

The present tense is iterative which describes an event that *repeatedly* happens. This use of the present is different from the customary present in terms of time frame and regularity. The intervals are shorter with the iterative, and less regular.¹

To include the iterative we translate the word, “You keep on lusting.” There are several lust patterns typical of those who habitually deploy them. James has by now become the source authority on the improper use of the tongue.

Chapter 4 begins with emphasis on the souls’ propensity to welcome in the agents provocateurs² of the sin nature. Lust is a word that describes the problem, but the separate categories are “patterns.”

The more favored lust patterns are facilitated into paths of least resistance and therefore are more commonly practiced as opposed to others referenced less frequently.

There are three major categories of sin that are involved and at least seven, major lust patterns welcomed into the human soul. They are deployed by the sin nature whose strategy is to get the individual to entertain a period of time outside the bubble—the more prolonged the absence the better.

Since this issue kicks off chapter 4, we are required to give it a summary examination. We will do so by the study of:

Overview of the Sin Nature’s Lust Patterns

1. Definition. Lust is the overwhelming desire for something. It can be a passion: the state of being acted on by external agents or sources. The soul and the body are separate but the entity that coordinates the two is an individual’s free will.
2. Categories. (1) The area of weakness, which is the temptation to sin, (2) the area of strength, which is the source of human good and dead works done out of fellowship, and (3) the trends of legalism and antinomianism.³
3. Lust. There are ten agents provocateurs by which the sin nature tempts volition to allow into the soul:
 - (1) The **lust for power** is the desire to control or dominate others, which is manifested by the inordinate desire to be recognized and aggrandized.

¹ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 520.

² “Agents provocateur [á-zhă”-pró-va-ka-tér]: One employed to associate himself with members of a group, and by pretending sympathy with their aims encourage them to commit illegal or harmful acts” (*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 2d ed. [1953], s.v. “agents provocateur”)

³ “One who rejects a socially established morality” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “antinomianism”).



This lust pattern is found to exist in the soul of Absalom when he sought to usurp David's power as king in:

2 Samuel 15:4 Then Absalom would say, “Who will appoint me [Qal active imperfect of שׁוּם (*sum*): appoint, call, consider] judge [שָׁפַט (*shaphat*): governor] in the land of Israel, that every man who has a cause [מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*): a legal case, claim] could come to me and I would do him justice [צָדָקָה (*sethaqah*)]. (EXT)

- (2) The **lust for pleasure** divorces a believer from the integrity provided by divine guidance from the Word of God. This is mentioned by Paul in **2 Timothy 3:4** where he writes that men will be “... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”

The lust for pleasure diminishes and destroys the honor and virtue associated with one's biblical integrity. There are many sources of pleasure that do not involve sinful activities.

- (3) The **lust for sex** reveals the loss or absence of honor in the soul of a believer. This lust pattern is the source of multiple sins practiced by vast numbers of U.S. citizens. Some include the following: fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, phallicism, rape, incest, pederasty, and pornography. Several of these are discussed by Paul in **Romans 1:18–32**.

- (4) The **lust for social standing** has to do with developing status from associates. This is nicely summarized by *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “social”:

Social: the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society; relating to or based on rank or status in a particular society; relating to or characteristic of the upper classes.

- (5) The **lust for approbation** is the habitual desire to acquire approval. The Lord provides a great example of this lust pattern in Matthew 6:1–6. The fifth verse reads like this:

Matthew 6:5 “When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

- (6) The **lust for capital** is motivated by greed. Greed is the selfish desire to acquire more of something than is needed. Often this is expressed in the accumulation of capital: money, stocks, investments, real estate, precious metals, and collectables, i.e., art, stamps, coins, baseball cards, or antiques.
- (7) The **lust for stimulants** such as intoxicating drugs, drinks, or inhalants. Some within these categories may be enjoyed in moderation but dependency on one or more is addiction.
- (8) The **lust for rebellion** is a category that exposes the rejection of the laws of divine establishment. Some of its expressions include civil disobedience, criminality, paramilitary organizations, vigilante activities, social engineering, anti-Semitism, civil unrest, and socialism and progressivism which have their roots in communism.

