

Kenny Luck: Stop the Self-Gratification

Admit it. You masturbate. Either in the past or recently—heck, maybe this morning. All men, married or single, young or old, struggle with this self-indulgence.

While it would be easy to get caught in the debate of whether or not it's a sin (and I believe it is), let me suggest that, in my own journey as a God's man, the reward of saving my sexual appetite for my wife is so worth waiting for.

But that's easier said than done, especially with culture flaunting the female body and shoving sexuality in our faces. The temptation to "relieve" yourself with a helpful hand puts men smack dab in the middle of a battle for the mind.

We justify it. "Well, it's not in the Bible." Or "I only fantasize about my wife." Or "God made us in His image, so He gets it." Or "As long as I'm not having premarital sex or cheating on my wife, it's OK."

I know. I know. I've heard these and other justifications before.

But the Bible teaches us to evaluate our behaviors with the outcomes they bring. It's the law of the harvest: "That which a man sows, he also reaps." So, what do you reap from masturbating—even while fantasizing about your wife?

I believe you reap a substitute for God's intended plan while training yourself to listen to your body over the Spirit and trusting your own action instead of waiting for God's plan for a wonderful wife.

The negative outcomes of masturbation are:

1. It creates distance from God. I've never heard any man tell

me it draws him closer to God.

2. It impacts the way you view women, or your wife, as objects of gratification versus someone with whom you're in a relationship where sex is a result of intimacy.

3. It's addicting. Habitual masturbation is hard to stop. The chemicals released in the brain from having an orgasm are the same being released when doing cocaine or heroin.

4. It's a slippery slope, meaning masturbation can lead to other behaviors that do not glorify God, namely porn, experimenting with pre-marital sex, cheating on your wife and learning how to hide something, allowing masturbation to become an idol.

5. It can produce false intimacy that the body and brain can wind up preferring over the real thing.

6. It short-circuits character and spiritual development in the areas of self-control, faith and patience.

So, if you are struggling with masturbation, ask yourself:

- Does it move me closer to God?
- Does it move me closer to my goals to be God's man?
- Will it improve my relationship with women and my wife?
- Will it improve my ministry to other people?
- Does it glorify God?

If you are striving to know God and love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, then take your hand off your boy toy and allow your focus to reap a much higher reward. If you truly trust God, His plan and that sex within marriage is, can be or is going to be the absolute (mind-blowing) best ever, then stop masturbating.

Here are a few suggestions if you want help.

Tips to Quitting

1. Make a strong decision to no longer stop short of God's plan.
2. Make a strong commitment to honesty with yourself, God and others.
3. Find strong accountability that's open and honest with another man or men.
4. Replace the false intimacy with a strong passion to be God's man that involves your time, energy and money.

Trust me on this one. Masturbation is only a consolation. But sex in marriage is a fascination!

Kenny Luck, founder of Every Man Ministries and the men's pastor at Saddleback Church, provides biblically oriented teaching and leadership for men and pastors seeking relevant, timely material that battle cultural, worldly concepts threatening men and God's men. Follow Kenny and Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everyMM) and YouTube.

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