

On Pornography

- I. The word *pornography* is a compound word from Greek:
- A. *Porno* is from a Greek root meaning “harlotry, fornication, indulgence in unlawful lust of either sex.”
 - B. *Graphy* is from a Greek root meaning “document, writing, etc.”
 - C. Strictly speaking, pornography treats of lewd or obscene writing but contemporary usage has broadened it to include (almost exclusively) imagery.
 - D. Pornography is essentially a vehicle for fornication with the eyes and the heart rather than physical contact with someone.
 1. Heart/eye sins do not evade the judgement of God.
PRO 6:25; MAT 5:28; JOB 31:1.
 2. Any form of *sexual connection* other than the sexual union of husband and wife is condemned. **HEB 13:4.**
 - a. adultery: Violation of the marriage bed; the voluntary sexual intercourse of a married person with one of the opposite sex, whether unmarried, or married to another (the former case being technically designated *single*, the latter *double adultery*).
 - b. whoremonger: One who has dealings with whores; one who practises whoredom; a fornicator, lecher.
 - (1) whore: A woman who prostitutes herself for hire; a prostitute, harlot. b. More generally: An unchaste or lewd woman; a fornicatress or adulteress. *To play the whore* (of a woman), to commit fornication or adultery.
 - (2) whoredom: The practice of playing the whore, or of intercourse with whores; illicit sexual indulgence in general; fornication, harlotry.
 - (3) Whoredom involves doting (panting after, infatuation), discovering nakedness, fondling private parts, and intercourse.
EZE 23:1-21.
 - c. fornication: Voluntary sexual intercourse between a man (in restricted use, an unmarried man) and an unmarried woman. In Scripture, extended to adultery.
 - d. intercourse: 2. a. Social communication between individuals; frequent and habitual contact in conversation and action; dealings. d. Sexual connexion.
 - e. connexion: The action of connecting or joining together; the condition of being connected or joined together.
 3. Thus, fantasizing over erotic images of someone other than one's spouse for sexual stimulation is a form of *fornication*, especially since it is unlikely that the viewer is not mentally visualizing himself as a participant.
 - a. If one is unmarried, such fantasizing is at least *heart-fornication*. If the image of one's sexual stimulation is a married person, then it is a case of (one-sided) *heart-adultery*, one-sided in the sense that the married party may have no knowledge or will in the matter.
 - b. If one is married, then fantasizing over the erotic image of anyone other than one's spouse is (one-sided) *heart-adultery*, one-sided in the sense that

- the other party may have no knowledge or will in the matter.
- c. Such fantasizing is the realm of *wicked imaginations*, which God hates.
PRO 6:18.
- E. Pornography promotes shameful nakedness and whoredom.
1. It is the *public* discovering of nakedness, which is shameful.
EXO 32:25; REV 3:18.
 - a. Nakedness between husband and wife is not an issue. **HEB 13:4.**
 - b. Nakedness for medical necessity is not an issue since the law for the preservation of life is a weightier matter. **MAT 12:3-5.**
 - c. Nakedness forced by circumstances or by others is not sin.
JAM 2:15; MAT 27:28.
 - d. It is intentional public nakedness that is at issue, particularly in the context of sexual enticement or activity.
 2. It presents objects other than one's spouse for sexual excitement. **PRO 5:15-21.**
 3. It emphasizes bodily characteristics over character, lust over love.
PRO 31:30; 11:22; 1TI 2:9-10.
 4. It breeds frustration since most do not match the bodies of pornographic models.
 5. It trains the mind to desire only a perceived ideal and to disrespect anything less.
 6. It cheapens the act and can destroy otherwise healthy relationships.
 7. It does not respect God's laws for pure thought. **PHIL 4:8.**
 8. It is evil communication which corrupts good manners. **1CO 15:33.**
 9. The indulgence of pornography is *lasciviousness* (the quality of being inclined to lust, lewdness, wantonness) and *lasciviousness* is a sinful work of the flesh.
GAL 5:19-21.
 10. Pornography incites concupiscence. **COL 3:5; 1TH 4:5.**
 - a. concupiscence: 1. Eager or vehement desire; in *Theol.* use, the coveting of 'carnal things,' desire for the 'things of the world.' 2. *esp.* Libidinous desire, sexual appetite, lust.
 - b. libidinous: adj. Of persons, their lives, actions, desires: Given to, full of, or characterized by lust or lewdness; lustful, lecherous, lewd.
 11. Pornography has highly addictive characteristics. Mind that we are called to freedom, not bondage (**GAL 5:1**) and are to avoid even being brought under the power of lawful things (**1CO 6:12**), let alone something sinful and destructive.
 - a. It stimulates the pleasure center of the brain causing it to narrow its focus under the influence of what has been termed an “eroto-toxin.” The user's mind goes from broad “real-time” to intensely focused “fantasy-time” where nothing else matters, then back to broad “real-time.” This cycle is a powerful addictive process.
 - b. It also promotes addiction by the well-known “guilt-thrill” cycle. The guilt increases the adrenaline component of sexual arousal at the onset, then after the thrill there is a descent back into guilt. The “low” then sets the user up for the next “high,” a classic addictive process.
 - c. Symptoms of porn addiction are similar to those of drugs or alcohol:
 - (1) Ignoring, replacing or damaging significant relationships.
 - (2) Isolation and secrecy.
 - (3) Inability to stop.
 - (4) Anger, hostility or irritability if asked to stop.

