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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SEMINAR
TO COMBAT THE EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY ON
MARRIAGE IN THE MADISON COMMUNITY SDA
CHURCH AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

by

Abraham Lincoln Swamidass

Adviser: Jerome Thayer

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SEMINAR TO COMBAT
THE EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY ON MARRIAGE IN THE MADISON
COMMUNITY SDA CHURCH AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

Name of researcher: Abraham L. Swamidass

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Jerome Thayer, Ph.D.

Date completed: June 2010

Problem

Recent statistics in the nation, research among Christian couples, and my own counseling experience with couples, “particularly men” who were addicted to pornography, revealed that pornography is one of the leading causes of divorce and family breakdown today. Thus, it needed to be addressed at the Madison Community Church in Madison, Wisconsin. The purpose of this research project was to develop, implement and evaluate a seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention*. The intent of the seminar was to help couples, and “particularly men,” to understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage, and

provide biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect oneself from the influences of pornography or avoid the use of it.

Method

The seminar, *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention* was designed over one year and implemented in one day consisting of three sessions to teach participants the addictive nature of pornography, how it distorts God's gift of sex, its effects on marriage relationships, the best approach to avoid the temptations of pornography, and strategies for prevention. As part of the seminar, a survey was given both before and after the seminar to assess the participants' knowledge of and attitude towards pornography and to evaluate changes that resulted from the seminar.

Results

The survey results revealed that there were significant changes in most items on the survey. The individual comments received on the surveys showed that the seminar helped the participants know sexuality is a gift from God, discover that pornography is an enemy of intimacy and distorts God's intentions for sex, learn pornography's many effects and how it wrecks marriages, develop healthy intimacy, recognize the need for establishing boundaries, and develop accountability methods to guard themselves from the influences and temptations of pornography. Almost all the respondents believed that pornography has devastating effects on marriage relationships and that it must be avoided at all costs.

Conclusions

Most of the seminar objectives were met. Among the factors that contributed to the success of the seminar are the support of the church board, the response of married couples to the two-question survey, my own journey for study and further understanding of the nature of pornography from the current psychological or social science literature, and an examination of the Scriptures that helped develop the theological foundation of pornography, lust and sexual intimacy. Yet, it was the implementation of the seminar that aided couples not only to understand the powerful allure of pornography lust and its devastating effects on marriage, but also provided valuable information, resources, and accountability methods to guard themselves from the influences of pornography.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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CHURCH AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

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Abraham L. Swamidass

June 2010

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Date approved

DEDICATION

To my wife Joan, our sons
Rajesh, Sanjay and Ravi.
Their love, prayers and
encouragement
were a constant
source of strength for me
during my time of study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	viii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Personal History	1
Purpose.....	3
Problem	4
Justification	8
Expectations	14
Delimitations	14
Definition of Terms.....	16
Methodology	20
2. A THEOLOGY OF SEXUAL INTIMACY AND PORNOGRAPHY	22
Introduction.....	22
Definitions of Pornography.....	24
Lust: A Word with Meaning	26
God’s Perspective on Sex	27
A Biblical Understanding of Sexual Intimacy and Sexual Lust	33
Overview	33
Sex Drive versus Lust	37
The Source of Lust.....	39
Sexual Lust and Healthy Sexuality in the Old Testament	40
Samson	40
David.....	41
Proverbs	43
Song of Songs	46
Sexual Lust and Healthy Sexuality in the New Testament.....	49
Christ’s View on Lust	49
Paul	50
Mutuality in Sexual Intimacy.....	51
Sex is a Spiritual Need.....	53
Biblical Counsels for Avoiding Sexual Temptation	54

Summary	65
3. EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION IN CURRENT LITERATURE	66
The Complexity of the Problem.....	66
The Pervasive Nature of Pornography	68
Pornography is Progressive and Addictive	71
The Myths about Pornography.....	73
Pornography is a Harmless Fantasy	74
Pornography Viewing Affects Husband's View of His Wife	75
Pornography Affects Singles	77
Pornography Affects Women	78
Pornography Affects Men's Sensibilities for Sex.....	80
Pornography User is Self-focused Sexual Intimacy is Affected	80
Pornography Keeps Sex Life Fresh and Exciting	81
Pornography Teaches False Intimacy	83
Couples Viewing Pornography Together Will Spice Things Up.....	85
The Effects of Pornography.	89
Effect on Brain and Behavior	90
Effect on Marriage	92
Effect on Sexual Satisfaction	93
Pornography is an Affair.....	97
Effect on Self-Esteem	99
Effect on Women's Self-esteem	99
Effect on Men's Self-worth	101
Cause for Separation and Divorce	101
Effect on Children.....	102
Strategies for Prevention	105
Develop Healthy Intimacy	105
Verbal Intimacy	106
Emotional Intimacy.....	107
Spiritual Intimacy.....	108
Intimacy with God	110
Physical Intimacy.....	112
Intimacy-oriented Sex	113
Establish Boundaries.....	114
Affair-proof Marriage	116
Accountability	117
Summary	119

4.	METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION NARRATIVE.....	120
	General Program Elements Initiated.....	120
	Church Board Meeting.....	120
	Two-Question Survey.....	122
	Sermon Series on Sexual Intimacy.....	123
	Profile of the Ministry Context.....	123
	Research Methodology.....	126
	Development of the Intervention.....	127
	Theological Foundation.....	127
	The Literature Review.....	129
	Implementation Narrative.....	130
	Participants.....	130
	Sessions.....	131
5.	OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION.....	136
	Surveys.....	136
	Evaluation Design.....	136
	Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	137
	Individual Comments.....	146
	Implications for Seminar Presenters.....	150
6.	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	154
	Summary.....	154
	Conclusions.....	169
	Recommendations.....	170
	Personal Reflections.....	172
Appendix		
A.	LETTERS AND SURVEYS.....	173
B.	SURVEYS.....	177
C.	SEMINAR OUTLINE.....	190
D.	SERMONS.....	222
E.	TESTS.....	237
F.	RESOURCE GUIDE.....	244
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....		256
VITA.....		267

LIST OF TABLES

1. Table 1	139
2. Table 2	143
3. Table 3	145
4. Table 4	145
5. Table 5	147

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Finally, I thank God for His faithfulness and for providing men with a way of escape (I Cor 10:13). My prayer is that God would be glorified and men would live a life of sexual purity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Personal History

As a pastor I got interested in the topic of pornography as a result of counseling couples, particularly the men in the couples, who struggle in the area of sexual sin. These Christian men whom I counseled were from normal Seventh-day Adventist Christian homes. Four out of six men I counseled had a terrible secret: an addiction to pornography. This has led me to conclude that pornography is pervasive, a common problem in the church, is destroying marriages, and needs to be addressed.

I have had couples who have come into my office and shared the following: “My wife wants me to move out of our family home immediately. She is so disgusted by what she has learned about me and pornography and that I have lied to her for so long. Why didn’t I see it coming?”

One man said that he accidentally visited a pornography site while at work and eventually got hooked to other sexually-oriented internet activities on his work computer during office hour. He was viewing pornography on the Internet at least two or three hours a day! He thought he would never be caught. His use of company equipment to feed his addiction to pornography was discovered; he was asked to resign from his job after pornographic images were found on his computer. He said, “Why was I so stupid? I knew my job would be at risk. I knew they had a filter on the system.”

The wife of another man said that she came home early from work due to illness and found her husband standing naked watching hard-core porn, masturbating. Needless to say his wife was crushed. In the intervening months she tried hard to please her husband. After several months of doing everything she could to win her husband, she finally gave up.

She left him and filed for divorce. Despite all of this, she had agreed to come for counseling with her husband. This counseling experience, along with others, have helped me understand how succumbing to the temptation of pornography causes the destruction of marriages and careers. This, of course, has led me to read many books on the subjects of pornography and sexual addiction. Thus my interest in the topic has evolved into a project.

That brings me to another reason why I chose this project. Many families, including Christians, are affected by the use of pornography. Christian researchers have found that exposure to pornography can fuel the sexual desire in abnormal ways and eventually lead men to even more grievous sexual immorality, thus creating conflicts in marriage.¹ Many problems that couples experience with regard to intimacy, sexual expectations and sexual fulfillment can be directly traced to involvement with pornography.²

The results of a 2000 survey revealed that among 68 percent of the couples in this

¹Rory C. Reid and Dan Gray, *Confronting Your Spouse's Pornography Problem* (Sandy, UT: Silverleaf Press, 2006), 14-17.

²Patrick Carnes, David L. Delmonico, Elizabeth Griffin with Joseph M. Moriarity, *In the Shadows of the Net: Breaking Free of Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior* (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2001), 181-182.

study, one or both partners had lost interest in sexual intimacy. Some couples had had no intimate sexual relations in months or years.³

The statistics on pornography are staggering. Pornography is now a major problem in nearly 50 percent of all U.S. homes.⁴ When asked, more than 50 percent of Christian men had recently visited a pornography site.⁵ A 2003 poll conducted by Focus on the Family found that 47 percent of families said pornography is a problem in their home.⁶ A 2006 poll conducted by two Christian organizations found that 20 percent of Christian women are addicted to pornography.⁷

From the calls I received from couples for counseling and from surveys and studies done by others,⁸ I discovered that pornography is one of the leading causes of divorce and family breakdown today and thus, it needs to be addressed as part of the overall church program to offer concrete biblical strategies and practical steps for prevention.

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to develop, implement and evaluate a seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention*. The

³Ibid.

⁴Dennis Frederick, *Conquering Pornography: Overcoming the Addiction* (Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word, 2007), xvi.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Statistics and information on pornography in the USA, <http://www.blazinggrace.org/cms/bg/pornstats> (accessed April 9, 2010).

⁷Second Glance Ministries and www.christianet.com, 2006, quoted in Bernie Anderson, *Breaking the Silence* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2007), 78.

⁸See Pornography Statistics: www.blazinggrace.org/pornstatistics.htm for current statistics.

intent of the seminar is threefold. First, it is to help couples, and particularly men, in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madison, Wisconsin to understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage. Second, the couples will gain insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexuality and intimacy with their spouse. Third, the couples will learn biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect themselves from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

This study is a project dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Ministry. The research of this study was quantitative in nature and data was collected by using a survey which was given to married couples who attended the seminar for the entire weekend at the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This study will be a valuable source of information and insight for researchers to do further investigation on confronting the realities of pornography addiction and its impact on families in their local churches. The study will also provide information for pastors to develop and teach a seminar in their churches to help congregations recognize the effects of pornography on couples and families and equip them to minister to those who need help to gain victory over its influence.

Problem

Pornography has long been a destructive element in our society, but since the arrival of the Internet, it has grown to proportions that no one could have imagined. Approximately forty million adults in the United States are sexually involved with the

Internet.⁹ In April 2004, Websense, a provider of employee Internet management software, revealed that the number of pornography Web sites in their URL database had grown seventeen-fold in four years—from 88,000 in 2000 to nearly 1.6 million in 2004.¹⁰

In November 2004, a panel of experts testified before a Senate subcommittee that a product which millions of Americans consume is dangerously addictive. They were talking about pornography. The effects of porn on the brain were called “toxic” and compared to cocaine. One psychologist claimed “prolonged exposure to pornography stimulates a preference for depictions of group sex, sadomasochistic practices, and sexual contact with animals.”¹¹

It used to be that if people wanted to see pornography, they had to go out and buy a magazine or rent a video. Store hours and available space under the mattress placed some limits on people’s porn habits. Now there are an estimated 420 million adult web pages online. “For the person who has difficulty stopping, more is only one click away,” says sex therapist Louanne Cole Weston. There’s no doubt that some people’s porn consumption gets them in trouble in the form of maxed-out credit cards, lost sleep, neglected responsibilities, or neglected loved ones.¹²

A 2004 study also found that pornographic sites are visited three times more often

⁹Jerry Ropelato, *Internet Pornography Statistics*, August 17, 2009: www.toptenreview.com (accessed April 9, 2010).

¹⁰“Websense Research Shows Online Pornography Sites Continue Strong Growth,” PRNewswire.com, April 4, 2004, quoted in Pamela Paul, *Pornified: How Pornography Is Damaging Our Lives, Our Relationships, and Our Families* (New York: Owl Books, 2006), 59.

¹¹Martin F. Downs, *Is Pornography Addictive?* April 30, 2007. <http://men.webmd.com> (accessed April 9, 2010).

¹²<http://men.webmd.com> (accessed April 9, 2010).

than Google, Yahoo, and MSN Search combined.¹³ Pornography even has its own Googlesque search engine, Booble.com, which attracts more than a million visitors a day.¹⁴

Unfortunately, pornography has infiltrated our churches through the lives of Christian men. Pornography not only destroys Christian men and women, but it is also ruining marriages, families and even churches. Pornography is one of the leading causes of divorce and family breakdown today. Christian researchers have found that pornography diminishes a person's sexual happiness¹⁵ and has devastating effects on marriages.

Dr. Jennifer Schneider, a Tucson, Arizona, physician, conducted a survey of nearly one hundred people affected by the pornography addictions of others and found that the problem could develop even in loving marriages.

She wrote, "Sex on the Net is just so seductive and it's so easy to stumble upon it. People who are vulnerable can get hooked before they know it."¹⁶ She compared the damage to that caused by compulsive gambling alcoholism, or drug abuse. Pornography addiction can create harmful effects on marriage, including feelings of betrayal,

¹³"Porn More Popular than Search," InternetWeek.com, June 4, 2004, quoted in Paul, 60.

¹⁴John Schwartz, "Google Protests Give Web Site an Audience," *New York Times*, February 2, 2004. Quoted in Paul, 60.

¹⁵Dolf Zillman, and Jennings Byrant, "Pornography, Sexual Callousness and the Trivialization of Rape," 15, quoted in J. Kerby Anderson, *Moral Dilemmas* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 1998), 147.

¹⁶Jennifer Schneider, quoted in Jane E. Brody, "Cybersex Gives Birth to a Psychological Disorder," *New York Times*, May 16, 2000, 7, quoted in Chamberlain, Gray and Rory C. Reid, ed. *Confronting Pornography* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005), 13.

deception, and abandonment. Victim spouses often feel devalued, ignored, and unable to compete with a fantasy.

Among those studied was a woman married fourteen years to a Christian husband whom she discovered had a porn addiction. She commented, “How can I compete with hundreds of anonymous others who are now in our bed, in his head. Our bed is crowded with countless faceless strangers, where once we were intimate.”¹⁷

Recent studies show that 70 percent of Christians admitted to struggling with porn in their daily lives as reported by CNN.¹⁸

The harmful effects of pornography have, in recent years, been repeatedly documented with the publication of many research-based books, journal articles, and presentations at professional meetings.

The simple fact that tens of thousands of victim-patients are being treated daily in major hospitals and clinics throughout the United States, including such places as the Menningers; the Meadows, and Sierra Tucson in Arizona; Del Amo Hospital in Los Angeles; River Oaks in New Orleans; the Masters and Johnson centers in St. Louis; Recovering Couples Anonymous in Oakland, California, as well as in outpatient clinics involving hundreds of therapists in all of the healing professions in every major city in America confirms the devastating effects of pornography.¹⁹

¹⁷Mark D. Chamberlain, Daniel D. Gray and Rory C. Reid, ed. *Confronting Pornography: A Guide to Prevention and Recovery for Individuals, Loved Ones, and Leaders* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005), 13.

¹⁸From the results of a ChristiaNet poll reported by Marketwire.com, April 6, 2007. <http://www.blazinggrace.org/cms/bg/pornstats> (accessed April 7, 2010).

¹⁹Chamberlain, Gray and Reid, 19-20.

Pornography, therefore, is a problem in the nation and among Christian couples and thus, it needs to be addressed at the Madison Community Church in Madison, Wisconsin as part of the overall church program to offer strategies for prevention.

Justification

The justifications for this project are as follows:

1. *Pornography is a problem in our nation.* Internet pornography is on the rise in America. Sixty-six percent of men in their 20s and 30s report being regular users of pornography.²⁰ According to 2006 Adult Internet Pornography Statistics, 72 percent of male-and 28 percent of female-visit pornography sites on a regular basis and 10 percent of adults admit to Internet sexual addiction.²¹ It is estimated that the pornography industry generates over 12 billion dollars a year in revenue. To put this in perspective, it exceeds the combined revenue of the National Football League, National Basketball Association, and Major League Baseball.²²

Statistics indicate that 80 percent of 15–17-year olds have had multiple exposures to hard-core pornography. In the past, studies have indicated that 12–17-year olds were the largest consumers of pornography, only recently having been surpassed by the 35 to 49 age group.²³

²⁰Albert Mohler, Jr., *First-Person: The Culture of Pornography* (Louisville, KY: Baptist Press, 2005), 28.

²¹www.toptenreviews.com (accessed April 9, 2010).

²²American Broadcasting Company, “Prime Time with Diane Sawyer.” Program aired, January 23, 2003, quoted in David A. Blythe, *The Secret in the Pew* (Enumclaw, WA: WinePress Publishing, 2004), 24.

²³www.toptenreviews.com, quoted in Bernie Anderson, *Breaking the Silence* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2007), 105.

In a 2004 survey by the Employment Law Alliance, one in four workers say they or their coworkers visit pornographic Web sites or engage in sex talk or other sexually-oriented Internet activities on their work computers during office hours. Twelve percent admitted that either they or a coworker have forwarded sexually explicit e-mail content to others in the office. Men were about twice as likely as women to pursue such activities. They were also more likely than women to report being aware of other coworkers' use of sexually explicit material online.²⁴

Dow Chemical Company fired fifty employees and suspended another two hundred for up to four weeks without pay after an e-mail investigation in July 2000 uncovered hard-core pornography and violent subject matter. A spokesman noted that these were not instances about personal use of the computers but rather, that there was a whole range of abuse from mild pornography to very graphic pornography and seriously violent images.²⁵

Pamela Paul, author and contributor to Time magazine, describes in her book *Pornified* just how our society is immersed in pornography:

“We’re only beginning to recognize the implications of the growth in pornography and the society’s impact on individuals who live in it. We’re only starting to grasp the extent to which the technology the way in which porn is produced and consumed. Those who argue that pornography has been with us since cavemen first drew fornicating women on earthen walls ignore the vast discrepancies between a world in which pornography was glimpsed on the sly, where naked girls were glanced at on the faces of nudie poker cards, and today’s culture, in which pornography is

²⁴Julie Forster, “X-Rated Surfing Common at Work,” *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, February 14, 2004, quoted in Paul, 29-30.

²⁵“Dow Fires 50 Workers over E-mail Abuses,” *New York Times*, July 28, 2000, quoted in Robert Weiss and Jennifer Schneider, *Untangling the Web* (New York: Alyson Books, 2006), 19.

omnipresent, accepted, and glorified, and on an incessant advance.”²⁶

2. *Pornography wrecks marriages.* In the Elle-MSNBC.com poll, one in four women said they were concerned their partner had an “out-of-control habit” with pornography, and one in four divorced respondents said Internet pornography and chat had contributed to their split.²⁷

At the 2003 meeting of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers—a gathering of the nation’s divorce lawyers—attendees documented a startling trend. Nearly two-thirds of the attorneys present had witnessed a sudden rise in divorces related to the Internet; 58 percent of them were the result of a spouse looking at excessive amounts of pornography online.²⁸

Matrimonial lawyers across the country attest to the growing number of divorce cases. “Pornography wrecks marriages,” says Marcia Maddox, a Vienna, Virginia-based attorney. Among the five attorneys in her office, there is always a case involving pornography under way.²⁹ These lawyers also said that excessive interest in online porn contributed to more than half of the divorces they handled that year.

A study conducted by Indiana University’s Dolph Zillman and University of Houston Colleague Jennings Byrant concluded the following: exposure to massive

²⁶Pamela Paul, *Pornified: How Pornography Is Damaging Our Lives, Our Relationships, and Our Families* (New York: Owl Books, 2006), 49-50.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 166.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 167.

²⁹*Ibid.*

amounts of soft-core pornography develops sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly men.

When comparing their spouse's response to sexual behavior portrayed in pornographic materials, both men and women became dissatisfied with their spouse's sexual performance. Dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of their intimate partners was evident as well. They even found their partners less attractive and even less worthy individuals.³⁰

3. *Pornography is a problem in the church.* According to 2006 Internet Pornography Statistics, 47% Christians said pornography is a major problem in the home. When asked, 53% of Christian men known as Promise Keepers admitted to viewing pornography in the last week.³¹

A survey conducted by the Maryland Coalition Against Pornography showed that four to six out of every ten Christian men are involved with pornography in some way.³² Without a doubt, the problem of pornography is growing among Christians.

Most disturbing were the results from a confidential survey conducted by Patrick Means and published in his book, *Men's Secret Wars*. The survey was taken during church retreats and workshops, and several hundreds participated in it. This study confirmed that 64 percent of the evangelical pastors and lay leaders surveyed struggled

³⁰Dolph Zillman and Jennings Bryant, *Pornography: Research Advances and Policy Considerations* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989), quoted in Blythe, 49.

³¹Ropelato.

³²Rogers, 65.

with sexual addiction which included pornography and other secret sexual activity.³³

Laurie Hall, a Christian author, comments on the damage she suspected porn had done to her husband's mind: "It wasn't until Jack and I were separated and we met with Dr. Ron Miller that my observations were verified. After examining Jack, Dr. Miller looked at him and said, 'You've destroyed your mind by fantasizing. You've dug a deep channel going in one direction. The rest of your mind is atrophied!'"³⁴

4. *The Bible specifically condemns the practices that result from pornography.*

Practices such as sexual exposure (Gen 9:21-23), adultery (Lev 18:20), and even thoughts of sexual immorality, which is often fed by pornographic material, are condemned (Matt 5:27-28).

The Bible warns against the "lusts of the heart." Paul said that these lusts are deceitful (Eph 4:22), foolish and hurtful (I Tim 6:9) and can reign over a person's body (Rom 6:12). Peter said that they are unclean (2 Pet 2:10) and war against the soul (I Pet 2:11), and James said that they war against one's members (Jas 4:1) and entice to sin (Jas 1:14). Jesus warned that to lust after a woman is to commit adultery with her in one's own heart (Matt 5:28).

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote, "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (I Cor 6:18). Involvement with pornography is a sin against our own bodies so Paul instructs us to flee. In I Cor 6:13, we are told to "be on your

³³Patrick A. Means, *Men's Secret Wars* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 2006), 13.

³⁴Hall, 100, quoted in Anderson, *Breaking the Silence*, 102.

guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.” In the area of lust, however, God’s Word tells us to flee (2 Tim 2:22). Why would God tell us to flee from something that He gave us? The answer is simple. God did not give us lust. Lust is a perversion of sexual desire which God did give us.

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world” (I John 2:16, NKJV).

The apostle Paul wrote, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (I Cor 3:16). This verse indicates that our bodies are temples belonging to the Lord. When a Christian introduces pornographic images into the temple of God, there is an immediate, internal desecration that occurs. The temple becomes defiled with perverted thoughts and images. This is why Paul reasoned with believers, “The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (I Cor 6:13).

There are many good reasons why we should avoid the thoughts of sexual immorality that results from viewing pornography images and learn to control our bodies. However, as Christians, our primary motivation for pursuing sexual purity should be so that we might please the Lord. A sincere desire to please Him will drive us to avoid sexual immorality and to control our bodies in a way that is holy and honorable.

5. As a pastor, my interest in this topic grew as a result of counseling couples, particularly men, who struggle in the area of pornography. These Christian men whom I counseled admitted that their preoccupation with porn has had devastating effects on their marriage and family. This has led me to conclude that this subject is highly relevant and it must be addressed to help men and women of the Madison Community Church

understand the damage pornography can cause in all aspects of life and offer practical tools to gain victory over its influence.

Expectations

My main goal in this project is to help couples understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage and gain insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexual intimacy with their spouse in order to protect themselves from the influences of pornography. This will be accomplished through the implementation and evaluation of a seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention*.

It is my hope that the biblical strategies and practical tools provided in the seminar will enable couples to help others who may struggle with it or refer them to a counselor. Informed by the conclusions of this research, it is my expectation that pastors and church leaders will teach a seminar in their churches to help couples and members to recognize the devastating effects of pornography on marriage and equip them to minister to those who need help to gain victory over its influence.

Delimitations

1. *Study Restrictions.* The seminar was restricted to the Madison Community Church in Madison, Wisconsin due to limitations in time and financial resources. Because there are seventy churches in Wisconsin and three in Madison, confining the study to all three churches would have made it difficult to gather data or to implement and evaluate a seminar to foster significant changes. However, using the resource material presented in this project dissertation, each Adventist Church in Madison could impact couples by developing and implementing a seminar.

2. *Study focus is on prevention.* The seminar developed in this study is limited to providing couples with biblical strategies, safeguards or accountability methods, and practical steps to help protect oneself from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it. It does not go into an in-depth study on sexual addiction or provide exercises specifically designed to help sex addicts like the 12-step recovery programs for sex addiction.

3. *Limited to married couples.* The seminar focuses on married couples. More specifically, it was limited to couples who are members of the church and was to be considered as part of the overall church program. The project did not include single members of the church: neither did it include couples and singles outside the Madison area.

4. *Time restraints.* If the dissertation did not strictly control the time of the project's duration, it is assumed that a six-month follow up after the seminar would have greatly increased the evaluation period and yielded more results. For example, sending a post-card in the mail to ask couples for their responses to questions such as "What safeguards or accountability methods have you been following to protect yourself from the use and influence of pornography? What important effects has the program had on your attitude towards pornography?" could help understand the long-term effect.

It should be understood that the elements of the project, however, would proceed beyond the closure of the dissertation process and hopefully help couples improve their sexual intimacy and thus to protect themselves from the influence of pornography.

5. *Church location.* Due to limitations in time and financial resources, the seminar was held in the church. It is assumed that if the seminar were to be held in a

Marriage Retreat setting where couples could go outside and work at giving each other the opportunity to truly open up and discuss their feelings, this could help develop a healthy intimacy.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined as they are used in this dissertation.

Accountability Partner. An accountability partner is someone who can love and care for, but at the same time, be brutally honest and tough on us when we need it.³⁵ This means we agree to give our partner freedom to ask the hard questions, without taking offense. For instance, “Have you seen any pornography today?” An accountability partner is simply another person in the Lord who is there to help us in our struggle through prayer, communication, guidance, and absolute honesty. Ideally, it is a pastor, a therapist, addiction counselor, or a mature friend, someone we trust and respect.

Boundaries. In a marriage relationship, boundaries establish limits that provide the optimum environment for healthy intimacy to flourish. A boundary is violated when a person crosses a line that defines our limits.³⁶ When a spouse indulges in pornography by seeking sexual gratification outside the marriage relationship, a boundary is violated. Trust is broken.

An example of a boundary regarding computer use might be a rule that requires spouses to report any accidental exposures to pornography while on the computer. If a spouse has been exposed and informs his partner, the experience can be processed and

³⁵David A. Blythe, *The Secret in the Pew* (Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word, 2004), 77.

³⁶Reid and Gray, 39.

strategies to avoid additional exposure can be established. It then becomes a learning experience for the couple. This boundary also removes shame or guilt that may otherwise be felt because of mistakes or accidents that were unintended. A good boundary is thus established that eliminates secrets and creates an atmosphere of trust in the home regarding computer use.

Cybersex. The term “cybersex” refers to Internet sex. It addresses a variety of sex-related behaviors when using a computer. They fall into three general categories:³⁷ (1) Accessing Online Pornography, Audio, Video, and Text Stories, (2) Real Time with a Fantasy Partner. Real-time chatting can be likened to a computerized version of citizens band (CB) radio. Internet chat rooms resemble CB channels in that they offer people the opportunity to listen to and discuss specific topics. It allows for the exchange of voice and video images via the Internet.

By simply providing a credit card number, one can take advantage of live video cameras that capture and transmit images of males or females engaged in everything from everyday activities to explicit sexual acts. (3) Multimedia Software. This does not take place online at all. With the invention of multimedia systems, people can play X-rated movies and engage in sexual games on a desktop or laptop computer.

A study of worldwide Internet use suggested that in 2005 there were more than 72 million visits worldwide to pornographic and sexual content Web sites. Understandably,

³⁷Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin, 10-12.

words like “cybersex,” “cyberporn,” “virtual sex,” and “cyber infidelity” have now joined our popular lexicon.³⁸

External boundaries. External boundaries are concrete steps that help us contain or control our behavior.³⁹ They are often steps that a spouse wants us to set, and they are usually easily measurable or verifiable.

Often we set external boundaries because we know there will be consequences if we do not set them. People who acknowledge their problems with cybersex may, for example, set an external boundary by not logging on to sexual sites or giving the password to a spouse or partner so he or she can check computer usage or history files.

Hard-core. Hard-core pornography commonly includes total nudity and various kinds of sex acts⁴⁰ such as oral sex, ejaculation, crude talk, and kinky stuff. Hard-core porn displays arousal and full penetration.

Internal Boundaries. Boundaries are about the relationship we have with ourselves. Internal boundaries have to do with listening and obeying our inner voice. Respecting our internal boundaries means being able to say, “*No, I am not going to do that, even though I want to because if I do I’m going to mess up my life.*”

Here are typical goals that underlie an internal boundary plan:⁴¹ “I don’t want to have secrets from my spouse. I want to feel like a whole person with integrity. I don’t

³⁸Robert Weiss and Jennifer Schneider, *Untangling the Web: Sex, Porn, and Fantasy Obsession in the Internet Age* (New York: Alyson Books, 2006), 8-9.

³⁹Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin, 101.

⁴⁰Rogers, 35.

⁴¹Weiss and Schneider, 154-155.

want to collect, hide, or pay for pornography.”

Lust. Lust is a perversion of the sexual desire which God gave us. It must be exercised within the confines of marriage. The Bible seems to support the notion that men are visually stimulated. Remember the warning Jesus gave that is recorded in Matthew 5:28: “*But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*” With that understanding, we, as men, are in somewhat of a ‘catch-22’, since we live in a culture in which we are invited, at every turn, to take in potentially dangerous sexual images.

Our minds can easily convert them into sexual fantasies. Since we can not walk around wearing blindfolds, we have to learn how to properly respond to our environment. It will require the discipline of our eyes, mind and heart.

Pornography. Pornography is defined as “all sexually oriented material intended primarily to arouse the reader, viewer, or listener.”⁴² The word pornography comes from two Greek words: *pornos*, which means “a harlot or prostitute and the sexual activity with such a person;” and “*graphe*,” which means “writing” and includes depictions and images.

Unlike sex education materials which provide accurate information about the human body and sexuality, the goal of porn is to sexually arouse and, ultimately, involve the viewer in a sexual relationship.⁴³ The word “pornography” can denote a wide range

⁴²Henry Rogers, *The Silent War: Ministering to Those Trapped in the Deception of Pornography* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2003), 34.

⁴³Wendy Maltz and Larry Maltz, *The Porn Trap: The Essential Guide to Overcoming Problems Caused by Pornography* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 15.

of materials and sexual behaviors. It compasses cybersex, infidelity, predatory behaviors on the Internet or offline, and illicit chat room discussions.⁴⁴

Soft-core. Soft-core pornography, like Playboy magazine, may have full nudity but does not have the individuals engaging in full penetration sex acts or emphasize violence or sexual perversion.

Transparency. Transparency represents how well we can see beyond the walls others establish to protect themselves and how well they can see beyond our walls. Transparent people allow others to see their true selves.⁴⁵

Methodology

1. As part of the research for this project, a two-question survey was done among couples in the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church to assess the level of their interest in discovering the harmful effects of pornography on Christian marriage and in attending the seminar.

2. An examination of the Scriptures searching for theological instructions and counsels that might be relevant to the project was done. The writings of Ellen White were also searched for references that address the issue of sexual practices that result from pornographic lust.

3. Current literature was reviewed. This included major books, magazines, and articles on websites that were used as resource materials to design a seminar. As part of the seminar, a survey instrument was developed to assess the participant's knowledge and

⁴⁴Reid and Gray, 9.

⁴⁵Ibid., 39.

attitude towards pornography and to determine measurable changes. The details of the research instrument are described in chapter 5. Conclusions and recommendations based on the research are summarized in chapter 6.

4. Information that is not shared cannot be very useful. Therefore, as part of this dissertation project, a seminar was presented to meet the following objectives: to help couples understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage; to give insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexuality; to provide biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect themselves from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it. Presenting my research findings to my own congregation has allowed me the convenience of immediate feedback and evaluation. The details of the seminar, how it was conducted, evaluations and recommendations are presented in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGY OF SEXUAL INTIMACY AND PORNOGRAPHY

Introduction

God created men and women in His image¹ as sexual beings. However, because of sin in the world,² sex has been misused and abused.³ Pornography attacks the dignity of men and women created in the image of God. Pornography also distorts God's gift of sex, which should be shared only within the bounds of marriage.⁴ Moreover, Scripture specifically condemns the practices that result from pornography, such as sexual exposure,⁵ adultery,⁶ incest,⁷ and prostitution.⁸

A biblical theology of sexual intimacy must recognize that sexual intimacy is exclusively reserved for the following purposes. First, it establishes the one-flesh union.⁹

¹See Gen 1:27.

²See Rom 3:23.

³See Rom 1:24-25.

⁴See I Cor 7:2-3.

⁵See Gen 9:21-23.

⁶See Lev 18:20.

⁷See Deut 18:6-18.

⁸See Deut 23:17-18.

⁹See Gen 2:24-25; Matt 19:4-6.

Second, it provides for sexual intimacy within the marriage bond. The word “know” indicates a profound sense of sexual intimacy.¹⁰ Third, sexual intercourse is for the mutual pleasure of husband and wife.¹¹ Fourth, sexual intimacy is for procreation.¹² The Bible also warns against the misuse of sex. Premarital and extra-marital sex is condemned.¹³ Even thoughts of sexual immorality which are often fed by pornographic material are condemned.¹⁴

Pornography can have significant harmful effects on the user and on marriage relationships. These include a comparison mentality; a performance-based sexuality that only forbidden things are sexually satisfying;¹⁵ distorted views of sexual intimacy; decreased emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy; strained communications and increased marital conflict; and increased risk of divorce.¹⁶

Christians, therefore, must work to keep themselves pure by fleeing immorality,¹⁷ thinking on things that are pure,¹⁸ loving the Lord Jesus Christ, and not gratifying the desires of the sinful nature in regard to its lust.¹⁹

¹⁰See Gen 4:1.

¹¹See Prov 5:18-19.

¹²See Gen 1:28.

¹³See I Cor 6:13-18; I Thess 4:3.

¹⁴See Matt 5:27-28.

¹⁵Kerby Anderson, *Moral Dilemmas* (Nashville, TN: Word, 1998), 152-153.

¹⁶Reid and Gray, 17.

¹⁷See I Cor 6:18.

¹⁸See Phil 4:8.

¹⁹See Rom 13:14.

Pornography is no respecter of persons. It affects Christian men,²⁰ women,²¹ and undermines marital relations and distresses wives.²² Although pornography is predominantly a male problem, this chapter will focus on women, spouses, and “men in particular.”

In developing a theology of sexual intimacy and pornography, we find the greatest help from Christian authors. We may also look to the Word of God, for that is an indisputable source of material that helps us understand God’s perspective on sex and evaluate pornography theologically. We will first define the words *pornography* and *lust*.

Definitions of Pornography

The word pornography is never used in the Bible. *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* defines pornography in the following words: “a description of prostitutes or prostitution, a depiction (as in writing or painting) of licentiousness or lewdness: a portrayal of erotic behavior designed to cause sexual excitement.”²³

Several authors have established additional definitions as well. Henry J. Rogers wrote that “the word *pornography* comes from two Greek words: *pornos*, which means

²⁰60 percent of Christian men are addicted pornography, quoted in Henderson’s back cover the book.

²¹ 20% of the church-going female participants struggle with looking at pornography on an ongoing basis, quoted in ChristianNet poll reported by Marketwire.com, August 7, 2006. <http://www.blazinggrace.org/cms/bg/pornstats> (accessed, April 7, 2010).

²²Ana J. Bridges, Raymond M. Bergner, and Matthew Hesson-McInnis, “Romantic Partners’ Use of Pornography: Its Significance for Women,” *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy* 29 (2003), quoted in Fagan, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Family/upload/852731.pdf>.

²³Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam Webster, indexed and unabridged edition, 2002), quoted in Daniel Henderson, *Think Before You Look: Avoiding the Consequences of Secret Temptation* (Chattanooga, TN: Living Ink Books, 2005), 37.

“a harlot or prostitute and the sexual activity with such a person;” and *graphie*, which means “writing” and includes depictions and images.”²⁴

Wendy and Larry Maltz stated that the word “Pornography” literally translates into “the writings of or about prostitutes.”²⁵ Defining pornography, Rory C. Reid and Dan Gray explained that the word “pornography” can denote a wide range of materials and sexual behaviors. It compasses cybersex, infidelity, predatory behaviors on the Internet or offline, and chat room discussions.²⁶ Pornography is a difficult and complex issue. However, Wendy and Larry Maltz summed up pornography as *any sexually explicit material that is intended to be or is used as a sexual outlet*.²⁷

Pornography is not just sexual material one uses but it is a relationship one develops. Commenting on this, authors Wendy and Larry Maltz wrote,

Our definition doesn’t rest on how sexually graphic porn is or on the nature of its subject matter, but rather on the *type of relationship* a person develops with the sexual material. Unlike sex education materials, which provide accurate information about sex, and erotic art and literature, which are produced to celebrate the human body and sexuality, the goal of porn is to sexually arouse and, ultimately, involve the consumer in a sexual relationship *with it*.²⁸

Given these definitions, it can be said that pornography is intended to affect behavior. Some may say that they enjoy looking at pornography but are not affected by it. By its own definition, pornography provides an experience of sexual stimulation coupled with immediate gratification. Like prostitution, porn avoids important aspects of

²⁴Rogers, 34.

²⁵Maltz and Maltz, 15.

²⁶Reid and Gray, 9.

²⁷Maltz and Maltz.

²⁸Maltz and Maltz, 15.

human sexuality, such as displays of genuine affection, communication between partners, foreplay, and concerns about safety and the consequences of sexual intimacy.

Lust: A Word with Meaning

The word “lust” appears in the Bible thirteen times and is generally associated with evil desires and idolatry. An idol is anything that takes the place of God as a source of affection, satisfaction, and pleasure.²⁹ In Colossians 3:5, Paul says, “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.” The English word “lust” is taken from the German word that can be positively used to refer to anything that is desired.³⁰

The Bible is more emphatic that lust can pertain to a desire for anything that is forbidden. This implies that lust refers to any selfish desire. We are urged to purge ourselves of selfish desire. Paul taught the Galatians, “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires (Gal 5:24). In his first letter, John declared, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world” (I John 2:16). Paul spoke of the “lusts of the heart.” The Greek term here is *eipthuma*, which means to long after something. Paul said that these lusts are deceitful (Eph 4:22), foolish and hurtful (I Tim 6:9) and can reign over a person’s body (Rom 6:12). Peter said that they are unclean (2 Pet 2:10) and war against the soul (I Pet 2:11), and James said that they war against one’s members (Jas 4:1) and entice to sin (Jas 1:14). References to

²⁹Daniel Henderson, *Think Before You Look: Avoiding the Consequences of Secret Temptation* (Chattanooga, TN: Living Ink Books, 2005), 39.

³⁰Earle and Laaser, 46.

adulterous women are also used to teach about lust. In Proverbs 6:25-26, we are instructed, “Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life.”

In each of these texts cited as examples, lust is used to refer to selfish, evil desires, and idolatry that take the place of God as a source of pleasure and satisfaction. Lust is a perversion of sexual desire which is a gift of God.

God’s Perspective on Sex

Scripture makes it clear that sexuality is one of the greatest gifts God has given us. The very first pages of the Bible declare the fact: “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them’” (Gen 1:26, 27).³¹ It is clear from this passage that it is not the male alone whom God made in his own image, rather, “male and female he created them.” That means they have the capacity to be in relationship with God and with one another.³² It also implies that God designed mankind to be social and relational beings capable of experiencing intimacy in relationship with each other.³³

Richard Foster made this observation about God’s design for the gift of sexuality:

Our human sexuality, our maleness and femaleness, is not just an accidental arrangement of the human species, not just a convenient way to keep the human race going. No, it is at the center of our true humanity. We exist, as male and female, in

³¹All biblical references are from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

³²Clifford and Joyce Penner, *The Gift of Sex: Guide to Sexual Fulfillment* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2003), 21.

³³Bryan Craig, *Searching for Intimacy in Marriage* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Ministerial Association of Seventh-day Adventists, 2004), 103.

relationship. Our sexualness, our capacity to love and be loved, is intimately related to our creation in the image of God. What a high view of human sexuality!³⁴

When God created male and female at the completion of His creative work, “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”³⁵ There was nothing unclean, shameful, or incomplete about His work at all—it was “very good.”³⁶

With so many good things in the Garden and on earth, only one thing was not good. The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”³⁷ In those few words, God taught us that for man, there is no substitute, no alternative plan, and no better companion than his wife.³⁸ Ellen White wrote, “Without companionship the beautiful scenes and delightful employments of Eden would have failed to yield perfect happiness. Even communion with angels could not have satisfied his desire for companionship.”³⁹

So, God created the female to complement the male. They both came into existence with a built-in longing and desire for each other, not just physically and sexually, but socially, emotionally, and spiritually as well.⁴⁰ The void that was originally

³⁴Richard J. Foster, *Money, Sex and Power: The Challenge of the Disciplined Life* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1985), 92.

