



Ethan Resists Wandering Eyes

Ethan was a boy who had just gotten his first phone. At first, it felt exciting and grown-up. He used it to text friends, check sports scores, and watch funny videos. His parents had set clear rules, and Ethan promised to follow them. Back then, he didn't think much about temptation.

One afternoon, while scrolling through videos, something inappropriate flashed across his screen. His heart beat a little faster. A small voice inside him said, "Look away." But another voice whispered, "Just a second longer won't hurt."

Slowly, Ethan began to let his eyes linger. He wasn't searching for bad things, but he wasn't turning away either. Without realizing it, he was letting the **vice of wandering eyes** take root in his heart. Wandering eyes happen when we keep looking at something we know we shouldn't.



Source Teaching: Scan the QR code to access this source teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more. Or, visit horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-lust

For Ethan, it started with curiosity. He told himself it wasn't a big deal. He tilted his phone when someone walked by. He cleared his screen quickly. What began as a glance slowly became a habit. The more he looked, the harder it felt to stop.

Soon, Ethan noticed something changing inside him. He felt distracted during prayer. He felt awkward around friends. Instead of seeing others the way God sees them—with dignity and worth—his thoughts sometimes drifted in ways he knew weren't right.

The images didn't bring real happiness. They left him uneasy and restless. What promised excitement actually dulled his joy. Instead of feeling stronger, he felt weaker. Wandering eyes were quietly pulling his heart away from peace.

By the end of the week, Ethan felt distant from God. He rushed through his prayers and avoided thinking about what he was doing. The more he ignored his conscience, the quieter it seemed. He didn't like the secret feeling growing inside him.

One night, Ethan sat on his bed with his phone in his hand. He thought about the kind of man he wanted to become—strong, honorable, and faithful. He realized that what he allowed his eyes to see was shaping his heart. He didn't want secret habits to control him.

Ethan understood that the screen wasn't really the master—his lack of self-control was. He knelt beside his bed and prayed, "Jesus, help me guard my eyes. Help me look away quickly. Help me see people the way You see them." He knew he needed the ***virtues of purity and self-control.***

The next day, when something tempting appeared again, Ethan acted differently. He closed the app immediately and put his phone down. He asked his parents to move his phone charger out of his bedroom at night. He built barriers before temptation arrived.

When the urge to look returned, he whispered a short prayer instead. He reminded himself that real strength is turning away, not staring longer. Each time he chose to "bounce his eyes," his will grew stronger. Each time he resisted, the habit weakened.

Choosing self-control didn't make Ethan weaker—it made him freer. He felt lighter and more focused. His prayers became honest again. He realized that guarding his eyes was really about guarding his heart.

Ethan learned that impure curiosity promises excitement but steals peace and joy. Purity and self-control, however, protect the mind and guard the soul. When he let Christ rule where temptation once lingered, he found freedom. And that freedom was stronger than any passing image.

Simple Reflection Questions (5 Minutes)

Ask the kids these three questions to get them thinking:

- 1. The "Feeling" Question:** How did Ethan feel after he kept looking at things he knew he shouldn't? *(Answers: Uneasy, distracted, distant from God, secretive)*
- 2. The "Warning" Question:** What were the warning signs that wandering eyes were becoming a habit? *(Answers: Lingered too long, hiding the screen, etc.)*
- 3. The "Grace" Question:** What changed when Ethan chose to look away quickly and ask God for help?

The "Look Away vs. Linger" Exercise (4 Minutes)

This is a physical way to show the difference between Temptation and Self-Control.

Step 1 (Lingering Eyes): Tell the kids to stare at an object in the room without blinking. Then say: "When we keep staring without blinking, it starts to hurt our eyes. In the same way, when we look at something we shouldn't, it hurts our heart."

Step 2 (Bouncing Eyes): Now tell them to glance at the object and immediately turn their eyes away. Say: "This is called 'bouncing your eyes.' Real strength isn't staring longer. It's looking away quickly. Guarding our eyes protects our heart."

The "Guard My Eyes" Prayer (2 Minutes)

Have the kids close their eyes and repeat after you:

Dear God,

- Help me guard my eyes and my thoughts.
- When something tempts me, give me strength to look away.
- Teach me self-control.
- Help me see others with dignity and respect.
- Keep my heart pure and close to You.

