

The No. 1 Lie People Tell Themselves About Pornography

One of the greatest lies men tell themselves when viewing pornography is that it isn't hurting anyone else.

The truth is that the pornography industry regularly exploits the women and children used in its making.

Over 620,000 child porn traders have been discovered online in the U.S. More than 30 percent of the searches conducted in one adult pornography network were related to child sexual abuse.

In their analysis of over 80 million child pornography images since 2002, The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children found that 1 in 6 of runaways reported in 2016 were likely sex-trafficking victims. This means these children were likely involved in either the adult entertainment industry (pornography) or sex trafficking.

These telling statistics also reveal many "porn stars" are involved against their own will. A common practice is to "groom" women through online ads luring them to serve in an escort service. A trafficker or "madam" (female leader of trafficking victims) then continues to push the victim toward a one-time and then ongoing role in prostitution, pornography filming or a combination of these practices.

And the problem does not stop at the doors of the church.

Most pastors (57 percent) and youth pastors (64 percent) admit they have struggled with porn, either currently or in the past, the Barna Group reported in a 2016 study. "Overall, 21 percent of youth pastors and 14 percent of pastors admit they currently struggle with using porn." More than 1 in 10 youth pastors (12 percent) and 1 in 20 pastors (5 percent) said they are addicted.

How can we defend against the damage caused by pornography?

Truth #1: Stop Telling Yourself the Lie

If you are viewing pornography, stop rationalizing it with the lie that it is not hurting anyone else. It is time to deal with that denial. Your viewing contributes to the growing demand for the sexual exploitation of minors and women at a level unprecedented in human history – you are feeding a \$97 billion a year industry.

This is in addition to the personal harm in your own life and your loved ones who are impacted by your porn usage.

“Leadership starts in the uttermost hidden parts of our lives.” –from the Conquer Series

Truth #2: Remember Every Person Is a Creation of God

The woman you last viewed in a video or picture was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). She is deeply loved by God. She is someone’s daughter, and maybe someone’s sister or mother. How would you feel if someone was viewing your daughter, sister, or mother in this way?

Thinking of the other person is a powerful reminder that the people in the pornography industry are not merely actors, but people.

Paul taught the young Christian leader Timothy to view “younger women as sisters, in all purity” (1 Tim. 5:2). The same applies to us today.

Truth #3: Pursue Change

“What matters in life is not how you start, but how you finish.” –from the Conquer Series

If you’ve tried to stop viewing pornography on your own and continue to struggle, get help. You don’t have to fight this

battle alone. But you do need to come to the end of yourself and realize your desperate need for grace. Once you have surrendered to God's grace, there are two powerful ways to combat the pornography battle and find freedom—people and preparation.

1. People

Opening up to others is an important first step to recovery.

Maybe you can begin by sharing your struggles with a trusted friend. If so, don't put it off ... call or text that friend today.

Others feel the need for total confidentiality and have chosen to see a local counselor instead.

Eventually you will also need to be a part of a small accountability group of Christian men. Meeting together reminds us we are not alone in our struggles—or our successes. As the Conquer Series study guide notes:

“Asking others to hold you accountable to goals you set for yourself—accountability—is key to change, you can't win this battle alone” (p. 10).

You can sign up to join a Conquer Group right now.

2. Preparation

It has been said the key to winning any battle is preparation. The Conquer Series was specifically designed to prepare you to win the battle for sexual purity.

This powerful DVD series will give you a deep understanding of God's grace, which is available to all of us, and arm you with biblical principles and daily practices to help you pursue purity and overcome the temptation to consume porn. You will join the 450,000 men in 65 countries who have learned to move beyond “not watching porn” to start living a transformed life.