³⁵See Gen 1:31.

³⁶Craig, 103.

³⁷See Gen 2:18.

³⁸Ed Wheat, M.D. and Gaye Wheat. *Intended for Pleasure: Sex Technique and Sexual Fulfillment in Christian Marriage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2005), 15.

³⁹Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1958), 46.

⁴⁰Craig, 103.

caused by taking “bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh”⁴¹ can be filled only by the presence of woman. Since a part of Adam went to make Eve, a man remains incomplete without his Eve.⁴²

God placed almost top priority on sexual intimacy in marriage. We can see in the Genesis account that after God told man not to eat the forbidden fruit (Gen 2:17), He told man and woman how to relate in marriage: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen 2:24). God had first divided the woman from the man when he made Eve. But now He commands them to be joined together again as one flesh. In this brief command, even before any sin and its resulting selfishness had entered the human race,⁴³ we are instructed to be joined together in sexual union, to be one flesh.

Paul carries this concept over to the time of Christ when he writes, “Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, ‘the two will become one flesh’” (I Cor 6:16). By quoting Genesis 2:24, Paul emphasizes the oneness that sexual intimacy creates. Sex makes two people one whether they are married to each other or not, whether they want it to or not. Sex and oneness cannot be separated.

Often the idea of “one flesh” is taken to imply the physical, sexual union that occurs between a husband and wife. However, this means far more than a mere physical meeting of bodies. The concept of unity is stressed by the use of the word “one.”

⁴¹See Gen 2:23.

⁴²Wheat, 15.

⁴³Ibid.

What is clear from the use of “one” throughout Scripture is that the notion of becoming “one flesh” is meant to convey the idea of unity, connectedness, and caring.⁴⁴ Jesus spoke of Himself as being “one” with the Father (John 17:11), and He prayed for His disciples “that they may be one” just “as we [Father] are one, I in them and you in me, may they be brought to complete unity” (John 17:22, 23).

What does it mean that God is “one” just like a husband and wife are one flesh? The meaning of the word for “flesh” gives us a clue. In both the Old and New Testaments, this word means “nature.”⁴⁵ Even though the Godhead contains three distinct persons (Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit), the Trinity is “one” in nature. The hearts of all three Persons of the Godhead beat for the same things. In sexual union, even though a husband and wife are two distinct persons, their hearts beat as one.⁴⁶ Thus, the concept of sexual union between a husband and wife is a picture of God’s relationship and desire for His people.

The early church is also described in Acts 4:32 as being “one in heart and mind,” suggesting that the Christian believers enjoyed a sense of harmony, unity and equality.⁴⁷ Thus, being “one” in the marital sense denotes the idea that two people develop a sense of intimacy and connectedness through the complete unity of their beings (physically, emotionally, and spiritually) while, at the same time, maintaining the integrity and

⁴⁴John Temple Bristow, *Love, Marriage and Family* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1994), 82-86, quoted in Craig, 28.

⁴⁵See Gal 5:19.

⁴⁶Laurie Hall, *An Affair of the Mind* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2003), 122.

⁴⁷Bristow, 84, quoted in Craig, 29.

separateness of their individual selves.⁴⁸

God created our bodies for sexual pleasure to be enjoyed in marriage without shame. The Bible says that they “were both naked, and they felt no shame” (Gen 2:25). The Hebrew word for “naked” is *arom*, which implies that they were both open to each other, innocent and trusting. They were exposed to one another without fear of criticism or rejection.⁴⁹

This also meant that every thought in Adam’s mind of his wife’s naked body was pure, as was Eve’s every thought of Adam’s body. Their sexuality was holy.⁵⁰ Sexual intimacy was the most enjoyable thing that God gave two people to experience. It was designed by God to be a mutually satisfying experience whereby the first couple could express their love, intimacy, and commitment to each other. Apparently, there was a completely open relationship between male and female and between God and man. Then, sin interrupted both relationships.

When Adam and Eve committed the act of disobedience, the Bible says that “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves” (Gen 3:7). Tragically, when sin entered the world, we see Adam and Eve were hiding from God and one another in shame that includes their twisted and impure thoughts about their sexuality.⁵¹

⁴⁸Craig, 29.

⁴⁹Bristow, 71, quoted in Craig, 31.

⁵⁰Dr. Gary Smalley and Ted Cunningham, *Language of Sex: Experiencing the Beauty of Sexual Intimacy* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2008), 215.

⁵¹Smalley and Cunningham, 215.

They became self-conscious and ashamed, so they covered themselves. That covering illustrated the separation between man and woman, as well as their separation from God.⁵²

Now God enters the scene. He comes to deal with Adam and Eve in their disobedience. The first action he takes is to make permanent coverings for their nakedness. Why, after these two people disobeyed God, would God enter the scene and make garments of skin to cover their nakedness? Why would these two events be connected?

As noted earlier, the sexual union is a symbol of mankind's relationship with God. It would seem that the total way in which two people get involved with each other in a sexual experience is a symbol of the way in which we can be intensely involved with God. We are totally open and vulnerable with each other in the sexual experience. God would have us give ourselves to him with the same abandonment.⁵³

Simply, according to God, marriage and sex are related, connected, and exclusive. God's intent is that men and women would marry and enjoy sexual pleasure without shame. Sex, as God intends it, is for one man and one woman in marriage with the overarching purpose of oneness. Subsequently, by definition, anything that contradicts God's intent is sinful. Thus, sinful acts, including adultery,⁵⁴ incest,⁵⁵ and prostitution,⁵⁶

⁵²Ted Roberts, *Pure Desire* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1999), 142.

⁵³Penner and Penner, *The Gift of Sex*, 23.

⁵⁴See Lev 18:20.

⁵⁵See Deut 18:6-18.

⁵⁶See Deut 23:17-18.

and sinful lust including pornography,⁵⁷ are wrong and they violate the clear teachings of Scripture.

A Biblical Understanding of Sexual Intimacy and Sexual Lust

Overview

As stated above, Scripture clearly presents sexual intimacy as God's idea. It certainly was no accident or afterthought. Human sexuality, like everything else that God had created, reflected a design that was purposeful, wise, and good. Obviously, it was a valuable and intentional gift from God, given to men and women to be embraced and celebrated with gratitude, joy and delight.⁵⁸

Before sin entered the world, God gave sex as a divinely unique and extraordinary gift to the original couple to share and enjoy with each other, to celebrate their oneness. Sex is holy as well because it is in sex, in the full unity of both male and female, that the full image of God is represented.⁵⁹ Sex is holy because it was created by God before sin ever entered the human race. In the beginning, sex was perfect and spiritually pure (Gen 2:25). However, like other sins, lust and sexual immorality became part of the human nature.⁶⁰

Throughout the history of humanity, sexual immorality has been a major factor in the downfall of society. As early as the Flood, it appears that a moral downfall occurred

⁵⁷See Prov 6:25; Job 31:1; Matt 5:28; Col 3:5; I Thess 4:5; I Pet 4:3.

⁵⁸Craig, 104.

⁵⁹Stephen Sapp, *Sexuality, the Bible and Science* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1977), 7.

⁶⁰See Matt 15:19.

when the “sons of God married the daughters of men.”⁶¹ As a result, the earth became filled with violence and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.” Sexual immorality was often associated with idolatry. It was Israel’s immorality combined with their idolatry that led to their downfall at Peor.⁶²

Samson lost his eyesight while flirting with a prostitute. David lost four sons because of his affair with Bathsheba. Solomon’s poor example of marrying heathen women led him and the nation into idolatry. This was one of the reasons Israel and Judah went their separate ways.

The Jerusalem Council stressed the importance of abstaining from sexual immorality.⁶³ It was sexual immorality that led the One who walked among the candlesticks to rebuke the churches of Pergamum and Thyatira.⁶⁴ Sexual immorality was at the heart of Peter’s warnings against false teachers.⁶⁵ And Paul admonished the Ephesians that there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality in the Christian community.⁶⁶ Plainly, those who continue to practice sexual sin will be excluded from heaven. In fact, because of these types of sin, the wrath of God came upon those who were disobedient.⁶⁷

Long before internet pornography was invented, sexual lust was an extremely

⁶¹See Gen 6:1-6.

⁶²See Num 25.

⁶³See Acts 21:25.

⁶⁴See Rev 2:14, 20, 21.

⁶⁵See 2 Pet 2:1-14.

⁶⁶See Ephesians 5:3.

⁶⁷See Eph 5:3-6.

powerful force in people's lives. Perhaps the best-known incident of sexual lust recorded in the Old Testament is David's adultery with Bathsheba.⁶⁸ Other Old Testament characters including Reuben's adultery with Bilhah,⁶⁹ the adultery of the Levite's concubine,⁷⁰ Hosea's wife Gomer's adultery,⁷¹ and the adultery committed by a host of other unnamed Israelites grieved the heart of God.⁷²

Moreover, the Old Testament reports a number of individuals who engaged in sexual sin that likely involved adultery such as Gilead, the father of Jephthah,⁷³ or Eli's sons Hophni and Phineas.⁷⁴ (I Sam 2:22).

In addition, the book of Genesis records several occasions of near adultery which would have been actually adultery had not the Lord providentially intervened, including Abimelech with Sarah,⁷⁵ Abimelech with Rebekah,⁷⁶ and Potiphar's wife with Joseph.⁷⁷ Scripture is filled with references to and examples of men and women falling into sexual lust.

Despite these instances of adultery or near-adultery due to sexual lust in the

⁶⁸See 2 Sam 11.

⁶⁹See Gen 35:22; 49:3, 4.

⁷⁰See Judg 19:1, 2.

⁷¹See Hos 3:1.

⁷²See Jer 3:2; 5:7, 8; 7:9, 10; 23:10; Ezek 22:11; 33:26; Hos 4:2; 7:4.

⁷³See Judg 11:1.

⁷⁴See 1 Sam 2:22.

⁷⁵See Gen 20:2-18.

⁷⁶See Gen 26:7-9.

⁷⁷See Gen 39:7-12.

history of Israel, however, the Old Testament reiterates in numerous places the fact that God's ideal for marriage is fidelity. For instance, the seventh commandment directed God's people in no uncertain terms, "You shall not commit adultery" (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18). The sexual laws plainly stipulated, "You shall not lie sexually with your neighbor's wife" (Lev 18:20), setting the penalty for adultery as death.⁷⁸

Moreover, the book of Proverbs repeatedly classifies sexual lust which leads to adultery as both foolish and dangerous.⁷⁹ What is more, the Lord frequently used the analogy of physical adultery to depict his displeasure over the spiritual adultery of Israel when they departed from him, their first love, in order to pursue other gods.⁸⁰

In short, although many in the history of Israel did not adhere to God's design of fidelity within marriage, the Old Testament is clear that the Lord's standard did not change. God expected His people to be faithful—both to their spouses and to him—and was clearly offended when they were not.⁸¹

Even though the Bible does not say anything about pornography, specifically, pornography is still sinful. The Bible tells us to be sexually pure. Sex is to be shared only between a husband and a wife, and cannot be extended to others either before

⁷⁸See Lev 20:10; Num 5:11-31; Deut 22:22.

⁷⁹See Prov 2:16-19; 5:3-22; 6:32, 33; 7:5-23; 9:13-18; 22:14; 23:27, 28; 30:20.

⁸⁰See Jer 3:8, 9; Ezek 16:32, 38; Hos 1:1-3:5.

⁸¹Judith Treas and Dierdre Giesen, "Sexuality Infidelity Among Married and Cohabiting Americans," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (2000), 48-60, quoted in Andreas J. Kostenberger with David W. Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 47.

marriage or during marriage.⁸² Sex must not be stirred up or awakened until the time is right.⁸³

This is why Jesus tells us even to guard our minds. Note that He said in Matt 5:27 that to even look on a woman lustfully is to commit adultery with her. In viewing pornography and explicit sexual displays, we give lust the opportunity to conceive. Once sexual fantasies and lustful thoughts are entertained in the heart and mind, they will give birth to sin.⁸⁴ This clearly demonstrates that pornography is sinful. For this reason, the Bible admonishes Christians to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”⁸⁵

Sex Drive versus Lust

God made us sexual creatures and wired us with this incredible thing we call a sex drive. Gallagher points out that the desire for sex is one of the basic, physical drives of the human being. It is among hunger, thirst, and sleep as the most important natural impulses. God instilled these desires in us so that we would do the things required to exist and survive as individual people and a species.⁸⁶ If we did not experience hunger, how often would we eat? If we did not experience thirst, how often would we drink? If we did not get tired, when would our bodies get rest? If God had not put a sex drive

⁸²See Matt 5:27, 28.

⁸³See Cant 8:4.

⁸⁴See Jas 1:14-16.

⁸⁵See 2 Cor 10:5.

⁸⁶Steve Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry* (Dry Ridge, KY: Pure Life Ministries, 2000), 168-169.

within us to have sex, how would we reproduce?

“Be fruitful and multiply,” God commanded mankind (Gen 9:7). Just as He gave us an appetite for food, He gave us a sexual appetite so that men and women would keep being joined together and creating offspring in marriage. Being a sexual being with sexual desire is part of what it means to be a human created in God’s image. However, our sex drive is not the same as lust. Joshua Harris, in his book *Sex is not the problem (lust is)*, offers this insight to show what lust is not. For example:

It’s not lust to be attracted to someone or notice that he or she is good-looking.
It’s not lust to have a strong desire to have sex.
It’s not lust to anticipate and be excited about having sex within marriage.
It’s not lust when a man or woman becomes turned on without any conscious decision to do so.
It’s not lust to experience sexual temptation.⁸⁷

Understanding the distinctions between lust and sex drive will not only enable one to develop a hatred for lust but, will also help cultivate a gratefulness and appreciation for the gift of sexual desire God has planted in us.

John Piper explains lust with this simple equation: “Lust is a sexual desire minus honor and holiness.”⁸⁸ When we lust, we take this good thing—sexual desire—and remove from it honor toward fellow humans and reverence for God. Lust is an idolatrous desire that rejects God’s rule and seeks satisfaction apart from Him.⁸⁹

⁸⁷Joshua Harris, *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is): Sexual Purity in a Lust-Saturated World* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2003), 35.

⁸⁸John Piper, *Future Grace* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1995), 336.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 336.

The Source of Lust

The Scriptures affirm that the source of lust is found in the sinful, fallen human nature. “Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.”⁹⁰ And Jesus taught, “For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery. . . .”⁹¹ It is only when we properly identify the source of lust as our own selves that we can take responsibility and do something about it.

Though the source of lust is our own evil desires, the One who is offended is God. When we choose lust, we are actively rejecting God: “For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.”⁹² After David had committed adultery with Bathsheba, and even had her husband murdered, he recognized his sin as first and foremost against God. He cried out to God: “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 (Ps 51:4).

David’s sin affected others. He violated Bathsheba and murdered her husband but ultimately, he saw that his sin was an expression of rebellion, even hatred, against God. This is not true of just adultery; all sin is rebellion against a holy God, including the use of pornography.

When we understand that the very nature of lust is rebellion against God, we

⁹⁰See Jas 1:14.

⁹¹See Mark 7:20, 21.

⁹²See I Thess 4:7, 8.

realize the gravity and the serious nature of the sin and hopefully we are more motivated than ever to pursue a life of sexual purity.

Sexual Lust and Healthy Sexuality in the Old Testament

This section of the chapter will focus on some of the stories in the Bible that involve sexual lust that can help us understand biblical principles about healthy sexuality. The Bible often uses sexuality to teach us about self-centered desire. We will examine the self-centered nature of lust and the self-less love of healthy sexuality in the Old Testament.

Samson

The angel of the Lord told Samson’s mother that he “will be a Nazirite of God from birth” (Judg 13:5). His would be a life dedicated to God, and we see throughout his life that the Spirit of God was with him.⁹³ However, when we read of Samson in the next chapter, we find him possessing a lustful, passionate drive that he does not attempt to restrain—neither now nor later. “I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife” (Judg 14:2). In the next verse we discover that his father did not think much of the idea (Judg 14:3).

Not only was the marriage undesirable, but Samson ignores the counsel of his father. Why would he reject his father’s advice? The reason from Samson’s mouth was simple—“she looks good to me” (Judg 14:3). Pornography has the same effect on

⁹³See Judg 14:6, 19; 15:14.

Christian men today. When we are weak, pornography can be desirable to us; yet it is something we need to flee from.⁹⁴

“One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her” (Judg 16:1). His sexual appetite for Philistine women had not subsided. Three verses later we see the first mention of another Philistine woman, named Delilah. The Philistines used Delilah to bring down Samson. The lust of Samson ended with betrayal by a beautiful woman. Men who struggle with pornography have the same experience.

Samson lost his eyes, his family, his reputation, his position, and finally his life. There is a cost associated with sexual lust. Renowned preacher and educator Haddon Robinson once said that sex and its passions are like fire. Under control, fire serves us by cooking our food and heating our homes. However, if you let fire burn out of control, it will destroy everything in its path.⁹⁵ It is the nature of this powerful force to do one of two things: to create or to destroy. Gardner reflects on this when he says,

Sex has a similar nature. Sexual intimacy within God’s boundaries of a loving, committed marriage can provide tremendous joy and fun; it can celebrate intimacy and love; it can bring the blessing of children; and it can create and sustain the mysterious, holy, and sacred oneness of marriage. But if we let it burn outside of God’s boundaries, it becomes a self-serving act that can and will destroy careers, marriages, children, reputations, and even life itself.⁹⁶

David

We know of King David’s adultery with Bathsheba and his arrangement to have

⁹⁴See I Cor 6:18.

⁹⁵Gardner, 173.

⁹⁶Ibid.

her husband, Uriah, killed. Let us note some of the events leading to that. When David brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, a great celebration began. David danced around the ark in some state of undress. David's wife, Michal, Saul's daughter, said when he returned home, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!" (2 Sam 6:20).

The Bible adds this postscript to the story: "And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death."⁹⁷ In this context, later, "David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful" (2 Sam 11:2).

Perhaps if the Internet had been available to David, he might have been tempted to get involved in Internet pornography and sexual fulfillment. As Earle and Laaser suggest, David was probably living in an unfulfilling marriage. Perhaps the Bible is teaching us that loneliness leads to sexual vulnerability.⁹⁸

First Kings 11 tells us that David's son, Solomon, "loved many foreign women" and they turned him to other gods. Nehemiah 13 describes how these foreign women turned Solomon's heart away from God, just as foreign women had turned away his father, David. The lineage of David, the family system he created, is passed on to the next generation.

In 2 Samuel 13, David's son Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar. Another of

⁹⁷See 2 Sam 6:23.

⁹⁸Ralph H. Earle Jr. and Mark R. Laaser, *The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Laypersons Free from Sexual Addiction* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 2002), 48-49.

David's sons, Absalom, kills Amnon for his deed. Perhaps one could argue that David's sinful lust was passed on to the next generation. Like so many stories, it displays how selfish lust destroys a life and family.

The Old Testament commands married couples to pursue healthy sexuality by building strong spiritual hedges around their contact with situations creating lust. We now turn our attention to specific texts in Proverbs, the book of wisdom and the Song of Solomon.

Proverbs

The book of wisdom includes a section that stresses the beauty of sex within the framework of a faithful, committed marriage relationship and warning against sexual lust and adultery:

Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well. Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love. Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?⁹⁹

There are three action words we must look at briefly in this section of Scripture. First, Solomon says that the man should rejoice with the wife of his youth. Instead of having a complaining attitude about what God has given him, he should develop a thankful heart for his wife. She is a wonderful blessing from God for him. Next, Solomon instructs the man to be satisfied with the breasts of his wife. This is obviously bedroom talk. It is the contentment which comes from having a grateful heart.

⁹⁹See Prov 5:15-20, English Standard Version (ESV).

Satisfaction is available for the man who is willing to allow God to change him.

Last, he exclaims, “be intoxicated always in her love. Why should you be intoxicated my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?” Steve Gallagher rephrases it this way, “Be intoxicated with your own wife. If the Lord can help you be thrilled with her love, why would you want to go to bed with some prostitute?”¹⁰⁰ Challies summarizes this text in his guide when he writes,

It calls a man to always find joy and satisfaction and intimacy in the wife God has given. It calls him to recall the delight he had in the days when he and his bride were innocent and newly married and calls him to live out of that delight. He has no right to go elsewhere, no right to “drink from another cistern,” to use Solomon’s terminology. And why should he ever want to? This verse both celebrates the gift of sex and the exclusivity of it.¹⁰¹

The book of Proverbs repeatedly warns people to guard their hearts¹⁰² and for men to keep far away from adulterous women.¹⁰³ This constitutes a powerful mandate for married couples to build strong spiritual hedges around their relationship and to nurture their marriage commitment with diligence and devotion.¹⁰⁴

Every time one looks at pornography, he is diminishing his ability to be intoxicated in his wife’s love, to find his joy and satisfaction in her. Just a few verses later in the same passage come these sobering words: “For a man’s ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all his paths. The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him;

¹⁰⁰Gallagher, 281.

¹⁰¹Tim Challies, *Sexual Detox: A Guide for the Single Guy*, 26. www.challies.com.

¹⁰²See Prov 4:23.

¹⁰³See Prov 2:16-19; 6:20-35; 22:14; 23:26-28; 31:3.

¹⁰⁴Andreas J. Kostenberger with David W. Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 53.

the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.”¹⁰⁵

Author Kostenberger warns,

Men who refuse to be intoxicated in the love of their wives, men who find delight in the bodies or images of the bodies of other women, are committing acts of great foolishness. This is the kind of foolishness that puts a man danger of death. It is a moral foolishness that leads to spiritual destruction. Their foolishness, their lack of discipline, their lack of concern for their sin, leads them to the paths of death.¹⁰⁶

The paths of death could mean physical, as mentioned previously, for example, in the experience of David’s sinful lust. Uriah’s demise is the first death resulting from the sin of David. David and Bathsheba’s first child dies as a result of David’s sin. David’s son Absalom kills Amnon. Once again we see death as a result of David’s sin.

Proverbs 27:20 says, “Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man.” If we apply this principle to pornography, it becomes apparent that seeing pornographic images of women are not going to satisfy our lust, but rather, inflame it for more images.

Lusting eyes may begin with a magazine, web site, or video and continue to view more magazines, web sites, or videos until they become bored and then go on to strip clubs, and prostitutes, which eventually also become boring and lead to orgies, pedophilia, and wherever else our sexual lust can lead to. This is why Solomon instructs men to have their wife as the standard of beauty and to build strong spiritual hedges around their marital relationship against sexual lust.

¹⁰⁵See Prov 5:21-23.

¹⁰⁶Challies, www.challies.com.

Song of Songs

The Song of Songs endorses the concept of healthy sexuality and sexual pleasure. Some contend that the Song of Solomon is only an allegorical look at God's love for his people, of Christ's love for his bride, the church. While it is true that the allegory is there, one must also take this book at face value. The author uses sensual language to describe God's ideal of romantic, intimate love between husband and wife.

Solomon's Song of Songs contains some of the most beautiful poetry ever written as it relates to healthy sexuality which requires selflessness. In the following chapters in Song of Songs, one can see Solomon's approach to lovemaking and his focus on all three dimensions of sexual intimacy: emotional, spiritual, and physical.

“How beautiful you are my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves. Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from Mount Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone. Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon; your mouth is lovely. Your temples behind your veil are like the halves of a pomegranate. Your neck is like the tower of David, built with elegance; on it hang a thousand shields, all of them shields of warriors. Your breasts are like two fawns, like twin fawns of a gazelle that browse among the lilies.”¹⁰⁷

Solomon dealt with his wife tenderly, spoke to her, kissed her, made her feel special and desirable. He built a desire for himself within her mind and heart. He was being romantic. There is an old, but true, saying: men give romance to get sex; women give sex to get romance.¹⁰⁸

Commenting on this verse, Tommy Nelson states,

Solomon knew that sex for a woman always begin in her mind, a woman's most sensitive sexual organ. A woman doesn't feel the same pressure or insistent urges for

¹⁰⁷See Cant 4:1-5.

¹⁰⁸Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 1998), 93.

sex that a man feels. She gets ready for sexual intimacy through what she thinks and feels, and to a great extent, she thinks and feels the way a man leads her to think and feel. Nothing calms a woman's fears and excites her passions as much as having a man tell her how wonderful she is.¹⁰⁹

In response to Solomon's passionate love, his wife pursues him with passion:

May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine . . . On my bed night after night I sought him whom my soul love . . . Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country, let us spend the night in the villages. Let us rise early and go to the vineyards; let us see whether the vine has budded and its blossoms have opened, and whether the pomegranates have bloomed. There I will give you my love.¹¹⁰

In response to his wife's pursuit, Solomon had this to say about his lovemaking to his bride: "Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense" (4:6). Their passionate love and sexual intimacy lasted until dawn.

In the opening chapter of the Song of Solomon, the woman says to Solomon, "Do not stare at me because I am dark, because I am darkened by the sun" (1:6). What did Solomon say to her after they experienced a night of sexual intimacy? "You are all fair, my love, and there is no spot in you" (4:7). This is a reminder that our heavenly Bridegroom sees us as being without "spot or wrinkle."¹¹¹

Solomon appreciated his wife's body. He praised her appearance and let her know that he found no fault in her. A woman who truly feels cherished by her husband in all ways is going to give herself to her husband freely and generously. And that is the beauty of healthy sexuality. However, lust focuses on a very narrow aspect of

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 89.

¹¹⁰See Cant 1:2; 3:1; 7:11-12. The New American Standard Bible (NASB).

¹¹¹See Eph 5:27.

intimacy—sex—and it promotes a selfishness that erodes a healthy relationship which requires *selflessness*. Pornography is the antithesis of a healthy relationship because it depicts a fraudulent message about sex and distorts expectations about physical intimacy in marriage.”¹¹²

When a person chooses to love and appreciate another through gestures, deeds, and words that we would call romantic, the response is a spouse who is more giving and loving in return. However, pornography provides a one-sided relationship for that God-given energy that is planted in us to move us toward relationships with our spouse.¹¹³

In summary, the Old Testament clearly teaches that sexual pleasure within marriage is encouraged and expected. God created our bodies for sexual pleasure to be enjoyed in marriage without shame. The sexual relationship in marriage reflects God’s image. Sex involves every aspect of our being. In God’s divine plan, He made Eve to complete Adam. She really was his better half and filled the void in his life that none of the animals could. She was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Sex involves total oneness with our mates just as it did with that first couple: physically, yes, but also mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

The Bible endorses the concept of healthy sexuality which requires selflessness. However, lust focuses on a very narrow aspect of intimacy, that is, sex, and it promotes selfishness that erodes healthy relationship. The best way to maintain God-given healthy sexuality is the pleasure of having a healthy sex life with our wife. This is enough to

¹¹²Reid and Gray, 106.

¹¹³Rogers, 181.

keep us satisfied. When we follow God’s purpose for sex within marriage, not only do we overcome pornographic lust, but our love for our wife and God increases.

Now that we have established the fact that sex is meant to be enjoyed only between a husband and wife and that God forbids pre-marital sex (fornication), extra-marital sex (adultery) and even forbids self-centered sex (pornography), we now turn our attention to the New Testament teaching on sexual intimacy.

Sexual Lust and Healthy Sexuality in the New Testament

In order to gain a proper theology of sexual lust and healthy sexuality in the New Testament, it is necessary to consider the teachings of Jesus Christ. This section of the chapter will also cover biblical principles that involve God’s standards for sexual purity which is an antidote for avoiding pornography.

Christ’s View on Lust

In Matthew 5:27-28, Jesus taught that entertaining lustful thoughts is a sin. “You have heard 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.” In this teaching Jesus makes it clear that “our thought life is more important than our actions.”¹¹⁴ Also, Jesus seems to tell us that adultery is more than having an affair with someone other than one’s wife. It begins in the heart—and God sees the heart and knows our imaginations and intentions.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴Earle and Laaser, 47.

¹¹⁵See I Cor 2:11; Heb 4:13.

Further, Jesus' words teach that mental and emotional boundaries are just as important as physical boundaries. The implications of this are clear as they relate to pornography, sexually explicit romance novels, and other material that promote thinking sexually about people other than one's spouse. Thus anytime another person is physically or emotionally introduced into sexual intimacy even in imagination, it compromises the purity of marital intimacy.

Paul

God's standard is high when it comes to lust. The apostle Paul wrote, "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."¹¹⁶ But why is God's standard so high? How can God demand not even a hint of lust when He knows that He made us with strong sex drives?

One of the reasons God calls us to cleanse our lives of lust completely is because He knows that lust never stays at the level of "just a hint." Lust craves for more. The result is that lust can never be quenched. As soon as the object of lust is attained, lust wants something more.

In Ephesians 4:19, Paul describes this endless cycle of lust. He speaks about those who have turned away from God and says, "Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more." That's the pay off of lust—"a continual lust for more."

Joshua Harris speaks of what it means to us today:

¹¹⁶See Ephesians 5:3.

Even when you indulge in every kind of impurity, you're still filled with a continual lust. You won't be able to fantasize enough to quench lust. You won't be able to sleep with enough people. You won't be able to view enough pornography. You can gorge yourself on lust, but you're always going to be hungry. You'll be trapped in a never ending pursuit of wrong desires—always reaching for something that cannot be grasped.¹¹⁷

This is the problem with pornography. Pornography never satisfies and always leaves one wanting more. Research shows that there are key features that are present in people who engage in porn use addictively:

1. They crave porn intensely and persistently,
2. can not control it and ultimately fail when they try to stop using, and
3. continue to use it despite being aware of significant harmful consequences.¹¹⁸

Craving—Can not control it—Continuing despite consequences. Thinking about the letter “C” can help one remember that pornography fails to satisfy and leaves one craving for more. When it comes to lust and pornography, God says, “not...even a hint” because we can not give in to lust’s demands and hope to satisfy it. It always grows. And as it does, lust will rob us of our ability to enjoy true, healthy intimacy and sexual pleasure.

We must not allow pornography lust to gain a foothold. Mark Twain wrote, “It is easier to stay out than to get out.”¹¹⁹ Getting out of a pornographic website is much harder than staying out.

Mutuality in Sexual Intimacy

Ephesians 2:13-22 is extremely relevant. It talks about Christ breaking down the

¹¹⁷Harris, 41.

¹¹⁸Maltz and Maltz, 92.

¹¹⁹Rogers, 211.

human barriers, making people who are formerly divided and at war with one another into the one household of God. When we apply this principle to our sexual experience, it makes men and women equal before God in their right to sexual pleasure.

Married couples are expected to give themselves to each other in marriage; this is a mutual command, not for wives only. “Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband” (I Cor 7:3 NASB¹²⁰). Paul encouraged couples to honor the sanctity and holiness of their relationship by enjoying sex as a meaningful part of their marriage. It was something they owed to each other and something that should not be withheld except in temporary circumstances by mutual agreement.¹²¹

Paul warned couples against allowing lust to infect their relationship so that their partner became simply an object for sexual gratification. He encouraged them to learn how to control their own body in a way that was holy and honorable (I Thess 4:4).

Ephesians 5, which deals with submission, starts with a command for mutual submission (v 21). Mutuality in sexual rights and responsibilities is a biblical principle that has made a significant positive impact on many couples’ sexual relationship.

Clifford and Joyce Penner point out that as a woman accepts the fact that she has the right to have her own needs met, she may begin initiating or become more expressive about what brings her pleasure.¹²²

¹²⁰New American Standard Bible.

¹²¹See I Cor 7:1-5 (The Message).

¹²²Penner and Penner, 30.

Sex is a Spiritual Need

Paul commanded husband and wives to be sexually available to each other to avoid temptation. He then encouraged Christians to remain unmarried, unless they have a strong sexual desire. The apostle Paul wrote,

It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. . . . I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (I Cor 7:1b-3, 7-9).

According to Paul, battling sexual temptation is significant reason for Christians to marry! In his impressive study *The Sexual Man*, church scholar Dr. Archibald Hart stated,

Most men face a lifelong struggle to control their sexuality. The struggle is between their hormones and their higher aspirations. It is a battle between their seemingly uncontrollable urges and the fear of succumbing to these urges. Ultimately, it is a struggle over integrity, right and wrong, uprightness and wholeness.¹²³

Hart's statement explains why sex is a spiritual need for a married man. He likely battles daily to stay pure. His walk with the Lord and his integrity are largely determined by how he handles sexual temptations and impulses. When he gives in to lust or pornography, he carries a tremendous burden of guilt.

In summary, the purpose of sex is to bring mutual pleasure. At its best, sex allows both spouses to give and receive at the same time and through the same acts. It is

¹²³Archibald D. Hart, *The Sexual Man* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 1994), 70, quoted in Juli Slattery, *No More Headaches: Enjoying Sex & Intimacy in Marriage* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2009), 106.

unique in that way, and uniquely powerful and fulfilling. Applying this principle to pornographic lust strips sexuality of its divine purpose of mutual fulfillment. The mutual giving and receiving which lies at the heart of God's purpose for sexuality, is exactly what pornography does not and cannot provide.

In healthy sexuality, love has to be the guiding principle for deciding what sexual behaviors are right and wrong for a husband and wife.¹²⁴ Within marriage, we are to freely enjoy each other's bodies as long as the activity is mutually desired, loving, brings us close together, and does not interfere with our relationship with God. But pornography is self-centered and it destroys a wife's self-esteem. In her book, *An Affair of the Mind*, Laurie Hall wrote,

Jack (her husband) also expressed irritation when I was uncomfortable with some of the sexual practices he'd seen in pornographic magazines. In the end he lost all interest in me as a sexual partner. This had a devastating impact on my view of my worth as a woman. It created such despair in me that I began to let my appearance go. At last, I looked the way his rejection made me feel—totally unlovely.¹²⁵

Biblical Counsels for Avoiding Sexual Temptation

Many men struggle with pornography. A survey conducted by the Maryland Coalition Against Pornography (MCAP), reported that 40 to 60 percent of Christian men are involved with pornography in some way.¹²⁶ It is essential that they not only commit to maintaining purity in thought and conduct, but that they have a plan to guard

¹²⁴Penner and Penner, *The Gift of Sex*, 31.

¹²⁵Hall, 76, quoted in Rogers, 179.

¹²⁶Maryland Coalition Against Pornography, Silver Spring: November 1997, quoted in Rogers, 65.

themselves against succumbing to sexual temptation. Such a plan may include (but not be limited to) the following steps.

Counsel 1: Pray and trust God. Men must pray and trust God rather than themselves to deliver them from temptation.¹²⁷ The Psalms are replete with the desperate cry of the righteous: “Lord, deliver me!” As did the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, men must realize that while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.¹²⁸ They will not be able to resist temptation in their own strength; they must look to God and appropriate his power to strengthen them in their hour of temptation. For God is faithful:

Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (I Cor 10:12-13, ESV¹²⁹)

Not only is God faithful, Jesus Christ our Lord can help us when we are tempted: “For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Heb 2:18, ESV).

Nevertheless, it is important to be proactive and to pray ahead of time before being faced with temptation so that “having done all,” we may be able to stand (Eph 6:13). If we are caught unprepared, resisting temptation may be too difficult.

Counsel 2: Grow in the Lord and the knowledge of his Word. Men should aspire to grow strong in the Lord and the knowledge of his Word. In this way, they will develop the true confidence that they are strong, that God’s Word lives in them, and that, in

¹²⁷See Matt 6:13; Lu 11:4; Matt 26:36, 40-41.

¹²⁸See Matt 26:41.

¹²⁹English Standard Version.

Christ, they have overcome the evil one (I John 2:12, 14). When faced with temptation, Jesus showed himself to be one who was intimately acquainted with God's Word and who was able to use it effectively to counter Satan's schemes (Matt 4:1-11).

One of the strategies for overcoming sexual temptation is to use a good Bible verse as a sword and rallying point. It may be useful to memorize several verses of Scripture about sexual purity,¹³⁰ as they work to eventually transform and cleanse the mind. However, in the day-today- fight against lust, it is wise to use a single verse. Job 31:1 is a good one. It says, "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl." This is a covenant one makes with his eyes. By training and repeating this verse to oneself, a person can help his eyes to bounce from objects of lust.

The objective in the struggle against sexual lust is to build perimeters of defense. Authors Arterburn and Stoeker stressed the importance of this when they wrote,

We're able to draw outside sexual gratification from only two places: the *eyes* and the *mind*. Therefore, to be successful in the battle for our sexual perimeter, we must blockade the "shipping lanes" of the eyes and mind. . . . That means your objective in the war against lust is to build perimeters of defense into your life.¹³¹

As stated above, the first perimeter of defense against sexual lust is one's eyes. The second perimeter is the mind. With the second perimeter (mind), one does not so

¹³⁰Purity means stopping sexual gratification that comes to us from outside our marriage. Here's a good working definition of sexual purity: *You are sexually pure when no sexual gratification comes from anyone or anything but your wife*, quoted in Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoker with Mike Yorkey, *Everyman's Battle: Every Man's Guide to Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time* (Colorado Spring, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2000), 104. For a complete selection of scriptural passages that teach God's standard for sexual purity, see Appendix D.

¹³¹ Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoker with Mike Yorkey, *Everyman's Battle: Every Man's Guide to Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time* (Colorado Spring, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2000), 104.

much block out the objects of lust, but he evaluates and captures them.¹³² A key verse to support one's mind is 2 Corinthians 10:5: "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." One must train his mind to take thoughts captive, something it does not currently do.

Another verse we can reflect on and draw strength from even when we are not in the direct heat of temptation is I Cor. 6:18: "Flee from sexual immorality." It is interesting to note that in I Corinthians 16:13, men are told, "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong." Yet in the area of lust, we are told to flee. Why is that? Our weakness is no surprise to Satan. He loves it when we hang around sexual temptation.

Counsel 3: Cultivate the virtues of self-control and purity of heart. Men must make every effort to cultivate the virtues of self-control¹³³ and purity of heart.¹³⁴ Galatians 5:22 reminds us that self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and can be a regular fruit of our lifestyle. Paul wrote to young Timothy, reminding him that God had given him a spirit of self-discipline to overcome his counterproductive impulses (2 Tim 1:7).

Richard Foster writes:

Sex is like a great river that is rich and deep and good as long as it stays within its proper channel. The moment a river overflows its banks, it becomes destructive, and the moment sex overflows its God-given banks, it too becomes destructive. Our task is to define as clearly as possible the boundaries placed upon our sexuality and to do

¹³²Ibid., 104-105.

¹³³See Titus 1:8; 2:6; I Tim 3:2.

¹³⁴See I Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 2:22.

all within our power to direct our sexual response into the deep, rich current.¹³⁵

The Bible defines the banks for the river. The Spirit gives us power to direct our sexual response. When a person gives in to the lust of pornography to let the river of desire run wild, he will reap the consequences.

Self-control is a trait of spiritual maturity and it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:23). The ancient Stoics used the term *self-control* to describe a characteristic of a person who was able to morally restrain himself when tempted by evil pleasures, so as to maintain his ethical freedom.

In the New Testament self-control refers to allowing the Holy Spirit to empower a person so that he is able to voluntarily abstain from anything (especially immoral sexual passion) that might hinder fulfillment of his divinely appointed task.¹³⁶ Self-control is the answer to the question, “How do we keep from yielding to the acts of the sinful nature?” (Gal 5:19). Paul comments that the actions of the sinful nature are clear: “sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery. . . .” (Gal 5:19-21). This is one of the reasons he wanted us to understand the difference between yielding to our sinful nature and walking in the Spirit.

Self-control and self-discipline work together. We constantly need to discipline our bodies by avoiding activities that would be harmful to us. In the same way, we must discipline our thinking by being cautious about what we read, watch or think. We must determine to feed our minds truth and purity. We must discipline our spiritual life by

¹³⁵Foster, 109.

¹³⁶Jack Haford, *Gifts, Fruit and Fullness of the Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 69, quoted in Thomas E. Trask and Wayde I. Goodall, *The Fruit of the Spirit: Becoming the Person God Wants You to Be* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 153.

developing habits of Bible study, meditation, fasting and prayer. Peter said, “Make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control” (2 Pet 1:5-6).

When it comes to cultivating a *purity of heart*, it is God who creates a pure heart in us through the Holy Spirit as we cooperate with Him. The Psalmist declares: “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Ps 51:10). Creating a pure heart is not something that comes naturally; it is supernatural. Let him fill us with his love and purity. Purity of heart is not just something we determine to do on our own; it is the fruit of God’s presence in our lives. Paul wrote, “Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of your sinful nature” (Gal 5:16).

Counsel 4: Accountability. Men should seek the company and accountability of other like-minded male believers in this critical area. Paul tells Timothy to flee youthful lusts and to pursue Christian virtues “along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (2 Tim 2:22). If we want to successfully guard against sexual temptation, it is helpful to live in accountable relationships with other like-minded men in the church.