- (5) Continued use despite guilt or negative consequences.
 - (6) Losing track of time.
 - (7) Increasing amounts or intensity needed to produce the “high.”
 - (8) Anxiety, stress or irritability if unable to access it.
 - d. Whereas the intake of some addictive things is largely chemical in nature (and one may not have even made a conscious moral choice of the substance which ends up creating dependency), porn addiction is largely a *behavioral addiction*. Scripture lays the blame for such addictions on the individual's behavioral choice. **EPH 4:17-19.**
- F. God has put within man a natural desire stimulated by the sight of the eyes which itself is not wrong. **DEU 21:11.**
- 1. So much is this the case that The Song of Solomon bemoans the young woman whose bodily endowments were limited. **SON 8:8-10.**
 - 2. A single man must be discreet in governing the desire of the eyes in:
 - a. not coveting another man's wife. **EXO 20:17.**
 - b. not being captured by the lusty, sensual beauty of the immodest woman. **PRO 6:23-26.**
 - 3. The married man is restricted to desiring the body of his wife (and vice-versa). **MAT 5:28; JOB 31:1; GEN 20:16; PRO 5:18-20.**
 - a. Husbands and wives should both think about the implications of “letting yourself go” physically, aesthetically.
 - b. Husbands and wives are naturally to seek to *please their spouses* (**1CO 7:33-34**). Charity “...seeketh not her own...” (**1CO 13:5**).
 - c. No one should willfully be a stumblingblock or an occasion of another's fall. **ROM 14:13.**
 - d. Couples need to work out their own salvation (**PHIL 2:12**) on this issue!
- G. Historically, the overwhelming percentage of pornography users have been men, but women are not immune to the pursuit of erotic writing or images.
- 1. God illustrated Jerusalem's whorish ways as a people who desired other than God by a description of a lusting woman who is captivated by images of desirable young men. **EZE 23:11-21.**
 - 2. The fixation upon the images led to the fornication and obsession with the prodigious genital/sexual endowments. **vs. 20-21.**
 - 3. “The preliminary findings of a Brigham Young University study on pornography showed increased acceptance and use by college students, including women. The data from a survey of 813 individuals appear to support the recent statements of a well-known researcher who linked female exposure to pornography to an increase in sex crimes committed by women. The study, called Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use Among Emerging Adults, also indicated an acceptance of pornography as a means of sexual expression by nearly 50% of females surveyed.
Lead author Jason Carroll told the Deseret Morning News, a Salt Lake City, Utah, newspaper, that women who label use of porn as acceptable can also be linked with risky behaviors such as binge drinking and having multiple sexual partners. Dr. Judith Reisman, a researcher whose award-winning 1970s- and 1980s-era studies looked at links between sexual stimulation and neurological responses, noted that the rash of female teacher-student abuse cases is another negative

outcome of widespread porn acceptance.

