

Ashamed About Masturbation No More: The ABCs to Victory

Part 2 is the best way to launch this commentary. It is a definite response to those who appealed for help after my recent article, “‘I’m Ashamed to Admit I Have a Problem With Masturbation.’”

One person expressed it this way: “I appeal for part 2. This area is epidemic-especially among men. Please don’t leave us hanging. We need more info and real solutions!”

So that’s exactly what we will do. Let’s lay out a strategy for success.

If you haven’t read the initial article, I encourage you to start by clicking [here](#) so you have a solid foundation for what follows. If you did read it, why not go through it once again. As the late Zig Ziglar said, “Repetition is the mother of learning.”

The response generated by the commentary is no surprise. Ever since I wrote a book almost 40 years ago entitled *Why Wait Till Marriage?*, I’ve found issues related to sex draw lots of questions and attention. And that’s a good thing so long as the answers come from sound, scriptural counsel.

Here’s the deal: Those who are teachable and approach God for guidance in humility receive life-giving wisdom to bless their lives. Those who are prideful and twist the Scriptures for selfish reasons are resisted by God, don’t progress and usually live defeated and depressed.

James 4:6 tells us, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Our Creator is not neutral toward the proud but opposes them. If there’s one person in all the universe you don’t want opposing you, it’s Almighty God!

Proverbs 28:13 instructs us, "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper (advance; go forward) but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

In other words, those who make excuses and rationalize sinful activity experience consequences and a residue of guilt that hold them back in a discouraged and depressed life.

Multitudes of people today are seeking relief and escape from the dealings of God in unbiblical ways. They're experiencing the conviction of a loving God who is lovingly "pressing down" on them to bring them into relationship with Him and freedom from the bondage of sin. "For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped ... Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity" (Ps. 32:4-5).

God gave us a conscience to alert us when we're going down destructive paths. It's like the "idiot light" on our dashboard warning us of danger ahead. When that red light glows, we're not to smash it and ignore the signal but rather pause and make adjustments to proceed ahead.

This is what many people wanted to do after reading the article on masturbation; yet not everyone.

Here's a sampling of some negative feedback:

- "You don't have to be ashamed. It's not a problem!"
- "To call this sin is a gross misrepresentation of scripture... legalistic... getting people into guilt and condemnation to spend a lifetime unable to get victory over it because someone told them it is SIN!"
- "The subject is dumb... a really dumb article."
- "Problem? This is not a problem – masturbation is not fornication. Since when is fornication the same as masturbation?" [Neither Scripture nor I stated this!].
- "This is ridiculous! What is the biblical basis for saying such a thing is something to be delivered from?"

And then there were positives:

- “Thank you. For five years I’ve lived victorious with just three falls along the way. Jesus told us if our hand causes us to sin we should cut it off. He was not meaning this literally but for emphasis so we avoid the destructiveness of sin. I thank Him for victory!”
- “Great work! I worked in juvenile detention and listened as leaders actually instructed young people to relieve sexual tension by masturbation.”
- “No one has to live in shame! We’ve been set free from sin. We can overcome sinful practice by His grace and power. Many no longer blush showing how far we’ve fallen.”

As we proceed let me underscore that we approach this issue totally from a biblical worldview. The Bible addresses every situation we face in life including dealing with sexual desires and masturbation. “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right” (2 Tim. 3:16, NLT).

We follow the divine blueprint for God’s glory and our good. Those outside of God’s kingdom will often ridicule these standards and mock God and His people. We mustn’t be surprised. “But people who aren’t spiritual can’t receive these truths from God’s Spirit. It also sounds foolish to them and they can’t understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means” (1 Cor. 2:14).

Recently atheist comedian Bill Maher and lesbian commentator Rachel Maddow teamed up on his RealTime cable show to lampoon a student booklet entitled “Mormons Overcoming Masturbation: a Guide to Self-control.” Glamorizing immorality and using profanity and vulgarity they had the audience hootin’ and hollerin’ as they mocked students standing together against pornography and avoiding the snare of masturbation.

RadioShack, clinging for survival as a corporation, is trying edgy TV ads with a young boy and his father portraying masturbation as harmless, humorous and normal.

As we have abandoned Judeo-Christian standards in America, we are increasingly encouraged to “Indulge yourself” rather than “Control yourself.” Will you genuflect to the ways of the world or stand strong to honor God and live holy?

ABCs to Victory

A. Appropriate by faith your liberation from the power of sin.

Jesus Christ came to provide us not only forgiveness of sin but liberation from its power! Although it may seem incomprehensible to the natural mind, the Bible clearly teaches that we who have been “born again” have also been totally “freed from sin” (Rom. 6:7). *We have the opportunity to sin but no longer the obligation.*

This reality is a settled fact in the Supreme Court of heaven because of the finished work of Christ. It is not altered by whether someone believes it or not. Our declaration aligned with the Word of God should not be “God said it. I believe it. That settles it.” What we should proclaim triumphantly is, “God said it. That settles it! “

Read Romans 6:1–22: “That we might no longer be enslaved to sin... Freed from sin... Sin will have no dominion over you... Set free from sin... You have been set free from sin.” This includes enslaving sexual sin like compulsive masturbation aligned with pornography or lustful fantasies fueling it in the mind.

The challenge we face is that we’ve been a slave to sin for so long that when the “good news” comes to us, deep down inside we really don’t believe it. It’s like a slave who served for 40 years in blistering hot cotton fields being told that Abraham Lincoln just issued the “Emancipation Proclamation”

and now he was a free man!