Teamwork is critical in overcoming pornography and sexual sin. The Bible stresses the importance of accountability. The wise man Solomon wrote:

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Eccl 4:9-12).

Commenting on the above Scripture, Robert Daniel noted, “We Christians need each other. There is strength in numbers. When isolated and separated from our

brothers, we are easy pickings for the Enemy of our souls.”¹³⁷ This is an important aspect of an accountability relationship. We should provide one another with spiritual protection from our mutual enemy.

Counsel 5: Protect the purity of God-given imagination. God has entrusted each of us with a powerful tool. This tool of imagination has been used for good throughout the centuries. The ability to create beautiful and inspiring images has been the primary ingredient in the world’s best paintings, musical scores, architectural feats, and technological advances.¹³⁸ Every great work is first imagined in the human mind. Michelangelo declared, “I saw an angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.”¹³⁹

Unfortunately, many evil and destructive experiences have also emerged from the human imagination. Sin has infected every imagination. As Genesis 8:21 states, “the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.”¹⁴⁰ The author of Hebrews wrote,

As the spiritual leader of our homes, we’re responsible for protecting our wives, not withering them. We’re to honor their essence, not feed our lust. Sex with us should be as pure as prayer. We aren’t to bring impurity from our past into the marriage bed: “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Heb 13:4).¹⁴¹

The pornography industry has gained a huge foothold in the commodity of the imagination. Christian men and women are called to take time each day in prayer and in

¹³⁷Robert Daniels, *The War Within: Experiencing Victory in the Battle for Sexual Purity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), quoted in Mike Cleveland, *Pure Freedom: Breaking the Addiction to Pornography* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2002), 26.

¹³⁸Henderson, 60.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰New King James Version.

¹⁴¹Arterburn and Stoeker, 258.

study of God's Word to cleanse their thoughts, to defend their mind, and maximize their imagination for their good and for His glory.

Counsel 6: Do not believe the Devil's lies. Jesus warned the Jews with these uncompromising words: "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."¹⁴²

One of the devil's lies is "My pornography use is about me and I'm not hurting anyone." Nothing is further from the truth. In her book *An Affair of the Mind*, Christian writer Laurie Hall tells her own heartbreaking story of her husband's sexual addiction, which began with soft-core pornography and progressed to daily sex outside his marriage.

She wrote, "I saw my husband lose his soul to pornography. I have held other women and listened to them weep as they told me how their husbands also lost their souls to pornography. Pornography kills the soul, steals the heart, and destroys the mind. Pornography is not a victimless crime."¹⁴³

But even when pornography does not lead to a sexual relationship with another person, it still damages a marriage. Men say that they can not help but compare their

¹⁴²John 8:44.

¹⁴³Hall, 68.

wives to the pornographic pictures they see, and for the woman that knowledge is agonizing.¹⁴⁴

Another lie men tend to believe in goes something like this: “It’s just sex—I didn’t actually touch another woman. I was just looking.” Whenever we allow our minds to go somewhere sexually other than where God wants our focus, that is, on our spouses, then it is only a matter of time before our bodies follow. Let us consider an example from the world of drugs. Some suggest and others insist that the use of “gateway” drugs such as marijuana leads to the use of “harder” chemicals like heroin and cocaine. Just about everyone who uses heroin or cocaine began their drug use with “softer” narcotics.¹⁴⁵

The same is true regarding pornography lust. A man who views pornography or engages in sex chat may not realize he is creating an unquenchable craving for more. Soon, that which is only virtual can become physical. It is only a matter of time before he allows his body to follow where his mind has already traveled.

Jesus once told His disciples that anyone who looks lustfully on a woman has already committed adultery in his heart (Matt 5:28). His statement should warn us to guard our eyes, our minds, and our hearts from things that would cause us to lust. However, it also suggests that our Lord knew something about how the mind and the heart eventually lead the body to engage in destructive activities.

Counsel 7: Protect your wife’s trust. The book of wisdom declares, “Many a man

¹⁴⁴Marsha Means, *Living with Your Husband’s Secret Wars* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 2003), 23.

¹⁴⁵Ed Young, *The 10 Commandments of Marriage: The Dos and Don’ts for a Lifelong Covenant* (Chicago: Moody, 2003), 132.

proclaims his own loyalty, but who can find a trustworthy man? A righteous man who walks in his integrity—How blessed are his sons after him.”¹⁴⁶

Trust produces great blessings in a marriage and family. George MacDonald said, “Few delights can equal the mere presence of one whom we trust utterly. To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved.”¹⁴⁷

Few things can undermine our wife’s trust more quickly than a pattern of playing with pornography. Not only does it hurt her in significant ways, but it reveals a pattern of secrets and lies. One woman whose marriage and family had been deeply affected by pornography said it pretty directly:

Most sex addicts are pathological liars. They lie about everything, not just their sexual behavior, and they do so with straight faces. They lie when telling the truth would save them time and money. They lie about little things as well as big ones. They lie to themselves about what they’re doing. They lie to their wives and families about where they’re going and what they’re going to do when they get there, even if there’s no sexually inappropriate behavior going on. Pornography itself is a lie, and they embrace it.¹⁴⁸

Keith Intrater, in his book *Covenant Relationships*, offers this insight: “Sin then, is the breaking of the trust of another person. One cannot sin in the abstract. Sin is not the failure to accomplish a certain action. Sin is personal, and sin is relational.”¹⁴⁹ One important reminder is the fact that every journey into lust-filled pornography is a violation of our wife’s trust.

¹⁴⁶Prov 20:6, 7 (New American Standard Bible).

¹⁴⁷Henderson, 135.

¹⁴⁸Hall, 117.

¹⁴⁹Keith Intrater, *Covenant Relationships: A More Excellent Way* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 1989), 16.

Some research suggests that discovering a husband's infidelity including pornography use can result in symptoms similar to those commonly ascribed to post-traumatic stress disorder because it shatters the foundation of trust and safety in a marriage.¹⁵⁰

A wife trusts her husband to take care of her, to love her, and to desire her. She trusts him to tell her the truth and relate to her in honesty. She trusts him to let her into his life and struggles as she does the same for him. Pornography undermines all of these important factors in a husband's relationship. Over time, it does not take too many violations of trust to completely undermine her ability to trust. By avoiding pornography, a husband encourages his wife's trust.

Counsel 8: Honor the sanctity of women. God's Word reiterates the honor, beauty, and sanctity of women. A very brief summary from Scripture reminds us that

A woman's value is far beyond precious stones as she is unusually skilled at bringing dignity, blessing, and wellbeing to the lives of family members. As a result she is to be praised (Prov 31:10-31).

A noble woman is her husband's joy and crown (Prov 12:4).

We are to exhibit a spirit of submission to women, honoring their needs and wishes above our own (Eph 5:21).

Women are to be loved and cherished even as Christ loves, cherishes, and provides for His people (Eph 5:22-33).

Younger women ought to be treated as sisters with absolute purity (I Tim 5:2).

The above stated scriptures suggest that all women must be treated with respect,

¹⁵⁰Shirley P. Glass, AAMFT Consumer Update: Infidelity, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, http://www.therapistlocator.net/families/Consumer_Updates/Infidelity.asp, quoted in Slattery, 178.

dignity, and in all purity. God commands all to see young women, not as sexual objects, but as sisters. However, pornography creates a vision of women that is completely opposed to God's commands. They become objects to be used and abused.

One must understand that all women, including the ones who are involved in pornography, were made in the image of God and are loved by the heavenly Father. Even though they may not respect themselves enough to say "no" to the pornography promoters, we can respect them enough to ignore their shameful exploits by avoiding pornography.

Summary

A review of biblical passages in this study reveals that sexual intimacy constitutes a foundational part of the marriage relationship. Sexuality is part of God's plan of creation. It is part of the original perfect creation of mankind. By implication, then, our sexuality is nothing to be ashamed of, but rather something to enjoy. Our sexuality is part of our total being, not merely a physical or fleshly part of us. It reflects the image of God in us. It involves the expression of our total being—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.

The husband-wife sexual relationship is used throughout Scripture to symbolize the God-man relationship. This imagery begins in Genesis and runs as a golden thread throughout the Old and New Testament and it clearly shows that the sexual relationship is what best symbolizes the relationship between Christ and the church. According to God, marriage and sex are related, connected, sacred, and exclusive. Subsequently, by definition, anything that contradicts God's intent is sinful. Thus, pornographic lust is sinful and it goes directly against God's purposes.

CHAPTER 3

EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION IN CURRENT LITERATURE

The Complexity of the Problem

Pornography has long been a major problem in our society but since the arrival of the Internet, it has grown to proportions no one could have imagined. This powerfully addictive force is invading our nation, church, and the Christian family today. Daniel Henderson, author of *Think before you Look*, calls pornography the number one weapon of spiritual and cultural terrorism against the moral fabric of our country.¹ Authors Wendy and Larry Maltz describe pornography as a form of sexual oppression that robs people of sexual innocence, sexual self-determination, and the skills to experience healthy relationships based on a loving connection with a real partner.²

In today's society, many spouses are concerned about the availability and accessibility of pornography. Pornography sites are currently being added at the rate of one million per month.³ They are available on home or office computers. One can

¹Henderson, xiv.

²Maltz and Maltz, 8.

³Penner and Penner, 312.

access them in complete privacy. The sites do not screen for age or gender. They are available twenty-four hours a day.

The statistics are truly staggering. The *Top Ten Reviews* on internet pornography statistics reported,

According to compiled numbers from respected news and research organizations, every second \$3,075.64 is being spent on pornography. Every second 28,258 internet users are viewing pornography. In that same second 372 internet users are typing adult search terms into search engines. Every 39 minutes a new pornographic video is being created in the U.S.⁴

The battle to counteract pornography is not easy. Swartz and Davidson point out that America Online blocks 2.4 billion adult-oriented messages per day, which accounts for 80 percent of all incoming e-mail. Businesses spent approximately \$200 million on anti-spam protection in 2003. Lost production in US organizations due to spam accounted for up to \$10 billion in 2003.⁵ The millions of dollars spent in prevention and treatment programs for sexual addiction are directly linked to pornography use.⁶

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that many men have found it difficult to keep their minds pure and have succumbed to some type of sexual sin. Pornography is the most common form of sexual sin, and it is estimated that 40 percent of American men purchase erotic materials each year.⁷

⁴Ropelato, *Top Ten Reviews* <http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html> (accessed April 29, 2010).

⁵John Swartz and Paul Davidson, "Spam Thrives Despite Effort to Screen It Out," *USA Today*, May 8, 2003, p. 1A, quoted in Henderson, 44.

⁶Henderson, 45.

⁷Gallagher, *When His Secret Sin Breaks Your Heart: Letters to Hurting Wives*, 9.

Adult entertainment is a multi-billion dollar industry,⁸ and those who profit from it know that the addictive nature of pornography and related activities lead men to spend an increasing amount of money and energy in pursuit of them. However, what many men fail to realize is that pornography carries with it a greater cost than the impact on spending money. It can devastate all of his relationships, especially with his wife and children.⁹

Pornography is not only a major problem among men in our society but unfortunately, it has infiltrated Christian men and women, it is ruining marriages, families, and even churches.¹⁰ Although pornography is predominantly a male problem, this chapter will also cover pornography's effect among women and single men.

In this chapter, we will review current literature to learn the pervasive and addictive nature of pornography. We will seek to understand how it distorts God's gift of sex and teaches a fraudulent message about sexual intimacy. We will learn pornography's many effects on marriage relationships and how it destroys marriages as well as distorting children's ideas of sex and sexuality. We will look at the best approach to avoid the temptations of pornography and strategies for prevention.

The Pervasive Nature of Pornography

Just a generation ago, only a small minority of people would have been

⁸According to U.S. News & World Report, pornography recently took in more than \$8 billion in one year, cited in Eric Schlosser, "The Business of Pornography," *U.S. News & World Report*, 10 February 1997, quoted in Gardner, 12.

⁹Henderson, 45.

¹⁰Blythe, 9.

considered regular pornography users; today it reaches an unprecedented number of people of all ages and from all walks of life. In the United States alone, forty million people visit Internet porn sites at least once a month. Some visit for only a few minutes at a time, while others stay for hours on a regular basis.¹¹

One of the reasons why so many men and women have a pornography problem is that there is so much of it everywhere, and it is easy to access and afford. There are more than 400 million pages of pornography on the Internet.¹²

In 2005, 77 percent of prime-time programming featured sexual content.¹³ A study conducted in 2007 concluded that 87 percent of men aged eighteen to twenty-six viewed pornography “in the past year” with nearly half viewing “in the past week.”¹⁴ Research indicates that 60 percent of Christian men are addicted to pornography.¹⁵ This picture looks bleak. Hardly a marriage exists in the Western world that has not been tainted to some extent by our sexually open culture.¹⁶

Author Henderson’s friend’s experience shows the pervasive nature of porn:¹⁷

My friend Steve got hooked on Internet pornography. As the credit card bills amassed, he felt he needed more. He met a lady from Eastern Europe on the Internet and began a cyber affair with her. Eventually he traveled to her country for some

¹¹Maltz and Maltz, 4.

¹²Ibid., 16.

¹³Dale Kunkel, *Sex on TV 2005* (Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005), 46, <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Sex-on-TV-4-Executive-Summary.pdf>, quoted in Slattery, 172.

¹⁴Jason S. Carroll, “Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use Among Emerging Adults,” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 23, (January 2008), 16, quoted in Slattery.

¹⁵Henderson, back cover .

¹⁶Juli Slattery, *No More Headaches: Enjoying Sex & Intimacy in Marriage* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2009), 172.

¹⁷Henderson, 45.

sexual adventure, still spending money on the Internet porn. Finally, his wife confronted him. The total financial price tag amounted to over \$225,000. The human price tag was incalculable.

Many experts believe that most boys are exposed to pornographic images by the age of thirteen.¹⁸ With the increased use of computers and the Internet, the average age of first exposure may actually be around eleven!¹⁹ Christian psychologist Slattery explains, “During that tender age of puberty, insecurity, and raging hormones, the seductive images prove irresistible. Exposure to porn stimulates the part of the brain that produces an extraordinary sensation of pleasure, similar to opiates like crack cocaine or heroin.”²⁰

Read the testimony of Dr. Jeffrey Satinover to the Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space:

It may seem surprising that, at this juncture, I should speak of “chemicals,” when one might be thinking instead of “sex.” But, in fact, modern science allows us to understand that the underlying nature of an addiction to pornography is chemically nearly identical to a heroin addiction: Only the delivery system is different and the sequence of steps.²¹

In summary, we are more sexually informed than ever. We have free access to more sexually stimulating material than at any time in history. No matter how prevalent sexual material is in our culture, its overwhelming presence does not make it normal, healthy, or justified. Author Tim Alan Gardner drives the point home when he writes,

¹⁸Slattery, 180.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Testimony of Dr. Jeffrey Satinover on November 17, 2004, cited in transcripts from Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space, November 18, 2004, <http://www.obscenitycrimes.org/Senate-Reisman-Layden-Etc.pdf>, quoted in Slattery, 180-181.

“Pornography or fantasy sex is a violation of the oneness we share with our mate. Every sexual encounter affects its participants, even if that encounter involves only one person gazing at a pornographic image on a video screen.”²²

Pornography is Progressive and Addictive

A number of books have been written that describe the progressive and addictive nature of pornography.²³ Dr. Victor Cline, a psychotherapist who has treated hundreds of pornography addicts, says that sex and pornography can be a more difficult addiction to break than cocaine.²⁴

Can the viewing of pornography become the source of addiction in its own right?

Absolutely! One clinician, M. Douglas Reed, puts it this way:

“The use of pornography can be both a cause and a symptom of behavior that serves to arouse or sedate individuals, depending on their neurochemistry and conditioning. *Any kind* of pornography is potentially addictive, as it serves the purpose desired by the user, to either provide escape from internal discomfort or to produce pleasure.”²⁵

²²Tim Alan Gardner, *Sacred Sex: A Spiritual Celebration of Oneness in Marriage* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2009), 4.

²³Patrick Carnes, *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction* (Deerfield Beach, FL: HCI, 2001); Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin *In the Shadows of the Net*, Grundner, *The Skinner Box Effect: Sexual Addiction and Online Pornography*.

²⁴Quoted in Gene McConnell and Keith Campbell, “Pornography and Cyber Sex,” *Stages of Porn Addiction*. <http://www.troublewith.com/AbuseandAddiction>. Accessed, April 29, 2010.

²⁵D.M. Reed, Pornography Addiction and Compulsive Sexual Behavior. In: D. Zillman, J. Byrant and A.C. Houston, A.C. *Media, Children, and the Family: Social Scientific, Psychodynamic, and Clinical Perspectives* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 249. Quoted in T.M. Grundner, *The Skinner Box Effect: Sexual Addiction and Online Pornography* (Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press, 2000), 23.

Dr. Victor Cline has identified a four-stage progression describing the addictive quality of pornography.²⁶

First Stage: Addiction. According to Cline, after exposure and repeated viewing, a person enters stage one which is *addiction*.²⁷

Second Stage: Escalation. Once addicted, a person may reach stage two which is *escalation*. In this stage, material that formerly produced the "high" no longer does, says Cline. More material, longer viewing times and harder, more degrading material is sought in order to achieve the same degree of stimulation.²⁸

Third Stage: Desensitization. Dr. Cline wrote, "Material which was originally perceived as shocking, taboo-breaking, illegal, repulsive or immoral, in time, comes to be seen as acceptable and commonplace."²⁹ There is an increasing sense that "everybody does it" and this gives pornography users permission to do it as well, even though the activity was possibly illegal and contrary to their previous moral beliefs and personal standards.³⁰

Fourth Stage: Acting-out. The final stage involves acting-out what the user has seen in pornography. This could take the form of seeking out prostitutes, engaging in

²⁶Dr. Victor B. Cline, "Pornography's Effect on Adults and Children," *Morality in Media*, 2001 <http://www.moralityinmedia.org/pornsEffects/clineart.htm> (12 December 2001). Quoted in Henderson, 90.

²⁷Cline, quoted in Henderson, 90.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Paul, 227.

group sex, voyeurism, inflicting pain, compulsive promiscuity, committing rape, child sexual assault, even murder.³¹

In summary, regardless of where one lands in this addiction cycle, one should not minimize or trivialize the effects pornography has on one's life. David Blythe, a Christian author who experienced pornography addiction, puts it this way: "I started like most men, viewing some occasional porn in a magazine, or on the Internet, or on an X-rated video. Soon the viewing became more frequent and 99.9 percent of the time, masturbation was involved. I excused away the guilt by saying, "I am a man, and I have my needs."³²

Pornography can be addictive and dangerous. Sexual behaviors caused by pornography ultimately lead to committing serious crimes. Pornography degrades women. It also degrades the very act of sex that God says is holy and pure between a husband and wife.³³

The Myths about Pornography

This section will explore the three myths involving pornography: (1) pornography is a harmless fantasy, (2) pornography keeps sex life fresh and exciting, and (3) couples viewing pornography together will spice things up.

³¹Henderson, 90.

³²Blythe, 32.

³³Marriage and sex are inseparable in God's design. You cannot have one without the other. In Hebrews 13:14, when God addresses our attitude toward sex, He starts by adjusting our view of marriage: "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."

Pornography is a Harmless Fantasy

In their impressive study *Confronting Your Spouse's Pornography Problem*, noted authors Rory Reid and Dan Gray point out that producers of pornography content would have us believe that consumption of pornography is a “guy thing” or that it is “just harmless fun.” These marketing tactics attempt to normalize such behavior so it is more widely accepted.³⁴

The pornography industry uses other tactics to demean any woman who would object to her husband's pornography habits. One magazine depicted a cartoon that mocked a wife who was frustrated with her husband's pornography magazines. The cartoon implied that the wife's complaints were unjustified and, in fact, presented her to the reader as a nagging, paranoid woman.³⁵

Regardless of these marketing strategies, pornography is harmful and has led to numerous problems for married couples. According to one survey, 41 percent of surveyed adults admitted they felt less attractive due to their partner's pornography use.³⁶

Pornography is intended to affect behavior. Sociologist Diana Russell conducted a study and asked women if they had ever been upset by a man who had tried to force or persuade them “to do what they had seen in pornographic pictures, movies, or books.” Of the women surveyed, ten percent said yes. And the upsetting acts included bestiality

³⁴Reid and Gray, 16.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Mark A. Yarhouse, Psy.D., “Marriage Related Research,” *Christian Counseling Today* 12 (2004), <http://www.blazinggrace.org/cms/bg/pornstats> (accessed March 14 , 2010).

and torture.³⁷ Thus pornography is not just looking at pictures or a harmless fantasy. It does affect behavior and a husband's view of his wife.

Pornography Viewing Affects Husband's View of His Wife

In her book, *An Affair of the Mind*, Christian writer Laurie Hall tells her own heartbreaking story of her husband's sexual addiction, which began with soft-core pornography and progressed to daily sex outside his marriage. She wrote,

I saw my husband lose his soul to pornography. I have held other women and listened to them weep as they told me how their husbands also lost their souls to pornography. Pornography kills the soul, steals the heart, and destroys the mind. Pornography is not a victimless crime.³⁸

In describing how pornography affects a husband's view of his wife, noted author Marsha Means points out that even when pornography does not lead to a sexual relationship with another person, it still damages a marriage. Men say that they can not help but compare their wives to the pornographic pictures they see, and for the woman that knowledge is agonizing.³⁹

Pamela Paul, a contributor to *Time* magazine and the author of the book *Pornified*, stresses that pornography deceives men on how women should look.⁴⁰ With 51 percent of Americans believing that pornography raises men's expectations of how women should look and 48 percent saying it changes men's expectations of how women

³⁷Rogers, 35.

³⁸Hall, 68.

³⁹Means, 23.

⁴⁰Paul, 92.

should behave, pornography ends up having a real impact on real women, according to the Pornified/Harris poll.⁴¹ Women are significantly more likely than men to say pornography harms relationships (47 percent versus 33 percent).⁴²

In addition, pornography demands unrealistic expectations of his spouse and sex. In a section titled, “When Miss September Meets the Wife,” Laurie Hall described the debilitating impact of fantasy on the marriage bed. She describes the various ways in which a husband will impose unrealistic expectations on his wife in comparison to his dream women of porn. Eventually, he can expect his wife to function as a passive, completely voluptuous sex friend. If she is a normal wife and mother, he comes to believe that she is too controlling, demanding, independent, and frigid. In Hall’s words, “She’s going to be too flat, too fat, too old, or too average to suit his gourmet taste.”⁴³

A study conducted by Indiana University’s Dolph Zillman and University of Houston colleague Jennings Byrant concluded the following: Exposure to massive amounts of soft-core pornography develops sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly men.⁴⁴

Zillman and Byrant’s research also found that when comparing their spouse’s response to sexual behavior portrayed in pornography materials, both men and women became dissatisfied with their spouse’s sexual performance. Dissatisfaction with the

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²*Pornified/Harris Poll*, 2004, quoted in Paul, 141.

⁴³Hall, 100-101.

⁴⁴Dolph Zillman and Jennings Byrant. This is a conclusion from clinical research reported in *Pornography: Research Advances and Policy Considerations* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989), quoted in Blythe, 49.

physical appearance of their intimate partners was evident as well. They even found their partners less attractive and even less worthy individuals.⁴⁵ This is the problem that porn creates: unrealistic expectations of our spouse and sex. It acts to distort the image of our wife and how she should perform sexually.

Pornography affects women's self-worth. Consider this survey that was done by 2004 Elle-MSNBC.com as cited by author Pamela Paul, "One in ten women told the 2004 Elle-MSNBC.com poll her partner seems more critical of her body since he started looking at Internet porn, and one in five said that as a consequence, they felt compelled to do more to keep their partners sexually interested."⁴⁶

According to Diana Russell, a sociologist who has researched pornography for decades, men who look at pornography repeatedly come to think that unusual sex acts are much more frequently performed in sexual relationships all over the country because, of course, that is what they are seeing in porn.⁴⁷

Pornography Affects Singles

With more than thirty-four years of psychotherapeutic practice, Dr. Frederick offers this counsel, in his book *Conquering Pornography*, to all singles:

"Singles believe they can engage in sexual activity without committing adultery or fornication. But pornography is a form of fornication because it is lust, and it is sex. It can even become adulterous in that the addict desires another person's partner.

⁴⁵Zillman and Byrant, quoted in Bylthe, 49.

⁴⁶Paul, 160.

⁴⁷Ibid.

When that happens, the single person has crossed the boundary physically, mentally, and emotionally.”⁴⁸

Single people are challenged in our sex-saturated culture. Dr. Cooper identifies three components that make pornography become even more appealing to a single person: *the accessibility, affordability, and anonymity* provided by the Internet.⁴⁹

Authors Reid and Gray further explain that the three A’s provide an opportunity to satisfy curiosity without a high risk of being discovered. Many who would not spend money at a strip club or risk traveling to a bookstore where they might be recognized have fallen prey to the accessibility, affordability, and anonymity of pornography use on the Internet.⁵⁰

Pornography Affects Women

Stereotypically, we think of sexual temptation as a man’s problem. As we might expect, most regular porn users are male (75-85 percent).⁵¹ However, women are not immune to the lure of pornography, fantasy, and emotional entanglements with other men.⁵² The following research indicates that more and more women are being lured into sexual outlets. According to a 2008 study of emerging adults (ages eighteen to twenty-

⁴⁸Dennis Frederick, *Conquering Pornography: Overcoming The Addiction* (Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word, 2007), 56-57.

⁴⁹Cooper, A. (1998). Sexuality and the Internet: Surfing into the new millennium. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 1 (2), 181-187. Quoted in Reid and Gray, 163.

⁵⁰Reid and Gray.

⁵¹Maltz and Maltz, 4.

⁵²Slattery, 184.

six), about one-third of young women reported using some pornography in the previous twelve months.⁵³

In the article *Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use among Emerging Adults*, Jason Carroll notes that the actual percentages of women reported using pornography are probably higher than reported because women typically consider porn to be a guy's problem and may be less likely to admit their own struggles with it. It is worth noting that although only 31 percent of women said they used pornography, almost half believed pornography to be an acceptable sexual outlet.⁵⁴

Although pornography use is predominantly a male problem, as already noted, there are numbers of females who also struggle with it. Recent research indicates 60 percent of the women who answered the survey admitted to having significant struggles with lust; 40 percent admitted to being involved in sexual sin in the past year; and 20 percent of the church-going female participants struggle with looking at pornography on an ongoing basis.⁵⁵

Having saturated the male-dominated porn market, author Slattery rightly observes that the creators of pornography are now turning their attention toward women. Slattery goes on to explain that female-oriented pornography tends to involve relationships and emotions. Unlike most men, women are generally not stimulated simply by viewing male and female genitalia. Sexual images are most exciting for

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Carroll, 17, quoted in Slattery, 184.

⁵⁵From the results of a ChristiaNet poll reported by Marketwire.com, August 7, 2006. <http://www.blazinggrace.org/cms/bg/pornstats> (accessed April 7, 2010).

women if they are placed in the context of a relationship or seduction.⁵⁶

Pornography Affects Men's Sensibilities for Sex

Pornography has a tendency to numb men's sensibilities toward sex. The 2004 Elle-MSNBC.com poll found that as a result of viewing online pornography, one in ten men said that he or his partner was bored with their sex routine; 17 percent said that viewing pornography made sex less arousing. One in ten admitted he had become more critical of his partner's body.⁵⁷

Author Paul points out that some men, particularly young men who grew up with Internet pornography, make assumptions about what can be expected from real women, based on their experiences with porn. Just as they upgrade their pornography, they attempt to upgrade their women in real life.⁵⁸

Pornography User is Self-focused; Sexual Intimacy is Affected

When one uses pornography, he or she is completely self-focused. Intimacy is completely other-centered. Sternberg identified the followings signs of intimacy which he considers to exist in all love relationships:

1. Desiring to promote the welfare of the loved one.
2. Sharing one's self with the loved one.
3. Giving emotional support to the loved one.
4. Having intimate communication with the loved one.

⁵⁶Slattery, 185.

⁵⁷Paul, 90-91.

⁵⁸Ibid.

5. Valuing the loved one in one's life.⁵⁹

Having and maintaining intimacy is an enormous task. Cyber sex allows for a quick fix without the challenges of initiating or maintaining intimacy. Wendy and Larry Maltz point out that intimacy-oriented sex allows us to explore dimensions of sexual experience not possible with porn, such as whole-body sensuality, self-respect, trust, warmth, playfulness, laughter, nurturing touch, profound love, and spiritual connection.⁶⁰

The authors also stress that in their practice and with the people they have interviewed, they have seen enough to know that porn use today compromises almost every one's ability to relate in intimate, meaningful ways to a real partner. They found this to be true in one of their interviews with a client. Max, who is only in his early twenties, already recognizes these problems in his porn use:

Porn distorts sex. There's no real consent, equality, or mutual respect. It teaches you to take but never give love. Porn doesn't truly reflect what's best for us sexually. It's unreal. You can't find any joy of lasting sexual happiness there.⁶¹

Pornography Keeps Sex Life Fresh and Exciting

Men who are pornography users rationalize or justify their behavior by believing in this myth involving pornography: "Pornography will help my sex life. It will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting. And when my wife is not in the mood, I won't have to burden her since I have my own pornography. I'm really doing it for her."⁶² For this

⁵⁹Robert J. Sternberg and Michael Barnes, eds., *The Psychology of Love* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), quoted in Craig, 51.

⁶⁰Maltz and Maltz, 232-233.

⁶¹Ibid., 24.

⁶²Rogers, 56.

justification, author Henry J. Rogers queries, “How about sharing this with one’s wife?” then suggests, “I doubt after hearing this rationalization a wife will say, “That is a wonderful plan, you sure do love me!”⁶³

The most powerful rebuttal of this rationalization comes from the words of a wife:

Pornography didn’t turn my husband into a great lover. Far from being the sexual liberator it purports to be, pornography enslaves participants in sexual activities that destroy their personhood. Far from being the ticket to endless rounds of sexual highs, pornography introduces a strain into relationships that squashes sexual enjoyment. As far as I’m concerned, pornography gets an “F” in sex education.⁶⁴

Laurie Hall drives the point home when she writes, “pornography is a lousy sex educator.”⁶⁵ Dr. Victor Cline’s research adds the following observation: “Pornography contains much scientifically inaccurate, false and misleading information about human sexuality, especially female sexual nature and response.”⁶⁶

Noted author Pamela Paul explains that many women remark on the lack of foreplay from men who watch a lot of pornography. Because porn is typically about male gratification, it rarely takes the time for foreplay. Men who watch a lot of porn are affected by how they view sex. The problem is that in pornography, women are always servicing men.⁶⁷ As Aaliyah, a Southern Baptist from Houston explains, “If some guy is watching porn a lot, they’re not necessarily going to please women in real life because porn never shows that. There’s no foreplay; there’s no romanticizing sex. It’s just, let’s

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Hall, 86.

⁶⁵Ibid., 90.

⁶⁶Victor Cline, *Pornography’s Effects on Adults & Children* (New York: Morality in Media, 2004), quoted in Hall.

⁶⁷Paul, 151.

do it.”⁶⁸ “In real life, sexually speaking, women are Crock-Pots and men are microwaves,”⁶⁹ Gary Smalley explains. “In pornography, all a man does is touch a woman and she’s howling in delight in two minutes. If men think this is how real women respond, they’re going to be horrible lovers. Today, pornography is so widely used by young men, they learn these falsehoods. That becomes what it takes to arouse them. There’s good evidence that the more men watch porn, the less satisfied they are with their partner’s looks and sexual performance.”⁷⁰

Pornography Teaches False Intimacy

Pornography does not teach men to achieve true intimacy. In their book *Every Woman’s Desire: Every Man’s Guide to Winning the Heart of a Woman*, the authors reveal these facts:

84 percent of women feel they do not have intimacy (oneness) in their marriages.

83 percent of women feel their husbands do not even know the basic needs of a woman for intimacy (oneness) or how to provide intimacy for them.

A large majority of female divorcees say that their married years were the loneliest years of their lives.⁷¹

Pornography functions as a vehicle or the tool of choice to avoid the demands and disappointments of real intimacy. As Harry Schaumburg notes in his landmark work *False Intimacy*, “A sex addict creates pseudo-relationships with something or someone

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Nelson, 94.

⁷⁰Paul.

⁷¹Arterburn and Stoeker, 61.

who can be controlled, such as a picture, an actor on the video screen or a prostitute in order to avoid relational pain.”⁷²

Author Daniel Henderson, in his book *Think before you Look*, reminds us that intimacy is threatening, especially to men, and for a variety of reasons. He writes,

For many of us, intimacy is unfamiliar. We grew up with an absent or angry dad. Perhaps our mother was controlling. Maybe our family of origin is filled with conflict and dysfunction. The confusion and pain promote withdrawal. In the world of being strong and tough, we learn not to talk about feelings. We bury our vulnerabilities and sometimes begin a lifelong pattern of emotional isolation. It is hard work to unlearn the negative lessons from growing up. Millions are trying to find intimacy online.⁷³

In separate studies, researchers found that people who spent more than thirty hours a week online were divorced from their spouses and fired from their job as a result of distractions. These researchers are considering an official classification of this tendency as a specific disorder.⁷⁴

In their landmark book *Every Man's Battle*, Fred Stoeker and Stephen Arterburn give us a valuable perspective.

Jesus' hands never touched a woman with dishonor, but Jesus said that lusting with the eye is the same as touching. Given that Jesus was sinless, I suddenly realized that Jesus not only never touched a woman with dishonor, He never even looked at a woman in dishonor. Could I say that?⁷⁵

Then, in response to the objection of some that they are being a bit too hard on themselves and that it is natural to look at women lustfully, Arterburn and Stoeker add,

⁷²Harry W. Schaumburg, *False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addictions* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992), 26.

⁷³Henderson, 105.

⁷⁴P. Douglas Filaroski, “Web surfing could get ‘disorder’ classification,” *Tampa Bay Business Journal*, August 6, 2003, quoted in Henderson, 106.

⁷⁵Arterburn and Stoeker, 71-72.

What you're doing is stealing. That impure thought life is the life of a thief. You're stealing images that aren't yours. When you had premarital sex, you touched someone who didn't belong to you. When you looked down the blouse of a woman who wasn't your wife, you were stealing something that isn't yours to take. . . . When we're thieves with our eyes, we're embezzling sexual gratification from areas that don't belong to us, from women who aren't connected to us.⁷⁶

While noting that porn undermines this view, one must realize that he will ultimately live out his image of women in how he interacts and relates to them. In the 2004 Elle-MSNBC.com poll, 45 percent of men who used Internet pornography for five or more hours per week said they were masturbating too much, and one in five confessed they were having sex less often with their partners.⁷⁷

In summary, pornography is self-centered sex and therefore, it does not help keep sex life fresh and exciting with one's spouse. Sexual intimacy almost always suffers when one partner has a long-standing porn habit. Porn is, after all, a competitor for sexual energy and attention.⁷⁸

Couples Viewing Pornography Together Will Spice Things Up

Many consider pornography to be fine in a committed relationship as long as a couple uses it together. Author Pamela Paul points out that people in their thirties, members of the so-called Generation X, most likely believe pornography improves one's sex life, even more so than people in their twenties.⁷⁹ However, this is a very dangerous act for three reasons.

⁷⁶Arterburn and Stoeker, 172.

⁷⁷Paul, 232.

⁷⁸Maltz and Maltz, 85.

⁷⁹*Pornified*/Harris poll, 2004, quoted in Paul, 143.

Reason 1: Sex is Holy. Christian author Tim Alan Gardner reminds us that God designed marital sex to be an encounter with the divine. He writes,

Sexual intimacy is a spiritual, even mystical, experience in which two bodies become “one.” God is present in a very real way every time this happens. Sex really is holy. It’s a sacred place shared in the intimacy of marriage. And it’s an act of worship, a sacrament of marriage that invites and welcomes the very presence of God.⁸⁰

Ellen White stressed the importance of this when she wrote,

All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman’s heart—the wife to soften and improve her husband’s character and give it completeness—fulfill God’s purpose for them. . . .”Angels of God will be guests in the home, and their holy vigils will hallow their marriage chamber.”⁸¹

Scripture admonishes us to “avoid every kind of evil.”⁸² This involves bringing God’s standards to bear in our evaluation of what we watch and responding accordingly—whether this means refusing to watch something like pornography, refuting its message, or agreeing with it.

Watching pornography eventually gives Satan a stronghold in our lives. In his book *Personality Traits of the Carnal Mind*, Dr. Ron Miller wrote, “Willfully seeking after pornographic material opens up one’s spirit to demonic influence and even control by an unclean spirit.”⁸³ Is it any wonder that we are told to flee from sexual immorality?⁸⁴ Job understood the dangers of lust and made the right choice when he

⁸⁰Gardner, 5.

⁸¹Ellen White, *Adventist Home*, 99, quoted in “Ellen W. White Writings Comprehensive Research Edition” CD-ROM (Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD:), 2008.

⁸²I Thess 5:22.

⁸³Hall, 121, quoted in Rogers, 189.

⁸⁴2 Tim 2:22; I Thess 4:3-5.

declared, “I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl.”⁸⁵

Reason 2: An Affair of the Mind. Watching porn can lead to an affair of the mind.

Authors Wendy and Larry Maltz point out that a relationship with porn can act like an affair. It can take time and energy away from an existing intimate relationship.⁸⁶ Dr.

Gary Smalley and author Ted Cunningham describe this a little differently:

You don’t want the images of anyone but your mind when you’re physically intimate with your wife. Think about it. When you are making love to your spouse and the lights are out and your eyes are closed, you don’t want your spouse imagining someone else. When you introduce pornography into your marriage, you’re introducing an addiction that will undermine your relationship.⁸⁷

Reason 3: The husband will eventually begin comparing his wife to the women in the pornography movie. Women often assume that when they use pornography with their partner, they are satisfying all his sexual needs. That is rarely the case. A woman from

Colorado writes to the advice columnist of a women’s magazine:

My body friend and I live together. Three months ago, I found him on the internet looking at porn. I was shocked! We discussed it and decided that if either of us was going to porn, it would be together and it would be a movie. I felt this arrangement was perfect. He gets his porn and his own porn star—me. Last month, I found him viewing Internet porn AGAIN! We talked about it, he said he was sorry, but I was so upset I couldn’t even bring myself to sleep in the same bed with him.

He promised all porn would stop. Then I came home last week, and guess what? He’s viewing porn on the Internet. I told him it makes me feel that I’m not good enough in bed for him. I love him, he’s fine in all other areas, but isn’t it time to move on?⁸⁸

Of women who consumed online porn, 37 percent admitted that, as a result, they

⁸⁵Job 31:1.

⁸⁶Maltz and Maltz, 23.

⁸⁷Smalley and Cunningham, 225-226.

⁸⁸E. Jean Carroll, “Ask E. Jean,” *Elle*, March 2004, 148, quoted in Paul, 147.

worried they might not be able to sexually satisfy their partner. More than one in five felt they needed to do more to maintain their partner's interest, 15 percent felt pressured to reenact scenes their partner had viewed on Web sites, and 12 percent blamed the Internet for the fact that they were having less sexual intimacy.⁸⁹

Pornography is one of the greatest destroyers of our spiritual growth. Author Smalley and Cunningham give this counsel to wives in response to the question, 'Is viewing pornography together as a couple okay?' They write,

Sexual immorality is one of the greatest destroyers of your spiritual growth. You don't want the images of anyone but your spouse in your mind when you're having sex . . . When you introduce pornography into your marriage, you're introducing an addiction that will undermine your relationship.

Realize that you are not going to develop intimacy as God designed it with your mate if you're thinking about some Hollywood actor or actress. Even soft pornography creates unrealistic expectations that will require an increasing unrealistic expectation to be met.⁹⁰

In summary, the myths involving pornography such as that pornography is a harmless fantasy, pornography keeps sex life fresh and exciting, or couples viewing pornography together will spice things up are deceptive and they provide no lasting satisfaction.

Pornography is a violation of the oneness we share with our mate. Every sexual encounter affects its participants even if that encounter involves only one person gazing at a pornographic image on a video screen.

Pornography does affect relationships. As interviews with men and women attest,

⁸⁹Paul, 148.

⁹⁰Smalley and Cunningham, 224-225.

pornography plays into how people approach and function in relationships. Whether a couple watches together, or one or both partners use it alone, pornography has a significant role not only in sex but in a couple's sense of trust, security, and fidelity.⁹¹

The Effects of Pornography

Pornography is no respecter of persons. It affects men and women, married or single, young or old, and it can damage all aspects of life—physical, mental, emotional, relational and spiritual. Consider the nine most common serious negative consequences of using porn in the worlds of who have struggled to move beyond the porn trap as cited by noted Christian authors Wendy and Larry Maltz:

1. "I'm easily irritated and depressed."
2. "I've become isolated from other people."
3. "I'm sexually objectifying people."
4. "I'm neglecting important areas of my life."
5. "I'm having problems with sex."
6. "I'm making my partner unhappy."
7. "I'm feeling bad about myself."
8. "I'm engaging in risky and dangerous behavior."
9. "I've become addicted to porn."⁹²

As we can see from the list above, the consequences of porn occur on both personal and interpersonal levels. Pornography can affect how we think and feel inside as well as how we interact and behave with others.

