

Why I Gave Up Pornography

It started in middle school—the talks about why sex was bad before marriage and why you shouldn't watch pornography or masturbate.

I signed probably a dozen purity pledges, wrote letters to my future husband and prayed for the perfect man, all while secretly longing to satisfy myself because God appeared not to be coming through.

In college, we were taught pornography was evil because it promoted lust. Even Christian media (I'm looking at you, *Fireproof*) implied nude images and indulged sexual appetites were not of God because they were devastating to a marriage.

As a single woman, I won't say pornography isn't hurtful to a marriage, but we're missing a critical point: Pornography and an over-sexualized culture promotes horrific abuse to women. When we indulge in pornography or graphic images, we are saying our sexual desires are more important than the physical health and well-being of another.

When we watch porn, we are fostering an environment where human beings are bought and sold, an environment where we imply hurting people created in the image of God is worth a quick moment of ecstasy.

It's disgusting. And I was guilty—and I truly believe that if Christian leaders in my past had sat down and explained to me the horrors of the commercial sex industry, I wouldn't have minimized the devastation of being hooked on porn.

For a recent assignment, I began investigating human trafficking, interviewing survivors, checking out ministries. I was overcome by their stories: tales of rape, broken bones, near-death experiences—because someone sought gratification

and knew their actions were too unacceptable for the marriage bed.

For those who indulge in the commercial sex industry—be it pornography, stripping, prostitution and so on—it starts as seeing an over-sexualized commercial, followed by watching explicit material on TV or in movies, followed by a visit to a website, followed by engaging in the acts in real life.

Enough already! How are we as members of the body of Christ supposed to heal the broken when we are the ones breaking them? How can we idly stand by and bemoan the porn statistics when we refuse to address the harm from our pulpits?

Speak out. Speak truth. Rescue the broken. Minister like Jesus would.

You can curb violence against women, children and men if you take up your cross and deny your flesh. Allow Christ to be your fulfillment, and you can change the world.{eoa}