'So now we've moved into a social epidemic that involves women who are becoming sexual predators in larger numbers than ever before,' Reisman said.

'And the major change is exposure to sexually explicit material.'

Carroll said one explanation for more female exposure could be that the current generation is the first to have wide-scale access to pornography through computers and wireless devices."

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4. "In an effort to help women and girls addicted to pornography, Crystal Renaud launched Dirty Girls Ministries. Hoping to protect women from the dangers of pornography early in their lives, the ministry primarily focuses on high school and college campuses. The ministry has its basis in the conviction that pornography addiction is much more prevalent among women than is commonly believed. According to Today's Christian Woman, 20% of Christian women admit being addicted to porn. However, Renaud indicates the figure could be much higher, since it is estimated that up to 50% of people viewing porn online are female. Renaud has also written the book Dirty Girls Come Clean, recounting steps to recovery based on her own experience."

(onenewsnow.com, 10/10/13)

II. Pornography has been around as a plague upon society for millennia.

- A. In ancient pagan cultures, pornography in the form of lewd amulets, stone or wood carvings, etc. was commonplace, as witness the relics of Mediterranean archeological sites like Pompeii and Herculaneum, or the Hindu culture, etc.
- B. Frequently, lewdness and obscenity were incorporated portions of their religious systems.
- C. Even the "enlightened" cultures of Babylon, Greece and Rome tended towards open lewdness and attendant images.

III. Some observations about pornography in our society.

- A. We are far removed from the isolated hand-drawn obscene images which were covertly passed amongst the seedy underbelly of the pre-photography society.
 1. Technology has brought pornography out of the gutter-world and onto glossy magazines, television broadcasts, movie screens, phone lines and the computer.
 2. Modern technology has thus been able to reduce the stigma of being seen at the sleazy porn retailer and made it possible to debauch oneself virtually anywhere in private or in public.
- B. One of the most notorious access providers to Internet pornography is now the public library system.
 1. Under the cloak of freedom of information/expression, public library Internet access-points make the worst forms of pornography available to anyone.
 2. Judith Krug, a director of the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom said, "Blocking material leads to censorship. That goes for pornography and bestiality too. If you don't like it, don't look at it."
 3. A late 1990's study documents over 2000 cases of patrons viewing porn in the library.
 - a. 33% of those cases involved children.
 - b. Much of the pornography accessed was "child pornography, hard-core

depictions of rape, sexual torture, sadomasochistic abuse, group sex, and sex involving urination, defecation, and bestiality.”