In this section, we will identify the most common effects of pornography and its negative consequences on marriage in particular.

⁹¹Ibid., 142.

⁹²Maltz and Maltz, 72.

Effect on Brain and Behavior

Neurophysiology of the brain provides insight into how pornography use affects the cognitive and emotional habits of the user. In their impressive study *The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, noted researchers John Ratey and Erick Hagerman point out that a repetition of an act establishes new neural pathways, thus facilitating the retention of these behaviors.⁹³

Researcher Mary Anne Layden, director of the Center for Cognitive Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania, has uncovered the link between dopamine, a hormone that produces feelings of pleasure, and the effect that a pornographic image has. PET scans (a nuclear medicine three-dimensional imaging technique) of both pornography-addicted adults and non-addicted adults viewing pornography show brain reactions for both groups similar to cocaine addicts looking at images of people taking cocaine.⁹⁴

In other words, researchers put together a test group of cocaine addicts and a control group of people with no known addictions or personality disorders, then took PET scans of their brains while they viewed pictures of animals, and another set while they looked at pictures of other people taking cocaine. The cocaine addicts' brains had a dramatically different response to the photos of people using drugs than to the animal photos. Non-addicts' brains showed no significant differences.⁹⁵

⁹³John J. Ratey and Eric Hagerman, *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 2008), quoted in Dr. Patrick F. Fagan, *The Effects of Pornography on Individuals, Marriage, Family and Community*, 2009, (accessed March 19, 2009).

⁹⁴Mary Anne Layden, Center for Cognitive Therapy, Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania (Testimony for U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, November 18, 2004). http://www.heritage.org/Research/Family/upload/85273_1.pdf (accessed March 19, 2010).

⁹⁵*Ibid.*

However, when the researchers showed the control group pornographic photos, different areas of their brains lit up and their PET scans closely resembled those of the cocaine addicts while they were looking at the photos of drug use. Layden observes:

That sets up some interesting questions. We're seeing the same symptoms in porn addicts as we do in cocaine addicts—but it's harder for the porn addict to go into remission than the cocaine addict, and they're more likely to relapse. When you're treating cocaine addicts, you start with detox to get it out of their system before you start counseling. But with a porn addict, that substance can be called up at a moment's notice, forever. Any lesson learned in the presence of arousal will be learned better, remembered longer and acted on more often.⁹⁶

She goes on to note that with porn, we are dealing with a permanently implanted addictive substance. Thus, it is a very hard disorder to treat. Then Layden goes on to explain that the problem with pornography is not just in the way the sexual images are presented that are etched in a person's memory. It is in the messages they send. "Sexual violence perpetrators have permission-giving beliefs. There's the rape myth, that women like it, need it, and there are similar pedophile myths. All are transmitted in pornography."⁹⁷

Researcher Jill C. Manning summarizes this point when he writes,

Men who habitually look at pornography have a higher tolerance for abnormal sexual behaviors, sexual aggression, promiscuity, and even rape. In addition, men begin to view women and even children as "sex objects" or instruments for their pleasure, not as persons with their own inherent dignity.⁹⁸

As stated above, researchers are now confirming porn's impact on the brain.

⁹⁶Layden, quoted in Henderson, 84.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Jill C. Manning, "The Impact of Internet Pornography on Marriage and the Family: A Review of the Research," *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 13 (2006): 131-65; http://www.heritage.org/Research/Family/upload/85273_1.pdf (accessed March 19, 2010).

Finally in Mark's Kastleman's groundbreaking book, *The Drug of the New Millennium: The Brain Science Behind Internet Pornography Use*, he observes:

When an individual ingests or injects a "drug," that chemical travels to the receptors in the brain and other parts of the body, seeking to "mimic" the body's own natural neurotransmitters. In effect, the drug tries to "fake" the body into releasing its own natural or endogenous (produced from within) chemicals. For example, Prozac triggers the body to release its own natural serotonin. Likewise, . . . pornography "mimics" sexual intimacy and "fakes" the body into releasing a tidal wave of endogenous chemicals, (dopamine, norepinephrine, testosterone, oxytocin, etc.) which is exactly what pharmaceutical and illicit street drugs do. Should pornography not then be referred to as a "drug"?⁹⁹

Effect on Marriage

Pornography has many effects on marriage relationships. Pornography use undermines marital relations and distresses wives.¹⁰⁰ Husbands report loving their spouses less after long periods of looking at and desiring women depicted in pornography. In many cases, the wives of pornography users also develop deep psychological wounds, commonly reporting feelings of betrayal, loss, mistrust, devastation, and anger in responses to the discovery or disclosure of a partner's pornographic online sexual activity.¹⁰¹

Wives can begin to feel unattractive or sexually inadequate and may become severely depressed when they realize their husbands view pornography.¹⁰² The distress

⁹⁹Mark B. Kastleman, *The Drug of the New Millennium: The Brain Science Behind Internet Pornography use: Three Power Principles Guaranteed to Protect Your Family* (2007), chap. 3, quoted in Anderson, 102.

¹⁰⁰Bridges, Bergner and Hesson-McInnis, quoted in Fagan. http://www.heritage.org/Research/Family/upload/85273_1.pdf.

¹⁰¹Jennifer P. Schneider, "Effects of Cybersex Addiction on the Family: Results of a Survey," *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 7 (2000), 31-58, quoted in Fagan (accessed April 9, 2010).

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 38.

level in wives may be so high as to require clinical treatment for trauma, not mere discomfort.¹⁰³ In their book, *Confronting Your Spouse's Pornography Problem*, authors

Reid and Gray summarize the most common effects of pornography on marriage:

- Decreased trust and feelings of betrayal
- Distorted views of sexual intimacy
- Decreased emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy
- Decreased sensitivity, tenderness, and kindness
- Financial instability, including loss of employment
- Decreased mental and physical health
- Strained communications and increased marital conflict
- Increased risk of divorce¹⁰⁴

To help us understand why long-term marriage relationships break up even though pornography does not involve direct physical contact, noted authors Weiss and Schneider asked people who experienced this situation to present their view point in the survey. Here are the most common reasons for such breakups:

- A concern about escalation of the behaviors
- The belief that a cybersex affair is still cheating
- The effect on the partner's self-esteem
- The effect on the marriage and children
- Being unable to trust again¹⁰⁵

In this section, three of the above stated reasons and others noted earlier will be examined in details.

Effect on Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual intimacy almost always suffers when one has a longstanding porn habit.

¹⁰³Barbara A. Steffens and Robyn L. Rennie, "The Traumatic Nature of Disclosure for Wives of Sexual Addicts," *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 13 (2006), 247–67, quoted in Fagan. (accessed April 9, 2010).

¹⁰⁴Reid and Gray, 17.

¹⁰⁵Weiss and Schneider, 123.

Dr. Jennifer Schneider, an expert on sexual addiction, found that 70 percent of couples for whom pornography addiction is a problem report that one or both partners lose interest in sexual intimacy.¹⁰⁶ Weiss and Schneider's survey revealed that two thirds of survey respondents described having sexual problems. Often the problems resulted from decreased interest by the porn user in having sex together.¹⁰⁷ Even when the porn user and his partner do have sex, there are often problems. The lack of skills for tuning into a partner's needs and integrating loving feelings with sex can result in a porn user being sexually demanding, distant, and insensitive during sex.¹⁰⁸

For example, Bergner and Bridges' 2002 study revealed two distinct themes related to sexual desire and satisfaction. The first theme these women voiced was that of decreased sexual desire by their partners. As one participant stated, "I am no longer sexually attractive or desirable to him. He's more attracted to the women depicted in his movies, magazines, and websites than he is to me, and I feel completely unable to compete with these women."¹⁰⁹

Secondly, it was common for pornography users to continue sexual relations with their female partner, but the sexual advances conveyed a message of objectification as

¹⁰⁶Maltz and Maltz, 85.

¹⁰⁷Weiss & Schneider, 118.

¹⁰⁸Maltz and Maltz, 86.

¹⁰⁹ R.M. Bergner and A.J. Bridges (2002). The significance of heavy pornography involvement for romantic partners: Research and clinical implications. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 28, 193–206, quoted in Manning, 15, (accessed April 19, 2010).

opposed to meaningful interaction.¹¹⁰ For example, one woman stated, “I am no longer a sexual *person* or partner to him, but a sexual *object*. He is not really with *me*, not really making love to *me*. . . . He seems to be thinking about something or someone else—likely those porn women. . . . He is just using me as a warm body.”¹¹¹ This is what porn does. It creates unrealistic expectations. Wendy and Larry Maltz wrote, “With porn as a model, it’s easy to wind up with unrealistic expectations of what sex is like with a real-life partner. Real sex can feel like an inferior substitute for what is portrayed in porn.”¹¹²

As noted earlier, Weiss and Schneider’s survey also revealed that, in some cases, it was primarily the porn user’s partner who lost interest in sex.¹¹³ For example, in her book, *Living with Your Husband’s Secret Wars*, Marsha Means made the following observation regarding the emotional shutdown response of a wife when she learned about her husband’s pornography addiction:

I couldn’t undress in front of him—I felt so vulnerable and exposed, even with my clothes on. I sure didn’t want him to see me without clothes, and I certainly didn’t want to give him a chance to compare me to the pictures he looked at. The idea of sex with him made me feel numb and dead. I just wanted to wear a long nightgown, get into bed, pull the covers over my head, and pray I’d fall asleep quickly.¹¹⁴

Marsha goes on to explain that others may go through the motions of intimacy, but purposely disconnect from their feelings during sex. Like children who are molested,

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Manning, 15.

¹¹²Maltz and Maltz, 82.

¹¹³Weiss & Schneider.

¹¹⁴Means, 27-28.

they hurt too much to stay emotionally present.¹¹⁵

It is disconcerting when porn users discover that a product promoted as an effective and harmless way to enhance sexuality ends up causing serious sexual problems. In their groundbreaking book, *The Porn Trap: The Essential Guide to Overcoming Problems Caused by Pornography*, sex therapists Wendy and Larry Maltz give a checklist of some of the most common sexual problems they found in their clinical work with porn users.

Top Ten Sexual Problems from Using Porn:

1. Avoiding or lacking interest in sex with a real partner
2. Experiencing difficulty becoming sexually aroused with a real partner
3. Experiencing difficulty getting or maintaining erections with a real partner
4. Having trouble reaching orgasm with a real partner
5. Experiencing intrusive thoughts and images of porn during sex
6. Being demanding or rough with a sexual partner
7. Feeling emotionally distant and not present during sex
8. Feeling dissatisfied following an encounter with a real partner
9. Having difficulty establishing or maintaining an intimate relationship
10. Engaging in out-of-control or risky sexual behaviors¹¹⁶

In summary, porn devalues sex. John Stoltenberg, author of *Refusing to Be a Man*, bluntly shares his opinion of porn's role as a sexual trainer when he writes, "Once man's ideal of sexual experience has been mediated by photographic technology, he may become unable to experience sex other than as a machinelike voyeur who spasms now and then."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵Ibid., 28.

¹¹⁶Maltz and Maltz, 81.

¹¹⁷Quoted in Maltz and Maltz, 83.

Pornography is an Affair

Pornography is an affair of lust. Men lust after what they do not have or what they wish they had. Pornography users are in love with porn women.¹¹⁸ Dr. Dennis Frederick states, “Addicts are in love with the pornography. They feed their passion. They invest money, time, and energy in the affair. It consumes their lives. The affair with pornography separates husbands from wives.”¹¹⁹

Some may not see anything wrong with porn. They may think that as long as they don’t physically consummate a relationship, it can’t be considered cheating or adultery. Pamela Paul points out that in an affair, there’s another human being involved, whereas in pornography there is not, or at least, not quite. But there is still one human being involved: the husband. According to Jennifer Schneider’s study, about one-third of those married to a cybersex user consider their partner’s online sexual activities akin to adultery.¹²⁰

Stack, Wasserman, and Kern found that individuals who had had an extramarital affair were 3.18 times more likely to have used Internet pornography than individuals who had not had an affair.¹²¹ The same study also revealed that people who have engaged in paid sex (i.e., prostitution) were 3.7 times more apt to use Internet pornography than those who had not used Internet pornography. What these statistics

¹¹⁸Frederick, 101.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Jennifer Schneider, “Effects of Cybersex Addiction on the Family,” *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity* 7 (2000), 31-58, quoted in Paul, 163.

¹²¹S. Stack, I. Wasserman & R. Kern (2004), Adult social bonds and use of Internet pornography: *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(1), 75–88, quoted in Manning, 18.

indicate is that Internet pornography is associated with activities that undermine marital exclusivity and fidelity.¹²²

In their survey, Weiss & Schneider found that to respondents who considered their partner's extensive pornography involvement to be the same as adultery, the lying and emotional unavailability of their partner felt the same as a real affair would.¹²³ They felt betrayed, devalued, deceived, "less than," and abandoned—the same as with a real affair. They mourned the loss of the sexual intimacy they had previously had. Most agreed that their spouse's extensive involvement with porn is definitely being unfaithful and real-time online sex, a violation of monogamy.¹²⁴

In her book, *Dear Nancy . . .* Nancy Van Pelt maintains that infidelity begins at the point of making a strong emotional connection. When people respond with a heightened emotional and or sexual awareness and have a sexual longing for a person who is not their mate, infidelity has occurred.¹²⁵

Emotional connection with pornography can act like an affair. As noted earlier, watching pornography stimulates the release of powerful chemicals such as dopamine and testosterone. These chemicals not only relate sexual arousal and pleasure, but are also released in real life when someone is sexually attracted to and falls in love with someone else.¹²⁶

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Weiss and Schneider, 126-127.

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Nancy L. Van Pelt with Madlyn Lewis Hamblin, *Dear Nancy . . . A trusted advisor gives straight answers to questions about marriage, sex, and parenting* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 109.

¹²⁶Maltz and Maltz, 23.

Weiss and Schneider's survey results found that the 40 percent of the partners in their survey who knew about an actual prior extramarital sexual encounter were able to compare how they felt about their partner's pornography activities versus how they felt about their affairs. Several experienced the same hurt.¹²⁷

Dennis Frederick states unequivocally why pornography is an affair of the mind and heart.

"The affair gives away your heart—the essence of who you are. It's not just the physical elements you have surrendered, it's your very self. When you gave that away, you broke the covenant you made in your marriage. To love, to cherish, to adore. You broke that covenant before her and before God."¹²⁸

Effect on Self-Esteem

Perhaps the most difficult negative consequences of pornography the user experiences is the toll that it can take on his spouse's self-esteem and on his self-worth. Discovering a husband's pornography can shatter a wife's self-esteem.

Effect on Women's Self-esteem

When a husband uses pornography, wives often wonder if the problem is their fault. Reid and Gray give this report from one of their interviews with the wife of a pornography user:

My husband began using porn as a teenager. What was once an adolescent hobby became the "other woman" in our marriage! I felt responsible, ugly, ashamed, alone and hopeless. Why would he look at another woman unless I wasn't pretty or sexy enough? Friends rejected my idea that his porn use was ruining our relationship. They told me to be sexier, more sexually responsive and available so that he wouldn't look elsewhere. I tried all these things only to find they didn't work. I ended up

¹²⁷Weiss and Schneider, 127.

¹²⁸Frederick, 101-102.

feeling like a failure, as a wife and a lover.¹²⁹

Marsha Means agrees with Reid and Gray when she writes, “When we’re wounded this deeply, we may believe that we’re fundamentally flawed. ‘After all, didn’t the man who knows me best need something or someone else to be satisfied?’ we ask. And often we seek the answer by checking out the competition—a habit that can crucify our self-worth.”¹³⁰

In his book *The Silent War*, Henry Rogers wrote, “I saw the destruction firsthand when I met with a woman named Jessica who weighed 350 pounds. “*My husband makes me feel so ugly,*” she wept bitterly as we spoke on the phone. When I met with her husband the next week he confided that at times he wished his wife was dead. It was obvious he now cared little for his wife’s self-esteem.”¹³¹

One of the most important truths a wife should realize is that her husband’s problem is not her fault. There are many reasons why he may choose to develop a habit of pornography. According to Rory Reid, a licensed therapist who specializes in the treatment of sexual-impulse behavior and Dan Gray, a clinical director of Sexual Trauma and Recovery (STAR), these reasons may include¹³²

1. Attempts to escape unhealthy shame about himself, possibly caused by childhood neglect, deprivation of needs, family dysfunction, or abuse.
2. A desire to be wanted or validated without investing in a relationship.
3. A coping mechanism used to deal with stress or as a reward for accomplishments.
4. Inability or fear of developing healthy intimacy.

¹²⁹*It’s Not Your Fault*, National Coalition Against Pornography Pamphlet. www.nationalcoalition.org, quoted in Reid and Gray, 17.

¹³⁰Means, 81.

¹³¹Rogers, 179.

¹³²Reid and Gray, 18.

5. Boredom and curiosity.
6. Escape into a fantasy world that pretends to meet his unmet, unrealistic expectations.

Effect on Men's Self-worth

One significant way pornography damages a man's self-image is that it is contrary to the moral and religious values of many users. For example, more than 50 percent of Promise Keepers, a Christian evangelical group dedicated to uniting men to become godly influences in their families and in the world, report having a problem with pornography.¹³³ As one Promise Keeper reported, "Pornography relegated me to being a spectator in the church. The secret life I kept and the shame I felt neutralized my power as a role model and took me out."¹³⁴

In summary, pornography destroys a testimony. A testimony is built and tested over time. However, pornography can destroy the Christian testimony, self-respect and integrity overnight. Pornography also rips at the heart of a woman. Her self-esteem is shattered. Even the women in the adult industry feel this pain.

Susan Brown Miller said,

In pornography our bodies are being stripped, exposed, and contorted for the purpose of ridicule to bolster that 'masculine esteem' which gets its kick and sense of power from viewing females as anonymous, panting playthings, adult toys, dehumanized objects to be used, abused, broken, and discarded.¹³⁵

Cause for Separation and Divorce

Given the research already cited, it is not surprising that addiction to pornography

¹³³Maltz and Maltz, 87.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Rogers, 187.

is a contributor to separation and divorce. In the best study to date, 68 percent of divorce cases involved one party meeting a new lover over the Internet, 56 percent involved “one party having an obsessive interest in pornographic websites,” 47 percent involved “spending excessive time on the computer,” and 33 percent involved spending excessive time in chat rooms.¹³⁶

Pornography, which often takes place in these chat rooms, was a major factor in separation and divorce. In over 22 percent of the couples observed, the spouse was no longer living with the “cybersex” addict, and in many of the other cases, spouses were seriously considering leaving the marriage or relationship.¹³⁷

Effect on Children

Children living in homes where a parent is participating in cybersex are much more likely to be exposed to sexual images or activities. Research indicates that nearly 90 percent of children ages 8 to 16 who have access to the Internet have viewed pornographic sites while doing their homework. Of these, 91 percent unintentionally found the offensive sites while searching the Web.¹³⁸

If a parent is using the Internet for sex, the possibility for children having access and exposure to sexual sites increases. Furthermore, if a parent is regularly using the

¹³⁶Jill Manning, Senate Testimony, November 10, 2005, referencing: J. Dedmon, “Is the Internet bad for your marriage? Online affairs, pornographic sites playing greater role in divorces,” 2002, press release from American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 14, quoted in Fagan, 9.

¹³⁷Schneider, “Effects of Cybersex Addiction on the Family,” 56, quoted in Fagan.

¹³⁸Cerberian, Inc. http://www.cerberian.com/02products_abusestats.htm, quoted in Henderson, 151.

Internet for sex, at some point a child will stumble into it in the middle of the porn user's sexual activity.¹³⁹

Sex therapists Wendy and Larry Maltz point this out from an interview with one of their clients who said, "I spent the afternoon online looking at some pretty intense hard-core. I forgot to disconnect the computer. My daughter walked in there and saw this image on the screen and yelled, 'Mom!' I felt so ashamed and humiliated."¹⁴⁰

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children found that one in five children ages 10 to 17 who regularly use the Internet have received a sexual solicitation while online. One in four was unwillingly exposed to images of naked people or people having sex.¹⁴¹

Dr. Mark Laaser has written extensively on the subject of sexual addiction, even reflecting on his own struggles. His research reveals that most men who struggle with pornography today were first exposed to it as children.¹⁴² As the director and cofounder of the Christian Alliance for Sexual Recovery, he addressed a committee of the U.S. Congress by saying,

Pornography has the ability according to all psychological theory, to program children early. We are now seeing research that is telling us that, whereas in my generation of men, the average age a person first saw pornography was age eleven, now it is age five. A child who has the ability, and we're teaching them in school to do this, can get into these [internet porn] sites very easily—four, five, six, seven year

¹³⁹Carnes, Delmonico, and Griffin, 193.

¹⁴⁰Maltz and Maltz, 87.

¹⁴¹The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families.
<http://www.nationalcoalition.org>, quoted in Henderson, 151.

¹⁴²Henderson, 149.

olds now are seeing things that in my extensive history with pornography I never saw.¹⁴³

Schneider's study examined the effects of cybersex addiction on the family.

Schneider found that the following negative effects could impact children in homes where a parent's compulsive and or addictive sexual behavior is occurring:

- Decreased parental time and attention
- Encountering pornographic material a parent has acquired
- Encountering a parent masturbating
- Overhearing a parent engaged in phone sex
- Increased risk of parental separation and divorce
- Increased risk of parental job loss and financial strain
- Increased risk for consuming pornography themselves
- Exposure to the objectification of human beings, especially women
- Witnessing and/or being involved in parental conflict
- Witnessing and/or experiencing stress in the home related to online sexual activities.¹⁴⁴

Studies also indicate that if a parent discloses his struggle with the addiction to pornography to his children, intentionally or unintentionally, it can distort his children's sexual development.¹⁴⁵

In summary, exposure to pornography impacts sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly the porn user. When comparing their spouse's response to sexual behavior portrayed in pornography, both men and women become dissatisfied with their spouse's performance.

¹⁴³York and LaRue, 12-13, quoted in Henderson, 150.

¹⁴⁴Schneider, J. P. (2000). "Effects of cybersex addiction on the family: Results of a survey." *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity*, 7, 31-58; Schneider, J. P. (2003). "The impact of compulsive cybersex behaviors on the family." *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 18, 329-354, quoted in Manning, "The Impact of Internet Pornography on Marriage and the Family," 22.

¹⁴⁵M. Deborah Corley and Jennifer P. Schneider, "Sex Addiction Disclosure to Children: The Parents' Perspective," *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 10 (2003): 291-324, quoted in Fagan, 4.

Pornography affects both husband and wife's self-worth and it is a major contributor to separation and divorce. A father's access and addiction to porn can also affect his children's self-worth. Pornography is dangerous, damaging, and deadly.

Strategies for Prevention

This last section will cover the best approach to avoiding the temptations of pornography and strategies for prevention. It will also include biblical and practical steps to maintain a porn-free home environment where couples can experience healthy, intimate sexual experiences with their spouse.

Develop Healthy Intimacy

Sex is more than a physical act. Good sex is the reflection of a good relationship. Research indicates that fulfilling sex has at least four separate aspects that work together.¹⁴⁶ Four aspects of intercourse contribute to good sex. As Denver psychologist Gary Oliver once said in terms of marriage, "All of life is foreplay."¹⁴⁷ In commenting on how a wife's sexual responsiveness will be determined by how her husband relates or treats her during the day, Kevin Leman states that good sex is an all-day affair.¹⁴⁸ Intercourse literally means "to get to know someone intimately."¹⁴⁹

In our culture, we have reduced the word to refer only to the act of sex. Equally,

¹⁴⁶Gary Smalley, *Making Love Last Forever* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1996), 236-245. See also Craig, 63-67.

¹⁴⁷Quoted in Smalley, 237.

¹⁴⁸Leman, 57.

¹⁴⁹Smalley, 237.

we have nearly forgotten a traditional meaning of the verb *to know*—which was “to have sexual intercourse.”¹⁵⁰ The Bible says, “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived” (Gen 4:1). The two words intercourse and knowledge are closely aligned. Thus verbal intimacy is vital to a healthy sex life.

Verbal Intimacy

This involves getting to know our mate through conversation and spending time together. The women usually want to connect with their partners through verbal intimacy before they can enjoy the physical act. In his book *Making Love*, Dr. Gary Chapman describes that when it comes to the nature of the sex drive, the female’s drive or desire is far more tied to her emotions than is the man’s. If a woman feels loved by her husband, she desires to be sexually intimate with him.¹⁵¹

There are numerous ways a couple can work on developing verbal intimacy. Gary Smalley, in his book *Making Love Last Forever*, suggests some ways that busy couples can make time for verbal intimacy.¹⁵²

1. Make a rule that the TV is off during dinner, encouraging conversation. For that hour, let the answering machine take all phone calls except emergencies.
2. Write a monthly date night into your schedule that cannot be broken.
3. Take a walk together after dinner. It is a good time to talk, and it’s also good for you physically.
4. If you are allowed some flexibility in your work schedule, go in late one day after the kids have gone off to school. Enjoy the hour with your spouse.
5. Once or a twice a year, plan a weekend getaway for just the two of you.
6. Ask your friend to hold you accountable to meet with your mate at least once a week for a meaningful conversation.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Gary Chapman, *Making Love: The Chapman Guide to Making Sex an Act of Love* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2008), 10-12.

¹⁵²Smalley, 238-29.

7. Read a book together that you both feel will stimulate a discussion.

Verbal intimacy enhances a husband's romance with his wife. A survey asked women to fill in the blank: "If he were more romantic, I would more inclined to. . ." The answers were:

"Be excited to be with him."

"Keep myself looking attractive."

"Find out what he wants; try to help him fulfill his needs."

"Stay with him rather than find a new partner."

"Be in a good mood around him."

"Attend to his sexual needs."¹⁵³

During verbal intimacy, couples can learn new ways to think and talk about their sexuality. They can read books and articles on healthy sexuality. This is one way to avoid the temptation of pornography.

Emotional Intimacy

Sharing deep feelings with each other is emotional intimacy and it is vital to sexual satisfaction. In his book *Searching for Intimacy in Marriage*, Bryan Craig points out that one of the most critical factors in the communication process is the ability to identify and understand the feelings being expressed. He wrote, "Feelings are the gateway to a person's heart and soul."¹⁵⁴ Connecting with a spouse's feelings constitutes the most powerful part of the intimacy process because it brings with it a sense of closeness and vulnerability.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³Lucy Sanna with Kathy Miller, *How to Romance the Woman You Love—The Way She Wants You To!* (New York, NY: Gramercy Books, 1998), 189, quoted in Leman, 133.

¹⁵⁴Craig, 74.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*

This involves conversations that are linked to emotion with the question, “*How does that make you feel?*” This is especially significant to women. They are often most responsive to sexual intercourse when the entire relationship is open and loving—when they feel that their husband understands and value their feelings.¹⁵⁶

In *The Female Brain* by Dr. Louann Brizendine, a UCLA neuro-psychiatrist, she notes that during a male orgasm, the chemical oxytocin is released into the brain. In women, the same chemical, oxytocin, is released in the brain during meaningful conversation. That means it can be as exciting and pleasurable for a wife to connect with her husband emotionally as it is for her to connect with him sexually.¹⁵⁷

Spiritual Intimacy

Dr. Nick Stinnett conducted a highly publicized study at the University of Nebraska. After looking carefully at hundreds of families that considered themselves healthy, his research concluded that healthy families possess six common characteristics. One of those characteristics is “a shared personal faith in God.”¹⁵⁸ Surveys taken by sociologist Andrew Greeley indicate that “frequent sex coupled with frequent prayer make for the most satisfying marriages.”¹⁵⁹

Spiritual intercourse may be the highest level of intimacy. A husband and wife can know each other as they both turn to and to know God—heart to heart. In a chapter

¹⁵⁶Smalley, 240.

¹⁵⁷Louann Brizendine, *The Female Brain* (New York: Morgan Road Books, 2007), 15, quoted in Smalley & Cunningham, 104.

¹⁵⁸Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain, *Secrets of Strong Families* (New York, NY: Berkley, 1986), quoted in Smalley, 243.

¹⁵⁹“Talking to God,” *Newsweek*, 6 January 1992, 42, quoted in Smalley, 243.

titled “Praying Together: Guardian of Intimacy,” in their book *If Two Shall Agree: Praying Together As a Couple*, Carey and Pam Rosewell Moore quote one couple’s strong statement: “The most important goal of prayer together is that it keeps our relationship as a couple intimate and close, and it keeps our hearts open before the Lord as a couple. There is a lot of unspoken accountability in our walk with the Lord and with each other.”¹⁶⁰

In their book *The Language of Sex*, Smalley and Cunningham offer four spiritual commitments a couple should make that can change their marriage and sexual intimacy forever.¹⁶¹

Commitment 1: I will remove the expectation that my mate will meet all my needs. As a couple, whenever we begin to look to our spouse to meet all of our needs, we will be disappointed and feel let down. We must look to God to meet all our needs (see Phil 4:19).¹⁶² Thus, the challenge in all of our marriages is simply this: Do not expect our mate to meet all of our needs.

Commitment 2: I will make every effort to seek my fulfillment from God. Dr. Bob Paul of the National Institute of Marriage said something intriguing: “There are so many things out there that will be attractive to an unfulfilled person.”¹⁶³ That includes pornographic lust. Smalley and Cunningham offer the following counsel: “When we

¹⁶⁰Carey Moore and Pamela Rosewell Moore, *If Two Shall Agree: Praying Together As a Couple* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1992), 200, quoted in Smalley, 244.

¹⁶¹Smalley & Cunningham, 164-175.

¹⁶²Within the context of the verse, Paul is encouraging the Church, but the principle extends to into all of our lives. God is ultimately the One who meets our needs. He is the source of all that we are and will be, quoted in Smalley & Cunningham, 165.

¹⁶³Quoted in Smalley & Cunningham, 166.

make every effort to seek our fulfillment from God, we'll find ourselves not just lavished in God's love but also better able to lavish our spouse with love."¹⁶⁴

Commitment 3: I will take 100-percent responsibility for my spiritual journey. A marriage relationship is between the husband, the wife and God. As we pursue God together, the distance between us grows smaller. The deeper we grow in our relationship with Christ, the more loving we will be (see Eph 3:16-18). However, each must take responsibility for his or her own spiritual journey.

Commitment 4: I will make God, not my mate, the center of my life. Too often, couples believe that their happiness is based on each other, but our real happiness, our true joy, is based on our individual relationship with God. Thus, each mate should develop intimacy with God.

Intimacy with God

In a recent survey of a very large congregation in North America, the question was asked, "What do you fear the most?" The primary answer from the pew was a bit startling: "Intimacy with God."¹⁶⁵ Intimacy requires open communication, heart-to-heart connection, and a deep sense of mutual belonging. The psalmist declared, "I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. . . you have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 167.

¹⁶⁵Henderson, 104.

¹⁶⁶Ps 16:8, 11.

When one faces the temptations of pornography, he must fill his thoughts and emotions with the Scriptural truth stated above. God has something far more satisfying for him in an authentic, pure, real, and life-changing love-relationship with Jesus.

Commenting on Ps 16:8, 11, John Piper framed this issue well when he wrote,

The fire of lust's pleasures must be fought with the fire of God's pleasures. If we try to fight the fire of lust with prohibition and the threats alone—even the terrible warnings of Jesus—we will fail. We must fight it with a massive promise of superior happiness. We must swallow up the little flicker of lust's pleasure in the conflagration of holy satisfaction.¹⁶⁷

In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis reflected, “I find myself having a desire which no evidence in this world can satisfy; the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”¹⁶⁸ In another place, Piper also states, “The greatest hindrance to worship is not that we are a pleasure-seeking people, but that we are willing to settle for such pitiful pleasures.”¹⁶⁹

To avoid pornography, we must seek, find, and thoroughly enjoy God above all else. Harry Schaumburg notes that a compulsion involving pornography is a by-product of loneliness, pain, the self-centered demand to be loved and accepted regardless of the consequences, and a loss of a vital relationship with God.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷Piper, *Future Grace*, 336.

¹⁶⁸C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Essays* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 1-2, quoted in Daniel Henderson, *Think before you Look: Avoiding the Consequences of Secret Temptation* (Chattanooga, TN: 2005), 14.

¹⁶⁹John Piper, *The Dangerous Duty of Delight: The Glorified God and the Satisfied Soul* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2001), 55.

¹⁷⁰Harry W. Schaumburg, *False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addictions* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992), 23.

Physical Intimacy

Physical intercourse is a small part of the physical relationship. When thinking of physical intercourse, one must think in terms of touching, caressing, hugging, kissing, and romancing.¹⁷¹ From his interviews and counseling with women, Gary Smalley says that most women need eight to twelve meaningful touches a day to keep their energy level high and experience a sense of connectedness with their mate—a hug, a squeeze of the hand, a pat on the shoulder, a gentle kiss.¹⁷² Studies have shown that people get healthier even as a result of tender attention and touch of animals—dogs and cats. Everybody wins when we touch each other in a proper way.¹⁷³

Gary Chapman, a noted author and director of Marriage and Family Life Consultants, writes, “Sexual intercourse obviously involves physical touch. However, if you touch your spouse only when you have sex, and your spouse’s primary love language is physical touch, I can tell you sex will not be an act of love.”¹⁷⁴

In an interview with a counselee, Chapman made this observation:

One wife said, “The only time he ever touches me is when he wants to have intercourse. I never get a kiss, he never hugs me, he never takes my hand when we get out of the car. He never holds my hand when we sit together. My primary love language is physical touch. My emotional love tank is on empty. Then he wants to have sex. It’s almost more than I can bear.”

This husband is having sex, says Dr. Chapman, but he is not making love.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹Smalley, 241.

¹⁷²Smalley, 241.

¹⁷³F. B. Dresslar, “The Psychology of Touch,” *American Journal of Psychology* 6 (1984): 316, quoted in Smalley, 241.

¹⁷⁴Chapman, 56.

¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*

Bryan Craig drives the point home when he writes, “When we embrace sex only as performance and passion, it becomes superficial, exploitive, and a physical act void of our deepest yearnings for intimacy and emotional connection. But sexual intimacy is a desire to form an intimate union with our spouse where love and caring transcend self-interest and create emotional connection and fulfillment.”¹⁷⁶

Intimacy-oriented Sex

Intimacy-oriented sex involves connecting to one’s spouse with his body, his senses, his mind, and most of all, his heart.¹⁷⁷ Christian sex therapists attest that men who thoroughly enjoy sex with their spouse are less likely to feel a need or desire for pornography. In their counseling, Wendy and Larry Maltz noticed that one of the things many people who do not cultivate an ongoing relationship with porn have in common is that they feel secure and confident about themselves sexually. One of their clients said,

When I was in my twenties, I was curious about porn, but as time went by, however, my curiosity about pornography dissipated. I think that happened because I was so completely fulfilled in my sex life with my wife. We have really good communication, and I can explore my curiosity about sex with her without feeling bad or ashamed. And, I can experience things sexually with her that I could never get through pornography.¹⁷⁸

Thus, experiencing healthy, intimate sexual experiences with a real spouse is an excellent way to combat the temptation of porn.

Another way to avoid porn is to have a good sense of the differences between porn-driven sexuality and healthy sexuality. The chart in Appendix C highlights key

¹⁷⁶Craig, 98.

¹⁷⁷Maltz and Maltz, 253.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., 51.

differences between the sexual attitudes and behaviors porn promotes and those that exist in healthy sexual intimacy.

In summary, developing and maintaining healthy sexuality is an effective way to avoid the temptation of pornography. In intimacy-oriented sex, nobody is exploited or gets hurt. The sex is shame-free because it is consistent with one's overall beliefs, values, and goals of life.

Establish Boundaries

There are a number of different boundaries we set throughout our lives. They include emotional, social, relational, spiritual, and physical including sexual boundaries. Pia Mellody, in her book *Facing Codependence*, suggests that boundaries serve three primary functions:

First, they prevent others from intruding into our personal space or abusing us. Second, they keep us from intruding into the personal space of others and abusing them. Third, they create a framework or structure that provides us with self-identity, which defines us as individuals.¹⁷⁹

A boundary is what distinguishes us as separate from others. There are a number of different reasons why we must establish boundaries.

Reason 1: Safety. In their book, Reid and Gray explain that a boundary is like a fence around a home, a boundary protects us from the outside while giving us an area in which we can feel safe. Each individual is his own gatekeeper and determines who will be allowed to enter the solemn and sacred aspect of his life.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹Pia Mellody, *Facing Codependence* (New York: HarperCollins, 1989). Quoted in Reid and Gray, 38.

¹⁸⁰Reid & Gray, 38.

To avoid the temptation of pornography, an appropriate boundary might include placing the computer in an open area and having a family policy that requires any family members who are exposed to pornography to report it the same day. Those who successfully overcome sexual lust including pornography take pains to create environments that will keep them safe. Safety is found in establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries.

Reason 2: Abstinence. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of establishing boundaries is abstinence itself, saying “no” to something, including cybersex. In his book *Conquering Pornography*, Dennis Frederick offers three practical steps to help us avoid pornography:

When you are on the computer and feel the temptation to look at pornography, get up and leave. Walk away from the temptation. The same applies to television programs, DVDs, or printed material.
Say a prayer and rebuke the pornography and temptation in the name of Jesus.
Say it aloud.
Call a friend or talk with your wife openly. Create a situation so that you are not alone.¹⁸¹

The question one must ask is this: Is taking care of myself important enough to me that I will do what it takes to make that happen? Robert Bly expressed this concept well when he said, “The making of a man is making your body do what it doesn’t want to do.”¹⁸²

Reason # 3: Transparency. In marriage relationships, boundaries establish limits that provide the maximum environment for healthy intimacy to flourish. The boundaries

¹⁸¹Frederick, 227.

¹⁸²Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book about Men* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1992). Quoted in Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin, 94.

for a spouse are usually more transparent than for any other person. Reid & Gray point out that transparency represents how well we can see beyond the walls others establish to protect themselves and how well they can see beyond our walls. Transparent people allow others to see their true selves.¹⁸³

This transparency can enable spouses to know each other more intimately than individuals outside the marriage relationship. It also creates vulnerability to being hurt should a spouse take advantage of the trust that exists in marriage. A boundary is violated when a person crosses a line that defines our limits.¹⁸⁴ When a spouse indulges in pornography by seeking sexual gratification outside the marriage relationship, a boundary is violated. Trust is broken. Respect is diminished.¹⁸⁵

An example of a boundary regarding computer use might be a rule that requires a spouse to report any accidental exposures to pornography while on the computer. If a spouse has been exposed and informs his partner, this experience can be processed and strategies to avoid additional exposure can be established.¹⁸⁶ A good boundary is thus established that eliminates secrets and creates an atmosphere of trust in the home regarding computer use.

Affair-proof Marriage

A number of books and articles have been written that give practical tools for

¹⁸³Reid and Gray, 39.

¹⁸⁴Ibid.

¹⁸⁵Ibid.

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

avoiding porn and to keep one's marriage strong from the temptations of pornography.¹⁸⁷

To affair-proof one's marriage, one source recommends that the following guidelines should be followed and reviewed weekly:

1. Get filters that block out pornography sites.¹⁸⁸
2. Give all passwords to your spouse.
3. Teach your spouse to check the history of your Internet usage on the computer.
4. Go to bed at the same time with your spouse.
5. Subscribe to television programming packages that are completely porn-free.
6. Avoid video stores that carry X-rated movies.
7. Call ahead when staying at hotels to make sure they do not subscribe to channels with sexual content, and if they do, request that these channels not be available in your room when you check in.
8. When tempted, make a speedy exit; turn your heart toward home. When you see an image or a person who attracts your sexual thoughts, place your spouse in that picture and pursue the feelings and thoughts with your spouse in mind.
9. If you get cable or satellite, ask your wife to block all questionable stations using a password of her choice unknown to you.
10. Immediately change the channel anytime you are watching TV and something questionable happens to come on.
11. Join a men's group for prayer support and encouragement.
12. Memorize a dozen Bible verses on the subject of purity and holiness. For suggestions see the Bible study guide available at the following website.¹⁸⁹

Accountability

Why do we need an accountability partner? An accountability partner is just one more safety net that may prevent us from the use of pornography.

There are two reasons why an accountability partner is vital:

Reason 1: The Bible stresses the importance of accountability.

The wise man Solomon wrote:

¹⁸⁷See Penner and Penner, 318-19; 330-331. Maltz, 173-174. Henderson, 165-171.

¹⁸⁸Cerberian, CleanSurf, or Hedgebuilders (x3watch from www.xxxchurch.com).

¹⁸⁹www.strategicrenewal.com.

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”¹⁹⁰

This is the true essence of what an accountability partner is all about. It is being there for each other to strengthen one another when one of them is down. It is to pray with and remind each other of the real source of power against temptation and pornography.

Reason 2: Medical science research supports it. Dr. Richard Swenson in his book *The Overload Syndrome* writes that confession is therapeutic.¹⁹¹ Researchers have called it the “disclosure effect.” Simply disclosing a problem improves well-being in measurable ways. Thus, confessing sins to one another can be supported biblically and medically. James declared, “*Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed*” (5:16). Healing can be found in confession of sins to one another.

