

Pornography—

Root of Adultery

The above title may sound like stretching the truth due to the fact that pornography is not so much the root of adultery, but the lust that accompanies it. However, saying that pornography is the root of adultery makes sense when you realize that pornography, in any medium, is a catalyst for lust and lust most certainly can lead to adultery. We cannot afford to sugar coat the effects of pornography, nor deny the fact that many people, including some believers, are struggling with this problem right now.

I believe that marriage, in its purest form, is as much a creation as the trees, the animals and even us. During the process of creation, Yahweh stated the following in **Genesis 2:24, For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.** Our Creator dictated that a man and a woman would become one flesh. The time that a husband and wife most deeply become one flesh is during intimacy. The sexual part of their relationship was given as a gift to humanity to be used in building and keeping the security of a loving and committed marriage relationship. Of course, it is for the purpose of procreation, but it also secures the bond between hus-

band and wife. Another thing to keep in mind is that we were created in His image. Think about that for a minute and ask yourself what Yahweh thinks when He sees some of His children involving themselves with the filthiness of pornography.

OUR CHILDREN

Due to the nature of this subject, I recommend that parents either read this article *with* their teenagers or discuss it with them. Pornography is by far the greatest moneymaker on the Internet. Whether parents want to believe it or not, taking into account the way pornography is now being marketed, it is more likely that your teenager, or even a younger child, will be exposed to pornographic images, than that someone will offer them drugs. In fact, in a recent survey, 90% of the teenagers that use the Internet to do their homework admitted to visiting pornographic websites! It is NOT hard for children under the age of eighteen to enter these pornographic sites without anybody knowing.

The government has set the legal age to view porn at eighteen. But the government does not and cannot enforce it. Porn sites sometimes have a dialogue box

that cautions you that you must be eighteen to enter, but that is easily passed by clicking the OK button. It is unreasonable and even impossible for parents to watch their older children twenty-four hours a day. However, parents should be careful not to let their children use the computer as a babysitter to keep them entertained. At the very least, parents should be very aware as to what kind of material their children are viewing on the Internet. Parents need to tell their children that pornography is dangerous for them. It has just the opposite effect that a user might expect. It will damage their marriage, hurt their children, and greatly *reduce* the joy of their marriage and of sex.

A LYING MESSAGE

Unfortunately, in the fallen world, pornography sends clear messages, generally to men, that faithful sexual attention to one woman is not necessary. There are many other women to look at. Why only be satisfied with one? The words, "You can look but not touch" are very common amongst some men. Those men do not realize that looking at another woman with lust is as much a sin as touching.

Matthew 5:27-29, You have heard that it was said, “Do not commit adultery.” 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Adam and Eve’s problems began long before they touched the forbidden fruit. Their problems started when they first *saw* the fruit. The fruit was very appealing to the eye and they ultimately felt that they had to eat it. Satan did not have to work very hard to entice them. They were well on their way to eating it before he even came along. Similarly, when a man involves himself with pornography or similar material, Satan does not have to work hard to entice him to commit adultery. Satan provides the means for us to do it. But, as Yahshua said, the adultery had already been committed in the heart and mind.

Pornography uses the strong visual senses of a man to promote lust and to make him vulnerable and weak. It stimulates the pleasure center in the brain. After a while, more pornography is needed to produce the same effect. The addictive cycle is started. Then there is an increase in intensity in the addiction so that the individual needs harder material to get the same affect, moving on to the accepting of repulsive behavior (desensitization) and the ultimate acting out of images seen in pornography. Pornographers know that men are wired to be sexually aroused by sight. They take advantage of this physiological reality by parading beautiful women’s bodies for any man to see. They take something that is real and good (sex in the marriage) and they masquerade it with false realities and negative concepts. They play on a desire

that is intended to bind a married couple together and, instead, offer a VERY cheap substitute. Why does no one mention that you can NEVER have a real relationship in pornography?

