THE QUESTION

# What do the Bible and early Christians say about masturbation, and is it ever okay?

*Asked by a THF member on August 29, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 12 numbered quotations · the 38 early Christian passages and 258 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.*

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-do-the-bible-and-early-christians-say-about-masturbation-and-is-it

## The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

These passages never name masturbation, so they give no word-for-word rule. But they teach that lustful thoughts are already sin, that Christians must put to death uncleanness and practice self-control, and that sexual desire belongs within marriage. They give no case where acting on lust alone is fine, though a nighttime emission is not counted as sin.

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| **LIBRARY ONLY** | This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it. |
| **HOW IT WAS MADE** | Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith. |
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POINT 1 OF 7

## Lust in the mind is already sin

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Lactantius says the mind itself sins when it pictures sexual pleasure, even if the body does nothing. Theophilus says Scripture teaches chastity not only in actions but in thoughts. This is the main reason the early writers treat private lust as a moral matter.

**1** "For the mind becomes adulterous if it even paints for itself an image of pleasure. For it is truly the mind that sins."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 23 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 33, page 8** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

**2** "About chastity, the holy word teaches us not only not to sin by our actions, but not even in our thoughts."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 13 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 10, page 7** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

POINT 2 OF 7

## Christians must put uncleanness to death

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Origen says Christians keep the body under control and work to put to death uncleanness and evil desire. Cyprian quotes Paul's command to put off fornication, uncleanness and evil desire, which he links to serving idols.

**3** "But when we do abstain, we do so because we keep our body under control and bring it into subjection, and desire to mortify our members that are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 49 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 25, page 7** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

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**4** “Therefore mortify your members which are upon the earth, putting off fornication, uncleanness, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which are the service of idols; for which things' sake the wrath of God comes.””

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 28, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

POINT 3 OF 7

## Young people were trained in self-restraint

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Origen says the church trained boys at puberty, who feel sexual desire, in habits of self-control. Polycarp tells young men to guard their purity and stay away from the lusts of the world. Neither treats strong desire as a reason to give in.

**5** “And we train boys who are just reaching puberty, and who feel a desire for sexual pleasures, in habits of self-restraint.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 56 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 23, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

**6** “Similarly, let the young men be blameless in all things, being especially careful to preserve purity and restraining themselves from every kind of evil.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Polycarp,** *Epistle to the Philippians* (c. 100–155 AD) **Source 7, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

POINT 4 OF 7

## Sexual desire belongs within marriage

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Athenagoras says Christians limit their sexual appetite to marriage and the having of children. Lactantius tells a married man to be content with his wife alone and keep the marriage bed pure. These writers place sexual desire inside marriage, not apart from it.

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**7** “For as the farmer, after throwing seed into the ground, waits for the harvest and does not sow more on it, so for us the producing of children is the measure of our indulgence in appetite.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Athenagoras,** *A Plea for the Christians* 33 (c. 170–190 AD) **Source 12, page 7** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

**8** “Let the man who has a wife seek nothing more. Instead, being content with her alone, let him keep the secrets of the marriage bed pure and undefiled.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 66 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 35, page 8** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

POINT 5 OF 7

## A nighttime emission is not a sin

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

The Apostolic Constitutions say that a nighttime emission, like married union or childbirth, does not defile a person or drive away the Holy Spirit. Only ungodliness and unlawful conduct do that. This separates what happens to the body without choice from deliberate acts.

**9** “For neither lawful union, nor childbearing, nor menstrual cleansing, nor a nighttime emission can defile a person's nature or separate the Holy Spirit from him. Nothing can do that except impiety and unlawful conduct.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Apostolic Constitutions** (c. 250–380 AD) **Source 30, page 8** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

POINT 6 OF 7

## The struggle is real, and God helps

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Methodius describes a law that often draws the soul into lustful thoughts and fights against the mind. Cyprian says we pray for God's help so that flesh and spirit may agree in doing His will. The fight against lust is carried out with God's grace, not by willpower alone.

