The Sexually Addicted Minister 40

Harry W. Schaumburg

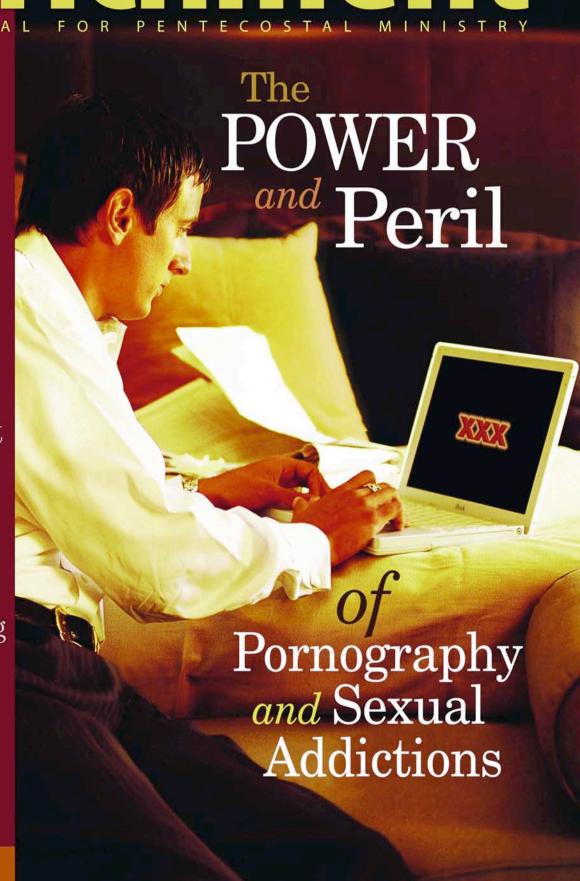
Rebuilding Love Amidst The Ruins

Brenda Stoeker 76

A Biblical Understanding of Healthy Sexuality

Mark R. Laaser

84



# **CONTENTS FALL**

THE POWER AND PERIL OF PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL ADDICTIONS

2005 • VOLUME 10 • NUMBER 4

# theme articles

# **18** ASK THE SUPERINTENDENT — THE DILEMMA OF MINISTERS AND SEXUAL ADDICTIONS

Interview with Thomas E. Trask

General Superintendent Thomas E. Trask presents a message of hope and healing for those bound by sexual sin.

# **22** OLD TEMPTATION, NEW TECHNOLOGY: PORNOGRAPHY AND THE INTERNET IN TODAY'S WORLD

By Patrick J. Carnes

By recognizing there is a pornography problem among the people they serve and among themselves, there is opportunity for pastors to help both their congregations and themselves.

### **32** LIFE AFTER ADDICTION

By Marvin Smith

Here is a personal account of one minister's struggle with Internet pornography and his path to recovery.

# **40** THE SEXUALLY ADDICTED MINISTER: THE HIDDEN OBSESSION

By Harry W. Schaumburg

Beneath the anointed preaching and successful ministry pastors are becoming prisoners of their own evil desires.

# **52** IN THE CLUTCHES OF PORNOGRAPHY — THE PATHWAY OF ESCAPE

By Steve Gallagher

Don't look for gimmicks, superficial solutions, or pain-free alternatives for overcoming sexual addiction. Instead, consider these biblical principles that have worked for many ministers bound by sexual sin.

# **58** PRISON OF SILENCE: GUIDELINES TO FREE CLERGY FROM SEXUAL SIN

By Doug Boudinot

Faced with dramatic consequences, what should a minister do if he wants to disclose his struggle and get help? What barriers must he overcome to expose his secret sin?

# **66** WHY AM I NOT ENOUGH? SHATTERING DISCOVERY FOR THE WIFE OF A SEXUALLY ADDICTED MINISTER

By Marnie C. Ferree

The good news is the story does not end with the discovery of a minister's addiction. There is hope for the wife of a sexually addicted minister.

# **76** PORN-RAVAGED HEARTS: REBUILDING LOVE AMIDST THE RUINS

Bu Brenda Stoeker

Standing in the rubble of her marriage, how can a minister's wife rebuild love amidst the ruins?

# **84** SEXUAL WHOLENESS: A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF HEALTHY SEXUALITY

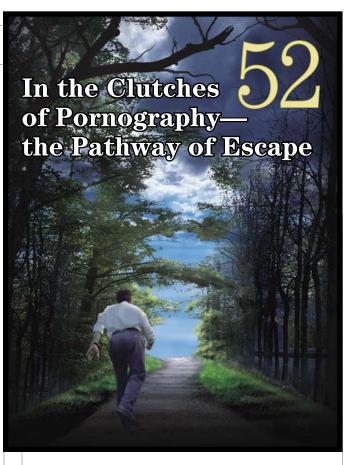
By Mark R. Laaser

Pastors will benefit from developing a model of healthy sexuality as they strive to make a difference in their church.

# **90** A BODY WHITE AS SNOW: LEADING YOUR CHURCH INTO SEXUAL PURITY

By Fred Stoeker

If pastors expect to have a sexually pure church, they must rethink their course.



# **100** WOMEN AND PORN: THE UNTHINKABLE BECOMES REALITY

By Kathy Gallagher

How to better protect the women in your church from becoming casualities of a sex-saturated culture.

# **104** SEX AND YOUNG AMERICA: MINISTERING TO SEXUALLY ADDICTED YOUTH

By Shannon Ethridge

If teens cannot get rock-solid answers and biblical truth about sexuality from their church, where are they going to get it?

## **112** KEEPING YOUR HOME A SEX-SAFE PLACE

By Richard and Renée Durfield

If ministers are to be "wise as serpents," they cannot assume that God will protect their children in spite of their negligence. Here is some practical advice to keep your home a sex-safe place.

# 116 BREAKING PORNOGRAPHY'S GRIP ON YOUR COMMUNITY

Interview with Phil Burris, Jerry Kirk, Clyde Miller How three men helped to take the "sin" out of Cincinnati and how your church can become an agent of change.

# **122** SEXUAL ADDICTIONS RESOURCE LIST

ENRICHMENT (ISSN 1082-1791) is published quarterly (January, April, July, October), ©2005 by The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, Missouri 65802. Assemblies of God ministers may reproduce nonbyline material from Enrichment in church publications, giving credit to the journal. Except for brief quotations, signed articles may not be reprinted without permission of the authors. Subscription rates: USA−1 year \$24; 2 years \$42. Outside USA add \$10 per year. Subscriptions: All subscription correspondence, including change of address, should be sent to Enrichment, Customer Services, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, M 065802, phone 1-800-641-4310. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Missouri, and at additional mailing offices. Printed in the USA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Enrichment, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, M0 65802.

# **CONTENTS FALL**

# THE POWER AND PERIL OF PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL ADDICTIONS

# 8 eShorts editorials

**7** MINISTRY MATTERS By Gary R. Allen

160 IN CLOSING Bu George O. Wood

# columns

# **124** POSTMODERNISM AND THE CHURCH

Being There for Each Other: The Church as a Genuine Community? By Stanley J. Grenz

### **128 PREACHING THAT** CONNECTS

Pentecostal Preaching (Part 4) The Heart of Annointed Preaching By Craig Brian Larson

## **130** HISTORY IS HIS STORY

Asahel Nettleton — The Forgotten Evangelist By William P. Farley

### **134** REACHING SECULAR **UNIVERSITIES**

Sacramento State Student Catches Fire By Rusty Wright

### 136 TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHURCH

Our World Is About To Change ... Again By Nick B. Nicholaou

# 138 WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Flourishing Like a Tree in the House of God By Stephen R. Phifer



Addiction

76 **Porn-ravaged Hearts: Rebuilding Love Amidst** the Ruins

# **140** FINANCIAL CONCEPTS

Rich Dad, Poor Dad: Rich Theology or Poor Theology (Part 1)

By Randall K. Barton

# **142** GROWING GODLY MEN

Second-Step Success By Andrew D. Templeton

# departments

**144 SERMON SEEDS** 

148 BOOK REVIEWS

**152** NEWS AND RESOURCES

**157** WITH CHRIST

158 MARKETPLACE

**159** ADVERTISING INDEX

### NEXT TIME IN ENRICHMENT

# From Pew to Purpose: **Mobilizing and Training Volunteers**

Many pastors struggle with recruiting people for church ministry, and maintaining the passion and involvement of their current workers. How can pastors motivate, recruit, and train their people to do the work of the ministry? Learn from Rob Burkhart, Aubrey Malphurs, Tony Morgan, Greg Ogden, Thom S. Rainer, Neil B. Wiseman, and others who have been successful in moving people from sitting on the sidelines to faithful involvement in the ministries of the church.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Gary R. Allen

MANAGING EDITOR Rick Knoth

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Richard Schoonover

ASSISTANT EDITOR Kevin Wilson

ADVERTISING/PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR

Steve Lopez

OFFICE COORDINATOR Faith Hamilton

GRAPHICS/DESIGN

Randy Clute

CIRCULATION MANAGER

# PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTERY

Thomas E. Trask (general superintendent); David W. Argue, C. Dan Betzer, James K. Bridges, L. John Bueno, Warren D. Bullock, Charles T. Crabtree, Charles E. Crank, Richard L. Dresselhaus, L. Alton Garrison, J. Don George, Charles E. Hackett, Nam Soo Kim, Jesse Miranda, Jr., H. Robert Rhoden, Zollie L. Smith, Jr., George O. Wood

### EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Gary R. Allen, chairman; Rick Knoth, vice-chairman; Dayton A. Kingsriter; John Maempa; Arlyn Pember; Harold W. Sallee; Juleen Turnage

# ADVERTISING POLICY

For information on advertising, call Steve Lopez at 417-862-2781, ext. 4097. Display rates provided upon request. Online advertising information is also available at enrichment journal.ag.org. or E-mail

### advertisingenrichment@ag.org.

Enrichment does not endorse any advertiser or product. Claims made in an advertisement are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. Enrichment reserves the right to reject any advertisement that is inconsistent with the journal's objectives, editorial convictions, and Assemblies of God doctrine.

E-MAIL: YOU MAY ADDRESS ENRICHMENT AT enrichmentjournal@ag.org

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT http://www.enrichment journal.ag.org



Member of Evangelical Press Association



Member of International Pentecostal Press Assoc

- Use of the masculine pronoun for pastor is used throughout this issue and refers to both genders.
- All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE. NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.



# Winning the Sexual Addictions Battle

BY GARY R. ALLEN

**PLEASE NOTE:** This issue of Enrichment contains material and words that are more direct than we might normally publish. We have worked hard to be sensitive to our readers. However, the seriousness of the sexual issues we are addressing demands that we be clear and direct.

elling sex is one of the oldest businesses in the world, and right now, the pornography business has never been larger. One of the biggest cultural changes in the United States over the last 25 years has been the widespread acceptance of sexually explicit material. It is estimated that Americans spend approximately \$10 billion a year on adult entertainment, as much as they spend attending professional sporting events, buying music, and going to movies.