When one keeps his secret lifestyle hidden and known only to himself, it keeps him in bondage. The only way one can experience the power of God is with other brothers—by confessing, sharing, and opening his wounds. When a person does not have to hide those wounds and sins anymore, they lose a lot of their power.¹⁹² There is freedom when one makes his struggles known to another.

¹⁹⁰Ecc1 4:9-12.

¹⁹¹Rogers, 201.

¹⁹²Becky Beane, “The Problem of Pornography,” *Jubilee Magazine*, Summer 1998, 23, quoted in Rogers, 199.

An accountability partner is someone who can love and care but at the same time, be brutally honest and tough when it is needed. In his book *The Secret in the Pew*, David

Blythe comments that an accountability partner should meet the following criteria:

1. Be anchored in a healthy and committed relationship with Christ.
2. Truly desire to help and be accessible to you when you need him.
3. Be able to commit time to pray for you and meet with you on a regularly basis.
4. Be able to be discreet and confidential about the things that you share with him.
5. Be someone you trust and respect.
6. Not be afraid to address the issue head on.¹⁹³

The topic of pornography is extremely difficult for us to talk about, but we must. Find an accountability partner, someone we can be transparent with, someone who will keep our struggles confidential and hold us accountable for good decisions.

Summary

By developing an intimacy-oriented sex, setting boundaries, and using practical steps to maintain a porn-free home environment can help couples to avoid the temptation of pornography. By avoiding pornography, we steer clear of the pathway that could easily result in infidelity and family disaster.

¹⁹³Blythe, 78.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION NARRATIVE

The methodology of this project and its implementation strategies were built on a number of factors. In order to initiate an effective ministry program to help couples understand the devastating effects of pornography on marriages and families and strategies for prevention, the entire Madison Community Church program needed to be considered. Therefore, this section of the project description will focus first on program elements that were done of a general nature that were applicable to the entire church family. Such general elements became a vital part of the development of the program specifically aimed at the married couples and men, in particular.

These program elements should not be seen as separate from the specific program designed for married couples, but an indispensable part. All the elements listed below should not be understood as of equal value to the success or progress of the project. Rather, each element was designed carefully and deliberately to contribute to the overall success of the program.

General Program Elements Initiated

Church Board Meeting

In the summer of 2008 I presented to the Madison Community Church Board my plan to engage in the research project on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and*

Strategies for Prevention. During the devotional message, I stated the following staggering statistics of pornography among Christians:

Research indicates that 60 percent of Christian men are addicted to pornography.¹

A 2006 poll conducted by two Christian organizations found that 50 percent of all Christian men and 20 percent of Christian women are addicted to pornography.²

68 percent of the divorce cases involved one party meeting a new love interest over the Internet.

56 percent of the divorce cases involved one party having an obsessive interest in pornographic websites.

47 percent of the divorce cases involved one party spending excessive time on the computer.

33 percent of the divorce cases cited excessive time communicating in chat rooms.³

I shared briefly how pornography destroys our relationship with God, and ruins our testimony for Jesus. I also challenged men about our high calling in Christ Jesus. That is, we are called to be the spiritual leaders of our households, to live the Christ-like example, to maintain sexual purity, and to be the visual and guiding influence for our wives and our children.

Several of the board members seemed to appreciate the information provided and supported the idea of this project being useful for the church and married couples, in particular. Others expressed their willingness to support, not because they liked the idea

¹Daniel Henderson, back cover.

²Second Glance Ministries and www.christianet.com, 2006, quoted in Bernie Anderson, *Breaking the Silence* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2007), 78.

³Jill Manning, Senate Testimony, November 10, 2005, referencing: J. Dedmon, "Is the Internet bad for your marriage? Online affairs, pornographic sites playing greater role in divorces," 2002, press release from American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 14, quoted in Fagan, 9.

of the topic on pornography presented in a church setting, but because this study is my project dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Ministry. As a group, the members of the board were in favor of this project and voted to support it.

Upon the church board's approval, the Wisconsin Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church also granted permission to conduct a seminar at the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church and to do pretest and posttest surveys among couples of the church who would attend the seminar. See Appendix A for the Consent Letter.

Two-Question Survey

As part of the research for this project, a two-question survey was done among couples in the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church to assess the level of their interest in discovering the harmful effects of pornography on Christian marriage and in attending the seminar (see Appendix B for the survey).

An announcement was made in church for two consecutive Sabbaths regarding the purpose of the survey before it was given to couples. The participants were asked to respond "yes" or "no" when responding to the survey. Upon completion, respondents were asked to fold the survey and place it in a basket at the end of the service.

From a total of 34 couples who received the survey, only 26 returned it. Seventeen responded "yes" and nine said "no." It should be noted that eight couples did not return the survey.

Sermon Series on Sexual Intimacy

With the availability of the use of computer-generated PowerPoint presentations, I preached a series of four sermons on sexual intimacy to prepare the congregation and couples, in particular, for the upcoming seminar on pornography. Included in the sermon presentation slides would be the texts referred to in the message, as well as various sermon highlights, quotations, and other observations. A study outline was placed as a bulletin insert for members to use during the sermon and for future reference. These sermons (located in Appendix D) were delivered two months prior to the seminar.

In sermon one, I taught that sexuality is part of the original perfect creation of mankind. The first command given to mankind was to “become one” (Gen 2:24). This refers to sexual intimacy. It was given before sin. In sermon two, I shared with the congregation how sexual pleasure within marriage is encouraged and expected. In fact, Scripture instructs believers to be available to their spouses (I Cor 7:3-5).

In sermon three entitled, “*Men are from Dirt, Women are from Men*” I explained some commonly identified differences between men and women that affect their sexual relationship.⁴ Finally, in sermon four, I expounded on overcoming sexual lust and the keys to victory.

Profile of the Ministry Context

I began my pastoral ministry in Madison, Wisconsin in January of 2004. Within a matter of few months, I had couples and men, “in particular,” who came into my office

⁴The following books were used to prepare sermon three to explain the sexual differences: Gary Chapman, *Making Love*, 9-19; Clifford and Joyce Penner, *The Gift of Sex*, 192-195 and *The Married Guy's Guide to Great Sex*, 120-123.

for marriage counseling and shared their struggle with pornography. I saw a variety of mixed emotions, thoughts, and reactions from wives who discovered their husband's use of pornography. As I listened, I sensed anger, betrayal, rejection, confusion, guilt and humiliation in their voices.

In years past, when it came to marriage counseling, I did not have to deal with the problem of pornography or sexual addiction. Now, these Christian men whom I counseled are from normal Seventh-day Adventist homes and they all struggle with this tremendous bondage: an addiction to pornography. This started a journey for study and further understanding of the nature of pornography and its devastating effects on marriages and families.

In the summer of 2004, attending a seminar on Sexual Addiction at Andrews University was eye-opening! The seminar not only provided useful information on how many marriages, including Christian marriages, are being torn apart by the use of pornography, but also outlined a timeless approach to avoiding the temptations of pornography.

The seminar instructor introduced me to the following books:

Patrick Carne's books:

Facing the Shadow: Starting Sexual and Relationship Recovery, 2nd ed. (Carefree, AZ: Gentle Path, 2005).

Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction, 3rd ed. (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2001).

In the Shadows of the Net: Breaking Free of Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2001).

Henry J. Roger's book:

The Silent War: Ministering to Those Trapped in the Deception of Pornography (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2003).

Steve Arterburn's book:

Every Man's Battle: Every Man's Guide to Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time (Colorado Springs, CO: Water Brook Press, 2000).

These books have been a valuable road map for understanding the pervasive nature of pornography and have helped me take a positive and effective approach to dealing with issues related to pornography in counseling.

Dr. Patrick Carnes's books, especially *Out of the Shadows*⁵ and *In the Shadows of the Net*,⁶ have helped me understand problematic Internet sexual behavior: how it starts, how it develops such strength, and how it can even become addictive. This book offers a plan for successfully dealing with problematic cybersex activities, one that can enable a person to regain control of his life and his relationships.

Henry Roger's book *The Silent War*,⁷ addresses the very sensitive and critical subject of pornography with both biblical accuracy and compassion. Through his own struggles with sexual temptation, Henry reveals, in this book, the real price of pornography while offering hope for those looking and needing a way out.

Steve Arterburn, in his book *Every Man's Battle*,⁸ does a wonderful job of teaching how to put hedges around our mind. This book shares the stories of dozens who

⁵Patrick Carnes, *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*, 3rd ed. (Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing and Educational Services, 2001).

⁶Patrick Carnes, David L. Delmonico and Elizabeth Griffin with Joseph M. Moriarity, *In the Shadow of the Net: Breaking Free of Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior* (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2001).

⁷Henry J. Rogers, *The Silent War: Ministering to Those Trapped in the Deception of Pornography* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2003).

⁸Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey, *Every Man's Battle: Every Man's Guide to Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time* (Colorado Springs, CO: Water Brook Press, 2000).

have escaped the trap of sexual immorality and presents a practical, detailed plan for any man who desires sexual purity—perfect for men who have fallen in the past, those who want to remain strong today, and all who want to overcome temptation in the future.

In reading the above stated books, I gained valuable information and practical help for counseling couples who were struggling with pornography and its effects on intimacy, relationships, family, career, and self-respect.

In counseling couples who came to me with pornography problems and from reading books, surveys and studies done by others on the effects of porn, I discovered that pornography is one of the leading causes of divorce and family breakdown today and it needs to be addressed as part of the overall church program in order to offer concrete biblical strategies and practical steps for prevention.

Thus, my counseling experience, the seminar on Sexual Addiction at Andrews University, and reading books on pornography contributed to my interest in the project. The task of this project is to develop, implement and evaluate a seminar to help couples and particularly men in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madison to understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage and learn specific strategies for prevention.

Research Methodology

Current literature was reviewed. This included major books, magazines, and articles on websites that were used as resource materials to design a seminar. The literature and other information researched that pertains to the subject of pornography have helped to include the following subject matter in the seminar. (1) The pervasive and addictive nature of pornography, how it distorts God's gift of sex and teaches a fraudulent message about sexual intimacy. (2) The myths about pornography and its

effects on marriage relationships and how it destroys marriages as well as distorting our children's ideas of sex and sexuality. (3) The best approach to avoiding the temptations of pornography and strategies for prevention.

As part of the seminar, a survey instrument (see Appendix B) was developed to assess the participant's knowledge and attitude towards pornography and to determine measurable changes. The details of the research instrument, the interpretation of the data, and the conclusions drawn from that data are described in Chapter 5. Conclusions and recommendations based on the research are summarized in Chapter 6.

Development of the Intervention

As part of this research project, a seminar was presented to meet the following objectives: To help couples understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage; to give insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexuality; to provide biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect themselves from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

Theological Foundation

The seminar was developed to reflect clearly the theological foundation of pornography lust and sexual intimacy. An examination of the Scriptures searching for theological instructions and counsels that might be relevant to the project was done. The writings of Ellen White were also searched for references that address the issue of sexual lust.

A biblical theology of sexual intimacy must recognize that sexual intimacy is exclusively reserved for marriage for the following purposes. First, it establishes the one-

flesh union.⁹ Second, it provides for sexual intimacy within the marriage bond. The word “know” indicates a profound sense of sexual intimacy.¹⁰ Third, sexual intercourse is for the mutual pleasure of husband and wife.¹¹ Fourth, sexual intimacy is for procreation.¹² The Bible also warns against the misuse of sex. Premarital and extra-marital sex is condemned.¹³ Even thoughts of sexual immorality which are often fed by pornographic material are condemned.¹⁴

Pornography can have significant harmful effects on the user and on marriage relationships. These include a comparison mentality, a performance-based sexuality that only forbidden things are sexually satisfying,¹⁵ distorted views of sexual intimacy, decreased emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy, strained communications and increased marital conflict, and increased risk of divorce.¹⁶

Christians, therefore, must work to keep themselves pure by fleeing immorality¹⁷ and thinking on things that are pure.¹⁸ They make no provision for the flesh.¹⁹ Sex is

⁹Gen 2:24-25; Matt 19:4-6.

¹⁰Gen 4:1.

¹¹Prov 5:18-19.

¹²Gen 1:28.

¹³I Cor 6:13-18; I Thess 4:3.

¹⁴Matt 5:27-28.

¹⁵Anderson, *Moral Dilemmas*, 152-153.

¹⁶Reid and Gray, 17.

¹⁷I Cor 6:18.

¹⁸Phil 4:8.

¹⁹Rom 13:14.

holy. It is a sacred place shared in the intimacy of marriage. And it is an act of worship, a sacrament of marriage that invites and welcomes the very presence of God.²⁰ Ellen

White stressed the importance of this when she wrote,

All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman’s heart—the wife to soften and improve her husband’s character and give it completeness—fulfill God’s purpose for them....
”Angels of God will be guests in the home, and their holy vigils will hallow their marriage chamber.”²¹

Scripture admonishes us to “avoid every kind of evil.”²² This involves bringing God’s standards to bear in our evaluation of what we watch and responding accordingly—whether this means refusing to watch something, refuting its message, or agreeing with it. Pornography leads to lust and lust is sin.

The Literature Review

Closely tied to an examination of the Scriptures searching for theological foundation is the current literature. The seminar was also developed and built upon the review of Christian literature and other current books and articles from websites.

The outline used in the seminar (see Appendix C) is referenced as Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention. Six main points were developed from the study of current books: (1) Why this Seminar, (2) Defining Pornography, (3) Types of Pornography, (4) Myths about Pornography, (5) Harmful Effects of

²⁰Gardner, 5.

²¹Ellen White, *Adventist Home*, 99.

²²I Thess 5:22.

Pornography, (6) Strategies for Prevention. For a detailed outline of the seminar, see Appendix C.

Implementation Narrative

Another key element in the process of addressing the problems couples in the church faced with pornography was the implementation of the seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention*. Therefore, the last section of this chapter will focus on a detailed chronological implementation of the seminar participants and sessions. The seminar surveys, evaluation design, data analysis and interpretation, and implications for seminar presenters are presented in chapter 5.

Participants

The participants for the seminar were recruited by a letter of personal invitation six weeks prior to the seminar outlining the purpose, objectives and the confidential nature of the seminar. The letter specified that the invitation was open to all married couples of the church. A seminar response card was included.

Seminar participants were asked to return the card anonymously through the mail. About two-thirds responded immediately. The rest returned their reply card in the intervening weeks. Three couples responded two days before the seminar. A few elderly couples called to say that they did not see the need for a pornography seminar but would help with potluck lunch or assist with transporting couples who needed a ride to church.

The current church directory was used to choose the participants. The letter of invitation was sent to all married couples in the church, including the inactive members.

Twenty nine couples returned their response card. No response was received from the inactive couples.

The seminar began on Saturday morning at 9:15 a.m. The seminar ended at 5:00 p.m. with a total of three sessions each lasting about ninety minutes. The method of presentation was lecture with PowerPoint. All fifty-eight participants were asked to make a commitment to attend all three sessions. Three couples did not stay for the afternoon sessions. Fifty-two people attended all sessions. The Seminar Invitation Letter and the Seminar Response Card are in Appendix A. The Seminar Outline is located in Appendix C. The Seminar Survey One and Seminar Survey Two are in Appendix B.

Sessions

The first session began with a song service and prayer. Seminar Survey One was passed out with survey instructions. Upon completion, the respondents were instructed to place the survey in a sealed envelope and deposit it in a box. The content of the first session dealt with why pornography is a problem in our nation, in marriage, and in the church. The types, definitions and myths about pornography were also covered. The instructor provided couples with specific information on the deception of pornography and how both soft and hard pornography are harmful and how they lead to the same hurts and destruction of the relationship.

In the first session, the couples were also shown the nature of lust and how God tells us to flee from it (2 Tim 2:22). Lust is a perversion of sexual desire which God gave us. It must be exercised within the confines of marriage (Eccl 9:9). Sex is simply a by-product of an intimate and healthy relationship with one's spouse. Anything else falls short of God's design for sexual intimacy (Job 31:1).

At the beginning of the second session, couples were instructed to take the Improving Sexual Intimacy Wish List (Appendix C) which is referenced as an Intimacy Wish List—What Husbands Wish and What Wives Wish. After completing the inventory, they were to take it home to discuss the wish list with their spouse to make their sexual relationship better. Before couples began taking the inventory, the instructor presented a brief overview of the key differences between men and women in the nature of the sex drive and sexual stimulation that makes them ready for sex. A husband and wife must discover and accept these differences before they can begin to find mutual satisfaction.

In the second session, we explored the harmful effects of pornography. First, pornography distorts reality. Second, it destroys a wife's self-esteem. Third, it never satisfies and always craves for more. Fourth, it devalues sex, and finally, pornography addiction can be passed to the next generation. One of the most important truths a wife should realize is that her husband's problem is not her fault. There are many reasons why a husband may choose to develop a pornography habit. These reasons were discussed in the seminar.

The purpose of the second session was to help couples understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage and how relationships take more time, more energy, and more commitment of our whole selves. It also requires more vulnerability and trust. However, pornography is built solely on lust. Its effects on marriage are devastating. It decreases trust and emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy. It increases marital conflict and the risk of divorce. It distorts views of sexual intimacy. God's design is one

man, one woman, becoming one flesh and living a life in obedience to Him. This relationship is built on love.

At the beginning of the third session, respondents viewed part two of a DVD presentation entitled, *Freedom Begins Here!* It is a dynamic series of DVD-driven “Toolkits” designed specifically to empower individuals and churches with the resources needed to recognize and face the crisis of pornography and sexual addiction head on.²³ A brief discussion followed. Most participants felt that viewing the DVD on starting a support group was the least helpful. Some believed that the DVD would be most helpful to pastors.

The third session focused on the strategies for prevention or avoiding the use of pornography. First, we discussed the need for developing a healthy intimacy with one’s spouse. Pornography focuses on a very narrow aspect of intimacy and it promotes selfishness that destroys a healthy relationship which requires selflessness. Sexual union between a husband and wife is an outward manifestation of their inward commitment to connect more deeply as spouses. Pornography offers a quick escape with no relational qualities.

Next, we discussed the four areas of intimacy: verbal, emotional, spiritual and physical. Sex is more than a physical act. Good sexual intimacy is the reflection of a

²³Hosted by America's leading marriage expert Dr. Gary Smalley and Pastor Ted Cunningham, *Freedom Begins Here* is filled with relevant, life-changing material. With in-depth teaching from Dr. Mark Laaser, recognized as the leading Christian authority on sexual addiction, *Freedom Begins Here* is standing in the gap by providing the most complete resource available to help people find freedom from the stronghold of pornography and sexual addiction. *Freedom Begins Here* DVD series can be purchased at <http://smalleyonlinestore.com/videosanddvds/smallgroup.aspx>.

good relationship. Research indicates that fulfilling sex has all four separate aspects that work together.

The main thrust of teaching this part of the seminar was to show couples that the sexual union is an example of the way God would like to relate to mankind. That is, God has a passionate desire to be in relationship with us. He compares this desire to the eagerness a bridegroom has to be with his bride (see Isa 62:5). Thus, sexual intimacy is a picture of our intimate relationship with God but pornography distorts God's intentions for sexual intimacy.

The instructor also provided the participants with specific information on establishing boundaries (internal and external) and having an accountability partner. Like two center tent poles, intimacy and accountability are essential to upholding any commitment one makes to sexual integrity. When one keeps his secret lifestyle hidden and known only to himself, it keeps him in bondage. There is something liberating, a sense of being released from a life sentence, that occurs when one makes her struggles known to another. When we do not share our problems with other believers in Christ, there is no one else to hold us and our actions accountable.

Finally, the couples were given biblical keys for overcoming lust and winning the battle of the mind. Instructions were given to use a good Bible verse as a shield to protect oneself from the use and influence of pornography. Job 31:1 is a good example: *"I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl."* To use this Bible text as a shield verse and try repeating that to oneself when tempted is one way to overcome lust.

At the end of the third session, the couples were given an extensive resource guide (see Appendix F) that contains a list of Christian organizations that provide referral

services for obtaining professional and other supportive help for people who struggle with pornography or are addicted to it. These organizations also provide assistance through their HelpLine to those harmed by pornography. They offer consultation with professionals and church leaders regarding sexual compulsivity, as well as links to web sites to help select Internet blocking or monitoring systems. The web sites in this resource guide are highly recommended for information on the latest technology for filtering Internet pornography.

In summary, this seminar was designed to provide couples with biblical strategies, safeguards or accountability methods, and practical steps to help protect oneself from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it. At the close of the seminar, the respondents were given 15 minutes to take seminar survey two. Upon completion, they were reminded to deposit the survey in the box. The seminar ended with a song and prayer.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Outcomes and evaluation of this project were based on the evaluation of a seminar. In order to find out the effectiveness of this project, a seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention* was held at the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church, Madison, Wisconsin. Therefore, this chapter will focus on surveys, evaluation design, data analysis and interpretation, and implications for seminar presenters.

Surveys

To determine whether measurable changes had taken place in the participant's knowledge and attitude towards pornography, seminar participants were surveyed. Seminar Survey One and Seminar Survey Two were given. The participants were asked to choose a six digit number to maintain total anonymity when matching seminar survey one and survey two responses. Upon completion, respondents were asked to drop the surveys in a box in a sealed envelope.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation is summative in nature. The aim is to use the results and conclusions of the evaluation to modify and improve the seminar in the future. The approach to this evaluation is objective. Specific intended outcomes of the seminar are

evaluated to see if the objectives and goals were met. The evaluation design is descriptive and non-experimental. Data was collected by using two surveys (see Appendix B) that were given to married couples who had attended all three sessions of the seminar to see what changes have occurred from Seminar Survey One to Seminar Survey Two.

Seminar Survey One had three sections. The first section (Part A) contained twenty-seven questions. The respondents were asked to circle the letter of the best answer. The second section (Part B) had two questions and couples were asked to circle the number of their choice. The third section (Part C) also had two questions. The participants were instructed to write their response in the space provided. Seminar Survey Two had three sections as well. The first had twenty-eight questions, the second contained two questions and the last had seven questions.

The questions in the survey asked the couples to share their reactions to and evaluation of the program and how it affected them. The content addressed on the instrument is relevant to dealing with the objectives of the seminar. Many items were measured to see whether the respondents learned the objectives of the seminar and what they thought of it.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Questions 1-27 in the survey are the same for Seminar Surveys One and Two. These questions focused on evaluating the participant's knowledge on the effects of pornography and strategies for prevention. Questions 28-37 in Seminar Survey Two asked the couples to share their reactions to the seminar and how it affected them. The following is a report and evaluation of their responses.

Table 1 summarizes the responses of all participants. A dependent means t-test was used to determine whether the changes from the Pretest to the Posttest were statistically significant. The change column in Table 1 indicates the difference in percentage correct between Seminar Survey One (Pretest) and Survey Two (Posttest).

Respondents as a whole scored high on most of the survey questions. Of the 21 questions, 16 showed significant change from Seminar Survey One to Seminar Survey Two ($p < .05$). As one compares the results of the two surveys, it is clear that a significant majority of the respondents have learned the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage.

Questions 1-6: These questions focused on what percent of men and women are addicted to pornography. The questions were designed to help couples understand that pornography is most certainly a serious problem in our nation, the church and marriage. In addition, these questions addressed the issue of how many problems that couples experience with regards to intimacy, self-esteem, sexual expectations and sexual fulfillment can be directly traced to involvement with pornography.

There was significant change from Seminar Survey One to Seminar Survey Two to all six questions. For instance, before the seminar, only 32.69 percent answered question 3 of the survey correctly. Their answer after the seminar increased to 63.46 percent. This is an increase of 30.8 percent. On items 1, 3, 4, and 6, the respondent's change ranged from 25 to 42 percent. Five of the items were higher than 85 percent at the end of the seminar. The seminar really worked for these questions. There was a small increase for item 2 (15 percent) and for item 5 there was only an 11 percent

TABLE 1
CHANGE FROM SEMINAR SURVEY ONE TO SEMINAR SURVEY TWO
QUESTIONS 1-20 AND 27

Q	Question Topic	Pretest		Posttest		t	df	p
		% Correct	% Correct	Change				
1.	Percentage of regular users of pornography	48.08	90.38	42.31	5.68	51	0.00	
2.	Types of pornography that are harmful	69.23	84.62	15.38	2.06	51	0.04	
3.	Percentage of Christian men addicted to pornography	32.69	63.46	30.77	4.08	51	0.00	
4.	Percentage of Christian women addicted to pornography	69.23	94.23	25.00	3.75	51	0.00	
5.	Excuses pornography users give	82.69	94.23	11.54	2.57	51	0.01	
6.	Percentage of workers visit porn websites during office hours	51.92	84.62	32.69	4.97	51	0.00	
7.	Most harmful effect of soft-core pornography	21.15	48.08	26.92	2.94	51	0.01	
8.	The main reason pornography is a false intimacy	32.69	28.85	-3.85	-0.42	51	0.67	
9.	Effects of pornography on marriage	90.38	94.23	3.85	1.00	51	0.32	
10.	The wife's feeling towards her husband's use of porn	80.77	92.31	11.54	1.94	51	0.05	
11.	The reason pornography is the opposite of healthy intimacy	40.38	67.31	26.92	3.24	51	0.00	
12.	Sexual relationship between husband and wife teach about God	53.85	94.23	40.38	5.87	51	0.00	
13.	Aspects of intimacy contribute to satisfying sex	90.38	96.15	5.77	1.35	51	0.18	
14.	Wives more likely to do when they lack emotional connection	3.85	57.69	53.85	7.17	51	0.00	
15.	Creating boundaries in marriage	73.08	96.15	23.08	3.91	51	0.00	
16.	Internal boundaries refer to	59.62	63.46	3.85	0.44	51	0.65	
17.	To avoid pornography requires this external boundary	90.38	86.54	-3.85	-0.81	51	0.42	
18.	The reason accountability is a safety net for avoiding porn	19.23	40.38	21.15	2.52	51	0.01	
19.	The most important task of an accountability partner	67.31	82.69	15.38	2.06	51	0.04	
20.	The reason most men have no accountability partner	13.46	59.62	46.15	6.15	51	0.00	
27.	According to psychologists the number of weeks to form a habit	61.54	82.69	21.15	3.33	51	0.00	

increase on Seminar Survey Two. The seminar did not have as much of an effect on these two items as I had expected.

Questions 7-10: These questions sought to determine the respondents' attitude toward soft-core pornography and what effects it can have on marriage. The intent was to discover whether the respondents knew whether soft-core porn is just as harmful as hard-core and both lead to the same dead end. They lead to the same hurts and destruction of the relationship. One should not minimize or trivialize the effects that either soft or hard pornography has on one's life.

For items 7 and 10, there were significant changes of between 11 to 27 percent after the seminar. There was a small increase of approximately 4 percent to question 9 and for item 8, there was a decrease of 4 percent. Although there was only a slight increase in the participant's response to question 9 after the seminar, it was already high on Seminar Survey One (90 percent). Apparently, many of them knew the answer and were aware of the effects pornography can have on marriage.

Questions 11-14: This series of questions focused specifically on the respondents' perception on healthy intimacy. The aim was to find out if the participants understood the fact that fulfilling sex has four separate aspects: verbal, emotional, and spiritual that work together to contribute to mutually satisfying physical intimacy.

There were significant changes for questions 11, 12, and 14. On these three items, the correct response rate increased between 27 to 58 percent at the end of the seminar. Two of these items were higher than 94 percent on the posttest. This shows that the majority of the respondents tended to know that pornography is the opposite of

healthy intimacy and it distorts God's intentions for sex. There was only about a 6 percent increase for item 13 on Seminar Survey Two.

Question 12 asked whether sexual intimacy between a husband and wife teach about our relationship with God. About 54 percent answered correctly on Seminar Survey One but after the seminar, nearly 95 percent believe that sexual intimacy is a picture of our relationship with God. This is an increase of 41 percent.

Questions 15—17: These items dealt with whether the respondents perceived that boundaries in a marriage relationship establish limits that provide the maximum environment for healthy intimacy to flourish. There was a significant change for item 15 after the seminar, an increase of 23.08 percent. There was a small increase of 3.85 percent for question 16 and for item 17, a small decrease of 3.85 percent.

Before the seminar, 73.08 percent correctly answered question 15. Their correct answers after the seminar had increased to 96.15 percent. This indicates that a large majority of participants recognized the need for establishing boundaries because when a spouse indulges in pornography by seeking sexual gratification outside the marriage relationship, a boundary is violated. Trust is broken.

Questions 18 to 20: These items addressed the issue of accountability. Question 18 asked why accountability is considered another safety net for avoiding the use of pornography. Question 19 added whether the participants knew the most important task of an accountability partner. Question 20 queried the underlying reason why most men have no accountability partner. There were significant changes from Seminar Survey One to Seminar Survey Two to all three questions. The intent of the questions focused on whether the respondents believe that teamwork is critical in overcoming pornography.

On items 18 and 20, the respondent's correct responses increased from 21 to 26 percent. For instance, before the seminar in question 18 of the survey, only 19.23 percent answered it correctly. Their correct answers after the seminar had increased to 40.38 percent.

Question 19 was higher than 82 percent at the end of the seminar. The seminar really worked for this item. This indicates that a significant majority of the respondents understood that the most important task of an accountability partner is someone who can love and care for you, but at the same time, be brutally honest and tough on you when you need it.

Question 27: This question focused specifically on the respondents' perception on how many weeks of doing something every day will help form a regular habit in their lives. There was a significant change in the participant's response to this question. Before the seminar, only 61.54 percent answered correctly. At the end of the seminar, their correct answers had increased to nearly 83 percent (82.69).

In summary, a larger percentage of the respondents believe in accountability methods and practical steps to help protect oneself from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

Table 2 summarizes and presents results on questions 21 to 26. The range of scores is from 1 to 4. Means that fell between 3.26 and 3.70 may be interpreted as "very true" and those that fell between 3.06 and 3.25 as "true."

TABLE 2
CHANGE FROM SEMINAR SURVEY ONE TO SEMINAR SURVEY TWO
QUESTIONS 21-26

Q	Question Topic	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Change	t	df	p
21.	Husband's desire to have sex irrespective of the relationship	3.26	3.60	0.34	3.49	49	0.00
22.	Desire for sexual release when the testosterone level is normal	3.16	3.44	0.28	2.71	49	0.00
23.	The male is sexually stimulated by sight	3.44	3.70	0.26	2.77	49	0.00
24.	The female's sex drive is far more tied to her emotions	3.48	3.62	0.14	1.85	49	0.07
25.	Physiological urges dependent on the quality of relationship	3.06	3.28	0.22	1.63	49	0.10
26.	The female is stimulated by touch	3.14	3.34	0.20	1.81	49	0.07

Questions 21 to 23: This series of questions focused specifically on the respondents' perception on how true these factors are for men when it comes to sexual intimacy. There was a significant change from pretest to posttest on all three items. Average responses on the posttest for these three items fell within the "very true" range.

Questions 24 to 26: These items dealt with whether the respondents perceived how true these factors are for women when it comes to sexual intimacy. While the changes from pretest to posttest for all three items were positive, none were statistically significant. The average responses on the posttest for these three items fell within the "very true" range.

As one compares the results of the two surveys, it is clear that a significant majority of the respondents have learned the key differences between men and women in terms of the nature of sex drive and sexual stimulation that makes them ready for physical intimacy.

Question 28 in table 3 addressed the issue of how committed the participants were to discussing the "Improving Sexual Intimacy" Wish List after the seminar. The purpose is to discover what each spouse would do or stop doing to make the sexual relationship better and thus to protect oneself from the influence of pornography.

The frequency in table 3 indicates the number of respondents and their commitment level. As a whole, 61.5% were willing "to a great extent" to discuss the list. Only 3.8% gave the "not at all" response.

Question 29 in table 4 addressed the respondents' ratings of their level of sexual intimacy with their spouse with 1 being low and 10 being high. Of the 52 participants in

the survey, 26 rated above the midpoint (7-10). Eleven rated below (1-3). This suggests that about one-third of the respondents need to improve their sexual intimacy with their spouse.

TABLE 3
RESPONSE FOR ITEM 28

Q	Question Topic	Response	Frequency	Percent
28.	Committed to discussing “improving sexual intimacy” wish list	Not at all	2	3.8
		Very little	3	5.8
		Somewhat	15	28.8
		To a great extent	32	61.5

TABLE 4
RATINGS FOR ITEM 29

Q	Question Topic	Rating	Frequency	Percent
29.	Rating sexual intimacy with spouse	1	5	9.6
		2	3	5.8
		3	3	5.8
		4	1	1.9
		5	6	11.5
		6	8	15.4
		7	5	9.6
		8	8	15.4
		9	5	9.6
		10	8	15.4

Question 30 in table 5 sought to discover the respondents' ratings on whether their marriage is safe enough to share with each other when tempted by any form of pornography with 1 being very safe and 10 being very unsafe. Of all the items in the survey, a wide range of responses were given to this question. Seventeen respondents (32.7 percent) feel very safe and six (11.5 percent) feel very unsafe.

Average responses for this item fell within the "neutral" range. This indicates a need for couples to work at giving each other the security to truly open up and be known at a deep, intimate level without fear of being blamed, criticized, and condemned. This, in turn, can help develop a healthy intimacy and avoid the influence of pornography.

Individual Comments

Of the 52 participants in the questionnaire, 37 wrote individual comments for questions 31-37. Questions 31 and 32 asked the participants what safeguards or accountability methods they have in place to protect themselves from the use of pornography or to overcome sexual lust. Most respondents indicated that in addition to adding a blocking-software to their computer system, they would have an accountability partner who could be honest and tough when they need it, but at the same time, be there to pray with and remind each other that God is the real source of power against temptation and lust.

Nearly all the respondents expressed that they would use a Bible verse as their shield verse to draw strength when faced with sexual lust. Several wrote Job 31:1—"I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl"—as a protective verse and stated that one should try repeating that verse to oneself to win the battle over the influence of pornography.

TABLE 5
RATINGS FOR ITEM 30

Question Topic	Rating	Frequency	Percent
30. Rating the level of security in marriage to discuss pornography	1	17	32.7
	2	5	9.6
	3	6	11.5
	4	4	7.7
	5	5	9.6
	6	1	1.9
	7	4	7.7
	8	4	7.7
	9	0	0
	10	6	11.5

Question 33 asked the participants to describe how the seminar matched or did not match their expectations. Several respondents felt that the seminar met their expectations. One person wrote, “I was a little uncomfortable with the topic and almost did not come. But I thought it will help me understand my spouse better.” Another respondent stated, “A great opportunity to be in this seminar to learn a lot of things on how to stay healthy on marriage and intimacy.” This person, along with several others, noted that the seminar was informative and gave steps to prevent porn and strengthen intimacy.

Question 34 asked the respondents to explain what aspects of the seminar benefited them the most. A wide range of responses were given. The following contains participant’s comments about what was helpful:

1. One respondent wrote, “A person can overcome porn. Reinforcing what a good marriage should be and more biblical truths. This seminar opened the door for interesting conversations. Completed some areas of knowledge I did not previously have.

Understanding how porn makes my wife feel “not good enough.” Statistical information was good. It reminded me of my commitment to spouse.”

2. Several indicated that learning the differences between men and women regarding sexual intimacy was beneficial. One spouse stated, “A chance for my husband to see what I have been telling him about how I as a woman related to him is real and supported by research.”

Another indicated, “It has helped me and my spouse to take a closer look at our intimacy relationship so we can avoid pornography in the future.”

3. Some stated that the third session of the seminar on strategies for prevention and how to guard oneself against the evils of pornography was helpful.

4. One person wrote that the first session of the seminar on Myths about Pornography helped her to see that porn is a problem in marriage. She also indicated that her husband believed in the myth that pornography will help his sex life and that it will help keep his sex life fresh and exciting. She wrote, “It’s not just me who has a husband who enjoys looking at porn, but many wives go through it too. This seminar helped me to understand why my husband looks at porn and how to help him and satisfy his needs.”

Question 35 asked the respondents to explain what aspects of the program were least helpful. Most participants felt that viewing the DVD on starting a support group was the least helpful. Some believed that the DVD would be most helpful to pastors. One person noted that there was too much focus on men and not enough on the wife’s role. Another indicated that there was a lack of audience involvement.

Question 36 sought to determine whether the respondents had a change in attitude towards pornography after the seminar. Of the 35 who gave short responses, only 3

indicated no change, 6 people wrote that it just reinforced what they knew but most expressed that their participation in the seminar changed their attitude. One person wrote, “More disgusted with porn than before because of what it does to marriage.” Another respondent stated, “It is hard on marriage. It just helps me better understand why I feel the way I do (upset) when my husband does it.”

Another respondent proposed, “I hate it vehemently. It is the enemy that needs to be repeatedly stabbed dead by the sword.” Others stressed the importance of a support system such as having an accountability partner or using a Bible verse as a shield to help protect them from the influence of pornography. Two people stated that the seminar gave solid tools to help others including members of their own family. One of them wrote, ‘I was shocked about the number of people addicted. I didn’t realize how pervasive it is in the church.’ Another indicated that it educated him to stay away from it. One respondent wrote, “I now recognize more things as pornography than I had previously realized.” Another respondent proposed, “Be honest and tough on your feelings and thoughts towards your spouse.”

Question 37 is the last one in the survey that asked the respondents how their participation in the seminar increased understanding of the effects of pornography on marriage. In summary, of the 27 who gave brief responses, only one person stated no change. The other 26 felt that their participation in the seminar had heightened their understanding of the destructive nature that pornography has on marriage. The following is a list of their responses:

1. “Pornography can destroy marriages—good ones and bad ones. There was a lot of great information: (As a side note: I had first found out about my husband’s use of

pornography approximately 2 weeks prior to your invitation to this class. My husband opened the letter 1st and we knew we were to come. This is truly an answered prayer!)”

2. “I know 1st hand how destructive it is. I’m sterile with the series of sexual diseases my 1st husband gave me. It all started with pornography.”

3. “Increased more knowledge about the topic and how I can use the strategy to save my relationship and help/share it with others.”

4. “It not only informed me of things I wasn’t aware of but gave me a better understanding of what people go through with this type of addiction.”

5. “It helped me a lot. I know I’m not alone in this. Other wives have husbands who are actually addicted. Let the Bible guide my mind and thoughts. Learn how to control most lust issues.”

6. One respondent wrote, “It helped to clarify the impact on a marriage, though I have experienced it subjectively. It could be a worse disaster to a healthy marriage.”

Implications for Seminar Presenters

This study suggests that marriage seminar instructors can help provide couples with biblical strategies, accountability methods, and practical steps to help protect themselves from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

As one evaluates the results of the two surveys of this seminar, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Nearly 95 percent of the respondents believe pornography can destroy marriage. Over 96 percent understand that pornography is the opposite of healthy intimacy and it distorts God’s intentions for physical intimacy. Almost 83 percent of the participants are in favor of having an accountability partner or adding a blocking-software to their

computer system. All this indicate that a significant majority of the respondents believe that pornography has devastating effects on marriage relationships and that it must be avoided at all costs.

Although the overall impact of the seminar appears to be very positive for almost all participants, it should be noted that there was a slight decrease in the respondent's response to questions 8 and 17. For instance, question 8 addressed the issue of the main reason pornography is considered false intimacy. The purpose was to discover whether the respondents knew that pornography is an enemy of intimacy and it does not focus on all four aspects of intimacy: verbal, emotional, spiritual, and physical and that the four areas of intimacy are vital to sexual satisfaction.

About 33 percent answered the question correctly on Seminar Survey One but at the end of the seminar, only 28.85 percent correct response. The respondent's response rate had a slight decrease (3.85 percent). Apparently, some misunderstood the question. A possible reason for this could be that they did not pay attention to the instructions during the seminar or other possible answers to this question in the survey were too close or confusing.

However, when asked what aspects of intimacy contribute to mutually satisfying sex (question 13), about 96 percent answered the question correctly and their response was slightly higher after the seminar (96.15 percent). As one compares the results of the two questions (8 and 13), it is clear that a rephrasing of question 8 is recommended.

In question 17 of the Seminar Survey One, the respondents were asked what external boundary they would set to avoid the use of pornography. 90.38 percent answered correctly. At the end of the seminar, only 86.54 percent answered it right, a

slight decrease (3.85 percent). A possible reason for this could be either the respondents did not pay careful attention to choosing the right answer or that the answer to this question might not have been made clear during instruction.

One of the purposes of the seminar was to help couples learn biblical keys for overcoming lust and pornography. In the responses of many respondents as referred to in the individual comments section, we can conclude that the overall impact of the program appears to be very positive for most participants and the seminar objectives have been met.

Nevertheless, the following recommendations and changes could serve as a springboard for devising a seminar which might produce better results.

Recommendations 1: On the survey instrument, respondents should be asked to identify their gender in the section on instructions. In addition, husband and wife should be instructed to have the same 6-digit number for the purpose of matching their responses to certain survey questions.

