



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

# MORE THAN A BATTLE

### INTRODUCTION

1. Why did you pick up this book? What made you decide to start reading it?
2. If you're in a group, share a bit about your story and why this book is relevant for you. If you're reading by yourself, spend some time journaling or writing down your history with the struggles discussed in the introduction.
3. Have different attempts and approaches to this problem in the past been helpful? Why or why not?
4. What are the three lenses described for seeing and responding to lust and sexual impurity?

### Chapter 1

1. Does Galatians 5:16-17 teach that Christians are in an ongoing war with no victory, or does it give us the expectation that we should have some victory?
2. How does the way you answered the last question shape your response to sexual temptation and sin?
3. How does differentiating between "position" and "progress" help us understand our call to sanctification and holiness?
4. What role does self-knowledge have in our application of the gospel? Do you have adequate self-knowledge, or should you do some work in this area?

### Chapter 2

1. In this chapter, Joe talks about establishing artificial boundaries to help starve the beast. What does he mean by this? Restate the concept in your own words.
2. Do you think this approach would be helpful? Are you at a place where you need to try this, and are you willing to do so?
3. What is a helpful approach to confession and accountability? Does this offer at all from the ways you've done confession and accountability in the past?
4. What is the next step you need to take, right now, in your ongoing struggle against lust?

### Chapter 3

1. Before getting into chapter 3, let's circle back to our last discussion. How is it going with the next step you committed to taking in your struggle against lust?
2. What did you learn in this chapter about the biblical doctrine of humanity? Why does this matter?
3. Which of the five states of humanity are you in? How does this inform our fight against sin?
4. Explain the metaphor of the rider and the elephant? What are some implications of this for your struggles with lust, or with other kinds of temptation?

### Chapter 4

1. Looking at Romans 6, which was discussed at the beginning of this chapter, what effect does sin have on the body?
2. Joe made the case in this chapter that sin rewires the brain. This is an objective reality. How have you experienced it subjectively? Do you feel like your brain has been rewired by sexual sin?
3. What is the "law of diminishing returns," and how does it play out in sexual sin?
4. What does it mean to renew our minds? How does this relate to our sexual struggles, and how can you start renewing your mind this week?

## Chapter 5

1. What is the difference in a reactive resolution and a steady resolve? Which is more effective in the battle against lust?
2. Is it discouraging or relieving to you to know that sanctification is a long journey? Why or why not?
3. What is the binge trap? Have you ever fallen into this trap?
4. How does the power of the gospel release us from the shame that often attaches itself to lust and sexual sin? How can you preach the gospel to yourself and apply it to yourself when shame approaches?

## Chapter 6

1. Is it a new idea to you that sexual sin might have its roots in more and different sin struggles—like envy, insecurity, or approval seeking—than just lust? How does this concept land on you?
2. As you reflect on your struggles, do you think there are other sins and temptations that might be funding your sexual sin? What might they be?
3. What do you make of the checklist/journal that Joe recommended? Will you commit to using something like this?
4. Widening the battle is about growing in self-knowledge. What have you learned about yourself through these six chapters so far?

## Chapter 7

1. Joe argues that men have a deep, inherent need to be admired and respected? Do you agree with it? How do you see it playing out in your struggle with sexual sin?
2. How is pornography a mirror for distorted manhood? How does biblical manhood correct these distortions?
3. In this chapter, Joe writes, “A man in the grip of lust is searching for more than just the release of a bodily appetite. He’s often looking for validation.” Do you agree with this sentiment? If so, how does the gospel respond to this search for validation?
4. How would you summarize true, biblical masculinity? Where do you need to repent, change, or grow toward biblical masculinity?

## Chapter 8

1. In chapter 6, we considered the idea of making a journal or a checklist of questions to ask when we give into sexual temptation, or when we feel it particularly strongly. How has that been going for you? Have you noticed any patterns yet?
2. This chapter talks about the role our formative past experiences play in our lives when they meet our present struggles. Are there any past experiences that you think shape your present struggles with sexual sin?
3. This chapter also explores the relationship between anger and lust. Is this a relationship you have also noticed? Have you experienced a correlation of these two in your life?
4. Does probing your past and your emotional life in the pursuit of self-knowledge, for the sake of growth, seem scary to you? Why or why not? What is the next step you need to take in this pursuit of self-knowledge?

## Chapter 9

1. Restate, in your own words, the different levels of lust described in this chapter.
2. Joe writes, “Where you choose to fight is where the battle will be fought.” Where are you currently fighting the battle?
3. Do you attempt to fight at the onset of so-called “light” sins, or do you wait until the last moment to try to fight?
4. What does the author mean by “good pretending”? How can this help you in your struggle against sexual sin?

## Chapter 10

1. Considering the state that you are in—single, dating, engaged, or married—what are some specific struggles that you face with sexual sin that men in other seasons might not face?
2. What did this chapter reveal to you that is specific to your season? Perhaps a unique temptation or a particularly helpful piece of advice?
3. What is the difference in a peer accountability group and “faithful fathers”? Do you currently have what you need in this regard?
4. No Christian married couple looks back and wishes they had been more physical before marriage. Based on this reality, are there any changes you need to make in your relationship right now?

## Chapter 11

1. If you are married, what's the most important thing you read or learned in this chapter? If you are not yet married, but one day want to be, what stood out to you?
2. Have you ever experienced the watchdog/caged animal syndrome that Joe describes? What is that like? Is this something you need to address or get some help in addressing?
3. How does this chapter explain the difference in temptation and sin? How can this help bring clarity in your struggle with sexual sin—especially as it relates to communication with your wife?
4. Why is it important to learn to de-escalate? What's the difference in de-escalating and shrugging off serious sin?

## Chapter 12

1. Restate the idea of “nuisance lust” in your own words.
2. Why does Joe want us, in a sense, to chill out? What is the difference in chilling out and coasting?
3. What place does marital intimacy have in our struggles with sexual sin? What does this mean for those who aren't yet married, or may never be?
4. As we come near to the end of this book, share with one another some areas you've seen growth over the past several weeks? If you're reading alone, write down some ways God has granted you victory. What are some areas where you still need much growth?

## Chapter 13

1. What place does a wise mentor have in learning to walk by the Spirit? Do you currently have a mentor? Are you currently mentoring anyone else?
2. What are the one or two most important things you have gained from reading this book?
3. Are you still keeping your journal/checklist from chapter 6? How is that going? What have you learned?
4. As you close this book, what is the next step in your struggle against sexual sin?