**10** “Another law comes from the attack of evil, and it often draws the soul into lustful thoughts.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Methodius,** *From the Discourse on the Resurrection* (c. 270–311 AD) **Source 31, page 8** Read it in the library ›
*THF's updated English*

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**11**

"Therefore we ask that, by the help and assistance of God, harmony may be made between these two natures, so that, while the will of God is done both in the spirit and in the flesh, the soul that has been born again by Him may be preserved."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 26, page 8** Read it in the library ›

POINT 7 OF 7

## God wants repentance more than punishment

***Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say***

Justin Martyr says Christ came to call the ungodly and the licentious to repentance, and that many had turned from intemperate habits. He says the Father desires the sinner's repentance more than punishment, which offers hope to anyone who struggles.

**12**

"For Christ did not call the just or the chaste to repentance, but the ungodly, the licentious, and the unjust; His words being, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.""

*later in the same passage*

"For the heavenly Father desires the repentance of the sinner more than their punishment."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *First Apology* (c. 130–165 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 8, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THE LIMITS

## What these passages don't tell us

- None of these passages names masturbation or rules on it directly; the answer is drawn from what they teach about lust, purity and self-control.
- The passages do not discuss medical or other special cases.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

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WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

# The Sources

The 38 early Christian passages and 258 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–38, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 39–137, in Bible order), then 159 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

## EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *38 passages from 17 writers*

**Didache**, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

**1** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 3 (1885 English; on point 1) "child, be not a lustful one; for lust leads the way to fornication… [continues online] **read ›**

**Barnabas**, *c. 70–132 AD · sources 2–3*

**2** *Epistle of Barnabas* (on point 2) But the way of darkness is crooked and full of cursing, for it leads to eternal death with punishment. This path contains things that destroy the soul, such as idolatry, … [continues online] **read ›**

**3** *Epistle of Barnabas* (1885 English; on point 2) "shalt not commit fornication: thou shalt not commit adultery: thou shalt not be a corrupter of youth… [continues online] **read ›**

**Hermas**, *c. 90–150 AD · sources 4–6*

**4** *Shepherd* (on point 2) the evil deeds from which we must restrain ourselves?" "Listen," he says: "from adultery and sexual immorality, from unlawful feasting, from wicked luxury, from indulging in many kinds of food… [continues online] **read ›**

**5** *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 6) "therefore, he ascends into your heart, immediately he talks to you of righteousness, purity, chastity, contentment, and of every righteous deed and glorious virtue… [continues online] **read ›**

**6** *Shepherd* (on point 1) He said, "I charge you to guard your chastity, and let no thought enter your heart about another man's wife, or about fornication, or about similar iniquities. For by doing… [continues online] **read ›**

**Polycarp**, *c. 100–155 AD · source 7*

**7** *Epistle to the Philippians* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 3** "it is well that they should be cut off from the lusts that are in the world, since "every lust warreth against the spirit;" and "neither fornicators, nor effeminate, nor… [continues online] **read ›**

**Justin Martyr**, *c. 130–165 AD · source 8*

**8** *First Apology* (1885 English) **Quote 12, page 5** "chastity, He uttered such sentiments as these: "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart before God." And, "If thy… [continues online] **read ›**

**Tatian**, *c. 150–180 AD · source 9*

**9** *Fragments of Tatian* 1 (on point 4) in a gentle way. For while he allows them to come together again because of Satan and lack of self-control, he presents a man who will try to serve… [continues online] **read ›**

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**Theophilus of Antioch**, *c. 169–183 AD · source 10*

**10** *To Autolycus* 13 **Quote 2, page 2** "chastity, the holy word teaches us not only not to sin by our actions, but not even in our thoughts. We must not even think any evil in our hearts… [continues online] **read ›**

**Athenagoras**, *c. 170–190 AD · sources 11–12*

**11** *A Plea for the Christians* 32 (on point 1) "5:28. Those, then, who are forbidden to look at anything more than that for which God formed… [continues online] **read ›**

**12** *A Plea for the Christians* 33 (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** "if the remaining in virginity and in the state of an eunuch brings nearer to God, while the indulgence of carnal thought and desire leads away from Him, in those… [continues online] **read ›**

**Irenaeus**, *c. 175–202 AD · source 13*

**13** *Against Heresies: Book V* (on point 2) contentions, jealousies, wraths, emulations, animosities, irritable speeches, dissensions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, carousings… [continues online] **read ›**