The fact that the pornography industry brings in millions of dollars more than regular filmmaking proves that their techniques to make people addicted are working. In less than three decades, pornography has grown from a small-scale operation of \$5-10 million annually into a giant industry with yearly sales of \$12-13 billion. That is as much as the gross revenue of the three major television networks combined. Some may say that pornography is a harmless vice. The truth is that societies, marriages, women, and individual users all suffer devastating consequences because of pornography. The problems created by this industry are many and they include these:

- Men, especially young men, will develop a distorted view of what a proper sexual relationship should be. They may resent their wives if they don’t look like the women on the screen or if they don’t perform the same way. Wives will feel degraded, disrespected and may begin to have low self-esteem. Often these feelings are made worse by the fact that pornography is often done in secret. If the wife is aware that her husband does it, she may not want to divulge the problem to friends and family because of the stigma that may come with it.

Romans 13:13-14, Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. 14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the likeness of Yahshua the Messiah, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

- Men may develop distorted

views of other women, seeing them as sexual objects. They may seek out unusual or deviant sexual practices. Men who repeatedly look at pornography lose their ability to give women the respect they deserve. Instead of enjoying the mind and heart of a woman, they focus on her body—undressing her in their thoughts and picturing what it would be like to have a sexual encounter with her. They may mistake a woman’s innocent, friendly smile as a flirtatious come-on. In many tragic cases, they find it difficult and uncomfortable to imagine themselves being involved with a woman in any other way than physically.

Their feet rush to sin...their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways (Isaiah 59:7). Bear in mind that an addiction to pornography blocks the most precious thing we can have in this life: a mind-to-mind, heart-to-heart, spirit-to-spirit loving relationship with our own wife. If you have not experienced it, you don’t know what ecstasy is.

- Men will develop an addictive behavior and may seek out other forms of pornographic material, including child pornography. **But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea (Matthew 18:6).**

- Men will develop loss of attention towards family, spouse and children. Contrary to what some believe, sexually explicit material *does not* enhance sex in a marriage. Just the opposite is true. Real life seldom lives up to what is represented in the fake world of pornography. And when a husband demands that reality imitate his fantasy, sex becomes empty for him and degrading to his wife. In the end, both feel resentful and

less interested in sex with each other. Furthermore, pornography does not create a desire to be close. It destroys intimacy in a marriage. As men become more addicted to this material, they will spend more time feeding their addiction. This means that they will spend less time with their children. Missing work, family functions and other social events is not unusual for men that are involved with this filth.

Psalm 128:3-4, Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the man blessed who fears Yahweh.

1 Corinthians 7:3-5, The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

- If a parent allows pornographic material in the home, or if a child is left unattended to surf the Internet, it is most probable that he or she will be exposed to pornography. This, in turn, will develop unhealthy attitudes towards sex and women. Girls may develop behavior that mimics what they see in pornography as they feel that what they see is what it takes to please men. **Ephesians 6:4, Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in Yahweh's training and instruction.**

- Men will develop strong feelings of guilt, shame, and low self-esteem; this may ultimately lead them to walk away from Yahweh and the faith. **Matthew 25:41: Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."**

- The effects of pornography on society are tremendous. Researchers have shown that regular exposure to pornography has led to rape and child molestation. In one study, 86% of convicted rapists confessed to regular use of pornography, with 57% acknowledging that they tried to reenact a pornographic scene during the rape. This study also revealed that 87% of molesters of girls and 77% of molesters of boys regularly used hard-core pornography. Another study found that over half of the male students exposed to violent pornography indicated a likelihood of raping a woman if they could get away with it.

Not all men who look at pornography get addicted to it, but research shows that far too many of them do. The Internet is now the biggest way for men to get hooked. Many people would have never had problems with sexual compulsivity if it were not for the Internet. The National Council on Sexual Addiction Compul-

sivity estimates that 6% to 8% of Americans are sex addicts, which is 16 to 22 million people! Sadly, most men don't admit the problem until they get caught, telling themselves that they're in control. Others feel hopelessly enslaved and don't know the way out. If you are a person who struggles with the damaging effects of pornography, or if you know anyone battling with this problem, the rest of the article will offer techniques that will help you break the cycle. One must keep in mind that once you have been involved with pornography to the extent of addiction, it will be very hard for you to walk away. Developing a support group will help.