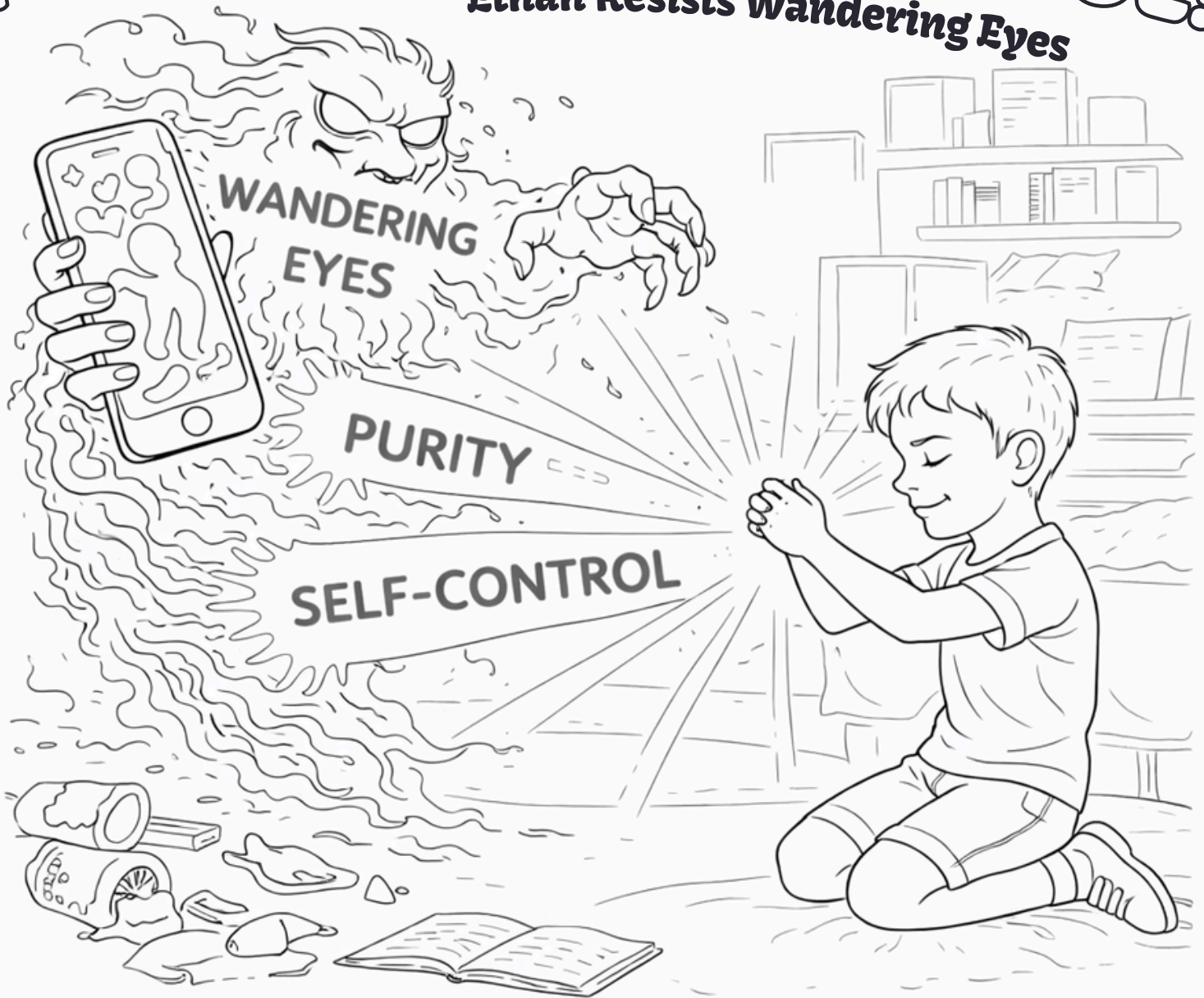
Amen.

Fun Extras:

- **Coloring Page:** Give the kids time to color and fill in the page on the back
- **Virtue over Wandering Eyes:** Talk through the examples at the bottom of the coloring page. Try to relate them to real-life situations you've encountered. This is a great way to connect the lesson to everyday life and gently challenge growth.

CHOOSE PURITY & SELF-CONTROL!

Ethan Resists Wandering Eyes



Circle what it looks like to choose virtue over wandering eyes

Watching something you know isn't good — or — Turning it off and choosing something good

Choosing things that keep your heart clean — or — Looking at things that make you feel weird

Staring at someone to make fun of them — or — Looking away and choosing kindness

Clicking on pictures or videos you shouldn't — or — Closing it and telling a trusted adult

Keeping your eyes on your own paper — or — Peeking at someone's answers during a test

Watching a naughty video a friend shows you — or — Telling your friend, "I don't watch that stuff!"