

What is Lust?

When Paul wrote: “walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh”¹, what did he mean?

To understand Paul’s statement, the first thing we need to do is understand what “lust” is. Secondly we need to understand what “the flesh” is, and then we can uncover what he meant.

(1) LUST – The first point that needs to be made is that Christendom has historically given to us the meaning of ‘lust’ as “evil desires”. This clouds the real meaning of the term, so it must be eliminated if we are to understand what 1st century believers understood it to mean (They were the ones he wrote this to, not us).

There are a number of Greek words which are translated as ‘lust’ in our English Bibles. These are:

- *Epithumia* (ἐπιθυμία)² – ‘desire’, ‘craving’, ‘longing’, ‘desire for what is forbidden’, ‘lust’.
- *Epithumeō* (ἐπιθυμέω)³ – ‘to turn upon a thing’, ‘to have a desire for’, ‘to long for’, ‘to desire’, ‘to lust after’, ‘covet’, ‘of those who seek things forbidden’.
- *Epipotheō* (ἐπιποθέω)⁴ – ‘to long for’, ‘desire’, ‘to pursue with love’, ‘to long after’, ‘to lust’, ‘to harbour forbidden desire’. From a word meaning ‘to intensely crave possession’ & ‘greatly long after’.
- *Orexis* (ὄρεξις)⁵ – ‘desire’, ‘longing’, ‘craving for’, ‘eager desire’, ‘lust’, ‘appetite’. Used both in a good and a bad sense, as well of natural and lawful and even of proper cravings (of appetite for food), also of corrupt and unlawful desires.
- *Pathos* (πάθος)⁶ – It’s meaning includes these: ‘a feeling which the mind suffers’, ‘an affliction of the mind, emotion, passion’, ‘passionate deed’. Used by the Greeks in either a good or bad sense, but in the NT in a bad sense of depraved passion or vile passions.
- *Hēdonē* (ἡδονή)⁷ – ‘pleasure’, ‘desires for pleasure’. From a word meaning ‘sensual delight’.

For all these, their context in the NT text matters as that provides an understanding of their inference. That’s because the words can be used in a positive or negative sense. For example: Here are some of these Greek words that can be translated as ‘lust’, where they are used in a positive way in the Bible:

- “With desire I have desired to eat this passover”⁸
- “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,”⁹
- “For I long to see you”¹⁰
- “this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which...”¹¹
- “having a desire to depart, and to be with...”¹²

RESULTS: ‘Lust’ is a strong desire, a passion. It can be used in a positive or negative way. It may involve pleasure.

1 – Galatians 5:16 (NKJV)

2 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G1939/epithumia.htm

3 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G1937/epithumeo.htm

4 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G1971/epipotheo.htm

5 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G3715/orexis.htm

6 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G3806/pathos.htm

7 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G2237/hedone.htm

8 – Luke 22:15

9 – 1 Peter 2:2

10 – Romans 1:11

11 – 2 Corinthians 5:2

12 – Philippians 1:23

Why do we see lust as evil when it refers to a ‘deadly sin’, but not evil at any other time?

- If ‘lust’ is a strong desire, what’s the difference between lusting after a woman which is adultery and lusting after food?
- What is worse, a strong desire for a new car or a strong desire for a promotion?
- For ladies, what’s wrong with a strong desire for a man?

We must get past religion’s ideas of lust and get the Trinity’s mind on it. That’s the only way we’re going to understand it accurately.

Quite a bit of insight on this can be taken from Rick Joyner’s visions and visitations to Heaven as it provides us with Heaven’s perspective on lust.

(i) Lust is a tool of the enemy:

*“The foremost divisions marched under the banners of Pride, Self-Righteousness, Respectability, Selfish Ambition, Unrighteous Judgment, and Jealousy. There were many more of these evil divisions beyond my scope of vision, but those in the vanguard of this terrible horde from hell seemed to be the most powerful. The leader of this army was the Accuser of the Brethren himself. The weapons carried by this horde were also named. The swords were named Intimidation; the spears were named Treachery; and the arrows were named Accusation, Gossip, Slander, and Faultfinding. Scouts and smaller companies of demons with such names as Rejection, Bitterness, Impatience, Unforgiveness, and Lust were sent in advance of this army to prepare for the main attack.”*¹³