**Clement of Alexandria**, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 14–19*

**14** *Stromata* 3 (on point 4) marriage, when by agreement it gives time to prayer, is a teaching of self-control. For he added the words "by agreement," so that no one might dissolve a marriage… [continues online] **read ›**

**15** *Instructor* 2.10 also openly, and not through riddles, forbade these things, saying, "You shall not commit sexual immorality. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not corrupt boys," in Exodus 20:14… [continues online] **read ›**

**16** *Stromata* 3 not in quarrels and strife. But self-control must not be considered in one kind only, namely in sexual matters, but also in any other things that the soul in… [continues online] **read ›**

**17** *Stromata* 3 (on point 2) washed, we who were in these things. But those who plunge into this intemperance baptize from self-control into sexual immorality. They decide that pleasures and passions should be indulged… [continues online] **read ›**

**18** *Stromata* 2.20 (1885 English; on point 1) "when it casts off restraint and rules the house, it generates first concupiscence, which is an irrational propension and impulse towards that which gratifies it… [continues online] **read ›**

**19** *Stromata* 6.9 (1885 English; on point 6) "to have such desires, as require self-restraint in order to their control, is characteristic of one who is not yet pure, but subject to passion… [continues online] **read ›**

**Tertullian**, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 20–21*

**20** *On the Apparel of Women* 2.2 (on point 1) to presume on His goodness! But why are we a source of danger to our neighbor? Why do we bring concupiscence into our neighbor? If God, in enlarging the law… [continues online] **read ›**

**21** *On the Veiling of Virgins* 10 (on point 6) "continence, by virtue. For great is the struggle to overcome concupiscence when you have become accustomed to such concupiscence… [continues online] **read ›**

**Origen**, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 22–25*

**22** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 2 (on point 6) instinct. So then, if there were no devil, would it be possible for human experience to show such self-control in eating that no one would ever go beyond proper… [continues online] **read ›**

**23** *Against Celsus* 56 (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** "we train to habits of self-restraint boys just reaching the age of puberty, and feeling a desire for sexual pleasures, pointing out to them not only the disgrace which… [continues online] **read ›**

**24** *Commentary on Matthew* 14 (on point 6) it is not useful to marry." Matthew 19:10 To this the Savior replied, teaching us that complete chastity is a gift given by God. It is not merely the… [continues online] **read ›**

**25** *Against Celsus* 49 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** "however, when we do abstain, do so because we keep under our body, and bring it into subjection, and desire to mortify our members that are upon the earth, fornication… [continues online] **read ›**

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**Cyprian**, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 26–29*

**26** *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 11, page 5** “fornications, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, murders, hatred, variance, emulations, wraths, strife, seditions, dissensions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have… [continues online] **read ›**

**27** *Treatises* anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of… [continues online] **read ›**

**28** *Epistles* (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** “off fornication, uncleanness, and evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which are the service of idols: for which things' sake comes the wrath of God… [continues online] **read ›**

**29** *Treatises* man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of… [continues online] **read ›**

**Apostolic Constitutions**, *c. 250–380 AD · source 30*

**30** *Apostolic Constitutions* **Quote 9, page 4** “those hours or days when they go through such things, do they refuse to pray, or to touch a Bible, or to receive the Eucharist? If they admit that they… [continues online] **read ›**

**Methodius**, *c. 270–311 AD · sources 31–32*

**31** *From the Discourse on the Resurrection* **Quote 10, page 4** the law of the mind. Another law comes from the attack of evil, and it often draws the soul into lustful thoughts. He says this law wars against the law… [continues online] **read ›**

**32** *From the Discourse on the Resurrection* (on point 6) also says in another place: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of… [continues online] **read ›**

**Lactantius**, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 33–36*

**33** *Divine Institutes* 23 **Quote 1, page 2** must be careful, then, not to give vices an opportunity through our own lack of self-control. Instead, let the habits of the two grow accustomed to each other, and… [continues online] **read ›**

**34** *Divine Institutes* 19 (1885 English; on point 4) “for the procreation of offspring; the affection of indignation, for restraining the faults of those who are in our power, that is, in order that tender age may be formed… [continues online] **read ›**

**35** *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 66 **Quote 8, page 4** or a slave, is just as much an adulterer and impure. But just as a woman is bound by the bonds of chastity not to desire any other man, so… [continues online] **read ›**