- C. Years ago, before the exponential explosion of internet porn availability was around, the Family Research Council noted, “The Number 1 distributor of pornographic materials in America, believe it or not, is the federal government. By selling sex magazines to U.S. Armed Forces through the military exchange system, the government spreads smut tax-free and at discount prices.” (Robert L. Maginnis, Family Research Council)
1. More recent information is available from military info sources which show that the problem is worse than ever because of the ease of access to the Internet.
 2. Military publications like Army Times address the problem with candor. (<http://www.armytimes.com/article/20100331/OFFDUTY03/3310301/Addicted-online-porn>)
 3. Military chaplains are dealing with the ravages of porn use and porn addiction at staggering rates.
- D. Man's inventiveness has its drawbacks. It is no little coincidence that Scripture links *whoredom* and *inventions*. **PSA 106:39.**
1. Mind that God does not need technology to sustain or promote His cause (**ZEC 4:6**). The world was evangelized (**COL 1:6, 23**) by very non-tech means.
 2. God's program may use technology but it doesn't depend upon it. Satan's program does depend upon it!
 3. Noted communication expert, Marshall McLuhan, said, “We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us.”
 4. Technology has put at the fingertips of the majority of the world's population an instant access to pornography. The number one search term used on the web's engines is “sex.” (Geoff Nicholson, Alexa Research, Feb. 14, 2009)
 5. “WebMD reports that an astounding 420 MILLION web pages contain pornographic material. *****, the second-largest porn site on the web, receives 100 million page views a day, and serves 4,000 VIDEOS a second during its peak hours. This one site receives an astounding 2% of the internet's total traffic.” (ProjectKnow.com)
 6. Parents ESPECIALLY need to snap out of denial when it comes to the danger that internet access presents to children with developing minds.
 - a. “It is estimated that over 60 million people in the United States are addicted to Internet pornography at some level and that nine out of ten children between age eight and sixteen have been exposed.” (Hart and Hart-Frejd, *The Digital Invasion*, p. 113)
 - b. A generation ago, no sensible parent would have given a child a stack of porn magazines and trusted the child to only read the good articles in them. And those magazines were mild in comparison to the Internet. Yet parents routinely are now letting their children access unrestricted Internet connections and even giving them devices to access the Internet anytime, anyplace.
 - c. Parents! Men in particular! What would you have been doing with unlimited Internet access if you had it when you were teenagers? Do you treasure your child's modernity, trendiness and peer-acceptance more than their souls?
 - d. God pronounces woe on those who offend the little ones. **LUK 17:1-2.**

- IV. Consider the dangerous nature of pornography.
- A. The entertainment and publishing industries tend to affirm that there is no definite proof that pornography exploits its viewer or leads to worse indulgences.
 1. This, from an industry that pays its bills through advertising which is meant to arouse interests in the consumer and, if possible, get the consumer hooked on its product.
 2. Scripture declares that one sin opens doors to others. **ROM 6:19; EPH 4:19.**
 - B. A University of Hampshire study revealed that the states with the highest readership of pornographic magazines like Playboy and Hustler also had the highest rape rates.
 - C. Michigan State Police have found that pornography is used or imitated in 41% of the sex crimes they investigate.
 - D. Scientists at the FBI Academy in Quantico, VA, studied the case of the notorious Miami Pillow Case Rapist. They prepared a five-page psychological profile of the rapist. Among his characteristics, they listed, “He collected Playboy, then Penthouse magazines...and dreamed of rape.” Then he slipped over the threshold of fantasy into the reality of sexual assault.
 - E. Before his execution, convicted serial sex-murderer Ted Bundy told James Dobson: “Those of us who have been so much influenced by violence in the media, particularly pornographic violence, are not some kind of inherent monster. We are your sons and we are your husbands. And we grew up in regular families. And pornography can reach out and snatch a kid out of any house today.”
 - F. A University of Wisconsin study showed that sexually violent films make men more likely to accept the notion that women enjoy rape, and a UCLA study demonstrated that men exposed to violent pornography show an increased willingness to inflict pain on women.
 - G. “Pornography leaves the impression with its viewer that sex has no relationship to privacy, that it is unrelated to love, commitment or marriage, that bizarre forms of sex are the most gratifying, that sex with animals has a specially desirable flavor and that irresponsible sex has no adverse consequences--no venereal disease, illegitimate births, abortions, premature marriages, single-parent families or moral erosion. I see no way that a torrent of materials with this subliminal message, which ultimately fans out to reach people of all ages, can fail to have pernicious effects.”
(Dr. Reo M. Christenson, Professor of Political Science, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio)
 - H. Dr. Christenson goes on to cite the surprising (to the researcher) study of Professor J.D. Unwin of Cambridge (who found the opposite of what he went looking for):
“If, then, we can reasonably assume that a flood of pornography will gradually erode barriers against irresponsible sex, what are the ultimate implications?...
“After examining the sexual practices of more than 80 primitive and more advanced societies, Unwin concluded that sexually permissive behavior led to less cultural energy, less creativity, less individualism, less mental development, and less cultural progress in general. Primitive societies with the greatest sexual freedom had made the least cultural advances. Those with stricter limitations had made the greatest progress. Among civilized societies, the same rule held. Those with restrictive sexual codes had made the greatest cultural strides, and when more permissive sexual standards appeared, cultural decline set in. Unwin said there was no known instance of a society that retained as high a cultural level after relatively relaxed sexual standards replaced more rigorous ones...”

