

BEYOND THE WEEKEND

For the sermon on March 16-17, 2013
"Breaking Away"



Welcome to *Beyond the Weekend*! The experiences below are designed to connect with the weekend message and fit a variety of learning styles. They provide additional readings from other sections of Scripture such as the Old Testament, Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles (letters). Take 20-30 minutes each day and enjoy your pursuit of God!



Prefer e-mail? ***Beyond the Weekend*** is also available via daily e-mails, which include links to the Scripture (both written and audio), the sermon video, and a weekly blog post. To sign up for the daily e-mails, go to adabible.org/btw.

The New You | Reading Plan

Each day this week, read Colossians 1.1-23
(in addition to the regular BTW exercises).

Day 1 2 Kings 17.7-23 | Idolatry...A Deep Problem

The children of God are instructed to flee the sin of idolatry. In *Gods at War*, Kyle Idleman points out that in ancient Israel idolatry was one of the only two sins requiring the death penalty. However, Israel allowed this heinous pattern to set in. When they entered foreign lands, God instructed them not to live as those around them. But they rebelled. "They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, 'Do not do as they do'" (2 Kings 17.15).

This weekend, Jeff Manion talked about sexual sin, and it's worth noting that our sexual impulses can be just as idolatrous as anything. We can easily be controlled by our good and natural (though often out of control) desires.

The thought hits us today. Have we elevated anything (e.g., sex) above God? Have we followed the lead of the culture around us? (Remember, the values of our society are not designed to point you to God.) The sins of the Israelites are graphically listed in 2 Kings 17.7-23. Read this passage and then make a list of your own idols. What is it that God would write about you? Commit this list to the Lord in repentance.

Day 2 James 1.13-15 | Being Tempted

I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman (Job 31.1).

Do you ever think you are less mature spiritually because you are tempted on a regular basis? Look at the list of sinful behavior in Colossians 3.5: *sexual immorality, impurity, lust*. We can often feel condemned simply because we are tempted by these sins. But it's not true. *Everyone* faces temptation, but not all choose to give in to that temptation. Even Jesus was tempted. In Hebrews 4.15, we read these words: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin."

There is a big difference between temptation and sin. Being tempted is not sinful; giving in to the temptation is. Today's reading describes how that happens. Spend a few minutes, today, drawing near to God and asking him to help you see when you are tempted and then for strength to avoid the sin. Then, be encouraged by Hebrews 4.16: "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Cling to the mercy available through the grace of our Lord by listening to "Grace Flows Down" by Christy Nockels (search youtube.com).

Day 3 Proverbs 5 | Giving in to Temptation

Our culture will tell you, "Everyone is doing it. It's okay. It won't hurt you." Idols such as sex, greed, and self-worship permeate our culture. The message is: the goal of life is to be happy, and you are not happy unless you pursue "X." That's when we (or at least our sexual desires) become our own idols.

With idolatry you are never content in the present; you live in the future always wanting something (or someone) more or different or prettier or sexier. You cannot overcome this pull on your own. You need the Spirit of God to rescue and empower you. If you have given in to temptation though, know that you are not alone. The Lord calls you to lean on his mercy. Today, commit to depending on the Lord's mercy and pursuing his glory. If you have fallen, pursue God's forgiveness (1 John 1.9). The heartfelt song, "Grace" by Silars Bald, may give you a simple prayer to pray ([search youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)).

Day 4 Songs of Songs 5.10-16; 7.1-10 | Sex is a Gift from God (We Pervert It)

We are not often told sex is a gift. The church has failed in this regard. We are so focused on helping people overcome their unhealthy addictions to sin that we forget to balance it with this wonderful (and biblical) news about sex. Although we can find a lot of sexual deviancy in Scripture, today's reading in Song of Songs provides a healthy celebration of the goodness of sex.

The gift of true sexuality comes as we experience increased intimacy. If you are a married couple and enjoying this gift, recognize it as from God and enjoy each other without hindrance. God has created us for this intimacy in the context of the marriage covenant. Yes, it can become warped, but we shouldn't let movies or media dictate our mental image of sex. Today, consider reading one of the books below under "MORE" to gain a healthy view of sex as God designed it.

Day 5 Psalm 103.1-5 | Worshiping the Living God

Worship is the right response to God, and idolatry is clearly the wrong response. Idolatry is essentially misplaced worship—when we center our lives on something other than God. But, we are created to worship the living God, not some fake imitation. The Psalms are full of words like "worship," "praise," and "glorify." We cannot ignore our calling to worship the living God.

Psalm 103 is a beautiful example of a cogent expression of worship. Spend a few minutes reading these lines and responding to God's goodness in your own words. Do you have a hunger to draw nearer to God through worship? At Ada Bible, a growing number of people have expressed this same desire. The leaders of UNION and Spiritual Formation have come together to offer a worship experience called **The Gathering**—Sunday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Knapp Street Campus. Join us!

MORE

Books | *Real Sex* by Lauren F. Winner; *Sheet Music* by Kevin Leman; *Every Woman's Battle* by Shannon Ethridge and Stephen Arterburn; *The Sexual Man* by Dr. Archibald D. Hart

Daily E-mail | Sign up for daily e-mails at adabible.org/btw.

Small Group Discussion | For a discussion guide related to the sermon, e-mail rcorlett@adabible.org.

Questions or Comments | Contact Tim Nelson, pastor of spiritual formation at tnelson@adabible.org.

BTW Blog

Ada Bible Church staff and leaders share how God is meeting them through the sermons. BTW blog posts are hosted on Sabea, our blog for spiritual formation, and go live on Wednesdays.

This week we hear from Kirk Bierens, college and career coordinator.

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