### ALARMING FACT

One of the largest groups using pornography is boys ages 12 to 17.1 Many of these are our children in our churches and in our families. We must do everything we can to help our families. Many single parents and children who attend church without parents need our special attention.

# IT IS NOT "MEN ONLY" ANYMORE

Men are not the only ones lured by Internet porn. This shameful addiction is affecting a rising number of Christian women. Thirty-four percent of readers of the *Today's Christian Woman* online newsletter admitted to intentionally accessing Internet porn in a recent poll. While many women explained they had accessed these sites to better understand what was luring their husbands time and again, it was the other e-mails — from Christian women who shared about their own Internet porn addiction — that caught our attention.<sup>2</sup>

# MINISTERS STRUGGLE, TOO

Ministers also are struggling with sexual issues. Various studies and surveys affirm that ministers are involved in pornography at about the same extent as those in the pew. While this is a reality, it must not continue. Pastors cannot be men and women of integrity if they are not living a pure life.

### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A MINISTER

It is essential that pastors be sexually healthy. If pastors come from a background of personal and family dysfunction and addictive lifestyle, they risk bringing some of that baggage with them into their marriage and ministry. I believe in the power of Christ's forgiveness and in His cleansing blood at salvation. But I also know that one's past life and experiences can make him more susceptible to reoccurring thought patterns and behaviors.

Remember, as pastors we are responsible for our own spiritual and moral wellbeing and behavior. We cannot blame others or place the responsibility for our attitudes, actions, or behaviors on others.

As a minister you can make a difference by:

- understanding the scope and nature of sexual addictions.
- preaching against sexual sin and offering hope and freedom in Jesus Christ.
- providing Christian resources on healthy sexuality for every age level in your church.
- providing seminars to help parents train their children in healthy sexual values and behavior.
- partnering with other churches in your community to share resources, encourage one another, and take a stand against the sex industry in your community.

If you are a minister struggling with sexually addictive behavior, I hope this issue of *Enrichment* will help you find the healing and deliverance you need. For confidential counseling, you can call 1-800-867-4011. I also hope this issue will help you be more effective in ministering to the sexual well-being of those in your church and community.

**GARY R. ALLEN,** D.Min., is executive editor of *Enrichment* journal and national coordinator of the Ministerial Enrichment Office, Springfield, Missouri.

### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families http://www.nationalcoalition.org/index. html.
- Ramona Richards, Today's Christian Woman, http://www.christianitytoday.com/tcw/2003/005/5.58.html, accessed February 24, 2005.

# GET REAL MORALITY CONTINUES TO DECAY

More than four out of five adults — 83 percent — contend that they are concerned about the moral condition of the nation. Given that 84 percent of all adults consider themselves to be Christian, they have good reason to worry about the moral state of the country: many of their own views conflict with the moral teachings of their professed faith.

Percentage of Adults Who Consider a Behavior To Be "Morally Acceptable"

	ALL ADULTS	EVANGELICALS	BORN * AGAIN	OTHER FAITH	ATHEIST/ AGNOSTIC
gambling	61%	27%	45%	69%	75%
living with someone of the opposite sex without being married, sometimes called co-habitation	60	12	49	70	87
enjoying sexual thoughts or fantasies about someone	59	15	49	71	78
having an abortion	45	4	33	45	71
having a sexual relation- ship with someone of the opposite sex to whom you are not married	42	7	35	47	69
looking at pictures of nudity or explicit sexual behavior	38	5	28	49	70
using profanity	36	7	29	46	68
getting drunk	35	8	24	44	61
having sexual relationship with someone of the same sex	30	5	20	41	55
using drugs not prescribed by a medical doctor	17	6	11	25	38

(Base: 1024 adults) \* Non-evangelical born agains

The Barna Group is an independent marketing research company located in Ventura, California. For the complete report, visit http://www.barna.org. Used by permission.



# **CROSSROADS LEGAL MUMBO JUMBO**

A federal judge recently threw out a Pennsylvania law requiring Internet service providers to block websites containing child pornography. Ironically, no one challenged the state's right to stop child porn, since it is already illegal under federal law. Lawyers from the ACLU and the Center for Democracy and Technology argued before the federal judge that filtering technology is too

# QUICK POLI

While in ministry, how often have you intentionally viewed sexually explicit material on the Internet, TV, or by video?

48 %
9 %
22 %
21 %

Enrichment journal online poll

# THE HIM BEHIND THE HYMN

# TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

In a day when unprecedented moral failure and carnal compromise are reported among church leaders, God continues to call His people to personal purity. God's call to holiness is not unique to this generation. It has been sounded from the pens of prophets and the lips of preachers for 3 millennia. A story about an unidentified



missionary to China who was preaching while on furlough provides an example. The missionary chose "Be ye holy; for I am holy" for his sermon text

(1 Peter 1:16). In his message, he referenced Leviticus 20:7 from which the words were originally taken. Among those who heard the missionary was a Christian businessman named William Dunn Longstaff. This young man was clumsy. While filtering technology exists that lowers the suppression of blocked websites in the filtering process, Internet service providers would not pay for the level of technology necessary to block child porn sites while increasing access to legitimate sites.

In less than 3 years, legal wizards repealed the 2002 Pennsylvania law that had targeted large companies (such as America Online) and required them to block sexually explicit images of children. In so doing, the American value of immediate and broad access to information trumped the morally reasonable desire of most Americans to protect their children from the frightening exploitation of the Internet.

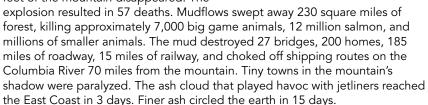
The repeal of a law protecting the defenseless, under the guise that the technology is too clumsy, is a pathway to self-destruction. A nation that has the technology to develop and operate the World Wide Web can surely use the same level of technology to protect the most vulnerable. The repeal of the Pennsylvania law will continue America's delusion that it can simultaneously advocate the value of its children and yet blatantly indulge its addiction to pornography.

**BYRON D. KLAUS**, D.Min., is president of Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri.

# WHAT IN THE WORLD

# THE DANGER OF DEADLY CIRCUMSTANCES

On May 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens vomited up molten lava as the top 1,314 feet of the mountain disappeared. The



As the 25th anniversary of Mount St. Helens' deadly eruption approached, the active volcano in Washington State began to let off steam. Seismologists tracked the mountain's erratic behavior and prepared for a possible repeat of what had taken place in 1980. Fortunately, this did not happen.

The anniversary of the mountain's meltdown brought to remembrance some graphic memories of the horrific devastation. One such memory is the tragic death of a colorful hermit named Harry Truman.

Truman, an 83-year-old proprietor of a lodge on Spirit Lake, had been warned for weeks before the mountain blew that a volcanic eruption was a distinct possibility. Unlike residents who responded to repeated calls to evacuate, the old man with his 16 cats and bright pink Cadillac threw caution to the wind. He refused to believe the situation was dangerous, and he was prepared to live (or die) with the consequences.

After the eruption, the media flocked to Spirit Lake to interview its most celebrated citizen. Harry Truman owned 54 acres of prime property in the shadow of Mount St. Helens. His 100 boats gave him a monopoly on the recreational boating industry. But on May 18, Harry Truman, his boats, cats, and his pink Cadillac were nowhere to be seen.

Peter challenged his readers to heed the danger of deadly circumstances. He did not compare the enemy of our souls to a volcano, but he did call him a dangerous lion (1 Peter 5:8). Flirting with temptations such as lust, power, and greed can find us in quicksand without hope of escape. We would do well to learn the lesson of Harry Truman and flee the deadly thing that can steal our integrity.

GREG ASIMAKOUPOULOS, Naperville, Illinois

convicted and could not get the missionary's sermon out of his head or heart. He determined to allow the holiness of God to increasingly mark his life.

Longstaff's father was a wealthy shipowner. When he died, Longstaff inherited his estate. Although he was financially independent, Longstaff did not allow his worldly wealth to distract him from a life of faith. He became known for his humility and devotion to Christ. He befriended Dwight L. Moody and Ira Sankey and supported them financially as they traveled in America and Great Britain.

Although the philanthropist was not given to writing hymn lyrics, on one occasion he wrote a religious poem that celebrated his passion for attaining and living a pure life. The poem began,

Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord. Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word. Make friends of God's children; help those who are weak, Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

Later, a magazine publisher discovered the poem and printed it. Someone who was moved by what Longstaff had written cut the poem out of the periodical and sent.

had written cut the poem out of the periodical and sent it to George Stebbins. When the gospel composer received Longstaff's poem, he tucked it away for future use.

Later when Stebbins was assisting in a series of revival meetings in India, he decided to put Longstaff's poem to music. When he was finished, he sent his new hymn, which he entitled "Take Time To Be Holy," to Sankey in New York. When Moody's colleague received the song, he noticed who had penned the words. Since he cherished his friendship with William Longstaff, Sankey determined to give the new hymn exposure by including it in his collection of hymns and gospel songs.

GREG ASIMAKOUPOULOS, Naperville, Illinois

# LEADERLIFE

# **MY NIGHTMARE**



I have this nightmare. In it, thousands of people spend their careers preparing leaders for the challenges of the 21st century, only to find the best and the brightest leaders have been disqualified.

## DISQUALIFIED BY INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY

Recently, a concerned church official told me that nearly 20 percent of a large group of credentialing candidates processed in his area had voluntarily entered rehabilitation to overcome their addiction to

pornography. Make no mistake; this addiction has the potential to decimate our leadership.

## **DENIAL IS THE ENEMY**

In 2000, a readership survey by *Christianity Today* found that more than one-third of clergy and laity readers had visited a sexually explicit website. More than half of the clergy who had visited such a site admitted to visiting several times within the last year. Twenty-eight percent reported that their spouses knew about their Internet porn problems.

With 135 million Americans online now (according to ClickZ.com) and the average user spending more than 9 hours on the Internet weekly, it is difficult to imagine a change for the better any time soon.

### DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

You owe it to yourself to take specific steps:

- 1. Seek help now if you are addicted. Contact qualified counselors at EMERGE at 1-800-867-4011 to receive anonymous help. Phone counselors can also provide names of Christian counselors throughout the United States
- 2. Enter an accountability relationship that involves regular and rigorous questioning.
- 3. Buy software that not only filters out porn sites, but also reports all sites visited to a trusted friend.
- 4. Get preventive training for your organization. My colleague, Cheryl Taylor, has excellent training/ prevention materials available at: http://www.agts.edu/community/sexual\_integrity.html.

Contact her (ctaylor@agts.edu) to arrange preventive, sexual-integrity training for your ministry team.