(ii) Lust is a corruption of pure love:

In Rick’s vision he was conversing with “the Reformer’s wife” and she said the following to him from her heavenly understanding as a ‘glorified’ human being who is in the sin-filtered presence of the King:

“Your attraction to me is not out of order. It is the attraction between male and female that was given in the beginning, which is pure in its original form. When pure truth is combined with pure love, men can be the men they were created to be without having to dominate women out of insecurity. Such domination is nothing but lust, which is the lowest depth to which love falls because of our sin. With true love, men become true men. Women, likewise, can be the women they were created to be because their love has replaced their fear.

“Love will never manipulate or try to control out of insecurity because love casts out all fear. The very place where relationships can be the most corrupted is also where they can be the most fulfilling, after redemption has worked in them. True love is a taste of heaven, and lust is the enemy’s ultimate perversion of the glory of heaven. To the degree that you are free of lust on earth, you will begin to experience heaven.”

“But I do not think I have felt any lust for you or for anyone while I’ve been here,” I mildly protested. “On the contrary, I was marveling that I could behold one with your beauty and not feel lust.”

*“That is because you are here. The light of His glory here casts out all darkness. But if you were not here, lust would be gripping you now,” she said.”*¹⁴

CONCLUSION: Lust is a strong desire, both good and bad. Unrighteous lust is a perversion of righteous desires or it’s strong desires for unrighteous things. That’s different to what we’ve been taught – it’s not “evil” *per se*, only if it’s unrighteous.

IMPORTANT: When the lust manifests, it isn’t always extremely evil. Don’t see it that way or you’ll convince yourself you’re always OK when you’re actually lusting. It’s a range, from evil, all the way up to inappropriate or wrong (See what “the Reformer’s wife” said in the quote above).

13 – Rick Joyner (2016) “The Final Quest Trilogy” p:16 [Kindle edition]

14 – Rick Joyner (2016) “The Final Quest Trilogy” p:58-59 [Kindle edition]

(2) **FLESH** – Next, we need to understand the meaning of the ‘flesh’. I’ve already done it, here:

- “What is 'The Flesh'”¹⁵ and
- “More About 'The Flesh'”¹⁶

CONCLUSION: Simply put, ‘the flesh’ is our ‘base nature’. By definition, it’s whatever we would do when we lack self control. That is: It’s the habits or actions of our nature as a ‘fallen’ human being without any control of it by the goodness & righteousness we’ve been trained in by our family, church or God. That’s different to what we’ve been taught – it’s not “evil” *per se*. It’s anything that controls us in any way, because we lack the ability to control it.

IMPORTANT: When the base nature manifests, it isn't always extremely evil. Don't see it that way or you'll convince yourself you're always OK when you're operating in your base nature. It's a range from outright, horrendous evil, all the way up to inappropriate or wrong. It's the base nature that the enemy works through.

(3) **THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH** – Now to understand the meaning of this.

Knowing what we know already, this expression can be re-written as:

- **The strong desires of the base nature which are not controlled.**

Notice that this now does **not** have an evil connotation. That’s because it doesn’t have to be evil like we think.

It means any strong desire that is not controlled. I repeat: ANY strong desire that isn’t controlled.

That includes: Our inability to control our spending; giving in to the internal emotional pressure to do something or say something wrong; giving in to food or drink; unable to control our temper; doing something unrighteous when we know it’s wrong; and many, many more.

(4) **WALK IN THE SPIRIT, AND YOU SHALL NOT FULFIL THE LUST OF THE FLESH** – So, what does this now mean?

If we allow our spirit to be in charge, rather than our mind and our soul, we will be able to control ourselves. Strong desires which are unrighteous, or are not appropriate, cannot control us if we do this. That’s because our spirit isn’t interested in the physical life. It’s our natural life that causes us to be ‘at odds’ with the Kingdom, making us to be out of alignment with Heaven and the will of the Trinity. This is not the place for sons to be in, so it’s our responsibility to learn to bring our spirit into the place of being the dominant component of our being.

Laurence

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

15 – canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/What-is-the-Flesh.pdf

16 – canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/More-About-The-Flesh.pdf