Proverbs 28:13 verifies that, in confession and renunciation, we will find mercy: **He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.** It is also important to treat this problem as an addiction; in other words, expect withdrawal pains, episodes of setbacks, and also expect a life-long struggle. Over time, however, with much fasting, prayer and guidance of the Holy Spirit, a person can be set free from Satan's clutches. Keep in mind that Satan will not give up easily. Although we may not have a problem with pornography, we all have issues that Satan uses against us. In a sense, we are all going through similar struggles. This is why Peter writes: **Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings (1 Peter 5:8-9).** The important thing to keep in mind about the following techniques is that one must always be *pro-active* and not *reactive*. There are countless scriptures that speak about the need for one to be prepared. This is what I mean by being pro-active. Here's a good example: **Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Yahshua the Messiah is revealed (1 Peter 1:13).** Peter could very well be telling us to train (prepare) our minds for the coming of our Master. It could be that the anti-messiah will be so convincing that he may lead us away from the true Messiah. That is why, as we are able, we must prepare our minds so that when that time comes, we will know how to respond. We do not want to wait until the last minute (reactive) to start preparing ourselves. By then, it will undoubtedly be too late.

One obvious part of overcoming the addiction of pornography is that we must, with a humble and sincere heart, seek Father Yahweh's forgiveness in the Name of Yahshua. Sadly, some people may be so deep into pornography that they may be thinking that there is no way that Yahweh will forgive them; so they block out the need to ask. Satan influences that line of

thinking, as he uses any means necessary, especially guilt, to make an individual think that he is not worthy of forgiveness (he does this with any issue that separates us from Yahweh). Satan does not want us to believe that we can be forgiven through Yahshua. These encouraging scriptures speak otherwise: **All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name (Acts 10:43). Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Yahshua the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you (Acts 13:38).** Also read **Acts 26:18, Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:13-14.**

The parable of the prodigal son (**Luke 15:11-32**) gives hope to those brethren who have walked away from Yahweh because of pornography. Once we have acknowledged our problems with pornography and have asked Yahweh for forgiveness, we can use the following techniques to help us deal with this addiction. We must constantly meditate on Yahshua the Messiah and take upon us His frame of mind, always seeking to please and praise our Father Yahweh. (Please keep in mind that these are only suggestions, not rule of law. There are other ways that can be used to break this negative cycle; none of them, however, replace the word of Yahweh).

STOPPING

This technique may be the most difficult to do because it involves the breaking of a behavior cycle. Since we are creatures of habit, the hardest things to stop are those behaviors to which we have grown accustomed. Think about what you do when you wake up in the morning or when you come home from work. Chances are that, most of the time, you go

through the same habitual behaviors. When dealing with pornography, this involves terminating the use of the Internet or any medium that exposes you to it. This can be quite difficult because we can always justify the use of the Internet for something.

The point here, however, is that if it is out of sight, it will be out of mind. Based on the problem that may exist with pornography, it may be worth getting rid of the Internet. There is, of course, software that will help monitor and block negative content from downloading onto your computer (this would be especially good for kids). One problem with that software, however, is that it may be limited to only blocking the material that the software makers think is negative. It may allow other content that can be as detrimental as hard pornography.

The Stopping technique also involves the separation from individuals who influence negative behaviors or that support the use of pornography. There are men who blame their spouse for their involvement in pornography. The Stopping technique includes the stopping of putting blame on others and accepting responsibility for their own behaviors. The one who has the problem causes it himself. Blame should not be placed on anyone else.

The last part of Stopping that we will discuss involves a complete break in thought pattern. This applies to those men that start fantasizing about other women. When a man begins to have thoughts about another woman, he must immediately tell himself that he has no right to do that and Yahweh does not approve of such behavior. The thought pattern is immediately stopped and changed to something else. Perhaps a prayer can be said.

The key here is to stop that pattern of thinking and to change it

to something productive and edifying to Yahweh. If the man has now realized that viewing pornography is sinful, that he loves Yahweh, and loves his family, then he knows he must stop—NOW! It takes some strength, but in some ways, the *easiest* solution is to just stop.