**EARL CREPS**, doctor of ministry director, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary

# PORNOGRAPHY INDUSTRY REVENUE STATISTICS

Size of the industry	\$57 billion worldwide
	\$12 billion United States
Adult videos	\$20 billion
Escort services	\$11 billion
Magazines	\$7.5 billion
Sex clubs	\$5 billion
Phone sex	\$4.5 billion
Cable/pay per view	\$2.5 billion
Internet	\$2.5 billion
CD-Rom	\$1.5 billion
Novelties	\$1.0 billion
Other	\$1.5 billion

- Porn revenue is larger than all combined revenues of all professional football, baseball, and basketball franchises.
- United States revenue exceeds the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC (\$6.2 billion).
- Child pornography generates \$3 billion annually.

2004 TopTenREVIEWS, Inc. Used by permission.

# BOOMERS TO ZOOMERS HEALTHY LOVE



Younger generations are being ravaged by the misuse of sexuality. AIDS is now the leading killer of Americans between ages 25 and 44, and 63 percent of people who acquire sexually transmitted diseases are under the age of 25. Even safe sex is not safe. Early college-age women, after countless exposures to safe sex education, still experience a 25 percent failure rate in their first year of contraceptive use.

Healthy biblical attitudes toward sexuality are eroding rapidly with each succeeding generation. This condition creates a climate in which pornography, adultery, and sexual brokenness become norms rather than exceptions. While we can blame the media or other sources for these problems, the real question is: what are we going to do about it?

I have three suggestions, particularly for older leaders

# PULPIT & PEW MORE SEX, PLEASE

Churchgoers want more sermons on sexual issues than pastors think they do.

If you're unsure what to preach next

Christianity Today International.

Sunday, consider something from Song of Solomon. Almost half of churchgoers want to hear more scriptural teaching on sex (44 percent), twice the number of pastors who feel they should spend more time on the subject (22 percent). An equal number of parishioners say they're satisfied with the frequency of sermons addressing sex (44 percent), according to a new survey by

The discrepancy between congregations' expectations and pastors' assessments of the need is also in the ear of the beholder. Some 85 percent of pastors say they speak about sexual issues at least once a year, but only 63 percent of the listeners say their pastor preaches on sex at least once a year.

Among congregants who want more teaching on sexual issues, only 47 percent claim their pastor brings up this subject once or more per year. CTI analyst John LaRue says, "Perhaps this desire for more biblical exposition on sexual issues exists because pastors are not speaking forcefully or clearly enough, while exposure to sexual images and messages in today's media is ever more heightened."

More gaps: Pastors and their parishioners were given a list of damaging sexual issues. Pastors were asked to choose those they believe affected their congregation, while



parishioners were asked to choose those affecting them personally. This should show how well pastors know their congregations. Addiction to pornography was rated No. 1 by both groups (57 percent of pastors to 36 percent of parishioners), but there were significant gaps in other rankings.

Churchgoers were more likely to consider abortion for unwed mothers a serious sexual issue (27 percent versus 3 percent of pastors). Churchgoers were more concerned about homosexual behavior (22 percent versus 3 percent of pastors) and sexual abuse (17 percent versus 9 percent of pastors).

About one-third of respondents in both groups agreed sex outside marriage is an issue, but more church members were worried about teen sex (34 percent versus 28 percent of pastors).

CTI conducted mail and Internet surveys of 680 pastors and 1,972 churchgoers, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4 and 2 percentage points, respectively. The full 53-page report can be downloaded for \$19.95 at http://www.bclstore.com/chandsex.html.

Reprinted with permission from *Leadership* (Winter 2005), www.leadershipjournal.net

who are serving their watch right

- 1. Be direct: preaching and teaching on human sexuality from Scripture is no longer optional. The questions are many and the need is pressing. Ignoring these issues or lecturing the congregation only makes things worse.
- 2. Be honest: those who have seen the consequences of unbiblical lifestyles need to warn others. Reporting on the brokenness that comes from living an unbiblical lifestyle is a practical approach that can still gain a hearing.
- 3. Be models: I shocked a group of church members once by telling them my wife and I had been married for 20 years. They had never met a couple who had been together so long. Our life is still the greatest influence we possess. Model healthy love and others will follow.

**EARL CREPS**, doctor of ministry director, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary



# **EIGHT TOP SEXUAL ISSUES**

Which of the following are sexually damaging issues for your congregation? Pastors said ...

- Pornography addiction
  Sexually active never-married adults
  Adultery of married adults
- Sexually active teenagers
- Sexual dissatisfaction
- Unwed pregnancy
- Sexually active previously married adults
- Sexual abuse

57 percent

34 percent

30 percent

28 percent 16 percent

14 percent

13 percent

9 percent

Reprinted with permission from *Leadership* (Winter 2005). www.leadershipjournal.net

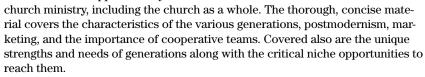
# FIELD TRIP CROSS-GENERATIONAL MINISTRIES

Tea parties, social activism, world missions, and rigid formats. What commonality does this odd combination share? Each resides in women's ministries history as a tried and true model

whose time has come and gone. Each still has value, but not as a solo act in today's diverse culture.

Kay Gross, Women's Ministries director for the Ohio District of the Assemblies of God, challenged the status quo in local churches' women's ministries. She encouraged multigenerational approaches that invited women of all ages to participate. Using extensive research from the fields of generations, cultures, and change, along with interviews from practitioners, she created a seminar to transform leaders' perspectives on current ministry methods.

Though crafted for women's ministries, the seminar content applies to any



Gross contends that a single-lens view of people will not work. Instead, women's ministries must market to the peripheral vision of the target, and women will see the ministry in an entirely new light. Simultaneously, what has traditionally operated as a self-contained unit of the church will more naturally lend itself to an integrative approach, supporting and synthesizing other ministries in the church.

Authentic spirituality, biblical teaching, and multiple options will draw all generations. In a cross-generational context, discipleship and service flourish. It sounds simple, but it cannot happen without being intentionally born of a broader perspective. Coupling the generational and cultural teaching with a call for broad, creative efforts, Gross' research provides a dual lens for sharper ministry vision. For more information, contact Kay Gross at the Ohio District office, 614-890-2290.

**LORI O'DEA**, doctor of ministry coordinator, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary



# STAYING WELL

# 10 WARNING SIGNS OF BLOWOUT

1. Having a secret life that involves fantasies and sinful behavior that will eventually lead to spiritual bondage.
2. Justifying behav-



iors as personal rights or liberties at the expense of living a life above reproach.

- 3. Having an inconsistent devotional life and no sense of God's presence and peace.
- 4. Lacking accountability, being unteachable, and/or surrounding oneself with "yes" people.
- 5. Insisting on having your own way; being dogmatic, argumentative, and unwilling to compromise on nonessentials.
- 6. Having a pragmatic approach to life and ministry, believing the end justifies the means.
- 7. Blaming circumstances and/or others for problems; having a root of bitterness.
- 8. Having a tendency to use people up rather than build them up by viewing people as a means rather than an end of ministry.
- 9. Neglecting primary relationships such as one's spouse, children, key leaders, and staff.
- 10. Depending on personal power rather than spiritual authority; ministering in the flesh instead of spiritual power.

DR. PAUL LEAVENWORTH, Staying Well. Dr. Leavenworth is director of leadership development for Open Bible Churches, Des Moines, Iowa. Used with permission.

# MINISTRY TRENDS SMALL CHURCHES LAG IN TECHNOLOGY

Just more than half — 52 percent — of Protestant churches maintain a website, according to a 2005 study by Ellison Research. Not surprisingly, 88 percent of larger churches, those with more than 200 regular attendees, have a website. Among midsize congregations, with 100 to 200 worshipers on a typical weekend, 60 percent have a Web presence. Only 28 percent of churches under 100 have a page available via the Internet.

But Ron Sellers, president of the Phoenix-based company, notes that while smaller churches may not have the budget or staff to keep a Web presence, those looking for a church — especially younger people — increasingly look online.

"As the American public becomes more reliant on technology in everyday life, they will logically expect churches to have websites, streaming audio or video on the site, or study materials on video or computer software," Sellers says. "The increased use of technology in churches has a real potential to widen the gap even further between small churches and larger congregations."

The study of 700 congregations also revealed that only 16 percent of small churches (compared to 28 percent of midsize and 49 percent of larger bodies) rated building or maintaining a website as extremely important in the next 5 years.

In addition to church size, the presence of a church website varies by the age of the pastor. Pastors under 60 have a website 56 percent of the time but only 35 percent of those older than 60 who are leading a church have a site.

JOHN KENNEDY, Today's Pentecostal Evangel

# MINISTRY BUSINESS FIVE THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

Computers have become a regular part of the ministry budget process. Surprisingly, most churches and ministries do not have a clear picture of what they have. Having an inventory can make the difference if disaster hits, and when considering system upgrades.

- 1. Create a secure location for all software licenses, software discs, and documentation. Software license authorities are beginning to knock on the doors of churches and ministries. Having these readily available can save a ministry embarrassing press and money.
- 2. List all computers and connected devices (printers, scanners, and PDAs) in the system. Include brands and models, and detail computers' processor type (that is, Pentium 4), amount of RAM, and operating system (that is, Windows XP Pro).
- 3. List all the software the ministry uses, and count how many computers the software is installed on. Compare this list to the software-license inventory and, if necessary, purchase additional licenses to match license requirements. A vendor who specializes in ministry pricing is Consistent Computer Bargains (1-800-342-4222).
- 4. If the ministry runs a computer network, a current data cable wiring diagram will facilitate supporting the system. If the data cable has never been certified for data traffic, doing this can save hundreds of hours in lost productivity. (The vendor who tests the cable with a PentaScanner or similar device can also create a wiring diagram.)
- 5. Go through the older hardware and software not being used to determine what can be thrown away or given away. Old technology, hardware and software replaced by one or two upgrades, will probably never be needed again.

**NICK B. NICHOLAOU**, president, Ministry Business Services, Inc. Reprinted from *The Clergy Journal's Faithful Finances*. Used by permission.

# **UTHTRAX**

# WHAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT GOD

"I know how to sign up for fine arts, youth bowling, and even missions trips," one 17year-old recently told me, "but I don't really know that much about God."

This confession sparked an honest group discussion. One teen said he felt pressured to be a good Christian teen.

"I'm under pressure to be an example and to be heavily involved, so I'm always

signing up for stuff. But what I really want is to just slow down and work on my relationship with God."

Knowing less about God is an emerg-

ing trend among Christian
youth. Sociologist Christian
Smith of the University of
North Carolina at Chapel Hill
worked with 133 researchers during a 4-year period to
survey teenagers. His report
revealed that the majority of
U.S. teens believed in God
and worshiped in conventional congregations. Good
news. However, the report

also revealed that Christian

youth view God as an undemanding deity who exists mainly to solve problems and make people feel good.

The study reported that this belief is compounded by their lack of knowledge of Scripture. Teens surveyed knew Scriptures such as John 3:16, but were detached from the teachings of their faith.