Initially it's too good to be true. Set free. No longer trapped. Able to walk triumphantly released from bondage. After years of living one way to discover a brand-new liberated lifestyle seems mind-boggling at first blush. But in time as it sinks in, this once-burdened man eventually walks out into the warmth of the sun, extends his arms heavenward, lifts his head toward his ascended Lord and Savior and with tears streaming down his face is finally able to declare resoundingly, "I ... I ... I really have been set free! Glory be to God!"

This same thing can happen to you if you step forward in faith to please God and make a quality decision to walk pure in your daily life. "You don't have to serve sin today, for you have been set free!"

What I did I again share with you. For years I had the above scriptural statement personalized on my hallway mirror. I confessed it almost daily. Romans 6:6–7 was my lifeline. Little by little my mind was renewed to believe this fact. In time the reality of this verse hit me like an atomic explosion. I've never been the same.

I encourage you to meditate on Romans 6 in your Bible (The Christian's Magna Carta) and do as I did with this verse. It's really true. You don't have to be a slave of sin anymore. We are to walk in the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

B. Battle for the mind must be won.

"Larry, I desperately want to walk in purity and victory as a genuine believer, but I am regularly tempted with lustful fantasizing, viewing pornography, masturbation, sexual experimentation, even weird thoughts about being gay. I don't want to be a hypocrite and walk in sexual uncleanness, disobey

God, lose out on abundant living, experience guilt, defeat and condemnation, even risk blowing my future—yet how do I break free?”

When a person repents and genuinely trusts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, ceases striving to achieve victory over sin and instead stands in that victory as an accomplished reality, then one must understand and win the battle for the mind!

Listen closely. Satan’s cover is about to be blown! His chief objective is to keep people ensnared in habitual sin by controlling their minds. He knows that we are the product of our thinking, and if he can manipulate our thought life, he can control our actions.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so *your minds* should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3, KJV).

The secret to dealing with our actions is to deal with our thoughts. That is where temptation begins—in the thought realm. If you deal with sin decisively in the arena of thoughts, the actions take care of themselves.

“Sow a thought—reap an act. Sow an act—reap a habit. Sow a habit—reap a lifestyle. Sow a lifestyle—reap a destiny.” (This quote has been attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson and many others.)

A thought itself is not sin. It is simply temptation to sin. We can’t help who knocks on the door of our mind, but we can decide whom we let in.

To deal with any sin, in this case sexual sin, we’ve got to take the Western approach: “Head it off at the pass!” An undisciplined thought life makes one a “sitting duck” for the enemy’s “fiery darts” in spiritual warfare.

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty

through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5, KJV).

A seductive and sensual thought comes subtly crawling across your mind. If you don't "bring it into the captivity of Christ" (rejecting it firmly as out of sync with God's Word), that thought can become a "stronghold" (hold onto you with a strong hold), and produce "imaginations" that slowly but surely lead you down the path to sinful action.

If you're a guy viewing and lusting after a provocatively undressed Miley Cyrus or Beyoncé gyrating sensually; then replay the tape in your mind while showering or lounging in bed; finally, you let your imagination run wild as your hands wander freely.... the archenemy of your soul will soon squeal gleefully and repeat once again, "Gotcha, sucker!" It's not rocket science.

The ladies can fall into this same pit through erotic fantasies stemming from romance novels or imaginary interludes with that "hot" dude or imaginary lover.

We simply can't sit back and be passive (Satan starts with "sat"), hoping this pattern will one day go away. "Sin lieth (Hebrew: "lurks like an animal") at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it" (Gen. 4:7).

So be vigilant in what you let in through the eye gate to your mind and "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles (Satan's favorite wile is "wait awhile") of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to

withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:10-13).

C. Commit to flee evil and find godly companionship.

"Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts" (2 Tim. 2:22, NLT).

If you're serious about being an "overcomer" (And I personally believe you are or you wouldn't still be reading this article!) and overcoming the besetting sin of masturbation, then here is your closing challenge:

- Discontinue activities, behavior and relationships with compromising counterfeit "Christians" and anyone leading you astray.
- Do like Job who said, "I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?" (Job 31:1). "Look" in Hebrew means "to separate mentally", so no more undressing with your eyes or separating mentally the clothes from another's body!
- Find a same-sex accountability partner for both prayer and mutual support in your pursuit of a victorious Christian life.
- Fight temptation the same way Jesus did by wielding the "sword of the spirit which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6:17). In the wilderness when He was tempted He declared, "It is written..." three times to thwart the enemy's attacks.
- In the morning when you may be most vulnerable, get up and get going! Don't "slo mo" getting out of bed, showering and getting dressed to launch into your day.
- Finally, cultivate the Presence of God and an atmosphere of intimacy with your heavenly Bridegroom. Surround yourself with praise and worship music and let the Holy

Spirit stay close to you.

Here's a closing thought from my friend Bert Farias who also communicated with me on this sensitive subject.

"As a man, what has helped me to keep masturbation in check over the years and not indulge my body in it has been to have a positive motivation incentive. Instead of thinking of masturbation as unlawful, or the illicit sexual fantasies that accompany it as forbidden by a God whom you may start to view as a killjoy or a hard task master, ask yourself this question: 'Are a few moments of illicit sexual fantasies worth short-circuiting the sweet intimacy of the Presence of the Lord in your life?' This perspective will give you a healthy and positive incentive for overcoming pornography and sexual fantasies that fuel you to masturbate. Is it worth the guilt and condemnation you will carry afterward? This is the wisdom that I imparted to my own teenage son."

"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

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