

SPEAKER: Scott Beckenhauer

DATE: May 4, 2025

SERIES: Upside Down

Sermon Title

“Upside Down Purity”

Introduction

This week, we started a new sermon series called “**Upside Down**”. Throughout this series, we are going to be unpacking the things Jesus taught that at first glance are not just counter-cultural, but seemingly counterintuitive. Much of what Jesus said seems backwards and confusing and it's easy for us to write those off as things we cannot apply to our lives. But when we actually see the truth of what Jesus said and see what happens when we put those things into practice, we notice that letting Jesus turn our world **Upside Down** brings about so many great things that God wants for us. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- How do you think media and entertainment have shaped your views on relationships and sexuality? Can you share an example?

Seek the Word

Read Matthew 5:27-28 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- How does Jesus redefine the concept of adultery in these verses? What does this teach us about the importance of our thoughts and intentions?
- Why is it significant that Jesus took one of the 10 commandments and expanded on its meaning for His new church and people?

Read Job 31:1-4 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does it mean to make a covenant with your eyes? How does this principle apply to our daily lives?
- How is our perception of sin and lust affected when we start viewing each part of our bodies as needing to be submitted to Christ?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:5 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does it mean to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ? How can this practice impact our spiritual lives?
- Paul declares that “we demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God”. How could you apply that way of thinking into your defense against impure thoughts and actions?

Going Deeper

- Discuss with your group if there are any areas that you feel your thoughts and emotions are running wild and not taken captive in Christ. What ways can you begin changing that reality for you?

Talk About It

- Jesus' teachings on sexuality and relationships were quite countercultural both in His time and today. How do you see cultural norms conflicting with biblical teachings in our society? What are some practical ways Christians can navigate these conflicts while maintaining their faith and integrity?
- Jesus emphasizes the importance of the heart and intentions, not just actions, when it comes to sin. How does focusing on the intentions behind our actions change the way we approach sin and repentance? Can you think of a situation where addressing the heart of the issue led to a more profound transformation?
- The advancements in the capability and accessibility of technology have increased the influence media and entertainment have on our thoughts and desires. How do you think the constant exposure to certain images and messages affects our spiritual lives and relationships? What strategies can we implement to ensure our media consumption aligns with our values and faith?

Wrap Up

Reminder: Jesus does not just desire us to act appropriately and according to the rules, He desires our hearts to be changed to align more like Him. And in an increasingly sexually immoral world, we must strive with heart, body, and mind to seek holiness and purity. Not in the ways that we might have approached it in the past, with brute force and determination, but by allowing the truth of God's Word and the Holy Spirit to transform every aspect of who we are and how we live: by allowing Him to turn our worldview on sex and relationships **Upside Down**.

Challenge for the Week: Full Body Surrender

1. *Surrender your EARS by hearing truth over lies:* Start your day with 10 minutes in God's Word being read out loud (YouVersion App, PRS Bible App) or a Christ-centered podcast— Let truth speak louder than temptation
2. *Surrender your EYES by setting strong boundaries:* Install screen filters, unfollow tempting social media accounts, and don't scroll alone— be proactive, not passive.
3. *Surrender your HEART through confession and connection:* Don't fight in isolation, confess your struggle to a trusted friend and ask them to pray for you and check in regularly.

Prayer: Close your time tonight by praying for each other. Ask God for strength and wisdom to guard your hearts and minds. Pray for each other's specific struggles and for the courage to live out God's design for purity. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide and transform your thoughts and desires to align with His will.