- V. Pornography is especially captivating because it appeals to the most powerful of human senses: the eyes. **MAT 6:22-23; JOB 31:7; NUM 15:39; 1JO 2:16.**
- A. Sin entered the world through the ungoverned desire of the eyes. **GEN 3:6.**
 - B. Samson's weakness was the reign of his eyes over righteousness. **JDG 14:1; 16:1, 21.**
 - C. David's debacle is a case study in the captivating nature of the lust of the eyes. **2SAM 11:2-4.**
 - D. The allure of the sensual harlot is powerful enough to captivate the strongest of men. **PRO 7:26.**
 - E. Those given over to lust are said to have "...eyes full of adultery..." (**2PE 2:14**).
 - F. Do not fool yourself into thinking that you can indulge without being affected by pornography. **PRO 6:27-28 c/w JAM 1:14-16.**
- VI. Consider some strategy for resisting the allure of pornography.
- A. Understand that it is a form of fornication.
 1. As such, it is not something to reason with; it is something which should be *fled*. **1CO 6:18; GEN 39:12.**
 2. "Other vices may be conquered in fight, this only by flight." (Matthew Henry)
 - B. Resolve to submit yourself totally to God in order to effectively resist temptation. **JAM 4:7-8; 1CO 9:27; COL 3:5.**
 1. David was once badly burned by ungoverned sight of the eyes. **2SAM 11.**
 2. Elsewhere David resolved to guard against such a thing. **PSA 101:3.**
 3. David did not want to be one of those "...having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin..." (**2PE 2:14**).
 - C. Keep your thought-life pure. **PHIL 4:8; PRO 23:7; 16:3.**
 - D. Govern the tongue; verbalizing sin encourages it. **JAM 3:2; PRO 13:3; 21:23.**
 1. Flippant, bawdy or lewd speech can open doors to sinful thoughts and actions. Discretion is needed in the area of "salty" speech, jokes, etc.
 2. Jokes about sexual sin are not funny; they are folly. **PRO 14:9.**
 - E. Avoid situations and conditions which provide for temptation. **1PE 2:11; ROM 13:14.**
 1. Cancel any magazine subscriptions which evoke lewd thoughts.
 - a. Beware of sultry "romance" novels. Remember that pornography includes sexually sinful writing, not just images.
 - b. Parents need to be aware of what reading materials are being pushed on their children in school, particularly in public school.
 2. If the people you hang around are breaking down your inhibitions, find better acquaintances. Companions of fools will be destroyed. **PRO 13:20 c/w PSA 119:63.**
 3. Avoid excesses of alcohol or mind-altering drugs which break down barriers to sin. **PRO 23:31-33.**
 4. If you struggle with television programming, movies, internet, etc., you are better off without them.
 5. If you insist on having access to the Internet, be especially careful! The most corrupt forms of pornography are readily available there.
 - a. Consider setting up a "buddy-system" with a trusted acquaintance who will check your web-trail and vice-versa.
 - b. Investigate the possibility of a porn-filter for your internet access.

Warning: porn-filters are notorious for being circumvented.

c. If necessary, get rid of your Internet access.

- F. Pray the Psalmist's prayer FERVENTLY and act accordingly. **PSA 119:37.**
- G. Replace bad habits with good ones. **EPH 4:28-32.**
- H. Incorporate Scripture into your life regularly. There is no substitute for the intake of God's word in warding off temptation. **PSA 119:9-11; PRO 6:20-28.**
- I. If you are living in denial about *evil communications*, wake up! **1CO 15:33-34.**
- J. Consider asking for godly counsel. **PRO 20:18.**
 - 1. The American Family Association (www.afa.net) is a good source for information on overcoming pornography.
 - 2. There are many other sources for help out there. Ask someone for help in finding them if necessary.