This study and the comments of youth hungry to know God challenges those called to youth ministry. Let's look at it as a yellow flag — a caution — thrown out in the game of ministry that requires us to slow down and include a solid foundation of biblical truth for this generation of teenagers. Activities are awesome, but building good Christian teens requires helping them know more about God.

T. SUZANNE ELLER, Muskogee, Oklahoma



# **PROFILES**

# AT CALVARY TEMPLE, KIDS ARE EVERYTHING

"The parents say that the kids are excited about going to church," explains Pastor J. Don George. He is talking about his church's commitment to creating a ministry environment for children and youth. It is a commitment that was front and center when Calvary Temple in Irving, Texas, recently completed its new facilities and built a dedicated children's center. "They are excited about going to Sunday School, and we've had an upward bump of 200 to 300 chil-

dren just in our children's ministry in the months we have been in the building."

That means between 200 and 300 additional children are hearing the gospel each week and discovering its relevance to their young lives. For George and his congregation, the plan to move their church was inextricably tied to their plan to prioritize the spiritual needs of their youngest members and visitors.

"We look at commercial entities like Disney, McDonald's, and Burger King and other companies that make significant investments to reach the children," George says, "so we know that it works in the commercial world." If the commercial world is willing to make that kind of investment in kids to reap a financial profit, George wonders, what steps should the church be willing to take to reap an eternal spiritual harvest?

The reference to Disney is deliberate. Calvary Temple hired Wacky World, a company founded by former Disney administrator Bruce Berry, to design its children's facility. The results are spectacular and justify a recent Wacky World write-up in *Newsweek*.

A nautical theme permeates the areas used by younger children. A five-level, enclosed-tube play park accommodates up to 160 children. The lower the kids go exploring the park, the darker the walls. Submarines, fish, and even a shark are part of the décor.

Another huge hallway is constructed on a Red Sea theme.

"We created a virtual 'through the Red Sea' experience going down that hallway," George says. "Styrofoam waves stack up each side. At the far end of the hall is a biggerthan-life Styrofoam Moses. We've put in a lot of special



PHOTO: SAM HAMILTON

lighting effects — lightning flashes, the clouds roll overhead and the kids go through the walls of water to head into their classrooms."

One of the facility's two large worship centers offers an ark theme. The entire stage represents Noah's ark with fold-down sides revealing the animals' stowage. The worship center's walls are painted with a procession of animal pairs.

Older children are intrigued by the array of electronic games available. Back in the

Red Sea wave hall, a video screen is positioned about every 15 feet for gaming.

"We find that the kids get their parents to church early so they can spend 15 or 20 minutes on a game before Sunday School or Super Church," George says.

Prioritizing kids does not mean forgetting adults. In the main building, Calvary Temple offers a coffee shop that attracts a steady clientele throughout the week. A resource center provides books, videos, DVDs, and audiotapes.

Key to the success of the new facilities, George emphasizes, has been consistent input and participation by the congregation. A year before construction began, he divided 300 people into 10 teams to carefully plan every aspect of the project from the children's center to the main building to the landscaping and parking lot across the 25-acre site.

Focusing on kids was always a priority. At monthly meetings, team members were encouraged to dream big.

"If we could do something better for the children, do something better for the youth," George says, "we could more effectively reach the kids and build strong families through children's and youth ministry."

Now the dreaming has paid off. The buildings are in place. The church campus is alive with activity. But this is only a tiny part of Calvary Temple's vision. The city of Irving stands as a continual mission field.

"We've brought the people through the process of understanding that the buildings are only tools," George says. "These acres are here to help us more effectively reach this city and communicate the message of Jesus."

**SCOTT HARRUP** is associate editor of *Today's Pentecostal* Evangel, Springfield, Missouri.



# A/G MULTICULTURAL CHURCHES SHOW FAST, LARGE GROWTH

Among many U.S. Assemblies of God leaders in recent years a key to church growth has been a focus on specific cultures, whether it be Hispanic, Slavic, Korean, Hmong, Tongan or 55 other groups that have formed distinct ethnic categories within the Fellowship.

Scott Temple, director of Intercultural Ministries for the Assemblies of God, sees another hope for the future. "The



Praising together: At Evangel A/G in Chicago many attendees say they no longer prefer all-white, all-Latino or all-black worship styles.

integrated model — where there is no dominant ethnic group — features many of the fastest-growing churches in the Assemblies of God," Temple says. "We need to stress planting and growing intercultural churches."

Temple says 472 Assemblies of God congregations have no racial majority, compared to only 226 multiracial churches in 1992. These "no single majority" congregations have an average Sunday morning attendance of 253, a growth of 101 since 1992. That compares to 145 average attendees in white churches, 137 in black churches, and 111 for Hispanic churches. There are 51 multiethnic churches with more than 500 attendees, and 22 topping 1,000.

One of the biggest multiethnic churches is Mision Ebenezer in Carson, Calif., which started as a Hispanic church and didn't have an English-language service until 1993. Now the two largest Sunday services are in English, although many of the attendees are natives of a dozen Spanish-speaking countries, including Cuba, Spain, and Chile.

"My concern is if we didn't have anything in English to encourage them to stay, they would leave," Pastor Isaac J. Canales says.

Canales has made a point of making diversity a priority. Mision Ebenezer today has 720 white adherents, 630 Hispanics, 180 blacks, 180 Asians, and 90 Native Americans. The church's leadership is equally diverse.

The Vision for Transformation process emphasizes the need to realign national services to more effectively serve integrated and diverse congregations and the ministry

needs of ethnically diverse constituencies. Vision for Transformation resolutions adopted by the 2003 General Council in session in Washington, D.C., included ethnic and language fellowship representation on the presbyteries of every geographic district and provisions to strengthen the cooperative relationship between ethnic/ language and geographic districts.

Worshipers at Evangel Assembly of God in Chicago on Sunday mornings represent 40 nationalities. The mix includes 450 blacks, 400 Hispanics, and 100 whites. When Ray A. Berryhill, Sr., became music pastor in 1988, he was one of five blacks in the congregation, and the church only had four Latino attendees.

Preferring to associate with people of one's own race — whatever that may be — is the path of least resistance, says Berryhill, who became senior pastor in 1992. It takes effort to integrate.

"You can't program that," Berryhill says. "It has to come out of authentic relationship."

Herbert L. Cooper, Jr., started Peoples Church in Oklahoma City three years ago with eight visitors in his living room. Now 600 followers, half of them black and 40 percent of them white, make it their church home. The church now meets in a movie theater but has purchased 50 acres to build its own facility.

As churches grow, the Fellowship is committed to making the best use of resources, another priority in the Vision for Transformation. The Assemblies of God Financial Services Group, for example, has launched new strategies to provide necessary flexibility to help ethnic congregations qualify for loans.

Randy R. Scott, the white pastor of Power Invasion in Denver, has attracted 325 Hispanics to the inner-city church, in part by offering "prayer fairs" for the sick, tired, and lonely near parks and housing projects.

"It's important to reach out to various races because that's the heart of Jesus," Scott says. "Jesus doesn't see color." Power Invasion also has 325 whites, 185 blacks, and 95 Asians.

"It's really not diversity if you just talk about it but don't take steps to make it happen," Cooper says.

"It's one thing to say, 'We would like black people to come to our church,' "Berryhill says. "It's another to have something there that people of color can identify with. There has to be something there that says 'That looks like me' or 'That speaks to my heart.'

"Multiethnic, intercultural churches are wonderful models of heaven on earth," says Temple, who pastored a multicultural church in Englewood, N.J. "If Christians are going to reach a divided world, then we need to present a united front."

JOHN W. KENNEDY, Today's Pentecostal Evangel



Ask the Superintendent —

# THE DILEMMA OF MINISTERS AND SEXUAL ADDICTIONS

eneral Superintendent **J** Thomas E. Trask has a passion for purity. He knows that personal purity is mandatory if one is to be effective in ministry. In his quarterly interview with Enrichment journal, Trask shares his concern about the increasing availability of pornography in today's world, and his deep concern for pastors who are entangled in this web of destruction. But more than that, he offers godly advice so pastors can prevent themselves from becoming ensnared by pornography. He also has a message of hope for those who are bound by this addiction.

NEARLY HALF OF MINISTERS TODAY ADMIT TO SOME FORM OF INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL ADDICTION OR BEHAVIOR. HOW CAN MINISTERS PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THESE TEMPTATIONS?

TRASK: Sexuality was created by God and is a part of His plan for His creation. Our sexuality becomes an addiction when it becomes controlling. How does a minister find himself in that situation? James 1:14,15 says, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

A direct correlation exists between a pastor's spirituality and his sexuality. When a pastor neglects his spiritual life, he limits his ability to fight the enemy because his protection comes from his walk with God. Galatians 5:16 says, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." A minister can become addicted to inappropriate sexual behavior because he lets down his guard and rejects the protection the Spirit gives him. When a pastor walks in the Spirit, he has the strength he needs to be victorious over sexual temptations.

I strongly believe in the need for fellowship with the Lord and the study of God's Word. In Psalm 119:11, David said, "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Pastors need to understand the seriousness and the consequences of sin. The Word of God is the best place to gain this understanding.

Some pastors have become so busy with religious activities they excuse themselves from a daily devotional time with the Lord and neglect their inward man. A pastor must take care of himself spiritually or the outward man will crumble.

A pastor's walk with the Lord must take priority. Jude 1:24 says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." No one is immune from falling. How are pastors kept? God keeps them, but they must want to be kept. In the Book of Revelation, John writes repeatedly, "He that overcometh." Revelation 12:11 says, "They overcame him by the blood of the lamb."

Pastors need the continual washing of the blood of Calvary to cleanse them from the contamination of living in this world. Consecration must also be continual. Paul says in Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by

the renewing of your mind." Revelation 12:11 also says, "They loved not their lives unto death." That is consecration.

If pastors will heed these biblical admonitions, they can be assured that God will keep them clean from the addictions in which the enemy would desire to trap them.

# WHY ARE SEXUAL TEMPTATION AND MORAL FAILURE WORSE TODAY?

TRASK: Sexual temptation and moral failure are worse today because of the culture in which we live. The lack of morality and moral standards contributes to sexual temptations and moral failure.

Today, sexual behavior is flaunted and exploited by big business. The content and language of today's TV programs would have been unacceptable years ago. I participate in the Religious Alliance Against Pornography. Major corporations in America are in the pornography business because it generates money.

# HOW DOES PUBLIC EDUCATION CONTRIBUTE TO SEXUAL ADDICTIONS AND MORAL FAILURE?

TRASK: Today one of the ladies here at Headquarters asked, "Brother Trask, did you read in the newspaper that our schools are advocating that children explore homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle?"

Society is a product of our educational system. Years ago a teacher would have lost his job if he had promoted sexual exploration. I was taboo. Now, it is part of the curriculum.