For example, Question 28 addressed the issue of how committed the participants were to discuss the “improving sexual intimacy” wish list after the seminar. The purpose is to discover what each spouse would do or stop doing to make the sexual relationship better and thus to protect oneself from the influence of pornography.

Recommendation 2: Qualitative data gathering methods could be used in addition to quantitative measures. For instance, Question 30 asked the couples to rate whether their marriage is safe enough to share with each other when tempted by any form of pornography. The couples could be asked to write a letter and bring it to the last program

session. The letter could contain the following information: their understanding of sexual intimacy, their attitude towards pornography, and their accountability methods.

In other words, the letter could reflect their feelings about what they have done during the weekend program and what plans they have made to work at giving each other the security to truly open up and be known at a deep, intimate level without fear of being blamed, criticized, and condemned. This could be possible if the seminar were presented in a Marriage Retreat setting where couples can go outside and discuss their feelings. This in turn can help develop a healthy intimacy.

Recommendation 3: Seminar presenters should seriously consider doing a follow-up interview six months after the program, or to understand the long-term effect, send a post-card in the mail asking couples for their responses to these three questions:

As you look back on the program you went through six months ago, (1) what safeguards or accountability methods have you been following to protect yourself from the use and influence of pornography? (2) What important effects has the program had on your attitude towards pornography? (3) How would you rate your sexual intimacy with your spouse with their spouse with 1 being low and 10 being high?

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the entire dissertation process and concepts explored in chapters 1-5. Conclusions are drawn from each of the chapters and recommendations for further study and improvement of the seminar are suggested. Personal reflections are also given.

Summary

The purpose of the project was to develop, implement and evaluate a seminar on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention*. The main objective of the seminar was to help couples in the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madison, Wisconsin to understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage and gain insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexual intimacy with their spouse to protect themselves from the influences of pornography. It was also to provide biblical strategies and practical tools that would enable couples to help others who may struggle with it or refer them to a counselor.

I decided to do the seminar for the following two reasons. The first reason sprang from my own counseling experience working with couples, and “men in particular,” regarding the painful issues revolving around the pornography problem. These Christian men whom I counseled were from normal Seventh-day Adventist Christian homes.

Because using pornography often involves high levels of secrecy, four out of six men I counseled often said that they felt isolated, ashamed, depressed, phony, morally compromised, and even in some cases, stopped coming to church. This was due to hiding a terrible secret: an addiction to pornography.

Most of the wives of these men I counseled expressed concern about their being pressured into sexual activities they did not want to be involved in or being sexually ignored. Some felt ridiculed about their bodies, appearance, and sexual performance. The depth of the problem of pornography was driven home to one man when his wife left him and filed for divorce. Despite his pornography problem, she agreed to come for counseling with her husband.

Most pornography users I counseled or spoke with were surprised at how easily pornography was transformed from an occasional diversion or fantasy to a habitual problem that had the potential of destroying almost every aspect of their real lives, including their marriage. Their wives not only worried about whether they could continue to live with their husbands, but also often worried about their children being exposed to pornography. They often felt emotionally abandoned, powerless, and helpless. This started a journey for study and further understanding of the nature of pornography and its devastating effects on marriages and families.

There was a second reason why I chose to do the seminar. One summer, I attended a seminar on Sexual Addiction at Andrews University. Part of the seminar dealt with the problem of pornography. The seminar not only provided useful information on how many marriages, including Christian marriages, are being torn apart by the use of pornography, but also outlined a timeless approach to avoiding the temptations of

pornography and action steps in quitting porn, such as telling someone else about your porn problem, getting involved in a treatment program, finding an accountability partner, and learning how to start healing your sexuality.

The seminar instructor recommended several books on pornography and sexual addiction. This led me to read many books on the subject of pornography. The books helped me in my understanding of problematic Internet sexual behavior: how it starts, how it develops such strength, and how it can become addictive. The books suggested steps for successfully dealing with problematic cybersex activities, one that can enable a person to regain control of his life and his relationships. They also provided specific steps couples should be taken to mend the damage pornography has caused on their relationship and to learn how to improve communication to build sexual intimacy.

From the counseling experience and the seminar on Sexual Addiction at Andrews University, I discovered that pornography was one of the leading causes of divorce and family breakdown today and thus, a seminar needed to be developed and implemented as part of the overall program in the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The seminar was developed to clearly reflect a theological foundation of pornography lust and sexual intimacy. An examination of the Scriptures was done for theological instructions and counsel that might be relevant to the seminar.

Pornography is defined as any sexually explicit material that is intended to be or is used as a sexual outlet. Pornography is not just sexual material one uses, but is a relationship one develops. By its own definition, pornography provides an experience of sexual stimulation coupled with immediate gratification. Like prostitution, pornography avoids important aspects of human sexuality, such as displays of genuine affection,

communication between partners, foreplay, and concerns about the safety and consequences of sexual intimacy.

The Bible uses the word “lust” to refer to selfish, evil desires and idolatry that take the place of God as a source of pleasure and satisfaction. Lust is a perversion of sexual desire which is a gift of God.

Scripture makes it clear that sexuality is one of the greatest gifts God has given us. The very first pages of the Bible declare the fact that sexual intimacy was God’s idea. It certainly was no accident or afterthought. Human sexuality, like everything else that God had created, reflected a design that was purposeful, wise, and good. Obviously, it was a valuable and intentional gift from God, given to men and women, to be embraced and celebrated with gratitude, joy and delight. The sexual union between a husband and wife is a picture of God’s relationship and desire for His people.

The Scriptures affirm that the source of lust is found in sinful, fallen human nature. Though the source of lust is our own evil desires, the One who is offended is God. Biblical examples such as Samson and David can help us understand the self-centered nature of lust and how their actions clearly offended God.

The Bible stresses the beauty of sex within the framework of a faithful, committed marriage relationship and warns against sexual lust and adultery. It repeatedly warns people to guard their hearts and for men to keep far away from adulterous women. This constitutes a powerful mandate for married couples to build strong spiritual hedges around their relationship and to nurture their marriage commitment with diligence and devotion. Thus, every time one looks at pornography, he is diminishing his ability to be intoxicated in his wife’s love, to find his joy and satisfaction in her. This is why

Solomon instructs men in Proverbs and in the Song of Songs to have their wife as the standard of beauty and to build strong spiritual hedges around their marital relationship against sexual lust.

Jesus taught that adultery is more than having an affair with someone other than one's wife. He said that even to look on a woman lustfully is to commit adultery with her. Adultery begins in the heart—and God sees the heart and knows our imaginations and intentions. In viewing pornography and explicit sexual displays, we give lust the opportunity to conceive. Once sexual fantasies and lustful thoughts are entertained in the heart and mind, they will give birth to sin. This clearly demonstrates that pornography is sinful. This is why Jesus tells us even to guard our minds.

God's standard is high when it comes to lust. The apostle Paul said that among Christians there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Paul commanded husband and wives to be sexually available to each other to avoid temptation. He also warned couples against allowing lust to infect their relationship so that their partner became simply an object for sexual gratification. He encouraged them to learn how to control their own bodies in a way that was holy and honorable.

The Bible clearly teaches that sexual intimacy is exclusively reserved for the following purposes. First, it establishes the one-flesh union. Second, it provides for sexual intimacy within the marriage bond. Third, sexual intercourse is for the mutual pleasure of husband and wife. Fourth, sexual intimacy is for procreation. Fifth, the writings of Paul stressed mutuality in sexual rights and responsibilities. At its best, sex allows both spouses to give and receive at the same time and through the same acts. It is

unique in that way, and uniquely powerful and fulfilling. Applying this principle to pornographic lust, it strips sexuality of its divine purpose of mutual fulfillment. The mutual giving and receiving which lies at the heart of God's purpose for sexuality is exactly what pornography does not and cannot provide.

The Bible gives counsels for avoiding sexual temptation. First, one should pray and trust God rather than him/herself for deliverance from temptation. As did the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, men must realize that while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. When we pray, not only is God faithful, but Jesus Christ our Lord can help us when we are tempted. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that because Jesus himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Second, grow in the Lord and the knowledge of his Word. The Bible admonishes that men should aspire to grow strong in the Lord and the knowledge of his Word. In this way they will develop the true confidence that they are strong, that God's Word lives in them, and that, in Christ, they can overcome sexual temptation. When faced with temptation, Jesus showed himself to be one who was intimately acquainted with God's Word and who was able to use it effectively to counter Satan's schemes.

Third, make every effort to cultivate the virtues of self-control and purity of heart. Scripture asserts that self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote to young Timothy, reminding him that God had given him a spirit of self-discipline to overcome his counterproductive impulses. This means one needs to discipline his thinking by being cautious about what he reads, watches, or thinks. Fourth, the Bible counsels men to seek the company and accountability of other like-minded believers. Paul told Timothy to flee youthful lusts and to pursue Christian virtues along with those who call on the Lord from

a pure heart. If one wants to successfully guard against sexual temptation, he should seek an accountability partner.

Finally, the Bible counsels men to protect their wife's trust. The book of Proverbs declared that many a man proclaims his own loyalty, but who can find a trustworthy man? The author of Hebrews stressed the importance of this when he wrote that as the spiritual leaders of their homes, men are responsible for protecting their wives, not withering them. They are to honor their essence, not feed their lust. They should treat sex as pure as prayer. They are not to bring impurity from their past into the marriage bed; rather, their marriage should be honored and the marriage bed be kept pure.

The writings of Ellen White were also searched for references that address the issue of sexual lust and intimacy. White emphasized the importance of the sacredness of sexual intimacy. She referred to sexual intimacy as a "holy vigil" and strongly declared that the angels of God will be guests in the home, and the couple's holy vigils will hallow their marriage chamber. In terms of overcoming sexual lust, she pointed out that there must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. We should meditate upon the Scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. It is only through faith in Christ who is able to keep us from falling that we shall be kept from every sexual lust and sin.

Current psychological or social science literature researched that pertains to the subject of pornography was used as an additional basis for the seminar. The following is the summary of the literature.

Pornography has long been a major problem in our society, but since the arrival of the Internet, it has grown to proportions no one could have imagined. Pornography is

invading our nation, church, and the Christian family today. In today's society, many spouses are concerned about the availability and accessibility of pornography. They are available on home or office computers. One can access pornography in complete privacy. Therefore, many, including Christian men, struggle with pornography addiction.

Porn-related problems have been increasing substantially. Single people say their preoccupation with it makes them feel less capable of establishing monogamous, long-term, intimate relationships. Couples and families break up over porn. Pornography is one of the leading causes of divorce today. The nation's divorce lawyers have witnessed and documented a sudden rise in divorces related to pornography.

A few years ago, Dow Chemical Company fired several employees and suspended another two hundred for up to four weeks without pay after an e-mail investigation uncovered hard-core pornography and violent subject matter. A spokesman noted that these were not instances about personal use of the computers but rather, there was a whole range of abuses from mild pornography to very graphic pornography and seriously violent images.

The results from surveys taken by Christian organizations during retreats and workshops indicate that pornography is not only a problem with men outside the church, but unfortunately, it has infiltrated our churches in the lives of Christian men. These men are not just struggling, but addicted to pornography.

A number of books and journal articles have been written that describe the progressive and addictive nature of pornography. Christian psychologists say that exposure to pornography stimulates the part of the brain that produces an extraordinary sensation of pleasure similar to opiates like crack cocaine or heroin. They also point out

that pornography can be addictive and dangerous. Sexual behaviors caused by pornography ultimately lead to commit serious crimes.

Pornography users believe in the myths involving pornography such as that pornography is a harmless fantasy, pornography keeps sex life fresh and exciting, and couples viewing pornography together will spice things up. However, Christian authors stress that in their practice and with the people they have interviewed, they have seen enough to know that porn use today compromises almost everyone's ability to relate in intimate, meaningful ways to a real partner. Pornography is not just looking at pictures or a harmless fantasy. It does affect behavior and a husband's view of his wife.

Results of surveys and studies from sociologists and sex therapists indicate that pornography does not teach men to achieve true intimacy. It creates unrealistic expectations of one's spouse and sex. It acts to distort the image of a man's wife and how she should perform sexually. Pornography affects women's self-worth. It has a tendency to numb men's sensibilities toward sex. Pornography degrades women. It also degrades the very act of sex that God says is holy and pure between a husband and wife.

Researchers also found that when comparing their spouse's response to sexual behavior portrayed in pornography materials, both men and women became dissatisfied with their spouse's sexual performance. Dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of their intimate partners was evident, as well. They even found their partners less attractive and even less worthy individuals.

When one uses pornography, he is completely self-focused. Intimacy is completely other-centered. Having and maintaining intimacy is an enormous task. Pornography allows for a quick fix without the challenges of initiating or maintaining

intimacy. Pornography is a violation of the oneness we share with our mate. Every sexual encounter affects its participants, even if that encounter involves only one person gazing at a pornographic image on a video screen. Thus, the myths involving pornography are false, deceptive, and they provide no lasting satisfaction.

Pornography is no respecter of persons. It affects men and women or married, single, young or old, and it can damage all aspects of life: physical, mental, emotional, relational and spiritual. Researchers are now confirming pornography's impact on the brain.

Pornography has many effects on marriage relationships. Pornography use undermines marital relations and distresses wives. Husbands report loving their spouses less after long periods of looking at and desiring women depicted in pornography. In many cases, the wives of pornography users also develop deep psychological wounds, commonly reporting feelings of betrayal, loss, mistrust, devastation, and anger in response to the discovery or disclosure of a partner's pornographic online sexual activity. Sexual intimacy almost always suffers when one has a longstanding porn habit.

Pornography is an affair of lust. Men lust after what they do not have or what they wish they had. Researchers say pornography users are in love with porn women. Some may not see anything wrong with porn. Surveys done by researchers found that respondents considered their partner's extensive pornography involvement to be the same as adultery, the lying and emotional unavailability of their partner felt the same as a real affair would. They felt betrayed, devalued, deceived, and abandoned—the same as with a real affair. They mourned the loss of the sexual intimacy they previously had. Most agreed that their spouse's extensive involvement with porn was definitely being

unfaithful, and real-time online sex, a violation of monogamy.

Pornography affects both husband's and wife's self-worth and is a major contributor to separation and divorce. A father's access and addiction to porn can also affect his children's self-worth. Pornography is dangerous, damaging, and deadly.

To avoid the temptations or to prevent the use of pornography, one must take biblical and practical steps to maintain a porn-free home environment. First, develop healthy intimacy. Research indicates that fulfilling sexual intimacy has at least four separate aspects that work together: Verbal, Emotional, Spiritual, and Physical.

Spiritual intercourse may be the highest level of intimacy. A husband and wife can know each other as they both turn to and know God—heart to heart. When one faces the temptations of pornography, he must fill his thoughts and emotions with the Scriptural truth that God has something far more satisfying for him in an authentic, pure, real, and life-changing love-relationship with Jesus.

Intimacy-oriented sex involves connecting to one's spouse with his body, his senses, his mind, and most of all, his heart. Christian sex therapists attest that men who thoroughly enjoy sex with their spouse are less likely to feel a need or desire for pornography. Thus, developing and maintaining healthy sexuality is an effective way to avoid the temptation of pornography. In intimacy-oriented sex, nobody is exploited or gets hurt. The sex is shame-free because it is consistent with one's overall beliefs, values, and goals of life.

Second, establish boundaries. An example of a boundary regarding computer use might be a rule that requires a spouse to report any accidental exposures to pornography while on the computer. If a spouse has been exposed and informs his partner, this

experience can be processed and strategies to avoid additional exposure can be established. To affair-proof one's marriage, additional guidelines can be set to review them weekly: Get a filter that blocks out pornography sites, go to bed at the same time with your spouse, subscribe to television programming packages that are completely porn-free, and immediately change the channel anytime you're watching TV and something questionable happens to come on. Third, an accountability partner is just one more safety net to avoid use of pornography.

The topic of pornography is extremely difficult for a person to talk about, but he should find an accountability partner, someone he can be transparent with, someone who will keep his struggles confidential and hold him accountable for good decisions.

The following procedures were done in preparing for the seminar. First, a two-question survey was done among couples in the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church to assess the level of their interest in discovering the harmful effects of pornography on Christian marriage and in attending the seminar. An announcement was made in church for two consecutive Sabbaths regarding the purpose of the survey before it was given to couples. The majority of the couples returned the survey.

Two months prior to the seminar, a series of four sermons were preached on sexual intimacy to prepare the congregation and couples, in particular, for the upcoming seminar. Sermon 1, "Sexuality is a gift from God," focused on sex and sexuality as a precious gift from the Creator and clearly sets us apart from those who misuse it. Sermon 2, "What does the Bible say about our Sexuality?" stressed two important principles. First, sexual pleasure within marriage is encouraged and expected. Second, mutuality has to be the guiding principle. Men and women are equal before God in their right to sexual

pleasure. Sermon 3, “Male and female sexual differences,” explored God’s intention for creating male and female different. Why understand male and female sexual differences? Understanding them will help couples minimize conflict and enhance mutual acceptance. Sermon 4, “Keys to overcoming sexual lust,” outlined specific actions such as using God’s Word as a weapon to flee from lust, renewing a man’s marriage commitment to his wife, and honoring the dignity of womanhood. Every mother, sister, and daughter is worthy of this respect.

The participants for the seminar were recruited six weeks prior to the seminar by a letter of personal invitation outlining the purpose, objectives and the confidential nature of the seminar. The letter specified that the invitation was open to all married couples of the church. A seminar response card was included. Seminar participants were asked to return the card anonymously through the mail. Twenty nine couples returned their response card.

The seminar was conducted on April 4, 2009 at the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madison, Wisconsin with a total of three sessions, each lasting about ninety minutes. Fifty-two participants attended all sessions. Seminar Survey One was passed out with survey questions before the first session began. Upon completing the survey, the respondents were instructed to place the survey in a sealed envelope, seal it, and deposit it in a box. The method of presentation was lecture with PowerPoint. The content of the first session dealt with why pornography is a problem in our nation, in marriage, and in the church. The types, definitions and myths about pornography were also covered. The instructor provided couples with specific information on the deception of pornography and how both soft and hard pornography

are harmful and how they lead to the same hurts and destruction of the relationship.

At the beginning of the second session, couples were instructed to take the Improving Sexual Intimacy Inventory. After completing the inventory, they were to take it home to discuss the wish list with their spouse to make their sexual relationship better. The purpose of the second session was to help couples understand the harmful effects of pornography on marriage and how relationships take more time, more energy, and more commitment of our whole selves.

At the beginning of the third session, respondents viewed part two of a DVD presentation entitled, *Freedom Begins Here!* It is a dynamic series of DVD-driven "Toolkits" designed specifically to empower individuals and churches with the resources needed to recognize and face the crisis of pornography and sexual addiction head on. The third session focused on the strategies for prevention or avoiding the use of pornography.

At the close of the seminar, the respondents were asked to take the Seminar Survey Two. Upon completion, they were reminded to deposit the survey in the box. The seminar ended with a song and prayer.

Seminar participants were surveyed to determine whether measurable changes had taken place in the participant's knowledge and attitude towards pornography. Questions 1-27 in the survey were the same for Seminar Surveys One and Two. These questions focused on evaluating the participant's knowledge of the effects of pornography and strategies for prevention. Questions 28-37 in Seminar Survey Two asked the couples to share their reactions to the seminar and how it affected them.

Respondents as a whole scored high on most of the survey questions. Of the 27

questions, 19 showed significant change from Seminar Survey One to Seminar Survey Two. For instance, about half of the participants answered some of the items correctly on Seminar Survey One, but after the seminar, almost all of them answered correctly.

One of the items in the survey addressed the issue of how committed the participants were to discussing the “Improving Sexual Intimacy” Wish List after the seminar. The purpose is to discover what each spouse would do or stop doing to make the sexual relationship better and thus to protect themselves from the influence of pornography. Over half of the respondents were willing “to a great extent” to discuss the list.

The last question on the survey asked the respondents how their participation in the seminar increased their understanding of the effects of pornography on marriage. In summary, of the 27 who gave brief responses, only one person stated no change. The other 26 felt that their participation in the seminar had heightened their understanding of the destructive nature that pornography has on marriage. The following are of some of their responses:

One respondent wrote, “I know first-hand how destructive it is. I’m sterile with the series of sexual diseases my first husband gave me. It all started with pornography.” Another respondent shared, “It helped to clarify the impact on a marriage, though I have experienced it subjectively. It could be a worse disaster to a healthy marriage.” One other participant said, “Increased more knowledge about the topic and how I can use the strategy to save my relationship and to help and share it with others.”

Nearly almost all of the respondents believed that pornography can destroy marriage and understood that pornography is the opposite of healthy intimacy and it

distorts God's intentions for physical intimacy. Most of the participants were in favor of having an accountability partner or adding blocking-software to their computer system. A significant majority of the respondents believed that pornography has devastating effects on marriage relationships and that it must be avoided at all costs.

Conclusions

The evaluation of the survey responses resulted in the following conclusions.

1. The totality of the project elements evidently created the success of this seminar. The support of the church board, the response of married couples to the two-question survey, and my own journey for study and further understanding of the nature of pornography and its devastating effects on marriages and families contributed to the effectiveness of the seminar. However, it was the implementation of the seminar that helped couples not only understand the powerful allure of pornography lust and its devastating effects on marriage, but also provided valuable information, resources, and accountability methods to guard themselves from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

2. The seminar was successful in helping the seminar participants (1) know sexuality is a gift from God and that pornography distorts God's intentions for sex, (2) learn pornography's many effects on Christian marriage relationships and how it destroys marriages, (3) recognize the need for establishing boundaries, (4) discover that pornography is an enemy of intimacy, does not focus on all four aspects of intimacy: verbal, emotional, spiritual, physical, and that all four areas of intimacy are vital to sexual satisfaction.

3. The outcome of the seminar and the individual comments received show that if

a seminar is developed to reflect clearly (1) the theological foundation of pornography lust and sexual intimacy and (2) the current psychological or social science literature that pertains to the subject of pornography, and if it is presented in a sensitive manner, a large percentage of couples will attend and stay for the entire seminar as was the case in this seminar. Most of the participants attended all three sessions. Only a few did not stay for the afternoon sessions. When asked how the seminar matched or did not their expectations, several respondents felt that the seminar met their expectations. One person wrote, “I was a little uncomfortable with the topic and almost did not come. But I thought it will help me understand my spouse better.”

Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to the preparation, implementation, and follow-up activities related to the seminar that was developed for this dissertation.

1. Due to the topic and nature of this seminar, the study focused on married couples. It is recommended that singles be included.
2. It is recommended that a half-hour be set aside for discussion between seminar sessions or at the end of the seminar for those who may be interested. The time could be used for discussing the DVD presentation or for couples to discuss the “improving sexual intimacy” wish list either in the seminar room if it is safe or in another room.
3. It is recommended that the seminar be held in a Marriage Retreat setting where couples could go outside to share their feelings and discuss issues related to sexual intimacy or pornography lust. This, in turn, can help develop a healthy intimacy.
4. It is recommended that the seminar be expanded to address two fundamental issues surrounding pornography. First, disclosing pornography problems; and second,

the steps to recovery for porn addicts. The effects of pornography on a marriage can be very destructive. Many times, both individuals have the desire to talk about and seek help for the problem but do not know where to begin. Thus, providing tips for couples for disclosing pornography problems is the first critical step towards reconciliation and change. Also, provide steps for the porn addict's recovery, his spouse's recovery, and the couple's recovery.

5. It is recommended that the church family seek individuals who would be committed to receive training in the area of sexual addictions to start a recovery group in their local church.

6. It is recommended that the local conference send their local church Family Ministries coordinators and pastors to receive training on the twelve-step program for partners of porn addicts from a residential and outpatient treatment center that provides workshops to help heal the spiritual, emotional, and relationship problems caused by pornography and other forms of sexual addiction. Funding could be provided to send these leaders to one of several centers cited in the resource guide of this dissertation.

7. It is recommend that, by using this project as the primary source and other pertinent information if need be, the North American Division Department of Family Ministries design this material to be included in the Family Ministries Curriculum to be taught as one the modules for training and equipping family ministry leaders and coordinators in local churches and conferences.

8. It is recommended that the Family Ministry Department of the Theological Seminary, in conjunction with Andrews University, develop a course on *The Effects of Pornography on Marriage & Family and Strategies for Prevention, Recovery &*

Relationship Healing. All seminary students and pastors in the field should be required to take the course. The following objectives should be a part of the course: (1) to preserve the purity of God's gift of sexuality for its intended purpose, (2) to nurture the biblical view of the sanctity of marriage and womanhood, (3) to understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage, (4) to provide biblical strategies and boundary plans to protect oneself from the influence of pornography and steps to recovery for the addicted, and (5) to equip leaders for launching preventive and recovery ministries in their local church.

The course should not only be informational, but also be intensely practical and allow for personal disclosure in a safe environment, either one-on-one or in small groups. An environment of openness and confidentiality needs to be created and maintained.

Personal Reflections

The process of completing this project has been one of the most enriching and rewarding experiences in my life and ministry. The project provided me the opportunity to develop and conduct a seminar that would not only help couples steer clear of pornography's clutches but also equip them to help others in their struggles against pornography or to provide referral services for obtaining professional and other supportive help. Doing this research project has also helped me to examine my personal, marital, sexual, professional, and spiritual life.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS AND SURVEYS

CONSENT LETTER

SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

**Wisconsin Conference
Headquarters**

N2551 Old Hwy 16
P.O. Box 100
Fall River, Wisconsin
53932
Telephone: (920) 484-6555
Fax: (920) 484-6550

March 17, 2009

Institute Review Board
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0335

To Whom It May Concern:

The Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists welcomes the opportunity with Abraham Swamidass and Andrews University in his DMin Project Dissertation entitled *"Development and Implementation of a Seminar to Combat the Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention."*

He has permission to conduct a seminar at the Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church and to do pretest and post-test surveys among couples of the church who will attend the seminar.

Sincerely,

Don Corkum
President

SEMINAR INVITATION LETTER

Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church
1926 Elka Lane, Madison, Wisconsin 53704
(608) 246-0974. Fax: (608) 249-2799
E-mail: pastor@madisoncommounitysda.org

You are invited to attend a seminar on Sabbath (Saturday) April 4, 2009.

Pastor Abraham Swamidass, a doctoral student at Andrews University, will be conducting a seminar on “*The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Strategies for Prevention.*”

Pornography is a secret sin that is corrupting our society—destroying marriages, families, careers, even churches. A startling survey recently revealed that 50% of Christian men and 20% of Christian women are addicted to pornography. Not just struggling—addicted! The crisis is bigger than any of us can imagine. It must be dealt with. And thus this seminar!

Threefold Purpose of the Seminar:

- To help you understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage
- To give insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexuality and building sexual passion and intimacy with your spouse
- To provide biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect yourself from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

Seminar Details:

Place: Madison Community Seventh-day Adventist Church

Schedule: Session one: 9:30—11:00 a.m.

Church Service & Lunch: 11:00—12:00 p.m.

Session two: 1:30—3:00 p.m.

Session three: 3:30—5:00 p.m.

Each couple will receive a *free book* for attending all three sessions of the seminar.

Pastor Swamidass

SEMINAR RESPONSE CARD

_____ YES, my spouse and I would like to attend

_____ YES, I would like to attend but my spouse will not

_____ NO, we will not be able to attend.

As you respond, please take note of the following:

- Do not mention your name or address
- Use the pre-postage paid envelope with the return address on it
- Respond by March 20, 2009

Confidentiality: During the course of this seminar, names will not be connected to the responses given and no record will be kept of who gave what response.

APPENDIX B

SURVEYS

TWO-QUESTION SURVEY

This is an anonymous survey.

Pastor Abraham Swamidass, a doctoral student at Andrews University, is planning to design and implement a seminar on “*The Effects of Pornography on Marriage and Biblical Strategies for Prevention.*”

This seminar will teach you how to avoid pornography or refer people (who may be struggling with it) to a pastor or psychologist or a counselor.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Would you like to discover the harmful effects of pornography on Christian marriage?

☐☐

Yes

No

2. Would you be interested in attending the seminar?

☐☐

Yes

No

THE EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY ON MARRIAGE AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

SEMINAR SURVEY ONE (April 4, 2009)

Survey Instructions:

- Write your six digit number here _____
 - Do not write your name
 - Try answering all questions, if any questions make you uncomfortable—do not answer
 - When you finish this survey—fold it and deposit it in the box
 - Use the pencil provided for you (do not use your pen)
-

PART A (Circle the letter of the best answer)

- 1. Approximately what percentage of men in the U.S. are regular users of pornography:**
a. 16% b. 26% c. 46% d. 66%
- 2. What types of pornography are harmful?**
a. Soft-core, like Playboy and R-rated movies
b. Hard-core, like total nudity and various kinds of sex acts
c. Both soft and hard are equally harmful
d. Both are harmful but soft-core is not as harmful as hard-core
- 3. According to a 2006 poll conducted by two Christian organizations—what percentage of Christian men are addicted to pornography?**
a. 25% b. 50% c. 65% d. 75%
- 4. What percentage of Christian women are addicted to pornography?**
a. 20% b. 40% c. 60% d. 80%
- 5. How many of these reasons/excuses do pornography users give to justify their use of pornography?**
a. God gave me this strong sexual desire
b. Pornography is about me, I'm not hurting anyone
c. Pornography will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting.
d. A and B
e. All of the above

6. **According to a survey done by the Employment, Law Alliance—approximately what percentage of workers visit pornographic Web sites or engage in sex talk or other sexually oriented Internet activities on their work computers during office hours.**
- One in four
 - One in eight
 - One in twelve
 - One in twenty four
7. **What would be the most harmful effect of soft-core pornography?**
- Sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly men
 - Dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of the wife
 - Unrealistic expectations of a spouse in terms of sexual performance
 - Exposure to soft-core produce no harmful effects
8. **What would be the main reason pornography is considered *false intimacy*?**
- It distorts God's intentions for physical intimacy
 - It is seductive because it does not require direct contact with a human being.
 - It does not focus on all four aspects of intimacy: verbal, emotional, spiritual, physical
 - It offers a quick escape with no relational qualities
9. **What effect(s) do you believe pornography can have on marriage?**
- Lack of emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy
 - Distorted views of sexual intimacy
 - Increased risk of divorce
 - All of the above
10. **When a husband uses pornography, the wife feels:**
- Worthless as a woman
 - The urge to improve her sexual intimacy
 - Competitive
 - Indifferent
11. **Pornography is not real and it is the opposite of a true healthy intimacy because:**
- It seeks sexual pleasure outside of marriage relationship
 - It has nothing to do with love and everything to do with lust
 - It does not require commitment
 - It is self-centered
12. **What does the sexual relationship between a husband and wife teach us about God?**
- Physical intimacy is a picture of our intimate relationship with God
 - God designed sex for procreation
 - It teaches about the mutual satisfaction that comes from physical intimacy
 - None of the above

- 13. What aspect(s) of intimacy contribute to mutually satisfying sex?**
- a. Verbal intimacy—talk and listen to each other
 - b. Emotional intimacy—share deep feelings with each other
 - c. Spiritual intimacy—pray and worship God together
 - d. A and C
 - e. All of the above
- 14. What would women be more likely to do when they lack emotional connection and romance with their husbands?**
- a. Stop desiring for companionship
 - b. Look for online chat rooms for porn sites
 - c. Shut down feelings of sexual desire
 - d. Stop communicating
- 15. Creating boundaries in marriage:**
- a. Provides the maximum environment for healthy intimacy
 - b. Does not reflect true love
 - c. Is restrictive and tends to hurt the relationship
 - d. Does not require boundaries
- 16. Internal boundaries refer to:**
- a. Listening to our conscience
 - b. Obeying our conscience
 - c. Not paying attention to our conscience
 - d. Following our feelings
- 17. People who want to avoid the use of pornography will set an external boundary by:**
- a. Not subscribing to Internet service
 - b. Using the computer only when at home
 - c. Adding a blocking-software to their computer system
 - d. Keeping the computer in a more private home office
- 18. What would be the best reason that *accountability* is considered another safety net for avoiding the use of pornography?**
- a. It requires our willingness to share
 - b. It is the best way to experience the power of God
 - c. Simply disclosing a problem improves our well-being
 - d. It's the best way to find healing
- 19. Which of the following characteristics describe the most important task of an accountability partner? Someone who is . . .**
- a. Willing to listen to your struggles when he/she is available
 - b. Caring and extremely cautious to hurt your feelings
 - c. Able to meet with you on a regular basis
 - d. Honest and tough when you need it

20. **The underlying reason that most men have no accountability partner is because:**
- a. Fear of being perceived as weak
 - b. Being absolutely honest with another man is not easy
 - c. The wife is his accountability partner
 - d. The macho mentality

How true are these factors for men when it comes to sexual intimacy

21. **A husband can desire to have sexual intercourse even when things are not right in the relationship**
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true
22. **When the testosterone level is normal, there will be a desire for sexual release**
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true
23. **The male is sexually stimulated by sight**
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true

How true are these factors for women when it comes to sexual intimacy

24. **The female's sex drive or desire is far more tied to her emotions**
 - a. Not true
 - b. Somewhat true
 - c. True
 - d. Very true\
25. **Physiological urges are often dependent on the quality of the relationship**
 - a. Not true
 - b. Somewhat true
 - c. True
 - d. Very true
26. **The female is stimulated by touch**
 - a. Not true
 - b. Somewhat true
 - c. True
 - d. Very true
27. **According to psychologists—how many weeks of doing something every day will help form a regular habit in our lives**
 - a. Six
 - b. Twelve
 - c. Eighteen
 - d. Twenty-four

PART B (Circle the number of your choice)

- [illegible]

29. Is your marriage safe enough to share with each other when you are tempted by any form of pornography? Rate yourself from 1 to 10:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(Very safe)					(Very Unsafe)				

PART C (Write your response in the space provided)

30. What safeguards or accountability methods do you have in place to protect yourself from the use and influence of pornography? Name three:

-
-
-

31. Write out some Bible verses that will help you overcome sexual lust

-
-
-
-

THE EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY ON MARRIAGE AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

SEMINAR SURVEY TWO (April 4, 2009)

Survey Instructions:

- Write your six digit number here _____
 - Do not write your name
 - Try answering all questions, if any questions make you uncomfortable—do not answer
 - When you finish this survey—fold it and deposit it in the box
 - Use the pencil provided for you (do not use your pen)
-

PART A (Circle the letter of the best answer)

- 1. Approximately what percentage of men in the U.S. are regular users of pornography:**
a. 16% b. 26% c. 46% d. 66%
- 2. What types of pornography are harmful?**
a. Soft-core, like Playboy and R-rated movies
b. Hard-core, like total nudity and various kinds of sex acts
c. Both soft and hard are equally harmful
d. Both are harmful but soft-core is not as harmful as hard-core
- 3. According to a 2006 poll conducted by two Christian organizations—what percentage of Christian men are addicted to pornography?**
a. 25% b. 50% c. 65% d. 75%
- 4. What percentage of Christian women are addicted to pornography?**
a. 20% b. 40% c. 60% d. 80%
- 5. How many of these reasons/excuses do pornography users give to justify their use of pornography?**
a. God gave me this strong sexual desire
b. Pornography is about me, I'm not hurting anyone
c. Pornography will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting.
d. A and B
e. All of the above

6. **According to a survey done by the Employment, Law Alliance—approximately what percentage of workers visit pornographic Web sites or engage in sex talk or other sexually oriented Internet activities on their work computers during office hours.**
- a. One in four
 - b. One in eight
 - c. One in twelve
 - d. One in twenty four
7. **What would be the most harmful effect of soft-core pornography?**
- a. Sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly men
 - b. Dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of the wife
 - c. Unrealistic expectations of a spouse in terms of sexual performance
 - d. Exposure to soft-core produce no harmful effects
8. **What would be the main reason pornography is considered *false intimacy*?**
- a. It distorts God's intentions for physical intimacy
 - b. It is seductive because it does not require direct contact with a human being.
 - c. It does not focus on all four aspects of intimacy: verbal, emotional, spiritual, physical
 - d. It offers a quick escape with no relational qualities
9. **What effect(s) do you believe pornography can have on marriage?**
- a. Lack of emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy
 - b. Distorted views of sexual intimacy
 - c. Increased risk of divorce
 - d. All of the above
10. **When a husband uses pornography, the wife feels:**
- a. Worthless as a woman
 - b. The urge to improve her sexual intimacy
 - c. Competitive
 - d. Indifferent
11. **Pornography is not real and it is the opposite of a true healthy intimacy because:**
- a. It seeks sexual pleasure outside of marriage relationship
 - b. It has nothing to do with love and everything to do with lust
 - c. It does not require commitment
 - d. It is self-centered

- 12. What does the sexual relationship between a husband and wife teach us about God?**
- a. Physical intimacy is a picture of our intimate relationship with God
 - b. God designed sex for procreation
 - c. It teaches about the mutual satisfaction that comes from physical intimacy
 - d. None of the above
- 13. What aspect(s) of intimacy contribute to mutually satisfying sex?**
- a. Verbal intimacy—talk and listen to each other
 - b. Emotional intimacy—share deep feelings with each other
 - c. Spiritual intimacy—pray and worship God together
 - d. A and C
 - e. All of the above
- 14. What would women be more likely to do when they lack emotional connection and romance with their husbands?**
- a. Stop desiring for companionship
 - b. Look for online chat rooms for porn sites
 - c. Shut down feelings of sexual desire
 - d. Stop communicating
- 15. Creating boundaries in marriage:**
- a. Provides the maximum environment for healthy intimacy
 - b. Does not reflect true love
 - c. Is restrictive and tends to hurt the relationship
 - d. Does not require boundaries
- 16. Internal boundaries refer to:**
- a. Listening to our conscience
 - b. Obeying our conscience
 - c. Not paying attention to our conscience
 - d. Following our feelings
- 17. People who want to avoid the use of pornography will set an external boundary by:**
- a. Not subscribing to Internet service
 - b. Using the computer only when at home
 - c. Adding a blocking-software to their computer system
 - d. Keeping the computer in a more private home office

18. What would be the best reason that *accountability* is considered another safety net for avoiding the use of pornography:
- a. It requires our willingness to share
 - b. It is the best way to experience the power of God
 - c. Simply disclosing a problem improves our well-being
 - d. It's the best way to find healing
19. Which of the following characteristics describe the most important task of an accountability partner? Someone who is . . .
- a. Willing to listen to your struggles when he/she is available
 - b. Caring and extremely cautious to hurt your feelings
 - c. Able to meet with you on a regular basis
 - d. Honest and tough when you need it
20. The underlying reason that most men have no accountability partner is because:
- a. Fear of being perceived as weak
 - b. Being absolutely honest with another man is not easy
 - c. The wife is his accountability partner
 - d. The macho mentality

How true are these factors for men when it comes to sexual intimacy

21. A husband can desire to have sexual intercourse even when things are not right in the relationship
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true
22. When the testosterone level is normal, there will be a desire for sexual release
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true
23. The male is sexually stimulated by sight
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true

How true are these factors for women when it comes to sexual intimacy

24. The female's sex drive or desire is far more tied to her emotions
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true
25. Physiological urges are often dependent on the quality of the relationship
- a. Not true b. Somewhat true c. True d. Very true

- PART B** (Circle the number of your choice)

- [illegible]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(Very safe)					(Very Unsafe)				

-
-
-

- 32. Write out some Bible verses that will help you overcome sexual lust**
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
- 33. Describe how the seminar matched or did not your expectations?**
- 34. What aspects of the seminar benefited you the most?**
- 35. What aspects of the program were the least helpful?**
- 36. How did the participation in this seminar change your attitude towards pornography?**
- 37. How did participation in this seminar increase your understanding of the effects of pornography on marriage?**

APPENDIX C

SEMINAR OUTLINE

EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY ON MARRIAGE AND STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

SEMINAR OUTLINE

A. Why this Seminar?

1. Pornography is a problem in our nation
2. Pornography is a problem in marriage
3. Pornography is a problem in the church

B. Defining Pornography

1. All sexually oriented material intended primarily to arouse the reader, viewer, or listener
2. Intended to arouse sexual desire

C. Types of Pornography

1. Hard-core pornography commonly includes total nudity, lewd display of genitalia, and various kinds of sex acts
2. Soft-core, like playboy, may have full nudity but does not emphasize violence or sexual perversion

D. Myths about Pornography

1. My pornography use is about me and I'm not hurting anyone
2. God gave me this strong sexual desire
3. Pornography will help my sex life. It will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting
4. Viewing pornography together as a couple will spice things up

E. Harmful Effects of Pornography

1. Pornography distorts reality
2. Pornography destroys a wife's self-esteem
3. Pornography never satisfies and always craves for more
4. Pornography devalues sex
5. Pornography addiction can be passed to the next generation

F. Strategies for Prevention

1. Develop Healthy Intimacy
 - a. Verbal Intimacy
 - b. Emotional Intimacy
 - c. Spiritual Intimacy
 - d. Physical Intimacy
2. Establish Appropriate Boundaries
3. Be Accountable
4. Biblical Keys for Overcoming Lust

SEMINAR LECTURE DOCUMENT

SESSION ONE

PART ONE:

Objectives: To provide participants with an overview of the seminar.
To obtain a commitment from the participants to the seminar process.
To share with the participants the three-fold purpose or objectives of the seminar:

- To help you understand the core issues related to pornography and its harmful effects on marriage.
- To give insight into developing a biblical view of healthy sexuality and building sexual passion and intimacy with your spouse.
- To provide biblical strategies, boundary plans, and practical steps to help protect yourself from the influences of pornography or to avoid the use of it.

