

Pornography

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Chris Amenson, Elder

Introduction: We live in a relativistic society where more and more we leave it up to the individual to decide “what’s right for them”. Our national motto might as well be “live and let live”. This attitude is exemplified in the bumper sticker that reads “If you’re against abortion-then don’t have one”. But where in Scripture do we see this advice?

This is the third in a series about current issues of our day, meant to arm you with information and remind us all of our values as Christian men. Today we will tackle one of the most prevalent and pernicious issues.

Pornography

Main Entry: **por·nog·ra·phy** Function: *noun*

Etymology: Greek *pornographos*, adjective, writing about prostitutes, from *pornE* prostitute + *graphein* to write;

1 : the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement

2 : material (as books or a photograph) that depicts erotic behavior and is intended to cause sexual excitement

3 : the depiction of acts in a sensational manner so as to arouse a quick intense emotional reaction <the *pornography* of violence>

Examples of forms of pornographic material: Photographs, magazines, art, catalogues, theatre movies, videos, TV movies, websites, live-camera websites, comic books, jokes, certain erotic behavior, certain “showclubs”.

The Problem

Matthew 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

- **The “Death” of Pornography**

In his book, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, psychologist Gary R. Brooks, Ph.D., identifies five principal symptoms of what he describes as a "pervasive disorder" linked to consumption of soft-core pornography like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*.

- **Voyeurism** - An obsession with looking at women rather than interacting with them. Brooks contends that the explosion in glorification and objectification of women's bodies promotes unreal images of women, distorts physical reality, creates an obsession with visual stimulation and trivializes all other mature features of a healthy psychosexual relationship.
- **Objectification** - An attitude in which women are objects rated by size, shape and harmony of body parts. Brooks asserts that if a man spends most of his emotional energy on sexual fantasies about inaccessible people, he frequently will not be available for even the most intimate emotional and sexual moments with his partner.
- **Validation** - The need to validate masculinity through beautiful women. According to Brooks, the women who meet centerfold standards only retain their power as long as they maintain perfect bodies and the leverage of mystery and unavailability. And the great majority of men who never come close to sex with their dream woman are left feeling cheated or unmanly.
- **Trophyism** - The idea that beautiful women are collectibles who show the world who a man is. Brooks asserts that the women's-bodies-as-trophies mentality, damaging enough in adolescence, becomes even more destructive in adulthood. Furthermore, trophies, once they are won, are supposed to become the property of the winner, a permanent physical symbol of accomplishment and worthiness. This cannot be so with women's bodies.
- **Fear of true intimacy** - Inability to relate to women in an honest and intimate way despite deep loneliness. Pornography pays scant attention to men's needs for sensuality and intimacy while exalting their sexual needs. Thus, some men develop a preoccupation with sexuality, which powerfully handicaps their capacity for emotionally intimate relationships with men and for nonsexual relationships with women.

- **A Few Things to Think About**

- Professors Dolf Zillman of Indiana University and Jennings Bryant of the University of Houston found that repeated exposure to pornography results in a decreased satisfaction with one's sexual partner, with the partner's sexuality, with the partner's sexual curiosity, a decrease in the valuation of faithfulness and a major increase in the importance of sex without attachment.
- A study conducted by Dr. Reo Christensen of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, found that pornography leaves the impression with its viewers 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 an especially desirable flavor; and that irresponsible sex has no adverse consequences.
- According to the book *Media, Children, and the Family: social Scientific, Psychodynamic, and Clinical Perspectives*, research has shown that sexual arousal and accompanying excitedness diminish with repeated exposure to sexual scenes. As exposure to commonly shown sexual activities leaves consumers relatively unexcited, they are likely to seek out pornography that features novel and potentially less common sexual acts.
- In addition, in a series of studies, researchers observed numerous persistent changes in perceptions concerning sexuality and sexual behavior after repeated exposing (i.e., six 1-hour weekly sessions) volunteers to pornography. These include the trivialization of rape as a criminal offense, exaggerated perceptions of the prevalence of most sexual practices, increased callousness toward female sexuality and concerns, dissatisfaction with sexual relationships and diminished caring for and trust in intimate partners.
- In the book *Back From Betrayal*, author Jennifer P. Schneider, M.D., asserts that for some dissatisfied people, fantasizing about affairs is the first step to a real affair. She suggests that the fantasization process occupies such a large part of a person's inner world that little energy is left

for the marital relationship.

