

Shining the Light on
The Scourge of Pornography

Messiah Midweek Session 5

Definition of Terms:

Adultery: Voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than his or her lawful spouse. Jesus clearly indicates that this can happen in the heart (and mind) without the reality of physical contact. (Matthew 5:28)

Fornication: Voluntary sexual intercourse between two unmarried persons, or two persons not married to each other.

Pornography: Writings, drawings, photographs, or the like, especially those having little or no artistic merit, created or produced for the intention to create sexual arousal. There is often times a distinction drawn between “soft-core pornography” and “hard-core pornography”.

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Premises:

- Humanity is **not** created for isolation, but rather for community, a fellowship in which things that are different are bound together.
- God has created human beings then, within the male-female polarity, a basic form of this fellowship. (Genesis 1:27)
- Sexual interaction between the man and the woman is a normal process included in God’s creation of humanity, the creation of which was included in His declaration “...It was very good”. (Genesis 1:31)
- Healthy sexual interaction is intended by God to be between a man and a woman in an exclusive, one-flesh, life-long relationship, as a component of the mutual love and accommodation between them. (1 Corinthians 7:2-4; Ephesians 5: 21-25)
- Marital sexual interaction is also intended as a partial remedy for sinful lust. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9)
- Not every human being need enter the earthly order of marriage. Celibacy is a gift from God, neither more nor less pleasing to Him than marital sexual interaction. (1 Corinthians 7:7; and Matthew 19:12)

The Scourge (ie. bringing affliction and calamity) **of Pornography** is in the secretive, self-focused behavior within which it thrives, and the destruction this wreaks in God's intention for community among His human creation.

- Pornographic images, made available for the sake of individual arousal, have the potential to disrupt and “adulterate” the most intimate form of fellowship for which humanity has been created. They promote a mis-understanding and mis-application of God's creative intention for sexuality.
- In addition to the destructive dynamics inflicted in marital relationships, children of God are warned against the voluntary indulgence of sexual fantasies as endangering faith and spiritual life. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- Pornographic images generally (though not always) are a greater temptation for males than for females because of the differences in arousal triggers typically associated with men and women. Women are typically more readily “triggered” when graphic, erotic language or interaction is depicted within emotionally connected relationship.
- Pornography disrupts the intimate connection in at least these ways:
 1. It comes “between” the spouses, disrupting the marital unity.
 2. It replaces stimulation by, and attraction to the spouse, thus denying him/her the mutuality of love to which both pledged themselves at marriage.
 3. Upon discovery of the secretive diversion of connection, spouses will feel betrayed, cheated, rejected, and unattractive, among other responses.
 4. Trust is destroyed. The person with whom the spouse thought they had “safe haven” has turned out not to be safe.
 5. The individual using pornography will have experienced changes in the brain's arousal template and other aspects of brain chemistry, similar to what takes place with addictions to substances.
 6. There is significant risk of loss: Money; reputation; job; marriage; family; life itself.
- A hope to escape shame is often the “pathway” to porn, but that means of supposed escape actually generates higher levels of shame.

The absolute best first step to deal with shame which locks people into the cycle of compulsive (or addictive) use of pornography is the bedrock base of our faith: Righteousness is by grace, through faith in Jesus as substitute. (Romans 3 et.al.)

Here are some strategies to combat the allure of pornography:

1. Daily immersion in the Scripture and prayer, **with spouse**.
2. Acknowledge temptation, and failure (if true), and confess it as having “missed the mark”.
3. Discover professional help with experience and training in attacking this problem from a Scriptural perspective.
4. Discover a support group in the community and participate regularly.
5. Shine the light (LIGHT). As this is an activity which grows and prospers in the darkness of secrecy promoted by the Prince of Darkness, grow in your relationship with Jesus, the Light of the world (John 12:46) has conquered the power of darkness.
6. Establish restrictions, along with your wife, on locations and times when and where the computer will be used at your home.
7. Consider monitoring applications, and which web sites will be off-limits.
8. Identify an accountability partner (not your wife) with whom you will have weekly face-to-face interaction.
9. Establish other behavioral changes which will substitute for cognitive choices until the temptation passes, and healthier brain patterns become established.
10. Continually immerse yourself in healthy and regular gospel-centered teaching and fellowship.
11. Pray continually for God to strengthen your resolve.

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