OPENING REMARKS

1. Welcome
2. Song Service
3. Opening Prayer
4. Instructions for taking Seminar Survey One

LECTURE NOTES

A. WHY THIS SEMINAR?

1. Pornography is a problem in our nation

Approximately forty million people in the United States are sexually involved with the internet. Sixty six percent of men in their 20s and 30s also report being regular users of pornography.¹ It is estimated that the pornography industry generates over 12 billion dollars a year in revenue. To put this in perspective, it exceeds the combined revenue of the National Football League, National Basketball Association, and Major League Baseball.²

In another 2004 survey by the Employment, Law Alliance, one in four workers say they or their coworkers visit pornographic Web sites or engage in sex talk or other sexually oriented Internet activities on their work computers during office hours. Twelve percent admitted that either they or a coworker have forwarded sexually explicit e-mail content to others in the office. Men were about twice as likely as women to pursue such activities. They were also more likely to report being aware of other coworkers' use of sexually explicit material online.³

People in all walks of life are experiencing problems with cybersex:

- The honor-roll college student whose cybersex activities caused him to flunk out of school and end up suicidal
- The attorney who became fascinated by images of young girls and struck up a relationship with an FBI agent posing as a thirteen-year-old girl as part of a sting operation
- The retiree who spent every morning downloading pornography and every afternoon e-trading, eventually draining all his retirement funds
- The single mother who felt so proud that she was able to work extra hours to support her family, not realizing that her eleven-year old daughter spent almost twenty hours a week looking at adult pornography on the internet.

Pornography is most certainly a serious problem in our nation today.

2. Pornography is a problem in marriage

Recent studies show that about half of all Christian homes are affected by it.⁴ Christian researchers have found that pornography diminishes a person's sexual

¹Mohler, 28.

²Blythe, 24.

³Paul, 29-30.

⁴Hall, 68.

happiness⁵ and has devastating effects on marriages. A study conducted by Indiana University's Dolph Zillman and University of Houston Colleague Jennings Bryant concluded the following:

Exposure to massive amounts of soft-core pornography develops sexual dissatisfaction in both genders, particularly men. When comparing their spouse's response to sexual behavior portrayed in pornographic materials, both men and women became dissatisfied with their spouse's sexual performance. Dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of their intimate partners was evident as well. They even found their partners less attractive and even less worthy individuals.⁶

This is the problem that pornography creates, that is, unrealistic expectations of a spouse and sex. It acts to distort husband's image of his wife and she should perform sexually. And many problems that couples experience with regards to intimacy, self-esteem, sexual expectations and sexual fulfillment can be directly traced to involvement with pornography.

3. Pornography is a problem in the church

A survey conducted by the Maryland Coalition Against Pornography (MCAP), 40 to 60 percent of Christian men are involved with pornography in some way.⁷ That is four to six out of every ten Christian men! Most disturbing were the results from a confidential survey conducted by Patrick Means and published in his book, *Men's Secret Wars*. This study confirmed that 64 percent of the evangelical pastors and lay leaders surveyed struggled with sexual addiction, which included pornography and other secret sexual activity.

Without a doubt, the specific problem of pornography is growing among Christians. A 2006 poll conducted by two Christian organizations found that 50 percent of all Christian men and 20 percent of Christian women are addicted to pornography.⁸ Sadly, with the emergence of the Internet in the nineties, the accessibility and anonymity offered by Internet pornography, many have found themselves addicted to it.

⁵Anderson, 147.

⁶Blythe, 49.

⁷Rogers, 65.

⁸Anderson, 78.

Defining Pornography

Pornography itself is generally defined as “all sexually oriented material intended primarily to arouse the reader, viewer, or listener.”⁹ The word pornography comes from two Greek words: *pornos*, which means “a harlot or prostitute and the sexual activity with such a person;” and *graphe*, which means “writing” and includes depictions and images. The word “pornography” can denote a wide range of materials and sexual behaviors.

Types of Pornography

Hard-core pornography

Hard-core pornography commonly includes total nudity, and various kinds of sex acts. Soft-core, like playboy, may have full nudity but does not emphasize violence or sexual perversion. The difference is that soft pornography does not have the individuals engaging in full penetration sex acts. Hard pornography displays arousal and full penetration. The bottom line: Pornography is pornography. The point is people often say that it’s only soft pornography, for example, the magazines you can buy at the corner convenience store, do not affect behavior. Does it matter whether it’s soft or hard? Does it affect behavior?

Soft versus Hard Pornography

In a survey Henry Rogers conducted with over one hundred Christian men, all of them said the first pornography they saw was in a magazine.¹⁰ What he discovered in talking to men is that they may start with magazines, but soon their appetite requires something more. Playboy no longer completely satisfies their lusts. They need more in frequency, intensity, and variety. Soft-core pornography leads to hard-core pornography. It becomes an addiction much like drugs and alcohol. They need more to achieve the same levels of high.

Soft-core is one step away from each other. It’s the effect on the heart and mind that is most important. So whether it’s classified as hard or soft doesn’t matter. What’s critical is the level of attraction it has on men and the degree of hold it has their life. Whatever is used to arouse the reader, viewer or the listener is pornography. Both soft and hard pornography are harmful. Both lead to the same dead end. They lead to the same hurts and destruction of the relationship. One should not minimize or trivialize the effects that either soft or hard pornography has on one’s life.

⁹Rogers, 34.

¹⁰Ibid., 60.

David Blythe, a Christian author who experienced sexual addiction, put it this way: “I started like most men, viewing some occasional porn in a magazine, or on the Internet, or on an X-rated video. Soon the viewing became more frequent and 99.9 percent of the time, masturbation was involved. I excused away the guilty by saying, “I am a man, and I have my needs.”¹¹

Myths About Pornography

1. My pornography use is about me and I’m not hurting anyone.”

Hurting no one? Ask a wife whose self-esteem is shattered. Nothing is further from the truth. In *An Affair of the Mind*, Christian writer Laurie Hall tells her own heartbreaking story of her husband’s sexual addiction, which began with soft-core pornography and progressed to daily sex outside his marriage. She wrote,

“I saw my husband lose his soul to pornography. I have held other women and listened to them weep as they told me how their husbands also lost their souls to pornography. Pornography kills the soul, steals the heart, and destroys the mind. Pornography is not a victimless crime.”¹²

But even when pornography doesn’t lead to a sexual relationship with another person, it still damages a marriage. Men say that they can’t help but compare their wives to the pornographic pictures they see, and for the woman that knowledge is agonizing.¹³

Valerie provides an example of how the myth involving pornography is not true.

Daniel and I had gotten a babysitter and gone on a “date.” We took our picnic dinner to our very favorite place—a lake near our home where we love to watch the sunset. On our drive there, Daniel started saying some things that sounded like he was talking about pornography. I could hardly believe my ears. Unbelieving, I asked him, “Are you talking about pornography? Are you telling me you’ve looked at pornography?” When he said yes, I just came apart. We never got out of the car. I was hurt and angry and shaking all over. “It might as well have been an affair!” I screamed at him. “I hate you! You’ve broken your marriage vows to me! You may not have been with a real woman, but you’ve already done it in your head! It tells me you don’t think I’m enough!” I felt totally betrayed.¹⁴

¹¹Blythe, 32.

¹²Hall, 68.

¹³Means, 23.

¹⁴Ibid.

2. God gave me this strong sexual desire.

Another myth about pornography is “God gave me this strong sexual desire.” That’s only half-right. God gave sexual desire to us but sin has perverted it. Some men are deceived into believing that sex is a need, maybe their greatest need. But that is not true.

Sex is simply a by-product of an intimate and healthy relationship with one’s wife. Anything else falls short of God’s design. In I Corinthians 16:13 we are told to, “Be on alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.” In the area of lust, however, God tells us to flee (2 Tim 2:22). Do these verses conflict? No, they don’t. Fleeing from lust is standing firm in the faith. But why would God tell us to flee from something that He gave us? The answer is simple. God did not give us lust.

Why would God instruct us to flee from lust if He created us with lustful desires? In Job 31:1 the Bible says, “I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl” (NIV). The apostle Paul instructed young Timothy to “flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2 Tim 2:22). Lust is a perversion of sexual desire, which God did give us. It must be exercised within the confines of marriage. The wise Solomon wrote, “Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life” (Eccl 9:9).

3. Pornography will help my sex life. It will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting.

The third myth involving pornography is “pornography will help my sex life. It will help keep my sex life fresh and exciting. How about sharing this with one’s wife? I doubt after hearing this rationalization a wife will say, “That is a wonderful plan, you sure do love me!”

The most powerful rebuttal of this rationalization comes from the words of a wife:

Pornography didn’t turn my husband into a great lover. Far from being the sexual liberator it purports to be, pornography enslaves participants in sexual activities that destroy their personhood. Far from being the ticket to endless rounds of sexual highs, pornography introduces a strain into relationships that squashes sexual enjoyment. As far as I’m concerned, pornography gets an “F” in sex education.¹⁵

4. Viewing pornography together as a couple will spice things up.

The fourth myth involving pornography is viewing pornography together as a couple will spice things up.

¹⁵Hall, 86.

Sometimes a couple will try to spice things up by adding new imagery to their relationship. They'll rationalize "since my body is not turning you on anymore and your body is not turning me on anymore or you are not meeting my emotional needs, let's get pornography. Let's go rent a video and watch it together."

This is a very dangerous act for two reasons.

First, sexual immorality is one of the greatest destroyers of spiritual growth. You don't want the images of anyone but your mind when you're physically intimate with your wife. Think about it. When you are making love to your spouse and the lights are out and your eyes are closed, you don't want your spouse imagining someone else. When you introduce pornography into your marriage, you're introducing an addiction that will undermine your relationship. Realize that you are not going to develop intimacy as God designed it with your spouse if you're thinking about some Hollywood actor or actress.

Second, the wife will eventually begin comparing herself to the women in the movie. It's only human for her to do this. In that situation, just how loved and cherished does a woman feel? Does she feel adored, or is she secretly wondering, when his eyes were closed was he fantasizing about doing it with her?

Author and psychologist Kevin Leman asked a number of wives this question: Overall and long-term, is this good for your marriage or harmful for your marriage? Most of these women did not know how to respond. Here's a clue: Watching porn won't make your husband treat you better, encourage him to spend more time with the kids, or be more helpful around the house—the very things that make most wives desire their husbands more.

SEMINAR LECTURE DOCUMENT

SESSION TWO

OPENING REMARKS

1. Instructions for “Improving Sexual Intimacy” Wish List
2. A brief overview of the key differences between men and women in the nature of the sex drive, and sexual stimulation that makes them ready for sex.
3. Begin taking “Improving Sexual Intimacy” Wish List
4. Instructions for taking Seminar Survey One

LECTURE NOTES

Harmful Effects of Pornography

1. Pornography distorts reality.

Men who battle with pornography are not engaged in a world of reality. They are lost in a world of fantasy. Fantasy is an addiction that grows and grows. Men living in a world of fantasy often act out their fantasies. Real women cannot possibly have the same sexual appetite women in adult entertainment appear to have. They lead us to believe that a woman who enjoys sex around the clock is a possibility. Pornography is not real, it is deceptive. It has nothing to do with love and everything to do with lust.

2. Pornography destroys a wife’s self-esteem.

In her book *An Affair of the Mind*, Laurie Hall wrote,

Jack (her husband) also expressed irritation when I was uncomfortable with some of the sexual practices he’d seen in pornographic magazines. In the end he lost all interest in me as a sexual partner. This had a devastating impact on my view of my worth as a woman. It created such despair in me that I began to let my appearance go. At last, I looked the way his rejection made me feel—totally unlovely.¹⁶

¹⁶Hall, 76.

In his book *The Silent War*, Henry Rogers wrote,

“I saw the destruction firsthand when I met with a woman named Jessica who weighed 350 pounds. “My husband makes me feel so ugly,” she wept bitterly as we spoke on the phone. When I met with her husband the next week he confided that at times he wished his wife was dead. It was obvious he now cared little for his wife’s self-esteem.”¹⁷

Spouses often wonder if the problem is their fault. One woman reported:

My husband began using porn as a teenager. What was once an adolescent hobby became the “other woman” in our marriage. At first it was our intimacy that suffered. Then, his pastime grew into an addiction which then started to include more serious forms of “adultery.” He was going to strip bars and sleeping with prostitutes. He was often late, with poor excuses.

I noticed our money disappearing and never suspected he was spending nearly \$500 a week to feed his addiction. I felt responsible, ugly, ashamed, alone and hopeless. Why would he look at another woman unless I wasn’t pretty or sexy enough? Friends rejected my idea that his porn use was ruining our relationship. They told me to be sexier, more sexually responsive and available so that he wouldn’t look elsewhere. I tried all these things only to find they didn’t work. I ended up feeling like a failure, as a wife and a lover.¹⁸

One of the most important truths a spouse should realize is that his problem is not her fault. There are many reasons why he may choose to develop a pornography habit. According to Rory Reid, a licensed therapist who specializes in the treatment of sexual-impulse behavior and Dan Gray, a clinical director of Sexual Trauma and Recovery (STAR) these reasons may include

- Attempts to escape unhealthy shame about himself, possibly caused by childhood neglect, deprivation of needs, family dysfunction, or abuse
- A desire to be wanted or validated without investing in a relationship
- A coping mechanism used to deal with stress or as a reward for accomplishments
- Inability or fear of developing healthy intimacy
- Boredom and curiosity
- Escape into a fantasy world that pretends to meet his unmet, unrealistic expectations¹⁹

¹⁷Rogers, 179.

¹⁸Reid and Gray, 18.

¹⁹Ibid.

3. Pornography never satisfies and always craves for more.

All addictions require more and more stimuli to attain the desired effect. Smokers don't start out smoking two packs a day. They build up to that level over time. Gamblers start with one bet. The same is true with pornography. What excited a person sexually when he began using pornography is most likely boring to him now. To get the level of excitement they need, men will seek more graphic, explicit, and lewd materials so they can become aroused and climax.²⁰

4. Pornography devalues sex.

Sexual release through pornography separates us from our spouse. Relationships take more time, more energy, and more commitment of our whole selves. It also requires more vulnerability and trust. The women of pornography and adult entertainment are people we don't even know. It is a relationship built solely on lust. God's design is one man, one woman, becoming one flesh and living a life in obedience to Him. This relationship is built on love.

5. Fifth, pornography addiction can be passed to the next generation.

This thought alone should stop the Christian husband to pursue any form of pornography.

Former Playboy Bunny Brenda McKillop testified before the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, and here's what she said:

My first association with Playboy began in childhood when I found Playboy as well as other pornographic magazines hidden around the house. I have since discovered that a great deal of pornography ends up in the hands of children. This gave me a distorted image of sexuality. I believe that the Playboy philosophy of pleasure-seeking lust influenced my father to make passes at other women and to ask a neighbor to swap wives. I believe my mother's battle with obesity caused her to feel jealous of the playgirls and jealous of her own daughter's body. I never questioned the morality of becoming a Playboy bunny because the magazine was accepted into the house.²¹

Brenda's father put her view of pornography in motion because of his addiction. Of course, none of this should be a surprise for the Christian husband. It has happened before. In I Kings 15:3 the Bible says, "And he walked in all the sins of his father which he had committed before him." This verse clearly indicates that we have the power to

²⁰Frederick, 69.

²¹Rogers, 185.

pass our addiction on to our children. The question one must ask is, do we want to pass on a legacy of lust to our children?

Pornography has many devastating effects on marriage relationships. In their book *Confronting Your Spouse's Pornography Problem*, Reid and Gray express some of the most common effects on marriage are:

- Decreased trust and feelings of betrayal
- Distorted views of sexual intimacy
- Decreased emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy
- Decreased sensitivity, tenderness, and kindness
- Financial instability, including loss of employment
- Decreased mental and physical health
- Strained communications and increased marital conflict
- Increased risk of divorce²²

²²Reid and Gray, 17.

SEMINAR LECTURE DOCUMENT

SESSION THREE

OPENING REMARKS

1. Song Service
2. Prayer
3. Instructions for DVD viewing

Freedom Begins Here! It is a dynamic series of DVD-driven "Toolkits" designed specifically to empower individuals and churches with the resources needed to recognize, to face the crisis of pornography and sexual addiction head on.²³

4. Instructions for taking Seminary Survey Two at the close of the seminar

LECTURE NOTES

Harmful Effects of Pornography

6. Pornography distorts reality
7. Pornography destroys a wife's self-esteem
8. Pornography never satisfies and always craves for more
9. Pornography devalues sex
10. Pornography addiction can be passed to the next generation

²³Hosted by America's leading marriage expert Dr. Gary Smalley and Pastor Ted Cunningham, *Freedom Begins Here* is filled with relevant, life-changing material. With in-depth teaching from Dr. Mark Laaser, recognized as the leading Christian authority on sexual addiction, *Freedom Begins Here* is standing in the gap by providing the most complete resource available to help people find freedom from the stronghold of pornography and sexual addiction. *Freedom Begins Here* DVD series can be purchased at : <http://smalleyonlinestore.com/videosanddvds/smallgroup.aspx>.

STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

1. Develop Healthy Intimacy

Pornography focuses on a very narrow aspect of intimacy and it promotes selfishness that destroys a healthy relationship, which requires selflessness. Pornography is the opposite of a healthy intimacy because it depicts false message about sex and distorts expectations about physical intimacy in marriage. Sexual union between a husband and wife is an outward manifestation of their inward commitment to connect more deeply as spouses.²⁴

Here are eight qualities of true intimacy:

- Trust
- Self-worth
- Positive regard for others
- Interdependence
- Tolerance for conflict, ambiguity, and imperfection
- Self-disclosure
- Courage
- Intimacy role model²⁵

These qualities are very hard for many of us to achieve. Pornography offers a quick escape with no relational qualities.

Four Areas of Intimacy That Are Vital to Sexual Satisfaction

Sex is more than a physical act. Good sex is the reflection of a good relationship. Research indicates that fulfilling sex has at least four separate aspects that work together. Four aspects of intercourse contribute to good sex. As Denver psychologist Gary Oliver once said in terms of marriage, “All of life is foreplay.”²⁶

Intercourse literally means “to get to know someone intimately.” In our culture, we have reduced the word to refer only to the act of sex. Equally, we’ve nearly forgotten a traditional meaning of the verb *to know*—which was “to have sexual intercourse.” The Bible says, “*And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived*” (Gen 4:1). The two words intercourse and knowledge are closely aligned.

²⁴Reid and Gray, 106-107.

²⁵Earle and Laaser, 96.

²⁶Quoted in Smalley, 237.

God designed sex so we could know something about Him. The word that is used for “know” in Gen 4:1 is the same word that is used in Jeremiah 16:21: “*they shall know that my name is the Lord*.” What can we know about God from the sexual relationship?

We can know that God has a passionate desire to be in relationship with us. He compares this desire to the eagerness a bridegroom has to be with his bride (see Isa 62:5). So sex is a picture of our intimate relationship with God but pornography distorts God’s intentions for sex.

Verbal Intimacy

Verbal intimacy is vital to a healthy sex life. It involves getting to know our mate through conversation and spending time together. This is especially significant to most women, who are amazed that men can have sex at almost any time without regard to the quality of the relationship.

The women usually want to connect with their partners through verbal intimacy before they can enjoy the physical act. As a couple, work at giving each other the time you need to relax, talk, and listen to each other.

Gary Smalley, in his book *Making Love Last Forever*, suggests some ways that busy couples can make time for verbal intimacy.²⁷

1. You’re both home from work at the end of the day? Set aside a 15 minute period at some point to discuss—reflect on— your respective day’s activities.
2. Make a rule that the TV is off during dinner, encouraging conversation. For that hour, let the answering machine take all phone calls except emergencies.
3. Write a monthly date night into your schedule that cannot be broken.
4. If your schedule permits, get together for lunch once a week—even if you’re just brown-bagging it in the park.
5. As a couple, attend one of your children’s sports games or other performances. It’s amazing how conversation can develop while you sit and watch your child or on the way and from the game.
6. Take a walk together after dinner. It’s a good time to talk, and it’s also good for you physically.
7. If you are allowed some flexibility in your work schedule, go in late one day—after the kids have gone off to school. Enjoy the hour with your spouse.
8. Read a book or the Bible together that you both feel will stimulate a discussion.
9. Don’t be afraid to use baby-sitters just to give you time alone to talk.
10. Write each other little notes that being, “I have something really amazing to talk with you about the next time we’re together.”
11. Once or a twice a year, plan weekend getaway for just the two of you.

²⁷Smalley, 238-29.

12. Ask your friend to hold you accountable to meet with your mate at least once a week for a meaningful conversation.

Emotional Intimacy

Sharing deep feelings with each other is emotional intimacy, and it is vital to sexual satisfaction. This involves conversations that deal with more than facts alone. Any conversation might start with facts. Then any fact in a relationship can be connected to emotion with the question: “*How does that set of facts make you feel?*” This is especially significant to women. They are often most responsive to sexual intercourse when the entire relationship is open and loving—when they feel that their husband understands and value their feelings.

Spiritual Intimacy

Some people sincerely wonder about an old motto: *The couple that prays together stays together*. But several years ago, Dr. Nick Stinnett conducted a highly publicized study at the University of Nebraska. After looking carefully at hundreds of families that considered themselves healthy, his research concluded that healthy families possess six common characteristics. And one of those characteristics is “a shared personal faith in God.”²⁸ And surveys taken by sociologist Andrew Greeley indicate that “frequent sex coupled with frequent prayer make for the most satisfying marriages.”²⁹

Physical Intimacy

Sex can be quick, but love requires time. Finding mutual sexual satisfaction in marriage takes time. There are key differences between men and women in the nature of the sex drive, and sexual stimulation that makes them ready for sex. A husband and wife must discover and accept these differences before they can begin to find mutual satisfaction. In his book, *Making Love*, Dr. Gary Chapman describes the key differences between men and women in two areas of sexual intimacy. Here is the summary:

Nature of the Sex Drive

For Female

- The female’s drive or desire is far more tied to her emotions than is the man’s. If a woman feels loved by her husband, she desires to be sexually intimate with him.

²⁸Smalley, *Making Love Last Forever*, 243.

²⁹Ibid., 243.

An exception might be the case in which sex is the only way she gets tender touch and kind words that speak to her emotionally.

- Physiological urges are often overridden by her emotions and the quality of the relationship.

For Male

- For the male, when the testosterone level is normal, there will be a desire for sexual release. This desire is not deeply rooted in his emotions but rather in his biological urges.
- A husband can desire to have sexual intercourse even when things are not right in the relationship.

For example, a husband and wife can have an intense argument and say hateful things to each other, but thirty minutes later the husband wants to have intercourse. The wife will find that virtually impossible unless he apologizes in a way that she considers sincere. Then, perhaps, her sexual desire can be rekindled. A husband can desire to have sexual intercourse even when things are not right in the relationship. In fact, he often thinks that having sex will solve the problems.

Sexual Stimulation

For Male

- The male is sexually stimulated by sight.

For Female

- The female is stimulated by touch and kind words.

Why women get addicted to Pornography?

First, it is appropriate to acknowledge that Christian women have a libido too. So often we forget the fact that women were created with sexual desire just as we men were. In general, however, the temptations are different for women. Since women enjoy an emotional connection and romance, sex for them often begins with talking. Women tend to be vulnerable when they sense that a man is more concerned about who they are internally than what they may have to offer physically.

Fantasy tends to be the main area women struggle with. In an article for Today's Christian Woman Ramona Richard remarks on the way women relate to pornography and where it can ultimately lead:

“Women desiring to find companionship often prefer cybersex and online chat rooms to porn sites that offer only pictures and graphic stories, but they eventually start surfing both. All forms of pornography can stimulate the user, releasing chemicals in the brain that act on the body in much the same way as cocaine does. It's an exhilarating but unfortunately short-lived euphoria. The loneliness returns, leaving the woman wanting more contact and more stimulation, thus creating the cycle of addiction.”³⁰

2. Establish Boundaries

Why Establish Boundaries?

(1) Safety. It is like a fence around a home, a boundary protects us from the outside while giving us an area in which we can feel safe. Each individual is our own gatekeeper and determines who will be allowed to enter the solemn and sacred aspect of our lives. Safety is found in establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries.

A client in a group therapy mentioned that the problem with seeing how closely we can drive to the edge without going over the cliff is that we assume we can see where the edge is and that is rarely the case.³¹ Safety is found in healthy boundaries.

(2) Abstinence. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of establishing boundaries is abstinence itself, saying no to something. For example, let us suppose we want to lose weight. To do so we have decided to eat more healthy foods and get some exercise every day. For a few weeks, we maintain our new regimen. Then work and family life get busy and we skip exercising for a few days and stop by some fast-food restaurants for quick lunches.

How do we feel about ourselves? Probably disappointed and maybe even somewhat disgusted. Perhaps we even want to say, “Ok, forget it,” and we pull into the nearest fast-food restaurant again on our lunch break and order a couple of burgers and a super-size order of fries. In so doing, we have broken a boundary we had set for ourselves. The question we must ask ourselves is this: Is taking care of myself important enough to me that I will do what it takes to make that happen? Author Robert Bly

³⁰Anderson, 79-80.

³¹Reid and Gray, 105.

expressed this concept well when he said, “The making of a man is making your body do what it doesn’t want to do.”³²

(3) Transparency. In marriage relationship, boundaries establish limits that provide the maximum environment for healthy intimacy to flourish. The boundaries for a spouse are usually more transparent than for any other person. Transparency represents how well we can see beyond the walls others establish to protect themselves and how well they can see beyond our walls. Transparent people allow others to see their true selves.³³

This transparency can enable spouses to know each other more intimately than individuals outside the marriage relationship. It also creates vulnerability to being hurt should a spouse take advantage of the trust that exists in marriage. A boundary is violated when a person crosses a line that defines our limits. When a spouse indulges in pornography by seeking sexual gratification outside the marriage relationship, a boundary is violated. Trust is broken. Respect is diminished.

Internal Boundaries

Boundaries are about the relationship we have with ourselves. Internal boundaries have to do with listening and obeying our inner voice. All of us had this experience. When we are about to do something, we hear a voice inside that says, “No, don’t do that,” but then we do it anyway even though we were pretty certain that the outcome would not be good. We did not listen to ourselves and we felt bad about it afterward. When we hear, acknowledge, and follow that voice, we are holding to our boundaries. Respecting our internal boundaries means being able to say, “No, I am not going to do that, even though I want to because if I do I’m going to mess up my life.” Without internal boundaries, we will find it difficult to honor external boundaries.

External boundaries

External boundaries are very concrete steps that help us contain or control our behavior. They are often steps that a spouse wants us to set, and they are usually easily measurable or verifiable. Often we set external boundaries because we know there will be consequences if we do not set them. People who acknowledge their problems with pornography may, for example, set an external boundary by

- keeping their computer on the main floor of the house rather than in a more private home office
- using the computer only when at work

³²Bly. Quoted in Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin, 94.

³³Reid and Gray, 39.

- not logging on to sexual sites
- giving the password to a spouse or partner so he or she can check computer usage or history files³⁴
- getting rid of the internet service that carries the pornography
- getting rid of the software that decodes and/or displays the pictures
- adding blocking-software to computer system

Another example of a boundary regarding computer use might be a rule that requires couples to report any accidental exposures to pornography while on the computer. If a spouse has been exposed and informs his partner, the experience can be processed and strategies to avoid additional exposure can be established. It then becomes a learning experience for the couple.

Creating boundaries is an act of love. The message of boundaries is that we care enough about the other person to avoid the harmful effect of pornography. We are communicating that we will not permit him to hurt himself or the relationship.

Our boundary says “I want to help you be your best self and surely you cannot feel good about acting this way.” They further communicate that we care enough about ourselves that we will not allow others to intentionally hurt us.

3. Be Accountable

Here are three reasons why an accountability partner is indispensable: First, the Bible stresses the importance of accountability. The wise man Solomon wrote:

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Eccl 4:9-12).

Teamwork is critical in overcoming pornography and sexual sin. A study was done with horses to determine the true value of team effort. The study revealed that one horse pulling alone was able to pull 2, 500 pounds. The test was then repeated with two horses pulling together; the two horses were able to pull 12, 500 pounds! The two horses together were able to pull 5 times the amount of weight that the one horse alone could pull! The Bible says, “Two are better than one. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”

³⁴Reid & Gray, 101.

Second, medical science research supports it. Dr. Richard Swenson, who wrote the wonderful book *The Overload Syndrome* writes that confession is therapeutic.³⁵ Researchers have called it the “disclosure effect.”

Simply disclosing a problem improves well-being in measurable ways. Thus confessing our sins to one another can be supported biblically and medically. James talks about it when he writes: “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (5:16). Healing won’t be found in a self-help book or video, but rather in our confession of sins to one another.

When we keep our secret lifestyle hidden and known only to ourselves, it keeps us in bondage. There is something liberating, a sense of being released from a life sentence, that occurs when we make our struggles known to another. When we don’t share our problems with other believers in Christ, there is no one else to hold us and our actions accountable to.

An accountability partner is someone who can love and care for you but at the same time, be brutally honest and tough on you when you need it. In his book, *The Secret in the Pew*, author Blythe comments that an accountability partner should meet the following criteria:

7. Be anchored in a healthy and committed relationship with Christ.
8. Truly desire to help and be accessible to you when you need him.
9. Able to commit time to pray for you and meet with you on a regularly basis.
10. Able to be discreet and confidential about the things that you share with him.
11. Be someone you trust and respect.
12. Not afraid to address the issue head on.³⁶

Third, testimonies of Christian men who once were addicted pornography. Author David Blythe shares an experience and his role as an accountability partner:

One of my partners was out of town on a business trip and I received a call one evening. The voice said, “David, I am in a hotel room that has pornographic movies on pay per view. That little box has been calling out to me all night. I have just had a horrible day. I miss my family. I know I am going to fail tonight, so I just wanted to talk to you.”

He followed by apologizing for bothering me. I explained that no apology was required and he was doing exactly what we had talked about time and time again. We need to be there for each other in times of weakness. Sometimes we just need to pray over the line, or maybe we just need to talk to get our minds off of the temptation at hand.

³⁵Rogers, 201.

³⁶Blythe, 78.

Whatever approach is taken, it is simply a cry for help to someone who can be trusted and can give some encouragement at that very moment.

My advice to my friend was to leave the hotel room and go down to the front desk and ask that the cable box be disconnected from his television. Then he was to call me back on his cell phone after that was accomplished. When he called back, I suggested he go out and have dinner at the Outback, come back to his room and go to sleep.

He did as I suggested. But I didn't stop there. I tried to call the others in our support group to have them pray, but unfortunately neither was home. So I immediately started to intercede on his behalf in prayer. I asked that God would protect his mind and thought process and give him the strength to overcome this seemingly insurmountable temptation that he was facing. To make a long story short, he didn't stumble that night or any other night during his trip.

This is the true essence of what an accountability partner is all about. It is being there for each other to strengthen one another when one of us is down. It is pray with and remind each other of the real source of our power against temptation and lust. It is to be that rock when the foundation is slipping away.

One thing I have learned through this process is that temptation and lust comes and goes. Often it is short lived. If you can keep it in perspective and stifle it in a moment of temporary weakness, you will overcome it. The help of a partner at that moment when you think you can't resist can be all it takes to succeed.³⁷

The topic of sexual temptation is extremely difficult for us to talk about, but we must. Find a man who we trust. Someone we can be transparent with and someone who will hold us accountable. Why do men have difficulty having an accountability partner?

The underlying reason that most men have no accountability partner is because being absolutely honest is not easy. To be transparent to another man or men, particularly in the area of sexual sin, is difficult at best. Laying it all on the line is not a normal practice in most men's lives. But this is the beauty of accountability. Once we open up and pour out struggles, the healing can start.

4. Biblical Keys for Overcoming Lust

The Bible seems to support the notion that men are visually stimulated. Remember the warning Jesus gave that's recorded in Matthew 5:28: "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." With that understanding, as men we are in somewhat of a catch-22, since we live in a culture in which at every turn we are invited to take in potentially dangerous sexual images.

³⁷Blythe, 81-83.

Our minds can easily convert them into sexual fantasies. Since we can't walk around wearing blindfolds, we have to learn how to properly respond to our environment. It will require the discipline of our eyes, mind and heart.

Key # 1: Victory through Eyes

Psychologists tell us that it requires six weeks of doing something every day before something becomes a habit in our lives. So train your eyes to bounce away from sights of sensual images. If you bounce or starve your eyes for six weeks, you can win this war.³⁸

You need to build a reflex action by training your eyes to immediately bounce away from sexual images, like the jerk of your hand away from a hot stove. The strategy for bouncing the eyes may sound rather simple. Maybe even easy to do! But they are not. Satan fights us with lies, while our body fights us with desires of our sinful nature. To win, we need a sword and a shield.

We need a good Bible verse to use as a sword and rallying point. Job 31:1: "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl." Use this single Bible text as an attack verse, and it better be quick. Try repeating that to yourself when you are tempted to lust: "I've made a covenant with my eyes, I can't do that!"

Your shield—a protective verse that you can reflect on and draw strength from even when you are not in the direct heat of battle is I Cor. 6:18: "Flee from sexual immorality." It is interesting to note that in I Corinthians 16:13, men are told, "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong." Yet in the area of lust, we are told to flee. Why is that? Our weakness is no surprise to Satan. He loves it when we hang around sexual temptation.

Earlier in his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote, "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body" (I Cor. 6:18). Involvement with pornography is a sin against our own bodies so Paul instructs us to flee.

Key # 2: Winning the Battle of the Mind

The mind is far more cunning and crafty than your eyes and more difficult to control. In fact, you really can't control the mind effectively until the defense mechanism of the eyes is in place. You shouldn't get discouraged if your mind responds more slowly than your eyes.

The great news is that the defense mechanism of the eyes works with you to build the boundaries of the mind. The mind needs an object for its lust, so when the eyes of

³⁸Arterburn and Stoeker, 125.

view sexual images, the mind has plenty to work with. Without those images, the mind has nothing to dance with.

By starving the eyes, you starve the mind as well. Although this alone is not enough—the mind can still create its own lust objects using memories of movies or pictures you saw on the Internet days ago or by generating fantasies about old girl or boyfriends or the women with whom you work—at least with your eyes under control you won't be overwhelmed by a continuing flood of fresh lust objects as you struggle to learn to control your mind.

Sword—Attack Verse: “Take captive every thought to make obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5). When our thoughts start to run down a path that says, “Wow, check out that girl over there.” We recite the attack verse. We don't so much block out the objects of lust, but you evaluate and capture them.

Shield Verse: “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

It is hard to lust when you fill your mind with wonderful things. If you're married, start praying with your wife before bedtime. If you travel, always take a framed picture of your family with you and put it on your TV set. And don't forget to call your family each night along with your accountability partner.

These people really care about you! You may also want to cover the screen with a towel from the bathroom. Your picture can hold it in place! Both are visual reminders of your commitment to stay pure on the road. Remember your sexual gratification comes from no one but your spouse.

Reminder/Instructions for taking Seminar Survey Two

“IMPROVING SEXUAL INTIMACY” WISH LIST

WHAT HUSBANDS WISH

What do you wish your wife would do—or stop doing—to make the sexual relationship better for you?

Place a check mark on the wishes you would like to share with her.

- ☐ I wish she would learn to enjoy sex rather than looking at it as an obligation.
- ☐ I wish we would communicate our sexual interests earlier in the day. If both of us are on the same page at bedtime, it can prevent disappointments and create great time.
- ☐ I wish she would wear sexy clothes and “light my fire.”
- ☐ I wish she would not talk about my weight.
- ☐ I wish my wife wanted to have sex more often. She is so busy.
- ☐ I wish she would join me in an exercise program.
- ☐ I wish she would watch more romantic movies with me.
- ☐ I wish we could spend more quality time together.
- ☐ I wish my wife would initiate sex more often. It is measurably more enjoyable for me when she is more active in getting things started.
- ☐ I never remember when my wife’s menstrual cycle is, and I don’t seem to figure it out until my motor is already running. I’m asking for a subtle little reminder.
- ☐ I wish she had sex more often and that she wanted it as much as I do.
- ☐ I wish she would take more pride in her appearance. No sweat suits in bed.
- ☐ I wish she would allow herself to let go of past experiences and enjoy our sexual relationship.
- ☐ I wish there were some variety in our sexual relationship and that we would have sex more often.

- ☐ I wish my wife would stop acting like we have to make an appointment for sex and that she would be more spontaneous.
- ☐ I wish my wife would be more vocal while making love. Sound is important.
- ☐ I wish she were open to date nights where we could just enjoy doing things together.
- ☐ I wish she would open up more and talk about this part of our marriage.
- ☐ I wish she would be patient and release me from my obligation when her drive for sex is stronger than mine.
- ☐ I wish she had a traffic light above her head that would tell me when she's "ready to go." I don't like it when I try to initiate sex and I am rejected.
- ☐ I wish my wife could have sex without so much romance to get it started.
- ☐ I wish our work schedules could be coordinated. Because we work on different shifts, we have very little time together, thus very little sex.
- ☐ I wish we had sex more than once a year. I wish her mind was on me rather than on her mom and dad. Maybe when they die, we can have sex.
- ☐ I wish my wife saw sex more as a mutual experience. It seems more and more about meeting my needs rather than an exciting experience for us.
- ☐ I wish I didn't have to use condoms every time we have intercourse. I wish she would take birth-control pills.
- ☐ I wish she would not go to bed early so many nights. I wish we would have time to talk and cuddle.
- ☐ I wish we could make love in the mornings when we are both awake.
- ☐ I wish the word *no* would disappear from her vocabulary.
- ☐ I wish my wife would seek medical advice for a physician problem she has that makes it painful for her to have sex. I'm frustrated and don't know why she won't seek help.
- ☐ I wish she would kick the kids out of our bedroom. I'm wondering if she is just using to avoid having sex.

- ☐ I wish that my wife would not bring up problems when we are trying to have sex. We can discuss problems at another time.
- ☐ Over the years her lingerie closet has become fuller but is opened less often. She is a beautiful woman, and I would enjoy seeing her open that closet more often.
- ☐ I wish she would not have projects every night that keep us busy but apart.
- ☐ I wish she would stay awake when we are making love. Her pleasure is just as important as mine, and it's not fun for me when I am making love with a corpse.
- ☐ I wish we could dedicate more time to our physical relationship. I wish she understood the importance of it. I miss the closeness.
- ☐ I wish she were more open to experimentation with new ideas, would let me know what she wants, and would listen to my desires. I don't want to force anything on her.
- ☐ I wish she would stop chitchatting during sex and just relax and enjoy it.
- ☐ I wish she would not expect so much of me in the way of romantic ideas. I'm willing and I try, but it never seems to be enough.
- ☐ I wish she would stop telling me that I don't act like I'm attracted to her. I am attracted to her. I don't know what else to do.
- ☐ I wish my wife would allow me to pleasure her sexually. She has general attitude that sex is "nasty." I know she was sexually abused as a child, but she refuses to go for counseling.
- ☐ I wish she were more comfortable with her body so we could leave the lights on when we make love. I enjoy seeing her body.
- ☐ I wish she would make suggestions to me about what makes the sexual experience more pleasurable for her.

“IMPROVING INTIMACY” WISH LIST

WHAT WIVES WISH

What do you wish your husband would do—or stop doing—to make the sexual relationship better for you?

Place a check mark on the wishes you would like to share with him.

- ☐ I wish he would work with me a little more to find out what feels good for me.
- ☐ I wish he would take better care of his body so that I would be more physically attracted to him.
- ☐ I wish that he would stop coming on to me constantly so I could make the first move once in a while.
- ☐ I wish he would not rush into lovemaking—more foreplay.
- ☐ I wish he would make sex spontaneous rather than ask for it and would hold me more.
- ☐ I wish he would stop waiting for me to initiate sex.
- ☐ I wish my husband would spend more time talking and cuddling instead of just jumping right in.
- ☐ I wish he would realize the things he does throughout the day affect sex that night.
- ☐ I wish I had more say about when the sexual experience would end; often he stops too soon.
- ☐ I wish he would spend time listening to me without the computer, radio, or television competing for his attention.
- ☐ I wish he would listen to me and not criticize my thoughts and feelings.
- ☐ I wish we could have more family time together. If I feel connected, sex is better.
- ☐ I wish he would come to bed earlier—turn off the TV sooner, and just come snuggle (pre-sex), making “intimacy” a priority.
- ☐ I wish he would not come to bed thirty minutes after I’ve gone to sleep and start “pawing” at me.