- According to Francine Klagsbrun, author of *Married People: Staying Together in the Age of Divorce*, the reason marriage provides the greatest possibility for intimacy is because marriage is predicated on the idea of exclusivity. And one of the differences between marriage and other friendships is the importance of exclusivity.
- In the book, *Men Confront Pornography*, Michael S. Kimmel maintains that pornography is one of the major sources of sexual information that young males have about sexuality and is therefore the central mechanism by which their sexuality has been constructed. "Men can no longer hide behind pornography as harmless fun."

NCPCF in Action Special Report, July 1997. Published by the National Coalition for the Protection of Children & Families. Copyright (c) 1997 by the National Coalition for the Protection of Children & Families. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

- **Marks of Addictive Sex**

It is easy to confuse normal sexual desire and conduct with addictive compulsion and gratification. A person can have a stronger-than-normal sexual appetite and not be an addict. Here are some characteristics of addictive sex that help set the two apart:

Addictive sex is done in isolation. This does not always necessarily mean that it is done while physically alone. Rather it means that mentally and emotionally the addict is detached, or isolated, from human relationship and contact. The most intimately personal of human behaviors becomes utterly impersonal.

Addictive sex is secretive. In effect, the addict develops a double life, practicing masturbation, going to porn shops and massage parlors, paying for prostitutes, all the while hiding what he is doing from others- and, in a sense, even from himself. Because this secret life is so full of shame, the biggest fear of the sex addict is to be found out.

Addictive sex is devoid of intimacy. The sex addict is utterly self-focused. He cannot achieve genuine intimacy because his self-obsession leaves no room for giving to others. As a child, there were most likely no intimate relationships outside of sex. To be truly intimate is an experience most sex addicts have never had.

Addictive sex is devoid of relationship. Addictive sex is mere sex, sex for its own sake, sex divorced from authentic interaction of persons. This is most clear with regard to fantasy, pornography and masturbation. but even with regard to sex involving a partner, the partner is not really a "person" but a cipher, an interchangeable part in an impersonal-almost mechanical-process.

Addictive sex is victimizing. The overwhelming obsession with self-gratification blinds the addict to the harmful effect his behavior is having on others. If achieving gratification means that a 6-year-old child will be victimized, the addict will proceed unaware until the shame comes crashing in, once the gratifying act has been achieved. Sex addicts need to be helped so that victimization is stopped.

Addictive sex ends in despair. When married couples make love, they are more fulfilled for having had the experience. Addictive sex leaves the participants feeling guilty regretting the experience. Rather than fulfilling, it is empty, and they despair over who they had sex with or how low they stooped to have it. In these dark moments of despair the addict most likely feels abandoned by God. Often they think to themselves of how badly they want to stop and want help, but they do not know how to stop or where to turn.

Addicted to Love by Stephen Arterburn, M.Ed. Published by Servant Publications. Copyright (c) 1991 by Servant Publications. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

- **Fatal Addiction**

Ted Bundy, an infamous serial killer, granted an interview to psychologist James Dobson just before he was executed on January 24, 1989. In that interview, he described the agony of his addiction to pornography. Bundy goes back to his roots, explaining the development of his compulsive behavior. He reveals his addiction to hard-core pornography and how it fueled the terrible crimes he committed. By the time he was apprehended, Bundy had killed at least twenty-eight young women and girls in acts too horrible to contemplate. He was finally convicted and sentenced to death for killing a twelve-year-old girl and dumping her body in a pigsty.