VII. Here are some steps for overcoming sinful indulgence in pornography. These are especially important steps for the chronic (addicted) indulger in pornography. These steps are vital for overcoming any sin problem.

- A. *Acknowledge* (own the knowledge of, confess, recognize or admit as true) the sin to God (**PSA 32:5; 51:3**) and acknowledge His justice in the matter. **PSA 51:4.**
- B. *Declare* (make clear or plain; 5. make known publicly, formally or in explicit terms) the sin TO GOD (not to the church): no excuses, blame-shifting, generalizing, euphemizing or leaving out details. **PSA 38:18.**
 - 1. Eg. "Almighty God, I have sinned against you by looking at ungodly images to feed my lust and so have committed fornication/adultery in my heart."
 - 2. By such a declaration, you are telling God what He already knows and "coming clean." Every good parent appreciates this in their erring child and is dissatisfied with anything less.
 - 3. Take some time to dwell upon the fact that you have sinned against God your Maker, Ruler, Savior and Friend. Be *sorry* (pained at heart; distressed, sad; full of grief or sorrow) for your sin.
 - 4. Godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation which "sticks." **2CO 7:10.**
 - 5. God has mercy on broken, *contrite* (bruised, crushed, *fig.* crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin, and so brought to complete penitence) sinners. **PSA 34:18; 51:17.**
- C. The acknowledging and declaring are the *confession* of sin, which God has promised to honor with forgiveness. **PSA 32:5; 1JO 1:9.**
- D. Having confessed the sin to God, the next step is to *forsake* (break off from, renounce [an employment, design, esp. an evil practice or sin]) it. **PRO 28:13.**
 - 1. You must give up your sin of pornography by *renouncing* it.
 - 2. renounce: To give up, to resign (to another), to surrender; esp. to give up in a complete and formal manner.
 - 3. Forsake not only the action but the thoughts that provoked the action. **ISA 55:7.**
 - a. Remember that outward sin begins in the inward man, in the heart which is the seat of thoughts and intents. **MAT 15:19 c/w HEB 4:12.**
 - b. Therefore, "...purify your hearts..." (**JAM 4:8**).
 - c. purify: To free from admixture of extraneous matter, esp. such as pollutes or deteriorates; to rid of (material) defilement or taint....to rid of base motive or feeling.

- d. Fight off the defiling thoughts at their onset with the commands and promises of Scripture. **PSA 119:11.**
 - e. Crowd out the defiling thoughts by thinking on good things. **PHIL 4:8.**
 - f. Limit exposure to things that promote evil thoughts. **ROM 13:14.**
- E. Tell God with a firm resolve, "...I will do NO MORE" (**JOB 34:32**).
- 1. This is *purposing* to not sin, as David. **PSA 17:3.**
 - 2. purpose: To set before oneself for accomplishment....design or resolve upon the performance of.
 - 3. This shuts doors left ajar in the mind and leaves you with no "out." The fear of breaking a commitment to God will help you resist the sin.
- F. Pray mightily for deliverance. **MAT 6:13.**
- 1. Your desire of freedom from this sin is vital.
 - 2. Many have not because they ask not, or ask with secret contingencies of lust. **JAM 4:2-3.**
 - 3. Don't talk yourself into saying that resistance is futile. **JAM 4:7.**
 - 4. Faith says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (**PHIL 4:13**), and "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength" (**ISA 40:29**).
 - 5. God has promised to the true heart, "...He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them" (**PSA 145:18-19**).
- G. If you fall back into the sin, repeat the aforementioned process including also the fact that you went back on your word of resolve.
- 1. Tell Him you accept whatever chastening He might send. **JDG 10:15; LUK 15:18-19.**
 - 2. "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again..." (**PRO 24:16**).
 - 3. This battle may be bloody, but victory is possible. **1CO 10:13.**
 - 4. Grace is greater than abounding sin. **ROM 5:20-21 c/w 1JO 4:4.**