Sex education without morality tantalizes and poisons young minds. It baits teens for sexual exploration. The longer our society promotes sexual exploitation, the more people will be a product of it.

When public school teachers promote immoral lifestyles, many students do not question it. Parents and pastors must provide training in the home and church to counteract unbiblical views of sexuality that young people are exposed to in public schools. We must reinforce the Scripture that says, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (James 4:17). Students need to know what is right before they can do what is right.

# WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR MINISTERS WHO ARE TRAPPED IN SEXUAL ADDICTION?

TRASK: Sexual addiction affects a pastor's life, his walk with the Lord, his spiritual well-being, his marriage, and his conscience. I have observed the horrendous effects of sexual sins on ministers. Gifted, talented men - great preachers who pastored great churches — became addicted to pornography or other forms of sexual sin and lost their ministry.

A pastor cannot participate in sexual immorality and then

carry out the responsibilities of a minister of the gospel. Sexual addiction causes a pastor's conscience to become callused. He feels he can continue in sin and still carry out the ministry. God in His mercy, longsuffering, tenderness, and grace might allow it for a time. But eventually, God, in His righteous judgment, will expose sin. When He does, He usually does it publicly. Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

My father gave me sound advice as a young man going into the ministry. He said, "Do not get involved in anything that takes your mind away from preparing for the call of God and from preparing for ministry to the congregation." That was before today's moral challenges, and it is even truer today. Anything that takes your energy away from what God has called you to do is wrong, whether it is making money, playing sports, or whatever else that causes one to lose his focus on God.

Some people say pornography is not that serious because, unlike adultery, it does not involve another person. But studies show pornography affects one's marriage relationship and one's children. It is also a cause of sexual abuse in the home. Pornography is so far reaching, its tentacles are so damaging

When a pastor neglects his spiritual life, he limits his ability to fight the enemy because his protection comes can remember when sex education in school from his walk with God.

> and entrapping, that I cannot urge ministers strongly enough to abstain from it. If a minister cannot control where he goes on the Internet, disconnect it. Pastors cannot afford to allow their ministry and their calling to suffer from sexual addictions. A sexual addiction is dangerous - just as an addiction to alcohol or drugs is dangerous — and the enemy knows that.

# STATISTICS SHOW THE GREATEST CONSUMERS OF PORNOGRAPHY ARE BETWEEN AGES 12 AND 17. HOW CAN THE CHURCH COUNTERACT THE SEXUAL INFLUENCES OF THE MEDIA?

TRASK: The church must help people differentiate between what they should and should not watch. There are ways to censor programming so children in the home are not exposed to explicit scenes or language.

Internet filters are essential. It is also wise to place computers in a public place in the home. A person must use the safeguards that are available because the enemy is insistent on destroying our families.

Scripture deals with the mind. In Philippians 4:8, Paul wrote, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." If Christians do not take charge of the media coming into their homes, then they allow the enemy a foothold and an opportunity to do his destructive work.

The church also has a responsibility to present a biblical model of sexuality to both its youth and adults. Mark Laaser addresses this important topic in his article in this issue titled, "Sexual Wholeness: A Biblical Understanding of Healthy Sexuality."

Sexuality fulfills its God-given purpose in a marriage rela-

tionship between one man and one woman. Today's youth need to know when a sexual relationship is proper and when it is improper. We must explain to our teenagers what God's Word says about the deviant lifestyles that are promoted today. We must begin this training early. Training a child is a daily process.

Pastors can take proactive steps to teach on sexual addictions in the church. When I pastored, I had sessions with parents. In these sessions, I could deal with sensitive subjects in an appropriate setting where I could discuss these matters more openly. The pastor needs to help parents understand what the issues are, what steps they can take, and what they can do to safeguard the home and their families. Two excellent articles in this issue by Richard and Renee Durfield and Fred Stoeker address these important issues.

If a husband or wife has already become sexually addicted, then the pastor needs to discuss how to deal with that. The church must take the lead in teaching and training people on sexual addictions. The pastor must build a fence at the top of this cliff, not park an ambulance at the bottom.

# HOW CAN A PASTOR PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY AWARENESS EFFORTS?

TRASK: Pastors can take the lead because many are professionally trained and understand the dynamics of addiction. The minister can answer tough questions such as what constitutes an addiction and what the issues are. Many in the community have never been addicted and may not understand. Pastors can provide tremendous resources for the community.

# HOW DO YOU ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING IN THE FIRST AND SECOND STAGES OF SEXUAL ADDICTION TO OPEN UP TO SOMEONE, EVEN IF IT MIGHT THREATEN THEIR MINISTRY?

TRASK: Hope and help are available for those suffering from sexual addictions. Someone said, "The church shoots its wounded." We do not. We believe in restoration and in giving people the help they need. Many people today are helping

others because the Lord saved them from sinful lifestyles. They understand the dynamics after being delivered from addictions and can be instrumental in ministering to others who are in a sinful lifestyle.

The trick of the enemy is to say you are ruined and there is no hope left. That is a lie. Our message is there is restoration, deliverance, and help.

I encourage pastors to open up to a person they can trust. A long-time minister friend or a long-time family member is a good choice. They should choose someone whom they can go to in confidence, so they can be honest, and yet know that

# Someone said, "The church shoots its wounded." We do not. We believe in restoration and in giving people the help they need.

person is not going to turn on them or try to destroy them because of their confession. Please read the article in this issue by Doug Boudinot, "Prison of Silence: Guidelines To Free Clergy From Sexual Sin."

It is important to know the stage of addiction in which the person finds himself. A pastor can spare himself from sin's consequences, if in the initial stages he recognizes the seriousness of his behavior and to where it can lead. But if he takes it lightly and does not seek help or counsel, then it leads to further entrapment and further addiction.

# WHAT GUIDELINES DO DISTRICTS HAVE FOR DEALING WITH MINISTERS WHO HAVE SEXUAL ADDICTIONS?

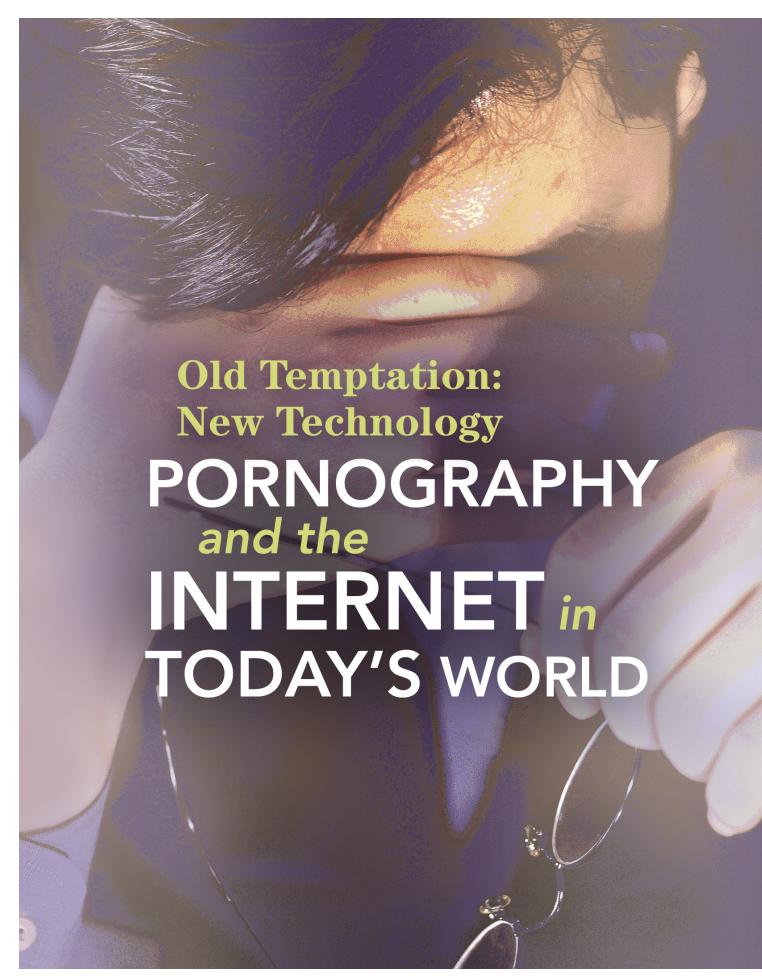
TRASK: The General Council has provided guidelines for our districts that outline how, and at what stages, to deal with ministers with sexual addictions. See the short piece in this issue by General Secretary George Wood entitled, "Ecclesiastical Guidelines for Helping Ministers Affected by Pornography."

The General Council, however, allows districts to pursue the course of action they deem necessary because every case is unique and needs to be handled with that in mind.

Some districts have access to a network of counselors where their ministers can receive help. If a district does not have these resources, there is a network of counselors and an 800 number available through the Ministerial Enrichment office. The number is 1-800-867-4011. This number is on the back of every Assemblies of God minister's fellowship card. A minister can receive help through a network of counselors across America. We feel responsible to provide this help for our ministers.

### **ENDNOTE**

1. Scriptures are KJV.



oday's information superhighway, the Internet, has become both a blessing and a curse. High-speed technology has those who counsel scrambling to keep up with the myriad of problems created by the proliferation and availability of pornography. The Internet is not the problem; it is the solitude and isolation of the user that can engender the problematic behavior that leads to sexual addiction. No one is immune, and the problem is growing.

## BACKGROUND

In 2002, sex-related sites became the No. 1 economic sector of the Internet, with sales exceeding the combined sales of both software and computers. Pornography has also become a problem in the workplace. Seventy percent of Internet pornography traffic occurs between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Seventy-two percent of companies that have addressed Internet misuse reported that 69 percent of those cases were pornography related. Leading software publishers estimate as much as \$83 billion a year in lost productivity for American companies. Serious researchers showed in large samples that one in six employees was now having trouble with sexual behavior online.

Researchers have noted problems with compulsive and addictive behavior online, especially in the areas of gambling and sexuality.<sup>3</sup> Others have noted behaviors such as online trading, gaming, and compulsive computer use.<sup>4</sup> In addition to Cooper's original research, people who work with compulsive sexual behavior documented problematic online sexual behavior in which people's daily ability to function was being affected by their cybersexual activities.<sup>5</sup>

# **SEX ADDICTION DEFINED**

What is a sex addict? During the last 2 to 3 decades, a series of studies has been performed that has created a profile for sex addiction. In keeping with the guidelines used to assess pathological gambling, alcoholism, and substance abuse, the following criteria for diagnosing sex addiction have emerged:

- Recurrent failure to resist impulses to engage in specific sexual behavior;
- 2. Frequently engaging in sexual behaviors to a greater extent, or over a longer period, than intended;
- Persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to stop, reduce, or control sexual behaviors;

- 4. Inordinate amounts of time spent in obtaining sex, being sexual, or recovering from sexual experiences;
- Preoccupation with sexual behavior or preparatory activities;
- Frequent engaging in the behavior when expected to fulfill occupational, academic, domestic, or social obligations;
- Continuation of the behavior despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent social, financial, psychological, or physical problem that is caused or exacerbated by the behavior;
- Need to increase the intensity, frequency, number, or risk level of behaviors to achieve the desired effect; or diminished effect with continued behaviors at the same level of intensity, frequency, number, or risk;
- 9. Giving up or limiting social, occupational, or recreational activities because of the behavior;
- 10. Distress, anxiety, restlessness, or irritability if unable to engage in the behavior.

Patients consistently report that they experienced a rapid escalation in both the amount of and diversity of sexual behavior. People who have significant problems often find that the problems started almost immediately. Consider the pastor who started viewing pornography on July 4. Five weeks later he was discovered and had already embezzled \$8,000 from the church to pay for his online activities. That pattern, while not true of all cases, is common enough to be noticed by clinicians. Factors that contribute to their escalation include the appearance of anonymity and ease of access. Also a pattern of denial quickly emerges in which the behavior is seen as having no consequences even though clear consequences are inevitable (such as the discovery of embezzled funds).

atients who were already having trouble with compulsive sexuality found the Internet to be a significant catalyst that intensified their sexual behavior. The Internet not only intensified the eroticization that was problematic, but also added new resources. For example, if compulsive prostitution was a problem, it intensified as a result of Internet activity. Some patients report having no history of compulsive sexual behavior until they discovered the Internet. When their sexual behavior escalated on the Net, they started behaviors offline that became compulsive as well. When church leaders are confronted by problematic sexual behavior and it fits the parameters of addictive/compulsive illness, they need to understand this disorder in order to make appropriate management decisions and to evaluate clinical approaches.

During the last 3 decades, professionals have acknowledged that some people use sex to manage their internal distress. These people are similar to compulsive gamblers, compulsive overeaters, or alcoholics who are not able to contain their impulses, and who experience destructive results.

Depending on one's professional framework, the words addiction and compulsion have been used to describe this disorder. In my field of addiction medicine, one sign of addiction is compulsive use. Other professionals occasionally make distinctions between addiction and compulsion. Some use them interchangeably. There is, however, a growing common understanding of the problem and how it occurs. Great progress is being made in treatment. Advances in neurochemistry may soon redefine our terminology when we understand more clearly the biology of the disorder.<sup>6</sup>

We find pastors of all denominations to be more vulnerable due to many factors.

- Pastors are in positions of power. People look up to them. Parishioners go to them for advice. They are perceived to hold a higher morality and, as such, are spiritual and moral leaders.
- Pastors lead stressful lives. They are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards; therefore, the shame factor is greatly exaggerated when their behavior is perceived as less than perfect.
- Pastors often lack the resources and outlets to communicate their own hardships. Just as every therapist gets group supervision, every minister needs a circle of confidants to whom he can communicate his personal troubles.

The essential problem church decisionmakers have is in identifying sexual compulsivity. Typically, pastors who are in trouble for their sexual behavior are not candid with those in authority about their behavior. Nor are they likely to reveal that their sexual behavior is a part of a consistent, self-destructive

pattern. This illness causes the pastor to hide the severity of his problem from others, to delude himself about his ability to control his behavior, and to minimize its impact on others. The fact pastors are to be models of moral behavior compounds the problem because their position adds to their shame and fear.

The National Campaign To Stop Pornography (2005) offers an excellent example of how trapped a pastor can feel because of the high moral standards laypeople hold him to and the high standard the pastor holds himself to. "If you had a pastor admit to his congregation that he struggled with an eating problem and that he was addicted to fried chicken, he would probably find some sympathy or get a chuckle out of it. But if the pastor confesses he has used pornography, more than likely the pastor would be [censored or disciplined]. The consequences of moral failure are deeply personal and professional. Instead of seeking help for their temptation, pastors may attempt to buy time through secrecy."

onsider the following examples that illustrate the diversity and complexity of sexual addiction among pastors:

 A pastor had a \$1,000-a-week prostitution habit. After depleting his family inheritance, he started stealing loose cash from parish collections and making out false payroll checks for staff who did not exist. He claimed he had a ministry to the prostitutes he used. He also did not see himself as violating his vow of celibacy since he was an emotional virgin with no relationship entanglements.

# Pastors who are in trouble for their sexual behavior are not candid with their authority structure about their behavior.

- A woman was the principal of a parish school. She was having an affair with a married man whose child was enrolled at the school. Simultaneously, she was sexually involved with the pastor of the parish. Also, she was having an intense sexual relationship with a woman in her order. Her cure was to become a missionary, but the same pattern emerged overseas. She called her superior from a hospital after she cut crosses into her thighs as a way to stop her behavior.
- A young monk had access to the Internet in an isolated part of the monastic library. Out of curiosity he started to explore sexually explicit websites. Soon he was hooked on pornography, chat rooms, and phone sex. He was unable to do his duties and started to drink heavily. When his superior eventually confronted him about his out-ofcontrol drinking, the monk confessed the real problem.

• An order priest teaching at a college became, over time, sexually involved with his students. He also had highrisk anonymous sex with men in parks and restrooms. Simultaneously, he developed a significant, compulsive overeating problem. He soon weighed in excess of 330 pounds on a six-foot frame. His life came apart when he was arrested in a park by a vice officer.

While these examples represent diverse behaviors, the common theme is sexually compulsive behavior. Church leaders need to understand that there is a common profile.

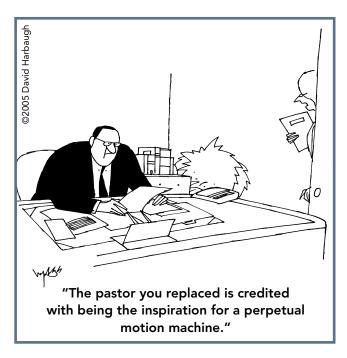
Christianity Today administered a reader survey to both clergy and laymen on Internet pornography. Even the lower percentage of people in this survey who have viewed Internet pornography show similar statistical patterns to the larger demographic of America:

- 33 percent of pastors and 36 percent of layman state that they have visited a sexually explicit website.
- Of those who have visited sexually explicit websites, 53 percent of pastors say they have done so in the past year, as compared to 44 percent of lay readers.
- When questioned if their spouses knew of their use of Internet pornography, 50 percent of laity said their spouses knew about their Web porn use. Only 28 percent of pastors responded that their spouses knew, and 30 percent claimed they did not talk to anyone about their behavior.
- · Two-thirds of those who have visited sexually explicit websites say they have prayed about this area of their lives (69 percent of pastors and 60 percent of laity). Few have sought professional help (4 percent of pastors and 7 percent of laymen) or have confessed it to anyone.

### **STATISTICS**

- In American society, sex is often portrayed in the media as a panacea for anything and everything.
- The number of Internet users in the United States is currently 158.3 million. People average six visits per week, visit an average of six sites, and spend on average 3 hours and 22 minutes per week on-line.8
- It is estimated Internet users worldwide exceed 420 million. Predictions are that users will number more than one billion by the year 2006.9
- Internet use doubles every 100 days. 10
- The amount of information and opportunities on the Internet is exploding. In January 2000, there were more than 1 billion unique pages available.<sup>11</sup> In March 2001, web pages had increased to 1,346,966,000.12
- The average age for first-time contact with Internet pornography is approximately 11 years of age. The largest consumer of Internet pornography is the 12- to 17-year-old age group. The average age for seeking help is between

- 30 and 35. Eighty percent of married sex addicts thought marriage was the answer to their addiction. The National Council on Sexual Addiction Compulsivity estimated that six to eight percent of Americans are sex addicts, which is 16 to 21.5 million people.  $^{\scriptscriptstyle 13}$
- One in four regular Internet users, or 21 million Americans, visit one of the more than 60,000 sex sites on the Web at least once a month.14
- An estimated 15 to 43 percent of Internet users have engaged in some form of Internet sexual pursuit. 15
- Twenty percent of young people who use the Internet regularly were exposed to unwanted sexual solicitations or approaches, and 25 percent encountered unwanted pornography in the last year.<sup>16</sup>
- In 2002, the U.S. customs estimated that 100,000 websites peddled child pornography.<sup>17</sup>
- Many experts say scotophilia (viewing sexual stimuli) is the No. 1 sexual activity in the United States.
- Seventy-one percent of those with sexual-acting-out problems also use the Internet as a venue.
- Seventy percent of Internet porn traffic occurs during the 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday.18 Two out of three companies have disciplined employees for misusing the Net at work, and pornography topped the list of abuses with a 41 percent share.<sup>19</sup> In 1 month, employees at IBM, Apple, and AT&T spent the equivalent of 1,631 work days — 13,048 hours — on the *Penthouse* magazine website.<sup>20</sup>
- Sexuality is big business. To date, sexuality has been one of the most profitable Internet markets with estimates of \$2.5 billion in sales and growth rates estimated at a 20 percent increase each year. U.S. pornography revenue exceeds the



- combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC (\$6.2 billion). Child pornography generates \$3 billion annually.<sup>21</sup>
- In 1998, Google listed over 70,000 web pages containing the word *sex*. This year a search returned 23,400,000 up more than 3,000 percent in 5 years. *Sex* is one of the most searched topics online. <sup>22</sup> A Google search performed on 17 April 2005, displayed 77,100,000 hits for the word *sex*.

The debate about Internet regulation is beyond the purview of this article. From an addiction perspective, it has never worked to restrict the supply or people's freedom. The lessons of the Prohibition experiment on alcohol have yet to be incorporated into our national drug policy. Gambling and sex, however, may be similar. Clearly, cybersex generates and intensifies reactions to sexual stimuli.

# INTERNET SEX SCREENING TEST

Welcome to the Internet Sex Screening Test. The following inventory should be taken online at Sex-Help.com. SexHelp.com is a Web resource for sex addiction and recovery sponsored by Dr. Patrick Carnes, a nationally known speaker and pioneer in the field of sexual addiction. The inventory asks questions about online and offline sexual behavior. Please respond "True" to the items that apply to your behavior and "False" to the items

that do not apply. SexHelp.com is currently collecting data on this screening test and therefore do not have cut-off scores to indicate whether or not you have a problem with Internet sex. However, once you have completed the test online, you will be shown the percentage that others have said "True" to the same items you indicated were "True" in your life. If you are concerned about your Internet sexual behavior, please seek professional help.

SexHelp.com All rights reserved. Used by permission.