Ted Bundy: *“Like an addiction, you keep craving something which is harder and gives you a greater sense of excitement, until you reach the point where the pornography only goes so far. I was a normal person. I had good friends. I led a normal life, except for this one, small but very potent and destructive segment that I kept very secret and close to myself. There are those loose in their towns and communities, like me, whose dangerous impulses are being fueled, day in and day out, by violence in the media in its various forms - particularly sexualized violence.”*

The Prevalence of Pornography

Facts taken from *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators 2001* by Empower America

- **The average American Child watches 1,500 hours of television per year and talks with his parents for 75 hours**
- **There are an average of 10 incidents of violence per hour on television**
- **The use of foul language has increased 5 fold between 1989 and 1999**
- **Scenes with sexual content increased tripled between 1989 and 1999**
- **Sexual acts or reference occurs every 4 minutes on the average TV show**
- **In 1999 70% of all movies produced were rated R; 9% -PG; 5% -G**
- **Americans spend more than \$9 Billion a year on pornography**
- **The number of hard-core pornographic video rentals increased from 75 million in 1982; to 490 million in 1992 and 686 million in 1998**
- **“Adult” cable and satellite generated \$310 million in sales 1999**
- **There were 10,000 X-rated movies produced in 1999 compared with 675 films rated by the Motion Picture Association of America**

Repentance for Sexual Addiction

The process of dealing with sexual addiction is a process of repentance. For some, the word repentance conjures up images of preachers pounding on pulpits, demanding that we get right with God and flee our sins. Consequently, it can seem more like an act of shaming than a challenge to move towards God. Yet repentance essentially means to change direction. It means to turn away from a focus on yourself and your own autonomy and toward God.

The real question isn't, "Are you sexually addicted?" The real question is, "Are you living your life by demanding that you fulfill your desires and avoid all pain?" A sexual fantasy stems from a desire to gain more in a relationship than is possible. It's an attempt to gorge ourselves with passion and move into a state free of any chance for disappointment. Simply put, we want to enter the Garden of Eden again.

But the very desire to know the bliss of the Garden here on earth is skewed by our obsession with self. In demanding the bliss of someone's real or imagined warmth, we become consumed with ourselves, which destroys the very ecstasy we seek. There is no way out. We are locked in reality, always wanting and therefore always destroying what we want. The process is insane. Until we become consumed with the love that desires to give for the sake of another's good, all joy is an illusion.

One sex addict began to realize this when he understood that his pornography and masturbation were direct results of his fear of loving his wife. "It is safer," he said, "to masturbate and look at a magazine. What you want me to do is impractical. I'd rather be with a caged lion than attempt to love her."

Many of the illusions we design to find fulfillment are sexual. We believe that if only someone attractive will touch us with warmth, everything will be okay. God wants to strip us of our illusions. God wants to deprive us of anything that is meaningless or counterfeit. He wants us to experience isolation when we need it, to be pushed to the point of discovering that we can't fulfill ourselves, to face the reality that life in this world will never be fully fulfilling: Emptiness and disappointment are chronic realities. We naturally (and wrongly) kick and scream when we are forced to face this reality.

Repentance is not simply a decision or an act of your will to stop addictive behavior. It's not just a new effort you make. Rather, it's an act of God and His grace that occurs as you open yourself to God and the deep work of His Spirit in your heart. Through repentance, you begin to understand that you aren't in control of discovering the source of true fulfillment or protecting yourself from pain.

Once you acknowledge your helplessness and dependence on God, real change can occur. Imagine yourself looking courageously into God's eyes, which aren't vengeful, bored, or patronizing. Refuse to defend yourself or to justify your behaviors because of what others have done to you or because your deepest needs have remained unmet. Face the gravity of your sinful heart.

