

7 Reasons You Must Defeat the Porn Monster

This past weekend during a men's conference in California, I challenged the audience to get honest about their struggle to stay sexually pure. So many Christian men are losing the battle with pornography, and that's why many of the guys came to the stage last Saturday. They wanted to pull the plug on a habit that was dragging them down spiritually.

I reminded the guys that when you want to catch a fish, all you have to do is put a juicy worm or a fake lure on a hook and then throw it in the water. Fish bite those hooks because they have very small brains. If they were smart, they would have sent out a warning to all the other fish: "DON'T BITE THE HOOKS! HUMANS WANT TO EAT US!"

Fish bite hooks because they are stupid. It's the same reason so many guys—and a growing number of women—bite the hook of pornography and get pulled into deeper sexual sin. We are stupid too! So how can we wise up and overcome the porn habit?

When guys ask me how they can overcome this struggle, my response is always the same: You must get ruthless. Paul told the Corinthians: "I discipline my body and make it my slave" (1 Cor. 9:27, NASB). You must ask God for the power to control your urges, and then run every time you feel tempted. You should also consider that it's really dumb to look at porn, for the following reasons:

1. Porn is a huge waste of time. A recent study of graduate students found that 48% of young adult males look at porn weekly, and some view it daily. Porn is now described as "the wallpaper" of Generation Z because it is so pervasive online. The problem is that the more porn you look at, the more you need—and porn addicts spend hours (and sometimes lots of

money) looking for bigger thrills. You'd be a lot healthier if you spent that time exercising, studying or hanging out with friends. Or praying!

2. Porn imbeds images in your memory. Philippians 4:8 says: "Whatever is pure ... dwell on these things." A Christian who indulges in porn is filing thousands of unholy images in his or her brain. Those images will emerge during a conversation, during sleep or even during worship at church. Why would you want those movies showing in your brain every day?

3. Porn changes your view of sex and other people. Porn addicts begin to view people as body parts. And married men who are porn addicts often try to force their wives to engage in degrading acts they've seen in films or photos. I've counseled guys who find it difficult to enjoy married sex because it's not as satisfying as the porn they consumed for years before marriage. Psychologists have proven that teenage boys who watch a lot of porn become much more sexually aggressive, and assume girls want to be treated roughly.

4. Porn grieves the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 says: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (MEV). When you grieve someone, they get quiet. When a Christian makes sinful choices, the Lord does not condemn or abandon us, but He will withdraw the sense of His presence so we become desperate for Him again. His unconditional love draws us back to Him. A mature Christian learns to avoid anything that offends the Holy Spirit.

5. Porn brings condemnation and shame. Many Christians go through life feeling spiritually defeated because guilt weighs them down. Romans 8:6 tells us: "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace" (NASB). If you focus your attention on porn, you will live in a depressing spiritual rut. Get up, repent, receive forgiveness and learn to overcome your habit by trusting in His indwelling power. To find total healing you should admit

your struggle to someone else (see James 5:16). Transparency brings freedom.

6. Porn is filthy. The Covenant Eyes ministry has reported that 66% of porn performers have herpes, and 7% have HIV. Porn is full of disease. It's gross. James 1:21 says: "So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives" (NLT). The Greek word for "filth" (*rhyparia*) can mean "obscenity" or "moral defilement." The next time you are tempted to look at a porn site, imagine yourself standing in a latrine, up to your neck in human waste. Don't soak your soul in filth!

7. Porn will pull you into worse sexual sin. Never downplay the power of temptation. You may think you can "manage" your sin, but the truth is that porn is a beast. It is stronger than you are. It is a cruel taskmaster that will take control and make you do things you regret. I have counseled men who admitted to me that porn was their first step toward adultery.

If you are struggling to stay free from porn, tape this article to your computer screen and read it before logging on. You may even want to write the words "DON'T BE STUPID" at the top of this list to remind you that purity is still important in this pornographic world. Get a grip. Use self-control. Don't let porn destroy your life—or your relationship with God.

J. Lee Grady was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs the *Mordecai Project* (), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).