

# Pornography: Everyone's Battle

Bob Russell

A full-page ad in a recent issue of *World Magazine* reported on the pervasiveness of pornography in our culture. The latest studies by the Barna Group and Covenant Eyes are alarming.

- *Over 40 million Americans are regular visitors to porn sites. The average visit lasts 6 minutes and 29 seconds.*
- *There are around 42 million porn websites.*
- *The porn industry's annual revenue is more than the NFL, NBA, and MLB combined. It's also more than the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC.*
- *47% of families in the United States reported that pornography is a problem in their home.*
- *Pornography increases the infidelity rate by more than 300%.*
- *Eleven is the average age that a child is first exposed to porn and 94% of children will see porn by age 14.*
- *56% of American divorces involve one party having an "obsessive interest" in pornographic websites.*
- *33% of women aged 25 and under search for porn at least once per month.*
- *68% of church-going men and over 50% of pastors view porn regularly.*
- *Of young Christian adults 18-24 years old, 76% actively search for porn.*

When I read those shocking statistics, I thought of two Scriptures. Before Noah's flood, Genesis 6:5 reads, *"The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time."* In Matthew 24:37 Jesus predicted, *"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man"* (Matthew 24:37).

## SO, WHAT'S WRONG WITH PORN?

Pornography is so readily accessible that it's becoming mainstream. Consequently, Christians are inclined to downplay its sinfulness. The 18th century English poet Alexander Pope wrote, *"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien as to be hated needs only to be seen; Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace."*

Pornography is sinful because it is intentionally designed to stimulate lust. Jesus taught that to look at a woman lustfully is to commit adultery in the heart. Pornography deliberately fuels wrong desires, creates guilt, and suffocates our fellowship with Christ.

Pornography is addictive. There is a law of increased appetite and diminishing return that takes over. What arouses today is unmoving tomorrow. Ted Bundy, the serial killer who murdered over 30 women, stated, “I’ve lived in prison for a long time now, and I’ve met a lot of men who are motivated to commit violence just like me. And without exception, every one of them was deeply involved in pornography – without question, without exception.”

More and more studies suggest that pornography often results in impotence. Satan seeks to destroy natural affection between a husband and wife through over-exposure to unrealistic images. I’m convinced the primary reason for the plethora of ads promising to cure ED is not that men age, but that normal desire has been numbed by overexposure.

## HOW DO WE GAIN VICTORY?

### **1.Acknowledge its danger.**

When you toy with pornography, you are dealing with a substance that is as dangerous as cocaine. It’s not just “a man doing what men do.” Pornography is lethal to your marriage and your spiritual well-being. *“...after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (James 1:15).*

### **2.Admit you’re vulnerable.**

God created men with a natural attraction for women, and vice versa. It’s not sinful to notice a pretty girl or to find a man attractive. The Bible says Rachel was lovely in face and form and Joseph was well-built and handsome. But Satan seeks to exploit natural desire and drag us into improper thoughts and behavior. It’s a daily, ageless battle for almost every man – and many women. *“Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed” (James 1:14).*

### **3.Take appropriate precautionary measures to protect yourself and your family.**

Limit your children’s cell phone capabilities and put appropriate blocks on all your computers. For years I’ve used the Parental Blockage feature to prevent access to any “R” rated movies (or worse) from being viewed on my home television. Since I’m 75 years old, I can’t remember the access code and inappropriate movies are blocked not just from my grandchildren but from me! Jesus said, *“If your right hand offends you cut it off!”*

### **4.Confess your struggles to a friend.**

If you find yourself stumbling regularly admit your weakness to a trusted friend. The Bible says, *“Two are better than one, and a strand of three chords is not easily broken.”* Then hold each other accountable and ask tough questions. There’s

something really healing about confessing secrets – once a fault is shared it's more easily overcome.

### **5. Pray together for victory.**

*“Jesus told His disciples, ‘Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation’” (Matthew 26:41). James wrote, “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).*

### **6. Read material that will reinforce you for battle.**

“Every Man’s Battle” (Stephen Arterburn), “The Cure” (Bruce McNicol), and “Wild at Heart” (John Eldredge) are books that have been helpful to numerous believers struggling with sexual temptations.

### **7. If addicted, admit it and seek counsel in a support group.**

Alcoholics almost always have to get in a support group in order to gain victory. Otherwise, they will relapse. Those ensnared by porn need to be humble enough to admit their addiction and seek help. Professional counselors suggest there is often an underlying issue in sexual sin that has not been faced. A competent Christian counselor can help you take that burden to the Lord and leave it there. Admittedly, this is not an easy step but as Jesus asked the man who had been infirm for 38 years, “Do you want to get well?”

### **8. Overcome evil with good.**

There’s an old saying, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.” Satan loves a vacuum, so change your routine and fill your idle time with positive activity. *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). “May you rejoice in the wife of your youth...may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love” (Prov. 5:18-19). “...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things” (Philippians 4:18).*

### **9. Confess your sin to God and be cleansed by the blood of Christ.**

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9).