After David committed adultery with Bathsheba, he turned to God and wrote,

Have mercy on me, O God,
According to your unfailing love,
According to your great compassion
Blot out all my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
And my sin is always before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned
And done what is evil in your sight,
So that you are proved right when you speak
And justified when you judge
Surely I was sinful at birth,
Sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
Surely you desire truth in the inner parts
You teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean
Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness
Let the bones you have crushed rejoice
Hide your face from my sins
And blot out all my iniquity.
Create in me a pure heart, O God
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence
Or take your Holy Spirit from me
Restore to me the joy of your salvation
And grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.
(Psalm 51 1-12)

Like David, you can admit that you have failed to love God, that you have run from Him and others into your own illusion. Search your heart before Him for the pervasive unmet needs that, above all else, pushed you into the horrors of your double life. Acknowledge before Him in a simple prayer that you are helpless, weak, and frail. Confess your sins before the Lord, who promised in 1 John 1:9--"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

If you have never asked God to come into your life, invite Him in. He promises to respond to your invitation. "Here I am," He says. "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). Paul writes, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Through brokenness, hopelessness, and dependence on God, you will receive joy in your heart--your deepest desires and inner being--as you begin to pursue God. You will partake of what He alone can offer and move into real intimacy, as you love others.

Reprinted with the permission of Dr. Harry Schaumburg from his book, *False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction*, (NavPress, 1992). For information on ordering this book, please visit:

Counseling Resources

Sexual problems are often intensified when they are kept secret. Sharing your struggles with others provides an opportunity for accountability as well as reflection on underlying problems.

Professional Counseling

Focus on the Family, a ministry based out of Colorado Springs, Colorado has provided this online resource. Our organization encourages you to call to speak to one of our counselors. Each one is a Christian who is a licensed therapist.

You can reach us by calling (719) 531-3400 weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. (MST). You should ask for our counselor's assistant. If a counselor is not immediately available, you can leave your contact information and a counselor will call you back as soon as possible. This one-time counseling service is available at no cost to you.

Our staff may also be able to help you find a professional counselor in your region who can provide more in-depth and long-term help. This referral service is also available by calling (719) 531-3400 weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. (MST) and asking for our counselor's assistant.

OTHER SERVICES

[Dr. Clifford and Joyce Penner](#)

The Penners offer a range of books, tapes, and seminars focused on achieving healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships. They have a useful list of responses to [frequently asked questions](#) on their Web site, addressing topics ranging from masturbation to "hum-drum" sex lives. The Penners are the authors of the book *The Gift of Sex*, which is available in the Focus on the Family [online resource store](#).

(626) 449-2525

[Christians for Sexual Integrity](#)

Provides programs emphasizing prevention, early identification, and treatment of sexual exploitation, trauma, addiction, and coaddiction.

(952) 401 7671

CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL PROGRAMS

[New Life](#) (1-800-NEW-LIFE)

[Rapha](#) (1-800-383-HOPE)

SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups often can provide relationships and resources that are more affordable than intensive counseling. Although confidentiality and focus on individual needs is lower in support groups, participants benefit from knowing they are not alone and from developing accountability relationships.

Christian Support Group

[Overcomer's Outreach](#)

1-800-310-3001 or

(714) 491-3000

Secular Support Groups (12-step approach)

- [Sexaholics Anonymous](#)
(615) 331-6230
- [Sex Addicts Anonymous](#)
(713) 869-4902 (M-F, 10-6 PM)
(800) 477-8191

Women's Groups

- [S-Anon](#)
(615) 833-3152
- [COSA](#) (Co-dependents of Sex Addicts)
(612) 537-6904

"How Come My Prayers for Help With Sexual Lust Don't Get Answered?"

Can prayer make sexual lust go away? Dr. Mark Laaser shares his experience of seemingly unanswered prayers and eventual recovery from sexual lust.

[././](#)by Mark R. Laaser, Ph.D.

Give Us Feedback

Have you ever prayed that God would deliver you from sexual lust and temptation? Have you read scripture, gone to Bible studies and church groups, or gone down to the altar numerous times to get help or rededicate your life? I have worked with countless men who have agonized over why God doesn't seem to help them. They have tried all kinds of strategies to get God to help them. I even knew a man once who was so frustrated with his pornography addiction--and I'm not making this up--he actually followed through on the biblical advice to pluck your eye out if it offends you.

How long have I been praying about this?

For 25 years I prayed and prayed for help from God for my sexual addiction. The first time was when I was 12. I had been looking at pornography for a year, stealing magazines from the local drug store. At the closing bonfire of a church camp that summer, I threw a piece of paper with the words "Playboy Magazine" on it into the fire. The camp director assured us that the Holy Spirit would consume our sin and we wouldn't have to deal with it again. Three days later I stole another magazine.

When I was 16 I went to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes camp and dedicated my life to Christ and His ministry. In return, I was hoping that God would simply wipe away my lust. Simultaneously, I hoped he would turn me into a professional tennis player. Several months later, I was matched up against a guy who was a year younger than me--someone named Jimmy Connors--in the Illinois State High School tennis tournament. Playing at a much higher level, Connors beat me and gave me a wake up call that God does not always answer our prayers with miraculous intervention.

Next, I hoped that by entering seminary and becoming a minister, God would take away my lust and sexual sin. Ministers don't struggle with this problem, or so I thought. I did more sexual acting out in seminary than I had before. I was really angry with God that He wasn't helping me.

Finally, I thought that marriage would save me. Paul says, after all, in I Corinthians 7 that it is better to get married than to struggle with sexual lust. When my patterns with pornography and masturbation continued after the honeymoon, I was really in a mess. Was it my wife's fault? Had I married the wrong woman? Was it God's fault? Was it my fault? Was I not doing something right?

The hidden barriers

In short, I had several spiritual choices. Some of them led me further down roads of sexual sin. If God really wanted me to be pure, I thought, He would take away my lust. In some twisted way I blamed God and everyone else that I was not getting well and this gave me, in my mind, justification to sin sexually. The real problem was that my own spirituality was totally immature. I had given parts of my life to Christ, but not others. I thought that God could magically deliver me from all inappropriate sexual thinking if He wanted to. I depended on the "highs" of sexual excitement and I didn't trust God to be able to do better. There was a real spiritual struggle going on inside me, one that I really didn't recognize. A large part of me wanted to be free of sexual sin, another part didn't. I wanted God to heal me without any pain, without any work, without any consequences, and without any sacrifice.

Why couldn't God heal me in a way that I would never be sexually tempted again? Why couldn't God just remove all sexual temptation from the world? Why was it so hard? At other times, I was really angry with others who didn't seem to know how to help me. A number of pastors and counselor gave me simplistic answers; that I should just repent more or believe more or try harder. I was feeling like a victim.

Part of the problem was that I was using sex to deal with my feelings of loneliness. Sex was equal to love. It was the only way I knew how to relate in what I thought was an intimate way. I had no friends who knew the real me. My sexual sin was making it worse. Who could I tell what was going on inside me? My life was a vicious downward spiraling cycle. This was not God's problem. It was mine.

Steps toward healing

My first step required understanding original sin. It was my pride that kept me in darkness. I thought I could provide myself with relief better than God could. I didn't trust Him that a relationship with one woman for a lifetime was enough. I didn't trust him that accountability relationships with other men would meet my needs for intimacy. The story of the healing of the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda was important for me. Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get well?" Did I want to get well at any cost? In Romans 12:1-2 Paul tells us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices. He also says that we must transform our thinking not to conform to the patterns of the world. It is important to remember that the world teaches us that sex is the answer to loneliness. It isn't. That is a lie. I had to transform my thinking. I had to be willing to consider the possibility that sex wasn't my most important need and that I could live without it if I had to.

The next step was to consider what James instructs us in 5:16. We must confess our sins to one another. This is not so that we can find punishment but so that we can find fellowship. Paul tells us that there is no sin that is not common to man. There are countless men and women who struggle with sexual sin. We can find an answer to our loneliness through fellowship with other Christians who really know us and who know what it is like to struggle themselves. Are you willing to find fellowship with others who struggle like you? Are you willing to sacrifice your fears of what might happen if others know about your struggles? The truth is that fellowship is equal to freedom from lust.

Sexual response is a normal part of our human makeup. It is normal and natural to be tempted. God calls us to live in the world but to not be of the world. Like the writer of the Psalms, there are times when it's OK to be angry. God hears that and understands. We must be honest enough with God to allow for true intimacy with Him and with others to take place.

We must be willing, therefore, to sacrifice our selfish desires for instant gratification. The final step in the spiritual journey of healing is to create for ourselves a vision of what God wants us to be. He wants us to be monogamous in marriage because He knows that a lifetime relationship with one person that is emotionally and spiritually connected is much more satisfying than anything else.

In Ephesians 5, Paul teaches us that the relationship of a man and woman in marriage is like the relationship of Christ and the Church. This is not a vision of rampant sexual submissiveness to each other, this is a vision of being willing to die for each other whether sex is wonderful or not. A spiritual journey of healing from lust doesn't mean all the things we tell ourselves not to do. It consists of telling ourselves all the things we should do to live a life consistent with God's calling.

Are you willing to sacrifice your lust totally to God? Are you willing to say if you never had another sexual encounter you would be satisfied? My experience is that if you are, you will find a joy that is beyond description. The truth is that God does answer prayer. It usually is not in the manipulative ways that we would like. It is more often the result of the humility in which we come to Him asking him to truly do whatever it takes to help us get well.

A closing note about professional help

In many circumstances, a Christian counselor can help you identify the scope of your problem and guide you through the process of recovery. Your openness with a professional may be the key to unlocking areas that keep you from fully surrendering to God. Often men and women who struggle with lust have childhood wounds or developmental immaturity that has not been addressed. For example, a harsh and abusive earthly father can create the type of wounds that make it difficult to trust a loving and gracious heavenly Father. A Christian counselor can help someone in that position to understand those wounds and move towards healing.

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Helpful Web Sites

www.pureintimacy.org
www.stonegateresources.org/False%20Intimacy.htm
<http://www.family.org/topics/a0018139.cfm>

Pornography: A Very Real and Troublesome Problem

by H.B. London Jr.

From the start, I will tell you that it was difficult for me to write this article. It may prove to be distasteful for you. Still, I respectfully ask you to read on.

The subject matter we addressed on volume 11 of our audiocassette series, *Pastor to Pastor*, was titled "Overcoming Sexual Addiction" and was burdensome to discuss. The men who joined us are some of the finest commentators on the subject in our country. They are godly men who care a great deal about you, your church and the people you serve. I must admit that as I reviewed the various aspects of this subject we addressed, I was a bit overwhelmed by the problems we face as colleagues in Christian leadership.

H.B. London Jr.
Vice President
**Ministry Outreach/
Pastoral Ministries**

I have just read excerpts of a book by Archibald Hart called *The Sexual Man* (Word). Dr. Hart is a good friend of mine, and he currently serves as Dean of the School of Psychology at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. His book is based on the experience of "good men." Mainstream types. Most of them were married fathers who attended church and worked hard. *The Sexual Man* does not address in any depth sexual perversions or deviations except to clarify what is considered to be normal.

One day, one of our secretaries in Pastoral Ministries mentioned to me that she had received five calls that morning from pastors on the issue of pornography. Initially, I thought the callers were looking for counseling aids, but I soon discovered that they themselves were hooked. One had been struggling with the temptations for more than 20 years.

Sexual addiction is a major problem in the ministry. At Focus on the Family, we surmise that as many as one in five pastors have a problem in the area of pornography. Research in *The Sexual Man* shows that 15.5 percent of married men who are not clergy and 6.8 percent of married clergy continue to masturbate to pornography. Why? From his research, Dr. Hart concludes that sex has become dehumanized. In many circles, it is no longer regarded as an act between loving, responsible couples. Sex has become a sport. And, as in all sports, there is a strong desire to improve one's performance -- pornography is a tool. Ministers are not excluded from this game.

How do men break the pattern of pornography? First, they must realize they choose their behavior. The men I have counseled say they could never break the habit gradually. It had to be done cold-turkey. *The Sexual Man* makes the following suggestions for the man who is faced with a pornography habit or any other sexual addiction:

1. Be honest with yourself and acknowledge that you have a problem.
2. Be accountable to another person. Tell someone else you can trust about your addiction.
3. Dispose of all the pornographic material you own. Don't keep any of it. If you're tempted to rent videos, don't go near a video store of any kind.
4. Be patient and resist feeling defeated each time you fail. Your addiction took time to develop; it will take time to overcome.
5. Pray about your problem. Rely on God for deliverance and strength. God promises to make a difference in our lives. Allow Him to give you the special strength you need to overcome this battle.

Dr. Hart states, "I have seen men take spiritual steps to find significant release from their lust and longing for porn. Thank God for this. But it doesn't happen everytime. Many godly men have prayed for release from their obsession, but to no avail. Why God helps some men and not others, I don't know." For the clergy, I would think the reason, though complicated, is that the minister often has no one to turn to and cannot possibly find healing alone.

Research shows that as men look back later in life on how pornography influenced them, the overwhelming majority see it as a negative force. Eighty percent said it was harmful. Eighty-two percent said it is

distorted sexuality. Ninety-seven percent admitted it did not help, and 71 percent concluded it was destructive.

Why am I writing an article on this subject? Because pornography is a problem in the church and among our colleagues. I hope you will purchase Dr. Hart's book, *The Sexual Man*. It will prove to be both helpful to you personally, and invaluable as a counseling tool.

Below, you will find a helpful list of other resources for use in dealing with men who God places in your care that are battling sexual addiction. The resources might even be helpful to you personally. If we can serve you in any way, please feel free to give us a call on our toll-free Pastoral Care Line at (877) 233-4455. We are here for you. I am serious when I say, "what happens to you matters to me."

Resources: Sexual Addiction

(Focus on the Family does not necessarily endorse the views expressed by these organizations, individuals and publications. Some of these resources may no longer be available from the publishers, but may be found in local and seminary libraries or from colleagues.)

Organizations & Therapists

Dr. Harry Schaumburg
Colorado Springs, CO
(719) 548-0908

Dr. Ralph Earle
Psychological Counseling Services, Ltd.
(602) 947-5739
(602) 946-7795 (fax)

Dr. Stephen Arterburn
Minirth-Meier New Life Clinics
Laguna Beach, CA
(714) 494-8383

Sex Addicts Anonymous
National Service Organization for S.A.A. Inc.
Houston, TX
(713) 869-4902

Sexaholics Anonymous
Los Angeles, CA
(213) 859-5585

New York, NY
(212) 439-1123

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous
Boston, MA
(617) 332-1845

Sex Offenders Anonymous (SOANON)
Van Nuys, CA
(818) 244-6331

Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS)
Temecula, CA
(909) 695-2277

Fuller Psychological and Family Services
Pasadena, CA
(818) 584-5555

Biola Counseling Center
La Mirada, CA
(310) 903-4800

Books & Articles

Addicted to Love

By Dr. Stephen Arterburn (Vine)

Lonely All the Time

By Dr. Ralph Earle and Dr. Gregory Crow (Pocket Books)

False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction

By Dr. Harry Schaumburg (NavPress)

The Sexual Man

By Dr. Archibald Hart (Word)

Out of the Shadows

By Patrick Carnes (ComCare)

The Secret Sin: Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction

By Mark R. Laaser (Zondervan)

Sexual Sanity

By Earl Wilson (Intervarsity)

"Freeing the Sexually Addicted"

by Hal B. School and Gary Sweeten with Betty Reid

Leadership, Fall 1989

"The War Within"

Leadership, Fall 1992

Available from Focus on the Family

(800) 232-6459

"Sexual Addiction: The War Within" (tape CS641)

"The Power of the Picture" (booklet LF141)

"When Sex Becomes an Addiction" (booklet LF194)

Running the Red Lights by Charles Mylander (Regal) (book BK333)

"Pornography: Addictive, Progressive and Deadly" -- Part 7 of the *Life on the Edge: Preparing for the Challenges of Adulthood* series featuring Dr. James Dobson. (VHS video V1156)

Also check out the "Sexual Issues" section under each product category of our [Online Pastoral Care Directory](#)

Taken from Pastor to Pastor newsletter, Jun. 1994.

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The Courts

All censorship is a violation of the First Amendment:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his own house, what books he may read or what films he may watch. [JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL](#) from a unanimous Supreme Court decision, 1969

The findings of this exhaustive study did not happen to fit the personal morals of Washington's power structure—from President Nixon on down. Nothing was done about repealing the laws.

When President Reagan put together another commission to study pornography, he did it right—extreme right. Attorney General Edwin Meese carefully selected eleven God-fearing (and, apparently, sex-fearing) Americans. One of the Meese Commission members was James C. Dobson, who wrote:

That is what the pornographers are doing to my country. They are hammering down the supporting columns and blasting away the foundations. We must stop the devastation before the entire superstructure crashes to the earth! With the diligent prayers and personal involvement of God-fearing people, we can save the great edifice called America. But there is not a minute to lose. [italics in original]

Is there any doubt where his personal sense of morality comes from? And does the rhetoric sound familiar? This from Donna A. Demac in her book, *Liberty Denied: The Current Rise of Censorship in America*:

The anti-pornography movement of the 1980s represents yet another attempt by certain groups to impose their morals on the rest of society. What makes these efforts more threatening than those of the past is the extent to which they have been abetted by federal, state, and local authorities. The climate engendered by initiatives such as the Meese Commission has been described with only a bit of hyperbole by Hugh Hefner as "sexual McCarthyism."

Whenever they burn books, they will also, in the end,
burn people.

[HEINRICH HEINE](#)

Job 31: **31**¹ "I made a covenant with my eyes
not to look lustfully at a girl.

²For what is man's lot from God above,
his heritage from the Almighty on high?

³Is it not ruin for the wicked,
disaster for those who do wrong?

⁴Does he not see my ways
and count my every step?

⁵"If I have walked in falsehood
or my foot has hurried after deceit--

⁶let God weigh me in honest scales
and he will know that I am blameless--

⁷if my steps have turned from the path,
if my heart has been led by my eyes,
or if my hands have been defiled,

⁸then may others eat what I have sown,
and may my crops be uprooted.

⁹"If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
or if I have lurked at my neighbor's door,

¹⁰then may my wife grind another man's grain,
and may other men sleep with her.

¹¹For that would have been shameful,

a sin to be judged. ¹

Proverbs 6:23 ²³For these commands are a lamp,
this teaching is a light,
and the corrections of discipline
are the way to life,
²⁴keeping you from the immoral woman,
from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife.
²⁵Do not lust in your heart after her beauty
or let her captivate you with her eyes,
²⁶for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread,
and the adulteress preys upon your very life.
²⁷Can a man scoop fire into his lap
without his clothes being burned?
²⁸Can a man walk on hot coals
without his feet being scorched?
²⁹So is he who sleeps with another man's wife;
no one who touches her will go unpunished. ²

Ezekiel 20: ³⁰"Therefore say to the house of Israel: `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Will you defile yourselves the way your fathers did and lust after their vile images? ³¹When you offer your gifts--the sacrifice of your sons in ^C the fire--you continue to defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. Am I to let you inquire of me, O house of Israel? As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will not let you inquire of me. ³

Colossians 3:5 ⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ^B
⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁴

1 Thessalonians 4: ⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ^B
⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁵

1 Peter 4: ¹Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. ²As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for

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evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ⁴They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit. ⁶

1 John 2: ¹⁵Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. ⁷

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