**36** *Divine Institutes* 26 (1885 English; on point 2) “they ought truly to be accounted as leprous and unclean, whom either boundless lusts compel to crimes, or insatiable pleasures to disgraceful deeds, and affect with an everlasting stain those… [continues online] **read ›**

**Peter of Alexandria**, *c. 300–311 AD · sources 37–38*

**37** *Genuine Acts of Peter* (on point 6) “also says in another place, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of… [continues online] **read ›**

**38** *Genuine Acts of Peter* (on point 6) mind. Another is the law that comes from the attack of evil, and it often pulls the soul toward lustful thoughts. This, he says, wars against the law of the… [continues online] **read ›**

**THE BIBLE** *99 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

**39** **Leviticus 5:3** or touches the uncleanness of a man, any uncleanness of his by which he would be defiled if he touched it, and it was hidden from him, but afterward he knows it and has trespassed; **read ›**

**40** **Leviticus 15:16** A man from whom seed goes out shall bathe his whole body in water, and be unclean until evening. **read ›**

**41** **Leviticus 15:18** If a man lies with a woman and seed comes out, they shall both bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **read ›**

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42 **Leviticus 15:24** If anyone lies with her in bed, and her uncleanness comes upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean. **read ›**

43 **Leviticus 18:19** You shall not go in to a woman in the separation of her uncleanness to uncover her nakedness. **read ›**

44 **Leviticus 18:23** You shall not lie with any four-footed beast to mate with it, to be defiled with it; nor shall a woman stand before any four-footed beast to be mounted by it; for it is a loathsome thing. **read ›**

45 **Leviticus 20:19** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister or of your mother's sister, for he has uncovered his own close relative; they shall bear their sin. **read ›**

46 **Leviticus 21:3** and for a virgin sister who is near to him and has not been given to a husband; for these he may defile himself. **read ›**

47 **Leviticus 22:5** or whoever touches any unclean creeping thing that will defile him, or a man by whom he will be defiled, whatever his uncleanness, **read ›**

48 **Deuteronomy 23:2** One born of a prostitute shall not enter the assembly of the Lord. (Septuagint Deuteronomy 23:3 (Deuteronomy 23:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

49 **Deuteronomy 25:11** If men are fighting together, a man with his brother, and the wife of one of them comes near to rescue her husband from the hand of the one striking him, and she puts out her hand and seizes him by his testicles, **read ›**

50 **Deuteronomy 27:15** "Cursed is the man who makes a carved or a molten image, an abomination to the Lord, the work of the hands of craftsmen, and puts it in a secret place." And all the people shall answer and say, "So be it." **read ›**

51 **Judges 21:11** This is what you shall do: every male and every woman who has lain with a male you shall utterly devote; but the virgins you shall keep alive." And they did so. **read ›**

52 **Job 31:1** I made a covenant with my eyes, and I will not think upon a virgin. **read ›**

53 **Proverbs 14:19** The evil will fall before the good, and the ungodly will wait at the doors of the righteous. **read ›**

54 **Ecclesiastes 6:4** For the untimely birth came in vanity and goes in darkness, and its name will be covered in darkness. **read ›**

55 **Song of Solomon 2:17** Until the day breathes and the shadows move, turn, my kinsman, and be like a gazelle or a fawn of the deer on the mountains of the hollows. **read ›**

56 **Isaiah 1:4** Woe, sinful nation, a people full of sins, an evil seed, lawless sons! You have forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger. **read ›**

57 **Isaiah 1:27** For her captivity shall be saved with judgment and with acts of mercy. **read ›**

58 **Isaiah 1:31** And their strength shall be like a stalk of flax fiber, and their works like sparks, and the lawless and the sinners shall be burned up together, and there shall be no one to quench them. **read ›**

59 **Isaiah 2:2** For in the last days the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, and the house of God shall be on the top of the mountains, and it shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall come to it. **read ›**

60 **Isaiah 2:3** And many nations shall go and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will declare to us his way, and we will walk in it." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. **read ›**

61 **Isaiah 2:4** And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke a numerous people; and they shall beat their swords into plows, and their spears into sickles; and nation shall not take up sword against nation, and they shall never again learn war. **read ›**