- ☐ I wish he would touch me sometimes when he *doesn't* want sex. Throw a few hugs and kisses into the mix and I would feel more interested in sex.
- ☐ I wish he would let me know that he is proud of me and glad I am his wife.
- ☐ With a new baby, I am tired much of the time. I wish sex wasn't "expected" so often.
- ☐ I wish my husband would romance me again, with a flower, note, card, or small gift that says, "I love you."
- ☐ I wish he would sit on the couch with me, hold hands, and kiss rather than sleep in the recliner.
- ☐ I wish he would show more love to me before and after sex, so it's not just physical but also spiritual and emotional.
- ☐ I wish we had consistent date nights without discussing cost—just trying new things together.
- ☐ I wish my husband would stop treating sex like it doesn't mean anything but a "fix," stop asking all the time, and stop making me feel guilty when I'm not in the mood.
- ☐ I wish he would allow me to get into bed, touch him, or cuddle up next to him, even kiss him good night, and not have it always turn into sex.
- ☐ I wish he would realize that the way he acts when he comes home from work (grouchy, impatient, irritable) sets the tone for the night, and I don't have a switch that turns all that off and suddenly makes me want to have sex with him.
- ☐ I wish he would be okay with the fact that sex is not as enjoyable for me as it is for him. I actually love good messages without sex.
- ☐ I wish he would spend more time before sexual intimacy reaffirming how special I am—things like placing his arm around me, saying something nice about me, treating me in a way that makes me feel loved. Having been sexually abused as a child, I sometimes feel that when these things do not happen, he is just using me for my body.
- ☐ I wish my husband would remember that because I am post-menopausal, intercourse is painful for me. I want to please him because I love him very much.
- ☐ I wish he would arrange for a special night or weekend where it is just us so we could concentrate on sexual intimacy.

- ☐ I wish he would understand that my lack of interest has nothing to do with him. It has everything to do with my lack of time and energy and my stress level.
- ☐ I wish he would stop grabbing me in intimate places when I'm trying to cook dinner or accomplish a task.
- ☐ I wish my husband would continue to stimulate me throughout the sexual encounter instead of just at the beginning.
- ☐ I wish we had sex more often and that he was not so tired all the time.
- ☐ I wish he would not tease or make "cat calls" when I undress.
- ☐ I wish he would work with me on our spiritual relationship.
- ☐ I wish my husband would seek help for impotency. It has been an issue for years.
- ☐ I wish he would believe that when I say, "I am too tired," I really am too tired.
- ☐ I wish he would not ask for sex when I'm not feeling well. I am pregnant and have morning sickness and just don't need to be shaken up like a soda bottle.
- ☐ I wish we would plan intimate nights so we could both "get ready" for a fun evening. Sometimes spontaneous sexual encounters are exciting, but anticipation is fun, too.
- ☐ I wish he would stop playing solitaire on the computer instead of coming to bed.
- ☐ I wish he would feel more free to let me know what I am doing—right or wrong—in making the sexual experience good for him.
- ☐ I wish that my husband would compliment my physical appearance more often, but I want him to mean it.
- ☐ I wish he would talk about loving me as a person instead of talking about wanting and desiring sex. I want to feel desirable as a woman, not as someone to meet his needs.

APPENDIX D

SERMONS

SERMON ONE

Sexuality is a Gift from God

Introduction

If God really did create sex and if He gave it to married couples as a singular gift just for us, why is sex such a struggle for some? It is important that we know that the Christian understanding of sexuality has gone through several shifts over the last fifteen hundred years. The first generation of thinking viewed sexuality simply as the required method of procreation, believing that God grudgingly tolerated the pleasurable part of the fact because it motivated people to “be fruitful, and multiply” (Gen 1:22, KJV).

The second generation of thinking, coming centuries later, affirmed that God really does want us to enjoy sex. The pleasurable part is okay with Him. The third generation of thought, which surfaced only in the last quarter-century, popularized the notion that since God wants spouses to celebrate the pleasures of sex, we should take full advantage of the medical data that explains in great detail how it all works and the technology that enhances its pleasure.

But something big is still missing. Even with couple couples taking advantage of information, medication, and therapy that were unheard of a generation ago, overall sexual satisfaction remain frightfully low.¹ And which brings us to the fourth generation of Christian sexual understanding. This has to do with viewing sex in the context of all of life, including our spiritual lives.

God’s Plan

Sexuality reflects the Image of God

- The meaning of God’s image is that we are created to be in loving relationship (Gen 1:26-27).
- The first command given to mankind was to “become one” (Gen 2:24). This refers to sexual intimacy. It was given before sin.
- Lovemaking cannot be just physical. The Hebrews never divided people into body and soul, as did the Greek dualists. Rather, the Hebrews thought of a person as a unity of the physical, emotional, and spiritual. So sexual intimacy involves the total person—physical, emotional and spiritual.

¹Gardner, 4.

Sexual Oneness Symbolizes the God-Man Relationship

- The Bible portrays sex as a symbol of the relationship between God and his people (Isa 62:5). When we accept sex and sexuality as a precious gift from the Creator, it clearly sets us apart from those who misuse it.
- The Hebrew word meaning “to know,” referring to sexual intercourse, is the same Hebrew word used when the Bible refers to man’s “knowing” God. For example, Genesis 4:1 says, “Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain.”
- Jeremiah 24:7 quotes the Lord: “I will give them a heart to know me.”
- The concept that sexual union is an example of the way God would like to relate to mankind (Eph 5:21-25) tells us that lovemaking cannot be just physical. It involves the total person—emotional, spiritual and physical.
- Even though the Godhead contains three distinct persons (Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit), the Trinity is “one” in nature. The hearts of all three Persons of the Godhead beat for the same things. In sexual union, even though a husband and wife are two distinct persons, their hearts beat as one.² Thus, the concept of sexual union between a husband and wife is a picture of God’s relationship and desire for His people.
- Solomon is a great model of the husband loving his wife as Christ loved the church. Solomon affirms and connects with the personhood of his wife. In response, his wife invites adventurous sexual activity. In Song of Songs chapter 4 Solomon describes in detail what he enjoys about her. In response, she pursues him with passion (Song of Songs 1:2; 3:1; 7:11-12).

Conclusion

According to God, marriage and sex are related, connected, and exclusive. God’s intent is that men and women would marry and enjoy sexual pleasure without shame. Sex as God intends it is for one man and one woman in marriage with the overarching purpose of oneness. Subsequently, by definition anything that contradicts God’s intent is sinful. Thus, sinful acts include adultery (Lev 18:20), incest (Deut 18:6-18) and prostitution, sinful lust including pornography (Deut 23:17-18).

²Hall, 122.

SERMON TWO

What the Bible Says about Sexuality

Introduction

Before we cover what the Bible says about our sexuality, let's consider the understanding of sex in the history of the Christian Church.

Theologian R.C. Sproul observes that “throughout the history of the Church, some have expounded on the notion that sex within marriage is merely tolerated by God for the sake of procreation,” and some have even concluded “that God regards sex as intrinsically evil.”³ That view is a long way from sex as a beautiful, holy act that invites the presence of God.

Additionally, some in the history of the church have regarded sexual pleasure itself as a consequence of sin. According to this view, before Adam and Eve at the fruit that God had forbidden, sex was not part of the scenario. Instead, the knowledge of good and evil gave them sexual awareness.⁴

If this view is true, then any expression of sex, even within marriage, becomes sinful. Along these lines, Saint Augustine believed that sex was the vehicle for the transmission of original sin.⁵ Borne out of his own confession that he couldn't find happiness, no matter how great his “indulgence in sensual pleasure,” Augustine concluded that all sexual pleasure must be evil.⁶

Christian belief that sexual pleasure is sinful went on for centuries. Only recently did Christians arrive at the idea that the pleasure associated with sex is a good thing. However, Jewish believers came to this conclusion much earlier. Rabbi Shmuley Boteach points out that the rabbis have always made female orgasm a moral obligation of the Jewish husband. In the Jewish tradition, “No man was allowed to use a woman merely for his own gratification.”⁷

³R.C. Sproul, *The Intimate Marriage* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale, 1986), 90.

⁴Sapp, 18.

⁵Bill Hybels and Rob Wilkins, *Tender Love* (Chicago: Moody, 1993), 14.

⁶Saint Augustine, *The Confessions* (London: Penguin, 1961), 132. Quoted in Gardner, 14.

⁷Shmuley Boteach, *Kosher Sex: A Recipe for Passion and Intimacy* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 46.

The Christian Church has struggled a lot more with the pleasure side of the sexual equation. Thirteenth-century theologian Thomas Aquinas and church leaders John Calvin and Martin Luther all agreed that God had created sex for reasons besides procreation. However, they also viewed sex as “disorderly”⁸ and never seemed to tread very long into the truth that sexual pleasure might actually be a gift from God.

Things have changed today. Look through any directory of Christian resources and we’ll find a book on sex or at least a book on marriage that includes a chapter on sex. Today, many have heeded the advice of Dr. Howard Hendricks, author and Christian educator: “We should not be ashamed to discuss what God was not ashamed to create.”⁹ We have come a long way from the days when sex was simply a wife’s marital duty. But there’s still more.

I agree that God wants us to enjoy sex, but sex is so much more than just fun or pleasure. Sex is much more than a mere physical act; it goes way beyond technique and physique. It has an emotional and spiritual component. The sexual union holds a deeper meaning and therefore offers deeper pleasure. But without a relationship with the Creator through Christ and a fuller understanding of His purposes for sex, we fall short of the “oneness” that God intended for us.

Now let’s consider what the Bible says about our sexuality.

Sexual pleasure within marriage is encouraged and expected.

- The sexual relationship in marriage reflects God’s image (Gen 1:26-27). In fact, Scripture instructs believers to be available to their spouses (I Cor 7:3-5).
- The Song of Songs is loaded with sexual messages of two lovers enjoying each other’s bodies fully. Nothing seems to be restricted.¹⁰
- Proverbs 5:18-19 also teaches that our feelings of sexual pleasure are permissible, and we are encouraged to enjoy them.

Mutuality—The Guiding Principle

- Since Christ broke down the human barriers (Gal 3:28; Eph 2:13-22), men and women are equal before God in their right to sexual pleasure.

⁸Hybels and Wilkins.

⁹Quoted in Gardner, 15.

¹⁰SOS 3:1; 5:10-16; 7:1-11.

- The New Testament teaches mutuality in sexual rights and responsibilities (I Cor 7:3; Eph 5:25, 28). Love has to be the guiding principle for deciding what sexual behaviors are right and wrong for a husband and wife.
- Within marriage, we are to freely enjoy each other's bodies as long as the activity is mutually desired, loving, brings us closer together.

Conclusion

The Scripture encourages the full enjoyment of sex in marriage. Let's thank God for the gift of sex. As you prepare for sexual times with your spouse, ask God to bless your intimacy.

SERMON THREE

Male and Female Sexual Differences

Introduction

Dr. Gary Chapman, family life education and marriage counselor has often been asked why God created men and women with all the sexual differences. His answer was, “if God had asked me, I would have suggested, ‘don’t even turn us on until we finish all our education. Then once you turn us on, let everyone get married three months later. After marriage, push both spouses’ buttons every three days.’ Wouldn’t that be a lot easier?”

God’s intention, when he made us different, was for sex to be more than a reproductive act—that it would in fact be a chance to tangibly show our love. When sex is an act of love, the husband and wife approach each other and ask, “How may I pleasure you?” If we don’t make it an act of love, we will never find mutual fulfillment.

Why understand male and female sexual differences? Understanding them will help couples minimize conflict and enhance mutual acceptance.

Male-Female Sexual Differences

- For women, sex tends to be a total-person experience. Men tend to focus more on the sexual parts.
 - Women usually need to connect and feel loved to open up sexually, whereas men get interested in sex in response to visual stimuli or being physically stimulated.
 - Women are just more complex than men. Women function on two tracks, the emotional and the physical, and these have to be in sync in order for a woman to be responsive sexually.
- Men tend to be ready emotionally when they are ready physically. The physical arousal carries the emotional for most men. It is like men have an on-off switch that is easy to find and figure out.
- Women have many buttons that have to be finely tuned and adjusted to be able to function well sexually.
- Men tend to be more goal-oriented, and women tend to be more into the process of lovemaking.

- Women vary more from one woman to another, and the same woman varies more from one experience to another than men do.

As John Gray, in his book *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, states:

Men are like the sun. They rise every morning and set every evening. Women are more like the moon. They are different every day but will likely circle back around next month. Women's ever-changing quality can be frustrating to a man. Yet, we are convinced that it is the combination of male constancy and ever-changing, complex femininity that is the key to keeping sex alive in marriage over a lifetime.¹¹

- Men tend to measure sexual satisfaction by quantity, whereas women tend to measure it by quality.

So when a man rates their sexual relationship, he will tend to think of how often they are together. When the woman discusses her evaluation of their sexual relationship, she will likely be thinking about the quality of their times together.

THE DIFFERENCES MAY SEEM LIKE¹²

SHE

1. All he ever wants is sex
2. He never takes the time to listen to me.
3. Why doesn't he remember what I tell him?
4. He likes the room cold.
5. He'd rather get to bed.
6. He likes to be on time.

HE

1. Why wouldn't she want sex?
2. All she ever wants to do is talk.
3. Why is she always changing her mind?
4. She likes it warm.
5. She takes an hour to prepare for bed.
6. She's willing to be late so she can take time to be gorgeous.

¹¹John Gray, *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992). Quoted in Penner & Penner, *The Gift of Sex*, 193-194.

¹²Penner & Penner, 194.

7. He loves for me to dress sexy to come to bed. He gets turned on just looking at me.	7. She likes me to love her as a person and not make her feel like an object. When I do, it turns her on.
8. I'd love to sit on the couch and have an evening of just kissing.	8. Why would she want to kiss, get all turned on, then not have sex?
9. I'm a night person.	9. I'm a morning person.
10. I need conflict resolved before having sex.	10. Sex is my way of getting close after conflict.

SERMON FOUR

Keys to Overcoming Sexual Lust

Introduction

Before sin entered the world, God gave sex as a divinely unique and extraordinary gift to the original couple to share and enjoy with each other, to celebrate their oneness. Sex is holy as well because it is in sex, in the full unity of both male and female, that the full image of God is represented.¹³ Sex is holy because it was created by God before sin ever entered the human race. In the beginning, sex was perfect and spiritually pure (Gen 2:25). But like other sins, lust and sexual immortality became part of the human nature.¹⁴

The Bible tells us to be sexually pure. Sex is to be shared only between a husband and a wife, and cannot be extended to others either before marriage or during marriage.¹⁵ Sex must not be stirred up or awakened until the time is right.¹⁶

This is why Jesus even tells us to guard our minds. Note that He said in Matthew 5:27 that to even look on a woman lustfully is to commit adultery with her. In viewing pornography, nakedness, and explicit sexual displays lust is not only given the opportunity to rise and thereby enticing since but most often lustful passions and thoughts are triggered in the heart and mind. So how do we fight and overcome lustful feelings. That's the issue.

Lust is Not

Joshua Harris in his book *Sex is not the problem (lust is)* offers this insight to show what lust is not. For example:

- It's not lust to be attracted to someone or notice that he or she is good-looking.
- It's not lust to have a strong desire to have sex.
- It's not lust to anticipate and be excited about having sex within marriage.
- It's not lust when a man or woman becomes turned on without any conscious decision to do so.
- It's not lust to experience sexual temptation.¹⁷

¹³Sapp, *Sexuality*, 7.

¹⁴Matt 15:19.

¹⁵Matt 5:27, 28.

¹⁶SOS, 8:4.

¹⁷Harris, 35.

The crucial issue in each of these examples is how we respond to the urges and desires of our sexual drive. Noticing an attractive person is not wrong; but undressing that person with our eyes or imagining what it would be like to have sexual intercourse with them is. A sexual thought that pops into our mind is not necessarily lust, but it can quickly become lust if it's entertained and dwelled on. If we fail to make these distinctions, our fight against lust will be greatly hampered.

Keys to Overcoming Sexual Lust

1. First, flee from it (I Cor 6:18; 2 Tim 2:22) as Joseph did (Gen 39:8-9).
2. Second, God's Word is our weapon (Ps 119:11; Job 31:1).
 - If Satan is resisted, he will flee (James 4:7).
 - It is hard to lust when we fill our mind with wonderful things (Phil 4:8).
3. Third, focus on the wife (Prov 31:10).
 - If we're married, our responsibility is to be absolutely committed to our wife and to treasure her. It's a wonderful antidote for the poison of lust. And God considers our wife a reward in life (Eccl 9:9).
 - Renew your marriage commitment to teach other. As I Corinthians 13 makes clear, love is not a feeling; it's a commitment.
4. Fourth, honor the sanctity of women. God's Word reiterates the honor, beauty, and sanctity of women.

A very brief summary from scripture reminds us that:

A woman's value is far beyond precious stones as she is unusually skilled at bringing dignity, blessing, and wellbeing to the lives of family members. As a result she is to be praised (Prov 31:10-31).

A noble woman is her husband's joy and crown (Prov 12:4).

We are to exhibit a spirit of submission to women, honoring their needs and wishes above our own (Eph 5:21).

Women are to be loved and cherished even as Christ loves, cherishes, and provides for His people (Eph 5:22-33).

God's Standard for Sexual Purity

New Testament Scriptures

The following is a selection of passages that teach God's concern for our sexual purity.

(High-lighted in *italics* are key words indicating what we're to avoid in the sexual realm):

1. But I [Jesus] tell you that anyone who looks at a *woman lustfully* has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matt 5:28).
2. Far from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, *sexual immorality*, theft, murder, *adultery*, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man "unclean" (Mark 7:21-23).
3. You are to abstain from. . .*sexual immorality* (Acts 15:29).
4. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in *orgies* and drunkenness, not in *sexual immorality* and *debauchery*, not in dissension and jealousy (Rom 13:12-13).
5. I am writing you that you must associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is *sexually immoral* or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat (I Cor 5:11).
6. The body is not meant for *sexual immorality*, but for the Lord (I Cor 6:13).
7. Flee from *sexual immorality* (ICor 6:18).
8. I am afraid that when I come again. . .I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the *impurity*, *sexual sin* and *debauchery* in which they have indulged (2 Cor 12:21).

9. So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.
. .The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: *sexual immorality, impurity* and *debauchery* (Gal 5:16, 19).
10. But among you there must not be even a hint of *sexual immorality*, or of any kind of *impurity*, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place (Eph 5:3-4).
11. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: *sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires* and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming (Col 3:5-6).
12. It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid *sexual immorality*; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in *passionate lust* like the heathen, who do not know God. . .For God did not call us to be *impure*, but to live a holy life (I Thess 4:3-5, 7).
13. See that no one is *sexually immoral* (Heb 12:16).
14. Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the *sexually immoral* (Heb 13:4).
15. For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagan choose to do—living in *debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing* and detestable idolatry (I Pet 4:3).

16. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to *sexual immorality* and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire (Jude 7).
17. Nevertheless, I [Jesus] have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin. .
.by committing *sexual immorality* (Rev 2:14).
18. Nevertheless, I [Jesus] have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into *sexual immorality* (Rev 2:20).
19. But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the *sexually immoral*, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death (Rev 21:8).

Drawing from these scriptural passages, authors Stephen Arterburn and Fred

Stoeker summarize God's standard for sexual purity:

- Sexual immorality begins with the lustful attitudes of our sinful natures. It is rooted in the darkness within us. Therefore sexual immorality, like other sins that enslave unbelievers, will incur God's wrath.
- Our bodies were not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, who has both created us and called us to live in sexual purity. His will is that every Christian be sexually pure—in his thoughts and his words as well as in his actions.
- Therefore it is holy and honorable to completely avoid sexual immorality—to repent of it, to flee from it, and to put it to death in our lives, as we live by the Spirit. We've spent enough time living like pagans in passionate lust.
- We should not be in close association with another Christian who persists in sexual immorality.

- If you entice others to sexual immorality, Jesus Himself has something against you!¹⁸

God does expect us to live according to His standard. I Thessalonians 4:3 states that this is God's will. So we take His command seriously—*Flee sexual immorality!*

¹⁸Arterburn and Stoeker, 45-48.

APPENDIX E

TESTS

DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?¹

Porn-related Sex

Sex is using someone
Sex is “doing to” someone
Sex is performance for others
Sex is compulsive
Sex is a public commodity
Sex is watching others

Sex is separate from love
Sex can be hurtful
Sex is emotionally distant
Sex can happen anytime

Sex is unsafe
Sex can be degrading
Sex can be irresponsible

Sex is devoid of morality

Sex lacks healthy communication

Sex involves deception
Sex is based on visual imagery
Sex has no ethical limits
Sex requires a double life

Healthy Sex

Sex is caring for someone
Sex is sharing with a partner
Sex is a private experience
Sex is a natural drive
Sex is a personal treasure
Sex is about genuine connection
Sex is an expression of love
Sex is nurturing
Sex is emotionally close
Sex requires certain conditions
Sex is safe
Sex is always respectful
Sex is approached responsibly
Sex requires morals and values
Sex requires healthy communication
Sex requires honesty
Sex involves all the senses
Sex has ethical boundaries
Sex enhances who you really are

¹Maltz, 182.

Sex compromises your values

Sex feels shameful

Sex is impulse gratification

Sex reflects your values

Sex enhances self-esteem

Sex is lasting satisfaction

Pornography Screening Test

When taking the test, circle **YES** or **NO** next to each question.

1.	Do you find yourself spending increasing amounts of time online looking at porn or engaged in sexual or romantic intrigue?	Yes	No
2.	Do you become involved in multiple romantic or sexual affairs online at the same time?	Yes	No
3.	Being truly honest with yourself, do you think pornography use or online sexual activity violates your marital and spousal commitments?	Yes	No
4.	Have you been unable to cut back on the frequency of your off- or online sexual involvement despite a thought or desire that you should do so?	Yes	No
5.	Have you been unable to “stay away” from sexual materials, sites, or interactions that have made you uncomfortable or worried about yourself when you previously viewed them?	Yes	No
6.	Does your pornography use interfere with home life, work, or school (such as making you tired or late because of the previous night’s use, or going to sex sites while at work)?	Yes	No
7.	Does your pornography use intrude on relationships that are important to you (for example, do you minimize a partner’s feelings about your porn use, or have you experienced a decrease in your intimate sexual life)?	Yes	No
8.	Do you collect pornography, keeping hundreds of magazines or videos or images stored in your computer or elsewhere?	Yes	No
9.	Do you engage in fantasy acts online or view other porn depicting illegal or violating sexual acts, such as rape, bestiality or child porn?	Yes	No
10.	Has the time you spend interacting with friends, family, and loved ones decreased because of your porn use or fantasy involvement?	Yes	No

11.	Do you lie or keep secrets about the amount of time you spend interacting with porn, type of porn you view, or the types of activities you engage in online?	Yes	No
12.	Do you have sex—either in fantasy online, or in person—with someone other than your spouse or partner?	Yes	No
13.	Are you hearing complaints and concern from family or friends about the amount of time you spend online using porn or the type of porn you use?	Yes	No
14.	Do you become irritable, angry, or extremely ashamed when asked to give up or reduce porn involvement to engage with partners, or family, or friends?	Yes	No
15.	Has the primary focus of your sexual or romantic life become increasingly related to images found in magazines, videos, computer/Internet activity?	Yes	No

After answering all fifteen questions, add up your score according to the formula given below and listed on the foot note of this page.²

Total number of statements circled “yes”: _____

Total number of statements circled “no”: _____

²Weiss and Schneider, 22-23. If you answered ‘yes’ to one to three of the symptoms should openly discuss your concerns with a caring friends or family member. More than three positive answers indicate the need to consider more professional support or counseling.

Internet Sex Screening Test³

Read each statement carefully and answer honestly. If it is true or mostly true for you, circle **YES**. If it is false or mostly false, circle **NO**.

1.	I have some sexual sites bookmarked	Yes	No
2.	I spend more than five hours per week using my computer for sexual pursuits.	Yes	No
3.	I have joined sexual sites to gain access to online sexual material.	Yes	No
4.	I have purchased sexual products online.	Yes	No
5.	I have searched for sexual material through an Internet search tool.	Yes	No
6.	I have spent more money for online sexual material than I planned.	Yes	No
7.	Internet sex has sometimes interfered with certain aspects of my life.	Yes	No
8.	I have participated in sexually related chats.	Yes	No
9.	I have a sexualized user name or nickname that I use on the Internet.	Yes	No
10.	I have masturbated while on the Internet.	Yes	No
11.	I have accessed sexual sites from other computers besides my own.	Yes	No
12.	No one knows I use my computer for sexual purposes.	Yes	No
13.	I have tried to hide what is on my computer or monitor so others cannot see it.	Yes	No
14.	I have stayed up after midnight to access sexual material online.	Yes	No
15.	I use the Internet to experiment with aspects of sexuality such as bondage, homosexuality, and anal sex.	Yes	No

³Carnes, Delmonico, Griffin with Moriarity, 26-28.

16.	I have my own Web site that contains sexually explicit material.	Yes	No
17.	I have made promises to myself to stop using the Internet for sexual purposes.	Yes	No
18.	I sometimes use cybersex as a reward for accomplishing something like finishing a project or enduring a stressful day.	Yes	No
19.	When I am unable to access sexual information online, I feel anxious, angry, or disappointed.	Yes	No
20.	I have increased the risks I take online (for example, giving out my real name and phone number or meeting people offline).	Yes	No
21.	I have punished myself when I use the Internet for sexual purposes. For example, I've arranged a time-out from the computer or canceled Internet subscriptions.	Yes	No
22.	I have met face-face-face with someone I met online for romantic purposes.	Yes	No
23.	I use sexual humor and innuendo with others while online.	Yes	No
24.	I have run across illegal sexual material while on the Internet.	Yes	No
25.	I believe I am an Internet sex addict.	Yes	No

After answering all twenty-five questions, add up your score according to the formula listed on the foot note of this page.⁴

Total number of statements circled "yes": _____

Total number of statements circled "no": _____

⁴Give yourself one point for each statement that you marked "yes." Based on 935 people who have previously taken this test, authors Carnes, Delmonico and Griffin have found that if your score is nineteen or above, it is very likely that you have a problem with your online sex-related activities.

APPENDIX F

RESOURCE GUIDE

RESOURCE GUIDE

The following is a list of organizations that provide referral services for obtaining professional and other supportive help in recovery. In considering a therapist, support group, or treatment program, you may want to consult physicians and mental health referral agencies for more information about the services in your area.

Use your own judgment when contacting any of these organizations or Web sites. Interview and learn details about their program, expectations and operations before making your choice. Be advised that Web site addresses frequently change and an internet search engine may be needed to find the recommended site.

CHRIST-CENTERED 12 STEP SUPPORT GROUPS

Faithful and True Ministries

Dr. Mark Laaser, Director
6542 Regency Lane
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Phone: (952) 949-3478
Local Counseling: (612) 961-0106
Web site: www.faithfulandtrueministries.com

Mastering Life Ministries

Dr. David Kyle Foster, Founder
P.O. Box 351149
Jacksonville, FL 32235-1149
Phone: (904) 220-7474
Web site: www.gospelcom.net

Overcomers Outreach

Judy Turnbull
P.O. Box 2208
Oakhurst, CA 93644
Toll Free: (800) 310-3001
Web site: www.overcomersoutreach.org

Prodigals International

6619 – 132nd Avenue NE, PMB-262
Kirland, WA 98033
Phone: (866) 910-9002
Web site: www.prodigalsonline.org

Pure Desire

Ted Roberts, Founder
P.O. Box 650
Gersham, OR 97030
Phone: (503) 661-4444
Web site: www.puredesire.org

Pure Life Ministries

Steve Gallagher
14 School Street
Dry Ridge, KY 41035
Toll Free: (800) 635-1866
Counseling Office: (859) 824-0870
Web site: www.purelifeministries.org

Pure Warrior Ministries

P.O. Box 190297
Boise, ID 83719-0297
Phone: (208) 322-7006
Web site: www.purewarrior.org
Email: info@purewarrior.org

COUPLES RECOVERY GROUPS**Codependents of Sex Addicts (COSA)**

www.cosa-recovery.org
Email: info@cosa-recovery.org (763) 537-6904

A national 12-step program for partners of sex addicts and sex offenders. The fellowship is affiliated with SAA. Because of the links available to the family groups, this Web site makes it easy for spouses and other family members to find appropriate groups for their recovery. One option made available through this organization is online meetings.

Dr. Carnes' Resources for Sex Addiction & Recovery

www.sexhelp.com

This Web site contains information about sexual addiction, offers a Sexual Addiction Screening Test to help assess whether a person has a sexual addiction problem, and has links to sexual addiction recovery resources.

Recovering Couples Anonymous (RCA)

www.recovering-couples.org (510) 663-2312

E-mail: rca_email@recovering-couples.org

A 12-step program where couples find support to recover from the impact of sexual addiction. It also helps both addicts and their partners work on issues of commitment, intimacy and mutual recovery. The site provides referral information on RCA meetings in your community, telephone meetings, and e-meetings, daily reflections for couples and other resources about twelve-step recovery for couples.

S-Anon

www.sanon.org. (800) 210-8141

E-mail: sanon@sanon.org (615) 833-3152

A national 12-step fellowship for the relatives and friends of sexually addicted people who share their experiences in order to solve their common problems. Although primarily married women attend, there are also many single members. Provides referrals to an established S-Anon group in your community. S-Anon is affiliated with SA and supports S-Ateen, a program for children of sex addicts.

TWELVE-STEP PROGRAM FOR SINGLES AND COUPLES

The following list briefly describes recovery programs for sex and porn addiction, their focus, and attendance. Contact the national offices by phone or visit their Web sites for more specific meeting information, location, and times. All these groups of self-help programs for people who wish to recover from any type of compulsive sexual behavior.

PORN AND SEX ADDICT RECOVERY GROUPS

Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA)

www.sexaa.org. (800) 477-8191

This group helps men and women overcome sexual addiction through a twelve-step fellowship. They provide extensive referral information for finding an SAA meeting in your area. Also provides SAA meetings via Internet chat and telephone conference calls. SAA has an affiliated program for partners of sexual addicts called COSA (Codependents of Sex Addicts).

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (S.L.A.A.)

www.slaafws.org. (210) 828-7900

A twelve-step program focuses on addictive sexual and romantic relationships. S.L.A.A. is helpful for sexual addict as well as people who consistently involve themselves in abusive relationships. This program attracts both men and women. S.L.A.A. is the most broadly supportive of women of all the 12-step sexual addictions organizations.

What differentiates this group is that it has a focus on the recovery from problems related to romantic dependency, romantic relationships, emotional dependency, and social or emotional anorexia.

Sexaholics Anonymous (SA)

www.sa.org. (866) 424-8777

E-mail: saico@sa.org (615) 370-6062

A national 12-step program, employing the most restrictive definition of sexual sobriety: “No sexual behavior outside of a marital relationship.” SA has an affiliated program for spouses and families of sex addicts and offenders called S-Anon. Those with more conservative religious beliefs often find themselves more comfortable here.

People who speak Spanish or German can find resources here. SA is also the only 12-step group that offers program for prisoners. Spouses will find links for family members on SA’s web site.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA)

www.sca-recovery.org. (800) 977-HEAL

Email: info@SCArecovery.org (212) 606-3778

A twelve-step program whose members strive to obtain sobriety from sexual addiction and recover from sexual compulsion. Membership consists primarily, but not exclusively, of gay and bisexual men and women. Provides referral information to meetings in various communities and offers on online meeting.

RESIDENTIAL AND OUTPATIENT TREATMENT CENTERS

Inpatient residential and intensive outpatient treatment programs that help people with serious pornography problems are located throughout the United States. The focus of these programs varies, but may include treatment for sexual addiction and sexual compulsivity. Contact your local physician, pastoral counselor or mental health center for information on existing programs in your area. The following are several nationally recognized centers.

Bethesda Workshops

Nashville, TN (866) 464-4325
www.BethesdaWorkshops.org

A Non-denominational Christian organization that provides residential workshops to help heal the spiritual, emotional, and relationship problems caused by pornography and other forms of sexual addiction. Separate workshops for women, men, spouses, and couples.

Center for Healthy Sexuality

Houston, TX (713) 785-7111
www.centerforthehealthysexuality.com

This outpatient treatment center offers ongoing individual and couples counseling as well as three-to four-day intensives for treating sexual addiction and relationship problems. Services also include comprehensive psychosexual assessments and evaluations.

Faithful and True Ministries

Eden Prairie, MN (952) 746-3885
www.faithfulandtrueministries.com

A Christian recovery ministry providing services for sexual addiction recovery, including men's counseling groups, men's recovery workshops, and couples intensives.

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES

American Association of Sex Educators Counselors and Therapists (AASECT)

www.aasect.org. (804) 752-0026

A national organization that helps locate qualified sex therapists and counselors in your region, as well as providing links to resources on human sexuality and sexual health.

Cybersexualaddiction.com

www.cybersexualaddiction.com

An informational Web site about cyberporn and cybersex addiction problems with helpful links and information.

Healthy Mind

www.healthymind.com (703) 705-6161

Clinical psychologist David Bissette from Washington, D.C. offers wealth of information about pornography, sexual addiction, and recovery. Pages include explanations about the nature of addiction and helpful worksheets for establishing and maintaining sobriety.

HealthySex.com

www.HealthySex.com

Developed by Wendy Maltz, this site provides information on healthy sexuality. It includes articles, checklists, comparison charts, and resources to help individuals and couples understand and develop skills for healthy sexual intimacy. In addition, this site offers information on Wendy Maltz's books, videos, DVDs, and workshops.

InternetFilterReview

www.internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com

This Web site helps evaluate Internet filter software programs available to purchase for your home or business computer. Also has information on Internet safety tips for children and extensive and extensive Internet pornography statistics.

Jennifer P. Schneider

www.jenniferschneider.com

E-mail: Jennifer@jenniferschneider.com (520) 721-7886

Provides the full text of research articles on sex addiction and its effects on the family, and information about her other books about sex addiction and family recovery.

MaleSurvivor

www.malesurvivor.org

Information, resources, and support for men who were sexually victimized as children, adolescents, or adults.

Sexual Health Network

www.sexualhealth.com

This site provides a wealth of information on sexual health topics and resources for men, women, and couples. Offers questions and answers on sexuality issues from their own network of experts.

Sexual Recovery Institute

www.sexualrecovery.com (310) 360-0130

E-mail: info@sexualrecovery.com

Web site for the assessment and treatment program of author Robert Weiss, clinical director. Provides extensive articles and self-test, helpful links, and information about treatment.

Smart Recovery

www.smartrecovery.org (866) 951-5357

An alternative to twelve-step programs, provides referral to free face-to-face meetings around the world, as well as online mutual help groups for people recovering from all types of addictive behaviors, including sexual addiction.

Society of Advancement of Sexual Health (SASH)

www.sash.net (770) 541-9912

E-mail: sash@sash.net

Provides a professional membership directory to find a therapist in your area who can help individuals and their families with pornography and sexual addiction problems. Also includes articles on sexual health and sexual addiction recovery.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND TEENS

Below is a list of online resources for sex education and for Internet safety for teens. Some of the sites are intended for parents, others for teens. It's advisable for parents to check out all these Web sites and recommend the teen-friendly ones to their children. A good start would be read the article, "*Teen Safety on the Information Highway*" by Larry Magid at www.safeteens.com/safeteens.htm.

Advocates for Youth

www.advocatesforyouth.org. (202) 419-3420

Provides extensive information for young people to make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health, as well as numerous articles on and guidelines for parents to talk to their children about sexuality.

Coalition for Positive Sexuality

www.positive.org

Kid-friendly site to educate teens on healthy sexuality.

Enough Is Enough

www.protectkids.com (888) 744-0004

Kid-friendly site with information on Internet dangers, the harmful effects of pornography, and child sexual abuse; resources; youth safety rules, parents' rules and tools, safety tools; and links for reporting cybercrime.

Getnetwise.org

www.getnetwise.org

A coalition of Internet industry corporations and public interest organizations that provides information on keeping children safe online, and how to block unwanted pornographic e-mail.

Internet Behavior Consulting

www.internetbehavior.com

In addition to helpful information online, this company has professionals available for consultation, training and intervention for problematic online behavior. Their online newsletter *Cyber Times* is informative.

National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families

www.nationalcoalition.org. (800) 583-2964 (HelpLine)

This Christian organization provides assistance through their HelpLine to those harmed by pornography. They offer consultation to professionals and pastors regarding sexual compulsivity, as well as links to sites to help select Internet blocking or monitoring systems.

Safekids.com

www.safekids.com

Offer tips and guidelines for parents to help their children be safe and responsible in their Internet use.

Web Wise Kids

www.webwisekids.org. (866) WEB-WISE

Provides parents with tips for protecting their children from the dangers of the Internet, and guides teens in developing an Internet safety plan.

DVDs AND CDs

Contrary to Love: Helping the Sexual Addict. A twelve-part PBS video series in which noted addiction psychologist Dr. Patrick Carnes discusses the spectrum of compulsive/addictive behavior and recovery treatment. Available as a complete set or individually, in videotape or DVD. Distributed by Gentle Path Press, P.O. Box 3172, Carefree, AZ 85377, (800) 708-1796, www.gentlepath.com

Freedom Begins Here: You were called to be set free. A dynamic series of DVD ToolKits designed specifically to empower individuals and churches to face the crisis of pornography and sexual addiction head on. Co-hosted by America's leading marriage expert, Dr. Gary Smalley, and Pastor Ted Cunningham, *Freedom Begins Here* is filled with relevant, life-changing material.

With in-depth teaching from Dr. Mark Laaser, recognized as the leading Christian authority on sexual addiction, *Freedom Begins Here* stands in the gap by providing the most complete resource available to help people find freedom from the stronghold of pornography and sexual addiction. Available as a complete DVD set. Produced by Gray Communications, www.graycommunicationsinc.com

No More Disposition To Do Evil: Abandoning Pornography Habits. It is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking ways to understand, overcome, or prevent pornography addiction. Roy Reid, a nationally renowned therapist, speaks out about recognizing and understanding pornography addiction, and the steps that you and or your loved one can take to win the battle against pornography.

Drawing from his experience counseling patients and his research into the problem, Reid illustrates how key steps, a change of perspective, and spiritual principles are all essential parts of the pathway to recovery. A hundred-twenty-one minute DVD, www.cedarfort.com

Now That I Know, What Should I Do? Answering the ten most frequently asked questions for partners of sex addicts. Featuring Douglas Weiss, Ph.D., Director of Heart to Heart Counseling Centers. Available in Video and DVD. Running Time, 90 minutes. Order from Heart to Heart Counseling at (719) 278-3708 or www.sexaddict.com

Somebody's Daughter: A Journey to Freedom from Pornography. Watch and listen as three men and a husband and wife share their intensely personal struggle of how pornography crept in and ravaged their lives. This groundbreaking DVD package includes four music videos: *Never Shake His Hand*, *Losing Ground*, *Somebody's Daughter*. Also, a bonus CD: Nine topic specific songs, personal stories, interviews and readings. Distributed by Vision Video, PO Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490, www.visionvideo.com

INTERNET FILTERING SERVICES

The following web sites are highly recommended for information on the latest technology for filtering Internet porn.

AT&T

www.getnetwise.org

The site explains the various technology approaches to filtering, allows you to load in the criteria you want in a filter, and then shows you which technology best fits your preferences.

Covenant Eyes

www.covenanteyes.com

A software that records every website visited and assigns scores based on content. A report that shows how the Internet is used is delivered to the Accountability Partner(s) of your choice. Choose Accountability, Filtering or both. Find freedom from online temptations. Covenant Eyes Accountability and Filtering software is available at the following website: www.covenanteyes.com

Every Home Protected

Web site: www.everyhomeprotected.com

Internet Filtering Services

Integrity Online

Web site: www.integrity.com

Monitoring Software

Web Watcher

Web site: www.awarnessstech.com/parents/index/html

x3watch

www.xxxchurch.com

Have software on your computer that keeps you accountable while surfing the Web.

National Directory Phone Numbers

Faithful and True Ministries	(888) 610-8094
Sex Addicts Anonymous	(800) 477-8191
Sexaholics Anonymous	(615) 331-6230
Focus on the Family Pastoral Care Line	(877) 233-4455
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy	(202) 452-0109
National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity	(770) 541-9912
American Association of Pastoral Counselors	(703) 352-7725
American Association of Christian Counselors	(800) 526-8673
Bethesda Workshops	(866) 464-4325

Websites

American Association of Christian Counselors	www.aacc.net
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy	www.aamft.org
American Association of Pastoral Counselors	www.aapc.org
Bethesda Workshops	www.bethesdaworkshops.org
Faithful and True Ministries	
www.faithfulandtrueministries.com	
Focus on the Family	www.pureintimacy.org
Focus on the Family, H.B. London	www.parsonage.org
Kid Shield	www.kidshield.com
National Association for Christian Recovery	www.christianrecovery.com
National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity	www.ncsac.org
Prodigals International	www.iprodigals.com
Psychological Counseling Services/New Hope	
Educational Foundation	www.pcs@pcsearle.com
Sex Addicts Anonymous	www.saa-recovery.org
Sexaholics Anonymous	www.sa.org

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Professional/Pastoral Experience:

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Washington, D.C.	Capital Memorial Church Potomac (Pastoral Assistant)	1988-1993
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