
Dealing with Pornography

Biblical Answers for an Enslaving Sin

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Introduction:

- We live in a culture that is saturated in pornography.
- Pornography is from the Greek and literally means “writings about prostitutes”
- It is a Romans 1:18 – 32 world.
 - Idolatrous affection to the created instead of worship of the Creator.

The dynamics of the sin of pornography.

The statistics are staggering...

A \$10 billion annual industry

25 million Americans visit pornographic websites 1 – 10 hours a week.

4.7 million view these sites over 11 hours a week. (according to Stephen Gallagher, p. 14)

... but this is not new.

Matthew 5:27 – 30

II Samuel 11:2 – 5

It's as old as the garden because it is rooted in:

Pride – “The root problem with men who look at porn is not neediness – it is arrogance.” (Heath Lambert, Finally Free, p. 110)

A lack of contentment

Selfishness (opposite of Phil 2:1 – 11)

Wrong worship (Romans 1:18 – 32)

(This is why self denial or mechanical techniques will not work – Col. 2:20 – 3:6)

It is particularly dangerous because it is gateway to more sin.

All sexual perversions outside of the biblical norm
Sexual abuse
Bestiality
Even murder

It not only distorts your view of human sexuality it distorts your anthropology comprehensively.

It always involves much deception.

The pornographer believes the lie that God has not been good to him.

The pornographer minimizes his sin.

The pornographer desperately does whatever is necessary to hide his sin.

It always involves blame shifting until there is genuine repentance.

It is addictive

Addiction: the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit – forming, as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma. (dictionary.com)

From the latin – addict, to be handed over as a slave

Enslaved (Proverbs 26:11; II Peter 2:22; Titus 3:3 – 7)

Habit (Eph. 4:17 – 24)

Psychological and/or physical

Cessation causes trauma (and not ceasing causes trauma!)

But addiction is not to be our identity; it is not hopeless or insurmountable.

The Impact on Families

- Caught or Confessed?
- What is a relief to the offender is a burden to the offended.
- A cause for temptation to sin by the offended.
- Legal consequences.
- The “ick” factor for those involved including the counselor.
 - Temptation will be to define this person according to their sin. We must build involvement with them as people who struggle with the same root heart issues.

Biblical Help and Hope

It requires all the means of grace at the believer’s disposal to help those who are affected by this sin.

There is great reason for hope because of the Gospel. The Gospel is good news because of grace which overcomes our sin. It saves us and transforms us.

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)

Where the counselee needs to learn and grow:

A biblical view of God

A biblical view of man

A unity of body and soul/spirit

A biblical view of the senses

Created by God for his Glory and worship and our joy

A biblical view of sexuality

A gift

A stewardship

A means of glorifying God
Intimacy that is only to be expressed between a husband and wife

A Biblical view of God's Grace

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:11-14 ESV)

Key point: *God's grace both saves and transforms.*

Without growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ (II Peter 3:18) the temptation will be to dwell on what you are saved from and not what you are saved into.

Sanctification and Holiness (I Thes. 4:3 – 7; I Thes. 5:23 – 24)

The Heart Response and Activity of Someone Addicted to Pornography

Godly Sorrow for Sin

Matthew 5:4
II Cor. 7:8 – 11

The Marks of Godly Sorrow (Heath Lambert, Finally Free, pps. 36 – 41)

It is Earnest (perseveres in its fight against sin)

Leads to an Eagerness to Clear Yourself (accountability and drastic measures)

Leads to Indignation (Psalm 51:4)

Leads to Alarm (fears God more than being caught)

Leads to a Longing and Concern for Restoration

Leads to a Desire for Justice

Confession

What Happens when we don't? (Psalm 32:3 – 4)

What Happens when we do? (Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 52)

You can't receive the blessing of mercy without confession.
Builds a platform for future trust

Care in Confession

To Everyone Appropriate

Rooted in Matthew 22:37 – 39 and not selfishness
Confess with an unmitigated willingness to accept the consequences
I Cor. 13:4 must be practiced with the offended

How specific should a man be in confessing to his wife?

The model of the account of David and Bathsheba - II Samuel 11
Specific enough to know what happened
Not so detailed to provide a means for bitterness

Accountability within and by the Body of Christ

With more mature people (Gal. 6:1)
Early not late (don't make it a sin report time after the fact)
Don't forget the authority of the elders and discipline
Avoid explicit details (Eph. 5:11 – 12)
Must be desired to be helpful
Not your spouse in a *specific* accountability role

Radical Amputation (Matthew 5:28)

Time, thought life, access
Caution: Excuse making takes place here!
Must be a matter of the heart to be helpful

Worship and Adoration of God

This can't be a means to an end but it will make the memories of pornography drift into the past as one is enthralled with what is truly beautiful – Christ.

“Change must take place at the level of our affections (Col. 2:20 – 3:6)”
Alisdair Groves, 2011 CCEF Conference

Data Gathering and Homework Recommendations

Time logs

Internet monitoring software (i.e. Covenant Eyes, Accountable2You)

Serving others

Removal of the means of temptation (total restructuring)

Reading Scriptures which describe the Attributes of God

Memorizing and Meditating on the Doxologies in Scripture

Some suggested reading resources:

Finally Free, Heath Lambert

Pornography: Slaying the Dragon, David Powlison

Sex is not the Problem, Lust Is, Joshua Harris