

## **Does the Bible Have Anything to Say about Pornography?**

**No one who I know ever used the word pandemic before the year 2020. However, for many years there has been another widespread pandemic developing and reaching more and more people called pornography. Young children are being exposed to graphic images and videos online. Addictions are starting at younger ages. Marriages are leading to divorce because of affairs that began with pornography. What does the Bible say about pornography? Today we are going to dive into the Scriptures on how to approach pornography and how to help ourselves and others with addictions.**

### **What Does the Bible Say About Pornography?**

**Joel Ryan from Crosswalk shares, "According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the word 'pornography' emerged in the 1840s as a combination of the Greek words, porneia, and graphe... The word 'pornography,' therefore, implies the description or depiction of sexually explicit content designed to sexually arouse the reader or viewer."**

**The Bible is clear that sex outside of marriage is not blessed by the Lord. This includes any sexual activity. Jesus Himself even tells us that to look with lustful eyes is adultery in the heart (Matthew 5:38). Below are some Scripture verses that clarify how porn is destructive and we as believers need to do our best to avoid it at all costs and fight against the temptations.**

**1 John 2:16 says, "For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world."**

**1 Peter 2:11 says, "Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul."**

**2 Timothy 2:22 says, "Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."**

**Job 31:1 says, "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman."**

**Psalm 119:37 says, "Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word."**

**James 1:14-15 says, "But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."**

### **What Does Porn Do To Your Brain?**

***In college, I was in a psychology class where the professor showed a video that talked about the effects of pornography on the brain. The devastating results of porn are sometimes life-long. The brain changes when someone views porn. This can cause people to be unstimulated by regular sexual experiences because they have only viewed fake edited or outrageous materials.***

***Jon Miltimore from Intellectual Takeout shares a Harvard study on the effects of porn. "This is why pornography causes a vicious circle. When someone views pornography, he gets overstimulated by dopamine; so his brain destroys some dopamine receptors. This makes him feel depleted, so he goes back to pornography, but, having fewer dopamine receptors, this time it requires more to get the same dopamine thrill; but this causes his brain to destroy more receptors; so he feels an even greater need for pornography to stimulate him."***

***Pornography is an addiction. The saddest part of all of this is that what used to be sought after and privately purchased at a store magazine section is now in our faces. Sexual content appears in social media, commercials, ads, movies, and books.***

***The Council on Recovery shares that 87 percent of men and 31 percent of women on college campuses struggle with pornography. The peak age of sensitivity to dopamine is 15. They also reveal, "Sexual pornographic material is correlated with concentration problems, low motivation, depression, social anxiety, negative self-perceptions, and erectile dysfunction."***

### ***Why Is Porn so Dangerous to Christian Relationships?***

***I recently heard about a woman who struggled with intimacy in marriage, so she turned to erotic books to get turned on for her husband. This broke my heart for them. Marriage is between one man and one woman. Anything that you are adding into that equation that is not Christ-honoring is damaging. Rather than working through her intimacy issues, this woman is covering over the root of their marital issue by living out a fantasy of something that is not true. The wife is reading pornographic material to escape. The purpose of sex is intimacy with a spouse. This woman is missing out on that gift and her husband is missing out on the opportunity to love her well in her weaknesses. The two could instead pray and seek the Holy Spirit to do work in their sex life.***

***The enemy wants us to turn to the world for help, but God cares about every area of our lives. He designed us as sexual beings, but ultimately, He is the one who satisfies our souls and makes us whole. Porn is dangerous for anyone. No one benefits long-term from pornography. For example, a man who views sensual Instagram accounts, might then watch erotic movies, he then might start direct messaging someone who is not his wife***

***to flirt online, then eventually he might flirt in person with women, and try to mimic his online fantasies with a real woman in his community. Porn is the top of a slippery slope.***

***I have seen affairs happen too many times. The problem occurs when someone thinks that it will not happen to them. The Bible tells us to be on our guard. 1 Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." As believers, we are called to live above reproach. (Or fault). When a provocative advertisement comes up, look away. When someone inappropriately follows you on social media, block them. When you are trying to decide whether you should watch a movie, read up on the content beforehand. Setting strong boundaries can prevent the devil from getting a foothold in an area.***

***I was just talking about purity in dating relationships with a friend yesterday. She asked how my husband and I were able to stay pure before marriage. I told her that I heard wise advice from a friend, "Set your boundaries where you can break them and not be devastated." This is not intending to break boundaries, but wisdom in knowing that we are human and likely to fail. In the same way with the images we see or material that we read, we need to set up safeguards to protect ourselves and our relationships with others.***

### ***How Do Christians Overcome a Porn Addiction?***

***There are many resources for people to overcome porn addictions. However, as a Christian, there is a greater hope that the Holy Spirit is there helping you. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." I do not know about you, but in my weakest areas if I put myself into tempting situations it is much more difficult to get out. If there are accountability partners, computer protection porn blockers, and creating boundaries.***

***For those of you who are parents, John Stonestreet, President of The Colson Center shared on his podcast BreakPoint, "In their new book titled Treading Boldly Through a Pornographic World, authors Daniel Weiss and Joshua Glaser note that today's parents are the first in history to bring up children in such a digitally connected, pornography-saturated world. It's not that we've ever had a world without sexual brokenness or pornography, but the access to it is unprecedented. Sexually explicit material is fully integrated into mainstream life, as they put it. And it's also become culturally accepted and is far worse, more violent, and more degrading than it was just a few years ago."***

***There is a spiritual war being waged on the minds of humanity. We must***

***remember that greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). Have open conversations with others. Share your story and background with discernment. Help keep friends accountable for protecting their eyes and minds. We are not defined by our sins but defined by Christ in us. Whether you have dealt with a pornography struggle or know someone who has, take hope. This might be a lifelong battle, but we have the victory in Jesus.***