

Pornography

By Bob Kline

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read Genesis 2:18-25 and then study the comments related to those verses in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What was the difference between Eve's origin and the animals'? Why might this make a difference in being a suitable helper? (Hint: Read Genesis 1:24-26.)

Assignment Two

Read James 1:13-17 and then turn to the comments related to those verses in the section **It's in the Book**. Death carries the idea of both separation and destruction. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What are some ways lust produces separation? What are some things it destroys?

Assignment Three

Read Galatians 6:1-3 and then turn to the comments related to those verses in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What are some possible dangers of forming accountability groups that we must be careful to avoid?

Scripture to Memorize

"But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Matthew 5:28

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit - by the end of this session, disciples will understand that Satan's ultimate goal for pornography is the corrosion of marriage.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Alex's friend, Josh, wanted him to look at a picture on his phone. After a quick glance, he saw that it was a picture of a naked young woman and looked away. Part of him wanted to keep looking, but he knew it was wrong. He found himself thinking about the picture the rest of the day. He had a strong urge to look up pictures on his own phone, yet he was a committed Christian and wanted to glorify God. How could he find the strength to resist?

Not Ashamed

Read Genesis 2:18-25 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 18. not good. At every stage of creation, God declared creation good. When He was finished with everything, He declared it very good (1:31). Adam's lonely existence was the only thing God declared not good. The word for *good* refers to the rightness or fitness of something to its intended purpose. Everything God had created so far was just as He had intended it to be. God never intended Adam to be alone, for then He could not populate the earth. Now it was time to complete the creation of man by bringing Adam a mate. In other words, the final act and capstone of creation was the institution of marriage.

Verse 18. helper. The word for *helper* does not mean a servant, but rather someone who comes alongside to share the burden. The same word is used to describe God in Psalm 30:10 and Psalm 54:4. **fit.** This word describes a counterpart.

Verse 24. one flesh. This term refers to sexual union. God created sex to be an expression of passionate love between a husband and a wife. Within marriage, it is very good.

Verse 25. both naked . . . not ashamed. In their sinless innocence they had nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to hide, either from each other or from God. They did not need clothing to protect them from the elements since the world had not yet been cursed. Their later sin drove them to cover their shame.

Pornography diverts our attention from the intimacy of the marital relationship to the thrill of cheap, easy sex. It perverts the priceless gift that God intended to belong to the husband and wife and turns it into something showy but cheap, to be given away without commitment, without cost, and without love.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on what made Eve a suitable helper for Adam.

Lust Brings Forth Death

Read James 1:13-17 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 13. tempted. The goal of temptation is to entice one to sin. God never tempts us, although He does test us in order to strengthen our faith. The difference is that the tempter wants us to choose to disobey God while God wants us to choose to obey Him even in difficult circumstances. **evil.** We usually picture evil as dark and malicious, something sinister and deadly. It certainly is that, but it doesn't always appear that way on the surface. Evil is simply a corruption of something good.

Verse 14. lured and enticed. Satan's goal in temptation is always to carry us away from the good thing God has for us. Satan entices us with things that appeal to us on the outside but are really a corruption of what God has intended.

Verse 15. desire . . . brings forth death. Giving in to the temptation of lust leads not to just an individual sin but begins a chain reaction of consequences that many times we never foresee. Ultimately, sin produces death, which carries the dual ideas of separation and destruction.

Verse 17. Every good . . . Father of lights. Satan tries to tempt us with the idea that what he is offering is better than what God is offering, but Scripture warns us that every good and perfect gift comes from God. Satan never offers us anything that is better than what God gives us.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now report on the separation and destruction lust can cause.

Discussion Question

(For groups of men) Pornography is alluring because it appeals so strongly to men's eyes, who are visually stimulated. It is also easy to get with computers, phones and tablets. So how do men who want to avoid the temptation of pornography find the strength to resist temptation?

(For groups of women) Can women experience temptation to post or look at pornographic images? Can sexting and sexual conversations be as alluring to some women as images are to men? How do women who want to avoid these temptations find the strength to resist?

Bear One Another's Burdens

Read Galatians 6:1-3 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 1. Brethren. Paul referred to the Galatian Christians as his brothers. Christians are spiritually connected with one another as brothers and sisters through their relationship with Christ. Together we form a spiritual community that is united for eternity. **caught.** The Bible sometimes uses the analogy of being ensnared (Proverbs 12:13; 29:6) or in bondage (Acts 8:23; Romans 7:14) when describing struggling with a sin that is difficult to resist. **transgression.** Anything that crosses the boundary of what is right.

Verse 1. you who are spiritual. This self-examination requires honesty and humility. You must be genuinely interested more in helping a fellow believer overcome a difficult struggle with sin than with how it makes you look in the eyes of others. Whenever possible, your encouragement and support should be done in private and not shared with others so that no one else knows. **gentleness.** Remember that God is gentle with us and does not deal with us as our sins deserve (Ezra 9:13). So we, too, should deal gently with those who are caught in sins they sincerely want to overcome, including pornography.

Verse 2. Bear . . . burdens. By relying on one another through honest and transparent confession and encouragement, believers can help one another resist the temptations of pornography and lust.

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now report on a danger to avoid in accountability groups.

Discussion Question

How can your group help create the sorts of relationships that will hold one another accountable and encourage one another to resist the temptation of pornography?

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share that with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: “In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue, I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . .”

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

Pornography is a scourge that is devastating the church. With online technology, pornographic material is easier to get than ever. By some estimates, roughly two-thirds of Internet websites are porn sites, and as many as 50 percent of Christian men of all ages struggle with online pornography. Why does Satan pour so much of his time and effort into tempting us to sexual lust? Because his ultimate goal is the corrosion and destruction of marriage.

Why marriage? Marriage is the capstone of God's creation and the symbol of the relationship between Christ and His church. Sexual intimacy between husband and wife is the highest and most powerful form of loving expression God designed for us.

Pornography diverts our attention from the intimacy of the marital relationship to the thrill of cheap, easy sex. It perverts the priceless gift God intended to belong to the husband and wife and turns it into something cheap to be given away without commitment, without cost and without love. Pornography creates unrealistic expectations for what marital sex should be like, leading to frustration in the relationship.

Further, pornographic thrill, like the ecstasy of drugs, is a progressive experience. The images have to keep getting more vulgar and explicit - more evil - to elicit the same thrill. Lust is a cruel and demanding master. It keeps you longer than you wanted to stay, costs you more than you wanted to pay and takes you farther than you wanted to go.

Gaining victory over a sin as gripping as lust is impossible without: 1) the power and presence of the Holy Spirit and 2) the encouragement and support of believing companions.

God created us as social creatures who crave relationship with others. In authentic, transparent relationships, men and women can find the strength to turn their backs on pornography and choose to protect God's gift of marriage.

Follow-Up Question

How does pornography corrode God's gift of marriage?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.