62 **Isaiah 13:7** Therefore every hand will grow slack, and every soul of man will lose heart. **read ›**

63 **Jeremiah 4:5** Declare it in Judah, and let it be heard in Jerusalem; say, "Sound the trumpet in the land"; cry aloud; say, "Gather together, and let us go into the walled cities." **read ›**

64 **Ezekiel 31:1** Now it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me, saying: **read ›**

65 **Hosea 3:5** And afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king; and they shall be amazed at the Lord and at his good things in the last days. **read ›**

66 **Hosea 5:5** And the arrogance of Israel shall be humbled before his face; and Israel and Ephraim shall be weak in their unrighteousness, and Judah also shall be weak with them. **read ›**

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67 **Hosea 11:9** I will certainly not act according to the anger of my wrath; I will certainly not abandon Ephraim to be blotted out; for I am God and not man, the Holy One among you; and I will not enter into a city. **read ›**

68 **Amos 3:13** Hear, O priests, and testify to the house of Jacob, says the Lord God Almighty. **read ›**

69 **Amos 3:14** For in the day when I avenge the ungodly deeds of Israel upon him, I will also take vengeance on the altars of Bethel; and the horns of the altar shall be broken off, and they shall fall to the ground. **read ›**

70 **Amos 4:12** Therefore I will do this to you, O Israel; but because I will do this to you, prepare to call upon your God, O Israel. **read ›**

71 **Amos 8:7** The Lord swears by the pride of Jacob: None of your works shall ever be forgotten. **read ›**

72 **Jonah 4:2** And he prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord, were these not my words while I was still in my own land? That is why I hurried to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are merciful and compassionate, long-suffering and abundant in mercy, and that you relent from evils. **read ›**

73 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:13** their offspring is cursed. For blessed is the barren woman who is undefiled, who has not known a bed of transgression; she will have fruit at the visitation of souls. **read ›**

74 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:14** And blessed is the eunuch who has done no lawless deed with his hand, nor devised evil things against the Lord; for to him will be given the choice grace of faith, and a more delightful lot in the temple of the Lord. **read ›**

75 **Wisdom of Solomon 4:12** For the evil eye of worthlessness obscures what is good, and the roving of desire perverts an innocent mind. **read ›**

76 **Wisdom of Solomon 8:7** And if anyone loves righteousness, her labors are virtues; for she teaches self-control and sound judgment, righteousness and courage, and nothing in life is more useful for men than these. **read ›**

77 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:12** For the devising of idols was the beginning of sexual immorality, and their invention the corruption of life. **read ›**

78 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:26** disturbance of the good, forgetfulness of favors, defilement of souls, confusion of sex, disorder in marriage, adultery, and shameless conduct. **read ›**

79 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:30** Do not go after your desires, but restrain yourself from your appetites. **read ›**

80 **Wisdom of Sirach 20:4** Like the desire of a eunuch to take a young woman’s virginity, so is he who executes judgments by force. **read ›**

81 **Wisdom of Sirach 23:5** and turn desire away from me. **read ›**

82 **Wisdom of Sirach 23:16** Two kinds multiply sins, and the third will bring anger: a hot soul like a burning fire will certainly not be quenched until it is consumed; a sexually immoral man in the body of his flesh will certainly not stop until he has kindled a fire. **read ›**

83 **Wisdom of Sirach 26:10** Over a headstrong daughter set a firm guard, lest, finding freedom, she make free use of herself. **read ›**

84 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:30** Wrath and anger, these too are abominations, and a sinful man will hold fast to them. **read ›**

85 **Wisdom of Sirach 31:26** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

86 **Wisdom of Sirach 38:10** Put away trespass, and direct your hands rightly, and cleanse your heart from all sin. **read ›**

87 **Wisdom of Sirach 41:16** Therefore be ashamed in regard to my word; for it is not good to keep every kind of shame, and not everything is approved by all in good faith. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:10** in her virginity, lest she be defiled and become pregnant in her father’s house; when with a husband, lest she transgress, and when married, lest she be barren. **read ›**

89 **Susanna 1:14** And when they had gone out, they parted from each other; and turning back, they came to the same place, and when each questioned the other about the reason, they confessed their desire. And then together they agreed on a time when they could find her alone. **read ›**