In 1984, [George] Orwell warns of the socialist project of cleansing history where “the past is erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became the truth.” That has almost happened in this case. Fortunately, we can still excavate the truths that lie buried under the progressive palimpsest in order to save our history and, in the end, ourselves. ⁴

- (9) The **lust for revenge** is a mental-attitude sin that has its roots in jealousy and envy. We studied this progression in the soul of Absalom following Crown Prince Amnon’s rape of Absalom’s sister, Tamar, and King David’s failure to prosecute Amnon for his crime.
 - (10) The **lust for criminality** occurs when a believer reverts into the cosmic system’s Arrogance Complex which is expressed by an insolent attitude that unlawfully disregards the rights, privacy, or property of others.
- 5. Those engaged in the sins of lust are constantly frustrated since most efforts are not fulfilled or, if accomplished, do not produce the desired result.
 - 6. Yet, the consistent result of these pursuits is frustration since the end result does not achieve the anticipated pleasure or happiness.

⁴ Dinesh D’Souza, *United States of Socialism: Who’s Behind It. Why It’s Evil. How to Stop It.* (New York: All Points Books, 2020), 40.



7. Happiness and contentment are never the result of fulfilled lust. True happiness and contentment come from having a relationship with God Who supplies the provisions associated with grace orientation.
8. Lust occurs in status quo carnality which cancels the ability to maintain one's prayer life and is illustrated by a verse we will soon analyze:

James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. (NASB)

9. Lust can only be overcome by the concentrated effort to get inside the bubble through confession alone to God alone followed by serious devotion to the exegetical study of Scripture.
10. Failure to pursue truth in favor of submission to one's lust patterns results in the rapid decline through Christian degeneracy: (1) failure to rebound extending status-quo carnality, (2) involvement is the morass of self-fragmentation, the soulish implosion that occurs from habitual submission to the sin nature's lust patterns, and (3) the steady decline through the eight stages of reversionism.
11. Consequently, the fulfillment of a pursued lust pattern never achieves the expected result, but rather by what may be illustrated by the boomerang:

Boomerang. A flat curved, usually wooden missile configured so that when hurled it returns to the thrower. A statement or course of action that backfires. To have the opposite effect from the one intended; backfire.⁵

12. This means that when a fulfilled lust does not result in the expected happiness, frustration intensifies efforts to acquire it. Yet when the lust pattern is fulfilled, it still does not result in the expected happiness.
13. Frustration is an ongoing problem for those who are enmeshed in lust patterns. True happiness is the possession of the copacetic spiritual life. The constant involvement of assuaging one's lust patterns prevents happiness from ever occurring.
14. The copacetic spiritual life is contentment that comes from a personal relationship with God, whose grace to him is unmeasured and maintained by the application of problem-solving devices.
15. The spiritual advance to the sophisticated spiritual life is an environment of the soul which provided true happiness in the soul.

⁵ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th ed., (2016), s.v. "boomerang."

16. This is the resource that the believer is able to rely upon to withstand the agents provocateurs' solicitations to the soul by the sin nature's lust patterns.
17. Volition is the gateway to the soul. Positive volition keeps lust patterns from entering the soul; negative volition allows certain ones of them to gain access to the soul.

Greek Words and Definition for "Lust":

1. Lust Patterns are not located in the soul, but in the body. The Greek words that refer to this mental attitude include:
 1. **ἐπιθυμέω (*epithuméō*)**: to have a strong desire to do or secure something, longed for: silver, gold, clothing; earthy things; something that belongs to another; to have sexual interest in someone, desire someone else's wife.
 2. **ἐπιθυμία (*epithumía*)**: a great desire for something: desire, longing, craving; a desire for something forbidden or simply inordinate, craving, lust. Of sexual desire in accordance with physical desire alone; to satisfy the desires of the body: gambling, drunkenness, and gluttony. "The desires that ruled over you formerly, when you were ignorant" (1 Peter 1:14).⁶

These definitions contain examples provided by Bauer to illustrate the lust patterns. There are others that are found in Scripture which together provide an inventory of the body's carnal proclivities.
3. James 4:2 begins with the failure to assuage these desires. We have already pointed out in the opening clause, "You lust and you do not have."
2. The verb, **ἐπιθυμέω (*epithuméō*)**, an **iterative**, present active indicative which means the action of the verb is repetitious, "you keep on habitually lusting." This describes a believer whose behavior patterns are so facilitated that they have become paths of least resistance.
3. This person may have one in particular or several concurrently yet whatever he lusts for results in the frustrations of the retroactive **progressive** present active indicative of the verb, **ἔχω (*échō*)**.

Progressive Present. Definition: The present tense may be used to describe a scene in progress. The difference between this and the iterative present is the latter involves *repeated* action, the progressive present normally involves *continuous* action.⁷

⁶ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed., Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.vv. "ἐπιθυμέω," "ἐπιθυμία".

⁷ Daniel B. Wallace, "Progressive Present" in *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 518.