STRATEGIC PLACING

If you are like most people and you view pornography in secret, it may be a deterrent if you move your computer into a room where most people in the house can see what you are viewing. If your spouse does not know that you view pornography and that you view it when she is not there or when she is asleep, it would help if you train yourself not to surf the Internet unless she is there. If you have to, force yourself to go to bed at the same time that she does and pray together before bedtime. You will find that bedtime is a great time to communicate with your wife, since the kids are not around to disturb. Strategic placing of the computer is also great for the kids. A parent who allows his child to have his own computer with access to the Internet in his or her room is just asking for trouble.

Remember that the protecting software is limited in its programming. It often keys on words that people would use when dealing with pornography or violence; however, words like “bikini” or “bras” are usually not recognized as being bad and access may be granted. Some of those websites can be just as raunchy as the pornographic sites. There are many words that you would not think would take you to porn sites, words such as “glasses” or “white house” but they do. The pornographers are slick and use any means necessary to get people to their sites. They particularly like the young-

er audiences because they have a greater chance of creating a customer for life. The presence of a parent is very important when children are on the Internet.

BLOCKING

This technique is very simple. It involves the practice of hindering or preventing you from being exposed to pornography or similar material. It involves making good choices when selecting movies or television programs. Blocking also involves control by association. The best example I can give is the following: On any window on a computer, there are three symbols on the top right corner which are: a dash (—) which means minimize, two small boxes which mean, restore down, and one X which means close. A person who uses the internet to view pornography is encouraged to think X (close or terminate) when they desire to see those images. Just as the window disappears or closes when you click on the X, the idea is that the person will also picture the thought closing, disappearing, or terminating before the mind entertains it.

In some ways, it is similar to the stopping technique and involves many of its facets. Probably the biggest difference, however, is that in blocking, you completely detach yourself from pornography by not allowing your mind to dwell on the images that you viewed. This is done by always keeping your mind on other things and not allowing yourself to think about negative things. This technique is not easy for a person that has been entrenched in pornography. However, it is much easier when you develop a higher sense of morals, values and ethics.

COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

Next is an effective technique called Cognitive Restructuring.

Although this sounds complicated, it is not. This technique is often used in anger management and it contains similarities to the other techniques mentioned. We can use it in dealing with the problems created by the use of pornography. Simply put, cognitive restructuring actually involves a complete change in the way a person thinks. For example, many men who are involved in pornography will often take a kind gesture from a woman and turn it into a flirtatious event. This line of thinking can lead to many embarrassing moments and is degrading to women. Other irrational thoughts that men may develop are the beliefs that what all women want is to have sex. "It doesn't hurt to look," is yet another irrational thought that some men have.

Cognitive restructuring involves the changing of all such irrational thought patterns and seeing things in a more rational and biblical manner. Some women are friendly, but that does not make them sex addicts. Women want to be respected and recognized as being created in the image of Yahweh. That gives them self-worth and the right to be respected. Yahshua explained that men do not have the right to have indecent thoughts about women. Cognitive restructuring is more successful when we ask the question, "What would Yahshua do or say in this situation?" We should put on the Messiah and overcome evil with His way of thinking.

Ephesians 4:24, ...and to put on the new self, created to be like Yahshua in true righteousness and holiness.

It is important to remember that nobody can successfully overcome the trials of this sin, or any sin for that matter, without the urgency of not only *wanting* to please our Father Yahweh, but also *doing* the things that *please* Him. Our Father Yahweh will guide us out of sin, and will not

only redeem us, but also forgive us. In **Matthew 19:26**, Yahshua said, **With man this is impossible, but with Elohim all things are possible.**

As long as we put our trust in Yahweh, put on Messiah, and do what Paul recommends in **Colossians 3:5-6**, we will be successful: **Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.**

We must remember that behind every image that promotes adultery there is a demonic spirit whose job is to lead us away from the Most High. **1 John 2:17** reminds us that the satisfaction that men encounter when looking at pornography is temporal and will fade away. Only those who overcome and do the will of Yahweh will be granted everlasting life.

The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of Elohim lives forever.

We must not forget that, as temples of the Holy Spirit, we must remain pure in heart, mind and soul.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which you have received from Elohim? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor Yahshua with your body.

Be of good courage, brothers. Read the Apostle Paul's teaching in **Philippians 1:6**, **Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of the Messiah Yahshua.**