90 **1 Maccabees 1:48** and to leave their sons uncircumcised, and to make their souls abominable with everything unclean and profane, **read ›**

91 **1 Maccabees 3:48** And they spread out the book of the law, concerning the things about which the nations sought guidance from the images of their idols. **read ›**

92 **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

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93 **2 Maccabees 6:4** For the temple was filled with wild living and drunken partying by the Gentiles, who amused themselves with prostitutes and had intercourse with women within the sacred courts, and who also brought in things that were not fitting. **read ›**

94 **3 Maccabees 2:17** Do not punish us through the uncleanness of these men, nor call us to account through desecration, lest the lawless boast in their anger and rejoice greatly in the arrogance of their tongue, saying, **read ›**

95 **4 Maccabees 1:4** it is also shown to rule over the passions that hinder righteousness, such as malice, and over the passions that hinder courage, namely anger and pain and fear. **read ›**

96 **4 Maccabees 1:27** in the body, eating of everything, gluttony, and eating alone. **read ›**

97 **4 Maccabees 1:31** Self-control, then, is mastery over the desires. **read ›**

98 **4 Maccabees 1:32** Of the desires, some are of the soul and some of the body; and reason is seen to master both. **read ›**

99 **4 Maccabees 1:33** For why else, when we are moved toward forbidden foods, do we turn away from the pleasures they would bring? Is it not because reason is able to master the appetites? I think so. **read ›**

100 **4 Maccabees 1:34** Therefore, though we desire creatures of the water and birds and four-footed beasts and all kinds of foods forbidden to us by the Law, we abstain from them through the mastery of reason. **read ›**

101 **4 Maccabees 1:35** For the passions of the appetites are held back, turned aside by the self-controlled mind, and all the movements of the body are bridled by reason. **read ›**

102 **4 Maccabees 2:3** For though he was young and in his prime for intercourse, he made the frenzy of the passions powerless by reason. **read ›**

103 **4 Maccabees 2:4** And reason is seen to master not only the frenzy of sensual pleasure, but every desire. **read ›**

104 **4 Maccabees 7:18** But as many as care for godliness with their whole heart, these alone are able to master the passions of the flesh, **read ›**

105 **4 Maccabees 13:7** so the seven-towered sound reason of the young men, fortifying the harbor of godliness, conquered the unruliness of the passions. **read ›**

106 **1 Enoch 8:2** And there was much ungodliness, and they committed sexual immorality and were led astray and were ruined in all their ways. **read ›**

107 **Matthew 5:30** If your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off, and throw it away from you. For it is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. **read ›**

108 **Mark 2:12** He rose immediately, took up the mat, and went out in front of them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!” **read ›**

109 **Mark 7:22** thefts, greed, wickedness, deceit, unrestrained vice, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness. **read ›**

110 **Romans 1:24** Therefore God also gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves; **read ›**

111 **Romans 3:2** Much in every way! For first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God. **read ›**

112 **Romans 3:9** What then? Are we better off? Not at all. For we have already charged both Jews and Greeks with all being under sin, **read ›**

113 **Romans 7:8** But sin, finding occasion through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of coveting. For apart from the law, sin is dead. **read ›**

114 **1 Corinthians 6:13** Foods are for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will bring both it and them to nothing. But the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **read ›**

115 **1 Corinthians 6:15** Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! **read ›**

116 **1 Corinthians 6:16** Do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body? For he says, “The two shall become one flesh.” **read ›**

117 **1 Corinthians 6:18** Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man commits is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. **read ›**

118 **1 Corinthians 7:1** Now concerning the things you wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. **read ›**

119 **1 Corinthians 7:2** But because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. **read ›**

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120 **1 Corinthians 7:5** Do not deprive one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. **read ›**

121 **1 Corinthians 7:9** But if they do not exercise self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. **read ›**

122 **1 Corinthians 7:28** But even if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such people will have trouble in the flesh, and I want to spare you. **read ›**

123 **1 Corinthians 7:36** But if anyone thinks that he is acting improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the prime of youth and it must be so, let him do what he wishes; he does not sin; let them marry. **read ›**

