

Sexual Purity Requires a 'Clean' Brain

The war over lust is multidimensional. In this war to be clean, you have several battlefronts. I want to show you how to sharpen your skills in a battle you may not even know you are in. This is a surprise for most men. Worse yet, this is often a battle most men have created, when it could have easily been prevented.

I need to take you back on a personal journey. It started more than 30 years ago when I was in Bible school. God would impress upon me to read certain scriptures. But when I would read one particular verse, I didn't understand its meaning. Then God would impress this same scripture upon me again and again and again, even though I still couldn't understand it.

This went on for many years, from Bible school through seminary and then after graduation. I discussed the verse with my theology and philosophy professors because it contradicted the teaching that all sins are the same. One day, as I was doing research on sex and our brains, God revealed its meaning, and it was truly sweeter than honey. It was a revelation I will never forget.

That scripture was 1 Corinthians 6:18: "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside of his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body."

I really couldn't wrap my head around why it was that when we sin sexually we sin against our own bodies. Why didn't the Scriptures state that when we lie, cheat, steal or any other host of sins we sin against our own bodies? Why is sexual sin different?

Remember, I was seeking answers in Bible school and seminary. In those fine institutions, they gave us all kinds of Bible

aids and even tortured me with the Greek and Hebrew ... I took this verse apart in so many ways. I remember looking up this word "body" in the Greek, thinking it would unlock some mystery and end this game of peek-a-boo. Do you know what the Greek word for body really meant in the original language? You guessed it: *body*. It really just meant our physical bodies, not our souls, spirits or anything else. This verse stayed a mystery.

I believe science confirms Scripture. The field of neuroscience was gaining its wisdom during these years as well. Around the time I was researching the brain and sex because I was working with sexual addicts, I found the missing piece to what God was trying to show me.

Your Sexual Brain

The brain, being the second most important sex organ for me, is something every man needs to understand if he is to have a clean life. The brain is an amazing machine; and when it comes to sex, that's absolutely no different. For journal support and all the technical information and references, go to the American Association for Sex Addiction Therapy's website at and order the DVD, *Biological Sex Addict*.

Your brain is the pleasure center for your body, especially when you have a sexual release. When you release sexually, your brain receives the chemical mother lode of endogenous opiates. These opiates are the single highest chemical reward for anything you can ever do. You can run and work out, but sex is by far the biggest chemical high we get in life.

Most men have experienced this high, regardless if it was sex with their wives, with themselves through pornography, or through immorality with another person. Sex feels good; dare I say, *really* good!

God in his merciful design of our bodies created what I like to call sexual imprinting. This sexual imprinting is a

biochemical program that strongly connects and bonds you to whomever and whatever you are viewing at the time you have a sexual release. This is the most powerful connection and attachment you will have in your life.

God hoped we would follow His commands regarding sex so we would never struggle with lust of others. If you wait until marriage to have sex, including not viewing pornography, you sexually bond and connect only to your wife. You will not crave others; you will only crave her. Most men, however, including myself, did not know about or did not follow God's commands sexually. We, therefore, have to deal with some consequences.

Our brain cannot separate reality, fantasy and pornography. Neuroimaging has shown us that our brain lights up the same way, whether we view a real object or imagine that same object. Let's suppose your brain has a supercharged web browser connected to it. Every time you masturbate, you hit a certain web page. The more you hit this page—say a certain type of woman or sex act—the browser records it and places it at the top of the search page results. Every time your brain thinks about sex, it goes to the top of the search page, and you desire that the most; then the next entry down, and so on. With this technique, you actually create an attraction to anything or anyone—real or imaginary.

The web pages you viewed are all connected to your brain. The more you view a certain image, the stronger that particular landmine is going to be. Some of these landmines are physical features of the woman or image you created or looked at during a sexual release. Some landmines are attitudes or emotions projected onto the image; you may have received them from the image, such as a feeling of being wanted or in control. These landmines, which are imprinted neurologically through biochemistry, are 100 percent your doing and not your spouse's fault.

Remember, when you sin sexually, your body stores these things for better or for worse. When you sin by engaging in sexual behaviors without your wife, you sin against your own body.

If you pray early in the day, out loud and with conviction, a prayer that states a commitment to love women, protect them and hate all lust toward them, it can be a powerful anchor of your commitment for your brain to follow and be aware of all day long. This prayer could go something like this:

“Lord Jesus, I am 100 percent committed to love all women today as your daughters and my sisters. I covenant with you to protect all women at all times, in every circumstance today, even in my mind. I hate lust of any kind of all women, and I covenant to protect them all this day.”

What you are doing is anchoring your commitment to have a clean mind and a clean life. When you pray this daily, protecting women from your lust will become a lifestyle. You’ll know this is true when you are successful in maintaining a woman’s value regardless of how she values herself.

Note: The preceding is the second excerpt from Douglas Weiss’ book, Clean: A Proven Plan for Men Committed to Sexual Integrity. The book will be available May 7 from Thomas Nelson Inc. Excerpt 1

Dr. Douglas Weiss is a leading expert in sexual addiction recovery, a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart-to-Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., and the president of the American Association for Sex Addiction Therapy.