

What Does the Bible Teach About Christians and Pornography?

June 24, 2021 Indepth Bible Class of
the Trilacoochee church of Christ

Understanding This Study

- This is not a matter for humor; there is nothing appropriate about making light of sin.
- We will use clear speech with direct terminology; it will not be helpful to cloud our meaning with obscure or euphemistic words.
- Sexual temptation is a serious matter for Christians today.
- This sin makes one less of a person, reducing his or her usefulness to the Lord
- This sin makes one less of a husband and father, wife and mother; married persons often compare their mates to models and lose interest in their spouse; fathers and mothers begin showing improper attention to children, including their own (repent/repeat cycle)
- This sin increases one's potential to move on to worse forms of perversion ("gateway drugs"); one finds himself moving on to porn in public, strip shows, degrading or unnatural forms of experimental sex, adultery, child porn, child molestation, molesting one's own children.
- Over time, this sin can generate a reprobate mind, one loses all capacity for repentance

How Bad Is The Problem?

- It's no secret that porn has become mainstream entertainment in our culture.
- There are around 42 million porn websites, which totals around 370 million web pages of porn.
- Porn is a global, estimated 97 billion dollar industry, with about 14 billion dollars of that coming from the U.S.
- The porn industry's annual revenue is more than the NFL, NBA, and MLB combined. It is also more than the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox.
- Porn sites receive more regular traffic than Netflix, Amazon, and Twitter combined
- Recorded child sexual exploitation (known as "child porn") is one of the fastest-growing online businesses.

How Bad Is The Problem?

- Over 40 million Americans are daily visitors to porn sites. The average visit per site lasts 6.5 minutes. That's 4.4 million hours every day in the U.S. is spent viewing porn
- One fourth of all search engine requests are related to sex
- One third of all downloads from the internet are pornographic
- Two thirds of men aged 18 to 24 visit a porn site at least once a month
- The largest consumer group of porn is men aged 35 to 49
- One-third of all internet porn users are women, and they constitute the fastest growing consumer group of pornography

How Bad Is The Problem?

- In the home
 - One half of families in the United States reported that pornography is a problem in their home.
 - Pornography use increases the marital infidelity rate by more than 300%. 56% of American divorces involve one party having an “obsessive interest” in pornographic websites.
 - 55% of married men and 25% of married women say they watch porn at least once a month.
 - Eleven is the average age that a child is first exposed to porn, and 94% of children will see porn by the age of 14.
 - One in three men who profess to be Christians view pornography
 - One in five women who profess to be Christians view pornography

How Bad Is The Problem?

- In my experience, in the 45 years that I have been preaching, churches with which I have worked have witnessed the following:
 - 28 divorces
 - 31 infidelities
 - 3 incidents of incest
 - 2 incidents of child molestation
 - 7 times a Christian wife came to me or the elders to talk to her husband about his porn addiction
- And in three out of four of these incidents, pornography viewing was a factor

The Signs Of Pornography Addiction

- What are the marks of someone who is addicted to pornography?
 - Viewing pornography daily or binging
 - Craving porn, needing it to deal with stress, anger, anxiety, etc.
 - Intensity of porn has increased from soft core to hard core, fetish, bondage, violence, child porn, etc
 - Attempts to act out the scenes viewed in porn
 - Becoming difficult to find anyone sexually attractive other than the women in pornography

The Signs Of Pornography Addiction

- Self-test for pornography addiction
 - Do I look at porn at least once a week?
 - Do I regularly look forward to logging onto pornographic websites?
 - Has the type of porn I view increased in severity over time? soft core to hard core, fetish, bondage, violence, child porn?
 - Do I look for sexy images in newspapers, magazines, catalogs, billboards, etc.?
 - Do I seek out sexually arousing programs on television?
 - Do I look forward to going away on business trips?
 - Are there behaviors I cannot share with my spouse?
 - Is getting rid of my Internet account something I could never bring myself to do?
 - Do I find my mate less sexually interesting or satisfying?
- If you answered yes to at least five of these questions, you may be addicted to pornography.

The Problem Pornography Viewers Face

- Addictive nature of neuro-chemical release in one's brain during sexual activity
 - Users keep returning to the activity that gave them the high
 - Because our bodies are designed to be adaptive, we need more activity and stronger forms of it in order to get the same high

The Problem Pornography Viewers Face

- Common myths:
 - “I can compartmentalize this.”
 - “It’s not going to happen to me.”
 - “I am not going to get caught.”
 - “It doesn’t happen to Christians.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe God has not fulfilled our needs
 - Jer. 12:1-2 - “Righteous are You, O LORD, when I plead with You; Yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? 2 You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; They grow, yes, they bear fruit. You are near in their mouth But far from their mind.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We have a physical body that still desires sin
 - Gal. 5:16-18 - “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can still be viewed as faithful Christians
 - Num. 32:23 - “But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and rest assured, your sin will find you out.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can't break old habits, even with the help of God
 - 1Cor. 10:13 - "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can control it, and it will not escalate
 - Luke 12:16-20 - “Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 ‘And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’”

The Solution

- This sin can be beaten
 - But it will take as much or more effort than that which went into developing and hiding it
 - Start by confessing the sin, not just to God, but to family or fellow disciples who will actively help you to break this pattern of behavior
- Avoid places where you will be tempted
 - Have someone you trust to set filters and controls on your computer and smart phone and lock it with a password

The Solution

- Stop looking intently; train your gaze to look away
- Pray about it and ask for help so as to not enter temptation
- If you fall, immediately repent and confess it to God - 1John 1:9
- Make a vow, a covenant with your eyes - Job 31:1
- Establish accountability with another trustworthy brother - James 5:16

The Plan For Recovery

- Self-knowledge, admitting that you have a pornography problem
- Realizing that pornography use is a symptom of deeper emotional issues
- Willing to do whatever it takes to recover
- Accept that recovery may be a life-long process
- Commit yourself to the process; don't give up

The Plan For Recovery

- Purify the home
 - Remove all pornography or suggestive materials from the home
 - Monitor all media that enters the home
 - Place the computer in a public area of the home
 - Spouses and parents must have full access to all computers in home
 - Monitor all electronic devices including smart phones
 - Monitor all social media and email

The Plan For Recovery

- When traveling, choose hotels that do not offer adult cable channels
- Support and accountability: arrange for someone trusted and morally strong to whom you will report regularly
- Counseling is almost always needed for pornography addiction, and is used to identify the emotional, personality, and spiritual conflicts leading to porn use
 - Root causes of porn use: selfishness, loneliness, anger, weak confidence, mistrust of women, excessive responsibilities (real or perceived), poor body image, permissive parenting, negative parental role model, weak spiritual life

Educating And Protecting The Family

- Become knowledgeable of the dangers of pornography
- Become aware of the resources available to fight pornography
- Protect the emotional lives and character development of family members
- Teach children and teens about the dangers of pornography
- Teach children and teens about healthy sexuality, respect, virtues, etc.

The Spiritual Plan For Recovery

- Confess the sin humbly, sincerely, and fully
- Worship and Bible study every week
- Daily prayer and spiritual reading
- Discuss spiritual growth and development periodically with elders
- Be active in the work of the local church