124 **1 Corinthians 7:37** But he who stands firm in his heart, who is under no necessity but has authority over his own will, and who has decided in his heart to keep his own virgin, does well. **read ›**

125 **1 Corinthians 10:8** Let us not commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell. **read ›**

126 **Galatians 5:17** For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, that you may not do the things that you desire. **read ›**

127 **Galatians 5:19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: adultery, sexual immorality, uncleanness, licentiousness, **read ›**

128 **Ephesians 4:19** Having become callous, they gave themselves up to licentiousness, to practice every kind of uncleanness with greediness. **read ›**

129 **Ephesians 5:3** But sexual immorality and all uncleanness or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints, **read ›**

130 **Colossians 1:14** in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. **read ›**

131 **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore your members which are on the earth: sexual immorality, uncleanness, depraved passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **read ›**

132 **1 Thessalonians 4:3** For this is the will of God: your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality, **read ›**

133 **1 Thessalonians 4:4** that each one of you know how to control his own body in sanctification and honor, **read ›**

134 **1 Thessalonians 4:5** not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who do not know God, **read ›**

135 **1 Thessalonians 4:7** For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. **read ›**

136 **2 Peter 2:10** but chiefly those who walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, **read ›**

137 **Revelation 2:21** I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. **read ›**

## ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *159 verses, by reference*

*Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.*

**Genesis** 4:25 · 6:1

**Exodus** 20:7

**Leviticus** 11:4

**Deuteronomy** 8:18 · 20:5 · 20:19

**Esther** 5:1

**Proverbs** 4:25 · 6:27 · 9:17 · 16:18

**Isaiah** 50:9

**Jeremiah** 23:24

**Matthew** 5:3 · 5:5 · 5:17 · 5:21 · 5:27 · 5:28 · 5:31 · 5:32 · 5:42 · 5:46 · 6:1 · 6:19 · 6:24 · 7:7 · 7:21 · 9:13 · 10:5 · 18:6 · 18:20 · 19:3 · 19:4 · 19:5 · 19:6 · 19:9 · 19:12 · 19:19 · 20:28 · 21:23 · 21:31 · 22:39 · 23:9 · 25:41 · 26:24

**Mark** 9:23 · 10:11 · 10:43 · 11:24 · 12:31

**Luke** 6:28 · 6:30 · 6:36 · 6:46 · 10:27 · 11:8 · 16:18 · 20:25 · 20:27 · 20:34

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**John** 1:8 · 3:6 · 6:27 · 14:6

**Acts** 2:30 · 9:20

**Romans** 1:18 · 1:26 · 2:4 · 2:14 · 2:24 · 4:11 · 7:4 · 7:7 · 7:9 · 7:12 · 7:13 · 7:14 · 7:15 · 7:18 · 7:19 · 7:22 · 7:23 · 7:25 · 8:2 · 8:13 · 8:28 · 8:29 · 13:9 · 13:12 · 14:19 · 14:21

**1 Corinthians** 2:15 · 5:7 · 5:11 · 6:9 · 6:11 · 6:12 · 7:3 · 7:8 · 7:10 · 7:11 · 7:14 · 7:32 · 7:35 · 7:39 · 9:27 · 10:5 · 10:24 · 12:4 · 13:5 · 14:15 · 15:44

**2 Corinthians** 10:5 · 11:3

**Galatians** 2:12 · 2:19 · 5:10 · 5:13 · 5:14 · 5:16 · 6:7

**Ephesians** 1:4 · 2:3 · 5:5 · 5:6 · 6:9

**Philippians** 1:27 · 2:4 · 4:3 · 4:8

**Colossians** 2:20

**2 Thessalonians** 3:14

**1 Timothy** 3:2 · 3:8 · 4:1 · 4:3 · 5:9 · 5:14

**2 Timothy** 2:12 · 3:2

**Titus** 1:6 · 1:15

**Hebrews** 9:12 · 9:14 · 11:1 · 13:5

**James** 1:8 · 1:14

**1 Peter** 1:14 · 1:21 · 2:11 · 4:3

**2 Peter** 1:20

**1 John** 1:8 · 5:1 · 5:6

*Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.*

## ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What do the Bible and early Christians say about masturbation, and is it ever okay?” on August 29, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

**Library only.** This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY