

## THE GAZE OF HOLINESS

### Intro

- What impact should holiness have on what we set before our eyes?
- Does God have an agenda for our eyes?
- Does God have anything to say about something as mundane as our media choices and viewing habits?

### The assault and its effects

“Empirical data shows that television has become increasingly sexual in the last three decades.... In 1987 a year long study conducted by the Planned Parenthood Federation calculated that no fewer than 65,000 references to sex were broadcast on television during the prime afternoon and evening hours.... The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed a drastic increase in sensual viewing, with the per hour statistics tripling.... Along with this tripling of sexual material, married sexuality is actually played down. In the spring of 1991, researchers ... noted that sexual activity in prime time favored sex outside marriage thirteen to one. Terry Fisher, one of the producers of L.A. Law, said with revealing candor, ‘For television, married or celibate characters aren’t as much fun....’ No Christian today can deny that we are living in a culture given to the ongoing desecration of sex and marriage... Sexual propagandists have taken over film and primetime television, so that lewdness, pornography, adultery, sexual violence, sexual humor ... occur as such a high rate that the situation can only be called an assault.”

~R. Kent Hughes, Set Apart, p.52-53,78-79

- Every Man’s Battle ... and Every Woman’s ???

### Wandering eyes, wayward affections (sight–thought–action)

2 Sam 11:1-17

Gen 3:6 “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.”

- Link between sight – thought – action is confirmed both by Scripture and experience.

## Nakedness & God's grace to cover shame

Gen 3:7 “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.”

- The age of innocence.
- A new sensation and a new instinct.

Genesis 3:21 “And [then] the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”

- God doesn't simply cover the shame of our sins - our moral nakedness; but also He has an interest in covering our physical nakedness.
- From here on, in Scripture, nakedness is always spoken of as a shameful condition. (One exception: marriage)

Isa 58:7 [speaking of what pleases Him, God says] “... Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?”

- Noah nakedness (Gen 9:20-25)
- The naked Savior

## Practicing the law of love

Eph 5:1-3

Job 31:1 “I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?”

“How dare any Christian man gaze upon the body of someone else's wife? Or on the body of any woman who is not his own wife? Who do we think we are that we can do this in defiance of our duty to love all women as sisters?”  
~Wayne Wilson, *Worldly Amusements*, p.100

1 Tim 5:2 “[treat] older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.”

## The 'sister test' and the law of love

- Would I approve if my sister were asked to behave or expose herself in any way that undermined her purity?

“There are those who claim that seeing shameful things in films does not affect them. They claim that their liberty in Christ gives them the freedom to enjoy these things. I say that they have missed their highest Christian duty: the love they owe to others. They have an obligation to preserve the purity of the performers, and it really doesn't matter if the performers care or not. As Christians, we have a kingdom-duty to be salt and light so these performers will know someone cares about them enough to refuse to watch their degradation... As a Christian, you must think about what is going on when you watch these shameless entertainments. You pay your money and a young woman is undressed for you. Perhaps she is handled by a man she hardly knows. Vulgar references are made in her presence – and you have paid for it all. Don't you owe her more than that? ... Let the law of love decide.”

~Wayne Wilson, Worldly Amusements, p.112,122

- The issue is not simply about whether we, male or female, have struggles after watching nude images, but of our call to be imitators of God.
  - What does God want from us?

Isa 58:7 “Is it not ... when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?”

## The need to recover a holy gaze

“In the past two years, God has begun to show me just how much my unhealthy media diet has fed my lust and negatively affected my spiritual life. What I've come to see is that no matter how much I study the Bible, pray, and ask God to help me conquer lust, I'll never move forward in holiness if I'm filling my mind with lustful images and ungodly themes through entertainment.”

~Joshua Harris, Not Even A Hint, p.116-117

“Tragically, a sensualized church has little or nothing to say to a world in sensual bondage.... We are called as a church to create a culture that nourishes purity.”

~R. Kent Hughes, Set Apart, p.57,83

Is 33:15-16 “He who walks righteously and speak uprightly ... who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking on evil. He will dwell on the heights; his place of defense will be the fortresses of rocks.”