True	False	1. I have some sexual sites bookmarked.	True	False	20. I have increased the risks I take online (give
True	False	2. I spend more than 5 hours per week using my			out name and phone number, meet people
		computer for sexual pursuits.			offline, etc.).
True	False	3. I have joined sexual sites to gain access to	True	False	21. I have punished myself when I use the Inter-
		online sexual material.			net for sexual purposes (e.g., time out from
True	False	4. I have purchased sexual products online.			computer,  cancel  Internet  subscription,  etc.)  .
True	False	5. I have searched for sexual material through	True	False	22. I have met face to face with someone I met
_		an Internet search tool.			online for romantic purposes.
True	False	6. I have spent more money for online sexual	True	False	23. I use sexual humor and innuendo with others
m	Б.	material than I planned.		п.	while online.
True	False	7. Internet sex has sometimes interfered with	True	False	24. I have run across illegal sexual material while on the Internet.
True	False	certain aspects of my life.  8. I have participated in sexually related chats.	True	Folgo	25. I believe I am an Internet sex addict.
True	False	9. I have a sexualized username or nickname	True	raise	25. I beneve I am an internet sex addict.
True	raise	that I use on the Internet.		α.	
True	False	10. I have masturbated while on the Internet.	_		neral Questions About Sex Addiction
True		11. I have accessed sexual sites from other	True	False	26. I repeatedly attempt to stop certain sexual
		computers besides my home.			behaviors and fail.
True	False	12. No one knows I use my computer for sexual	True	False	27. I have continued my sexual behavior despite it
		purposes.			having caused me problems.
True	False	13. I have tried to hide what is on my computer	True	False	28. Before my sexual behavior I want it but
		or monitor so others cannot see it.			afterward I regret it.
True	False	14. I have stayed up after midnight to access	m	F1-1	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
_		sexual material online.	True	raise	29. I have lied often to conceal my sexual
True	False	15. I use the Internet to experiment with			behavior.
		different aspects of sexuality (e.g., bondage,	True	False	30. I believe I am a sex addict.
True	Folco	homosexuality, etc.). 16. I have my own website which contains some	True	False	31. I worry about people finding out about my
True	raise	sexual material.			sexual activities.
True	False	17. I have made promises to myself to stop using	True	False	32. I have made efforts to quit a type of sexual
Truc	1 disc	the Internet for sexual purposes.	True	1 disc	activity and failed.
True	False	18. I sometimes use cybersex as a reward for			
		accomplishing something (e.g., finish a	True		33. I hide some of my sexual behavior from others.
		project, stressful day, etc.).	True	False	34. When I have sex, I feel depressed afterwards.
True	False	19. When I am unable to access sexual			
		information online, I feel anxious, angry,			ARNES, Ph.D., C.A.S. © Copyright 1997–2005

or disappointed.

## **CHARACTERISTICS**

The essentials of the treatment process are best understood by reviewing the characteristics of those affected by compulsive sexual behavior. The emerging profile will help church leaders understand the requirements of treatment. All data listed in specific traits come from a study of more than 1,000 sex addicts published in 1991.<sup>23</sup> Critical characteristics are:

Distrust of authority. Most patients come from dysfunc-

tional families that have significant problems with addictive disorders. Only 13 percent of the families of origin have no addictions to report. Children who grow up in these families are severely affected by parents with

Of those who have visited sexually explicit websites, 53 percent of pastors say they have done so in the past year, as compared to 44 percent of lay readers.

addictive disorders. Most important, 77 percent of the families are extremely rigid and controlling. Children from this kind of family do not develop normal abilities of self-limitation and responsibility. They learn in childhood that compliance with authority means an essential loss of self. As adults they are comfortable hiding things from those in authority and resistant to accountability.

**Intimacy deficit.** More than 87 percent of patients come from disengaged families — a family environment in which family members are detached, uninvolved, or emotionally absent. All compulsive and addictive behaviors are signs of significant intimacy disorder and the inability to get needs met in healthy ways.

Post-traumatic stress disorder. Common to all addictive/compulsive behaviors is a history of trauma and abuse. Sexually compulsive patients have a history of sexual abuse (81 percent), physical abuse (72 percent), and emotional abuse (97 percent). Addictions and compulsions become a way to manage stress disordered affect and may include repeating the trauma compulsively.

**Extreme eroticization.** One effect of abusive families and childhood sexual abuse is, as adults, survivors sexualize all interactions. They often sense that most people do not have the same relationship filters they do, which adds to their shame.

**Shame based sense of self.** Shame stems from a failure to achieve a positive sense of self and a profound belief in one's lack of worth. The constant failure to stop unwanted behavior confirms the belief that a person is fundamentally flawed and unloyable

**Compartmentalization.** A survival mechanism for abused children is to compartmentalize to avoid reality. For an adult, this means dividing life into compartments. This explains why a person lives out flawed behaviors as though no one will find out, and why people can tell outright lies without distress.

When Robert Louis Stevenson described alcoholism with the metaphorical story of Jekyll and Hyde, he approached this kind of internal fragmentation.

Compulsive cycles. Most addicts (72 percent) binge and then feel despair much like a bulimic will binge and purge. Many pastors preach against promiscuity or some sexual behavior only to be discovered or arrested for practicing that behavior. In their public pronouncements, they were

purging while privately they were clearly bingeing. These cycles add to both shame and compartmentalizing.

Self-destructive behavior. Many report doing high-risk behavior that resulted

in severe consequences. Children who are sexually abused often integrate fear into their arousal templates. For adults, this means sex must have a fear component, which results in risk-seeking sex. Frequently, these patients knew there was a 100 percent probability their behavior would be disastrous and did it anyway.

Other addictions. Seldom do these patients have only a sexual problem. Most (83 percent) have other addictive/compulsive disorders as well. For example, 41 percent have problems with alcohol or drugs, and 38 percent have an eating disorder. Other issues include gambling, financial disorders, and nicotine. Usually compulsive sexual behaviors are part of an intricate weave of behaviors to manage internal distress. Sometimes addictions are fused. For example, studies are



emerging that show a close connection between cocaine use and sexual acting out. Many patients would never use cocaine without sex and vice versa. Various reports also document switching — replacing one set of addictive/compulsive behaviors with another.

oncomitant mental health disorders. Dual diagnosis issues are common with these patients. Addictive and compulsive disorders are often accompanied by acute depression that is constantly intensified by the failure to control sexual behavior. Other issues include bipolar swings, narcissism, and sociopathy that further complicates treatment planning.

The treatment challenge is to provide a therapeutic environment that gains the patient's trust but also holds the patient accountable. Further, sufficient containment must occur to stop self-destructive behavior. Once that is established, the core issues of family control, dysfunction, and abuse can be addressed. Tools for managing stress, shame reduction, and relapse prevention are critical. Information about sex and sexual addiction, along with cognitive behavioral interventions, disrupt cognitive distortions and dysfunctional beliefs. Other addictions and mental health issues also must be addressed as part of treatment planning.

Pastors need to recognize there is a problem among the people they serve, and also a problem among themselves. By being open to the illness and the sexual addiction recovery process, there is opportunity for pastors to help both their congregations and themselves by contributing to sexual health.



Patrick J. Carnes, Ph.D., C.A.S., is clinical director of Sexual Disorder Services at The Meadows, an internationally recognized, private multiple addiction/disorder treatment and recovery facility in Wickenburg, Arizona.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- 1. Patrick Carnes, "The Anatomy of Arousal: Three Internet Portals," Sexual and Relationship Therapy, vol. 18, no. 3, (New York: Brunner-Routledge, August 2003)
- 2. Patrick Carnes, "The Making of a Sex Addict" (2005). (Adapted from "The Obsessive Shadow," 1998).
- 3. P. Shizgal, and A. Arvanitogiannis, "Gambling on Dopamine," Science, vol. 2, 299.

### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. R. Greenspan, "Internet Abuse Drains Time and Money," Websense Inc. Internet Misuse in the News (2002).
- 2. Al Cooper, ed., Cybersex: The Dark Side of the Force. (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2000).
- 3. S.A. King, "Internet Gambling and Pornography: Illustrative Examples of the Psychological Consequences of Communication Anarchy," CyberPsychology and Behavior, vol. 2, no. 3, (1999): 175-194.
- 4. H. Shaffer, "The Epistemology of 'Addictive Disease': The Lincoln-Douglas Debate," Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, vol. 4, (1987): 103-112. Also, Kimberly Young, and others, "Online Infidelity: A New Dimension

- in Couple Relationships With Implications for Evaluation and Treatment " Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention, vol. 7, (2000): 59-74.
- 5. J. Schneider, "Effects of Cybersex Addiction on the Family: Results of a Survey," Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention, vol. 7, (2000): 31-58. Also, M. Schwartz, and S. Southern, "Compulsive Cybersex: The New Tea Room," Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention, vol. 7, (2000): 127-144. Also, Patrick Carnes, D.L. Delmonico, and E.J. Griffin, In the Shadows of the Net: Breaking Free of Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior (Center City, Minn.: Hazelden, 2001).
- 6. Patrick Carnes, "Addiction or Compulsion: Politics or Illness?" Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention, vol. 3, no. 2. (1996).
- 7. Christine J. Gardner, "Tangled in the Worst of the Web," Christianity Today, vol. 45, no. 4, 5 March 2001, 42. http://www.christianitytoday.com/ ct/2001/004/1.42.html.
- 8. Nielsen Netratings, 2001. http://www.nielsen-netratings.com.
- 9. CBC News: The Passionate Eye "O.COM, Cybersex Addiction" aired: Monday, February 7, 2005, at 9 p.m. on CBC-TV, http://www.cbc.ca/passion ateeye/ocom/facts.html.
- 10. Jon Swartz, "Internet Use Is Doubling Every 100 Days: Digital Industries a Driving Economic Force," San Francisco Chronicle, 16 April 1998. http:// www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/1998/04/16/ MN74417 DTI
- 11. "Web Surpasses One Billion Documents," Inktomi press release, January 18, 2000. The original website http://www.inkdomi.com/new/press/billion. html is no longer available. Inktomi (a web search provider) became a subsidiary of Yahoo, March 19, 2003.
- 12. http://www.google.com, 2001.
- 13. http://Estherministries.org/ishe.htm, 2002; http://internet-filter-review. toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html, 2004; CBC News: The Passionate Eye — "O.COM, Cybersex Addiction" aired: Monday, February 7, 2005, at 9 p.m. on CBC-TV. http://www.cbc.ca/passionateeye/ ocom/facts.html.
- 14. Timothy Egan, "Wall Street Meets Pornography," New York Times, 23 October 2000. http://www.nytimes.com/2000/10/23/technology/23PORN. html?ex=1114315200&en=2ebaedd61b8f34f4&ei=5070.
- 15. A. Cooper, D. Delmonico, and R. Burg, "Cybersex Users, Abusers, and Compulsives: New Findings and Implications," Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention, vol.7, no. 1-2 (1999) 5-30. http://www.americanpsychotherapy.com/online\_magazine\_article\_3009.php. Also, Timothy Egan, "Wall Street Meets Pornography," New York Times, 23 October 2000. Also, P. Goodson, D. McCormick, and A. Evans, "Searching for Sexually Explicit Materials on the Internet: An Exploratory Study of College Student's Behavior and Attitudes and Emotional Arousal," Archives of Sexual Behavior, vol. 30, no. 2, (American Psychological Association, April 2001) 101-108.
- 16. David Finkelhor, Kimberly Mitchell, and Janis Wolak, "Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth," (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, June 2000). http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/Youth\_Internet\_info\_page.html. More information about Crimes against Children Research Center publications and activities is available from the program administrator at: University of New Hampshire, 126 Horton Hall Durham, New Hampshire 03824, by calling: 1-603-862-1888, or visiting: http://www. unh.edu/ccrc/index.html.
- 17. Toronto Globe and Mail, 25 September 2003.
- 18. SexTracker. http://sextracker.com.
- 19. Saratoga Institute, 1999. http://www.pwcservices.com.
- 20. CBC News: The Passionate Eye "O.COM, Cybersex Addiction" aired: Monday, February 7, 2005, at 9 p.m. on CBC-TV.
- 21. Internet Filter Review, 2004. http://www.internetfilterreview.com.
- 22. Alexa Research, 2001. This domain name expired on 6 April 2005 and is pending renewal or deletion, however a Google search reveals many sources with this information. Also, Alvin Cooper and others, "Sexuality on the Internet: From Sexual Exploration to Pathological Expression," Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, vol. 30, no. 2 (American Psychological Association, April 1999). Also, A. Foley, "Beyond Critical Consumption: Analyzing a Website Using Mode of Address, Discourse Analysis, and Symptomatic Reading." Paper presented at the International Conference of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology in Denver, Colorado (October 2000)
- 23. Patrick Carnes, Don't Call It Love: Recovery From Sexual Addiction (Minnesota: Gentle Press, 1997).



# LIFE AFTER

One Minister's Struggle With Internet Pornography and His Path To Recovery

# ADDICTION

Marvin Smith taught at North Central University, Minneapolis, Minnesota, until April 2002 when his inappropriate use of Internet pornography was revealed. His credentials with the Assemblies of God were immediately suspended, and Smith chose to enter a ministerial rehabilitation program offered by the Minnesota District of the Assemblies of God.

After completing the rehabilitation program, he was reinstated to the ministry during a recommissioning ceremony. Clarence St. John, superintendent of the Minnesota District of the Assemblies of God, described Smith's 2-year recovery process as positive and encouraged other ministers in rehabilitation to follow his example.

# What follows is Marvin Smith's own story of his struggle with Internet pornography and his path to recovery.

### WHAT HAPPENED

y first contact with Internet pornography occurred while I was working on my doctoral dissertation. I was searching for information about authors of works I had cited when I noticed that the name of one female author was also the name of a model that appeared in a pornographic website. I tried to click on the name of the author and inadvertently opened the pornographic site. Instead of running upstairs to tell my wife, Betty, what had happened, I continued viewing these images — with increasing frequency.

This accidental introduction to Internet pornography created in me an appetite for viewing more pornographic images that later led me to embrace a secret lifestyle. I would

The Lord seemed to tap me
on the shoulder and say,
We know what you preach,
now let's find out what you practice.

confess my sin to the Lord and vow never again to view pornographic images; but I did return, and I continued to access, store, and even catalog these images. Occasionally, I would repent and discard all my computer files only to repeat the cycle again and again.

In October 1996, I confided in the president of North Central University, explained my involvement with Internet pornography, and asked him to help keep me accountable. I reported to him weekly and communicated my progress. His encouragement and support were invaluable.

Nevertheless, in May 1997, Betty discovered my secret lifestyle. I had been careful to keep my addiction to pornography hidden from her. I did not share my conversations with the University president with her, and I also kept my conversation with my wife a secret from him. I feared that any further revelations to either of them would jeopardize both my marriage and my ministry.

In spite of promises I made to both of them, I continued my secret life. My wife discovered evidence of my continued inappropriate behavior. In an attempt to overcome my problem with pornography, we removed Internet access at home and at my office. This worked for a time. When I accepted responsibilities as the department chair for pastoral ministries, I found an increased need to reestablish access to the NCU computer network. I believed the user-ID and password login procedures would provide adequate deterrence to any inappropriate Internet use. Also, the Internet filtering system would report attempts to access pornographic websites. I thought these barriers would help me regain the self-control I had lost. With

all my heart, I believed I was fulfilling the command of Jesus to gouge out my eye or cut off my hand (Matthew 5:29,30). I considered myself so successful that in October 2001, I preached a chapel message about sexual purity. Then the Lord seemed to tap me on the shoulder and say, We know what you preach, now let's find out what you practice.

In February 2002, I noticed that a previous user did not log off when using the NCU faculty computer lab. Thus, I discovered a way to access the Internet without logging in under my ID and password. With this barrier removed, the sin in my heart resurfaced. I began to access Internet pornography again. Betty questioned me about the strange use of my time, but I lied to her, citing an increased grading load and depart-

mental responsibilities. I now believe the Lord was providing me with a way out (1 Corinthians 10:13) through her questions.

I recall praying at the altar after chapel, desperately asking the Lord to do whatever it would take to free me from my secret life of sin. I intended to seek counseling during the summer months through "Project: 1," a confidential counseling program

offered by the Minnesota District Council. The Lord, however, began to answer my prayer on Thursday, April 4, 2002, when a student employee at NCU asked to speak with me. He was searching for space on the school's server and had located files of Internet pornography I had stored. I lied to this student because I intended to seek help through "Project: 1." Later, I did confess to the IT director, to the VP for Academic Affairs, and to the president of NCU. I submitted my resignation on April 11 after serving North Central University for 20 years and 11 months. During the chapel service on April 12, the president of NCU announced my resignation to the university community.

During this time, Betty was at her parents' home helping them prepare for their move to senior housing from their home of 64 years. On the day the president announced my resignation, I drove to my in-laws' home and shared with my wife my reentry into the world of Internet pornography and the subsequent events. During the next week, I also confessed my addiction to pornography to my parents, to my daughter and her husband, to my sisters and their husbands, to my pastor and Sunday School teachers, and to my district superintendent and secretary-treasurer. Rather than run and hide, my wife and I attended Sunday School and church that first Sunday — and have every Sunday since.

That next week my wife returned to her job at NCU. What could have been an open sore became an opportunity for ministry. Several people approached my wife to support her, often by telling their own stories of pain and growth. Likewise, I received numerous phone calls and cards that encouraged me. The body of Christ embraced both of us.

# WHAT I WAS THINKING

Something inside of me awoke when I first began viewing Internet pornography. I allowed myself to believe I deserved more visual and sexual stimulation in my marriage and a strong sense of entitlement took control of my thoughts. I permitted myself more and more time to search for pornography. Frequently, I would reward myself for completing a task by searching for new images. If I had a mental block while writing my dissertation, I would take a break and go online to look for new pornographic websites. Rather than look at and leave a porn site, I would download and organize files into a collection. This evolved into a dangerous game. It was a thrilling challenge to find photos of the next woman on my target list without resorting to any pay sites. When I eventually discovered the desired photo, something inside my head seemed to explode. I experienced such intense chemical reactions in my brain that a powerful addiction was started. I would risk everything to recreate that feeling. Consequences meant nothing to me. I was hooked, and I told no one.

# **HOW I JUSTIFIED MY ACTIONS**

I considered my inappropriate use of the Internet to be a minor, temporary indulgence that God and others would forgive. I believed that obedience to the Holy Spirit was still my top priority. I had sinned in many ways prior to using Internet pornography, and I knew sin would continue to vex me until I entered eternity. I perceived my preoccupation with pornography to simply be one of the many characteristics of my selfish, fallen nature. It was just another weight to lay aside (Hebrews 12:1).

As I became more addicted to pornography, I rationalized even more. For instance, many people may wonder how Christian leaders can minister with unresolved sin of any kind in their lives. I did not see any difference between my struggle with pornography and someone else's struggle with other kinds of sin. I justified my behavior because I knew other Christian leaders who were too proud to acknowledge how their own selfishness compromised their relationships. Since believers do sin to some degree, holiness will always remain a spiritual position in Christ and will never become a self-attained experience. After all, I told myself, other sins exasperated other Christian leaders. In my mind, pornography was my problem. At least I knew I was sinning. They might be blind to their sin.

Eventually, I developed a theological rationale for my pornographic pastime. I had wondered how a Christian man could read the Song of Songs and not violate Jesus' teaching, "Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). It had seemed odd that reading a passage from the Bible could cause one to violate the teaching of Scripture. Therefore, I had either misunderstood the Song of Songs or Jesus' instruction about lust. In my mind, I had allowed no difference to exist between reading the Song of Songs and viewing pornographic images

— both activities resided in sexual fantasy.

I went to great extremes to give myself permission to view pornography. Why could I not accept a literal understanding of Matthew 5:28, "Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart"? This text is straightforward. In my mind, though, it seemed odd to take Matthew 5:28 as a literal command from Jesus, when we relegate His other literal commands to figurative language. For example, Jesus claimed His flesh was "real food" and His blood was "real drink" (John 6:53–56). Yet, in spite of what appears to be straightforward text, centuries of Protestant interpretation have accepted this text as figurative. In light of the Song of Songs, I felt my interpretation of Matthew 5:28 was inherently more consistent than a literal understanding of Jesus' teaching about lust.

No matter how much I justified my sexual activity with Scripture, I could not get past these words from the apostle Paul, "with a continual lust for more" (Ephesians 4:19). My sexual appetite resembled a car without brakes. The thrill of going faster and faster created its own addiction, but how much longer could I go before everything would crash? It seemed I had acquired the spirit of King Solomon. Just as he collected wives, I collected pornography. Even though his sexual addiction was hidden behind the legitimate social institution of marriage, his sexual appetite had spun out of control.

My secret sexual appetite had spun out of control. I became powerless to stop my desire for pornography. I needed help, but more important, I needed healing.

# **HOW I FOUND HEALING**

Under the leadership of Clarence St. John, the Minnesota District formed a committee to oversee my rehabilitation process. I prepared monthly reports for committee members that detailed my spiritual and relational progress. I also reported on a book I had read that month. For 2 years, I met my counselor weekly, my supervising pastor monthly, and my supervising committee quarterly. This structure that supported the healing process surrounded me.

I credit my wife, my counselor Dr. Mark Laaser, and others in the Faithful and True Ministry, for most of my recovery. Betty's courage and commitment to our marriage strongly motivated me to continue the healing process. My secret life of sexual addiction cut her deeply — more than I may ever understand. Nevertheless, she listened to me without passing judgment, and she loved me even though her trust in me needed to be reestablished.

Laaser's spiritual leadership and wise counsel profoundly affected my thinking, my emotional well-being, and my marriage. He organized couples into small counseling groups. Laaser worked with the men for 2 hours while his wife, Deb, and a female counselor met with our wives. Then we came together for couple counseling. In these small counseling groups, I learned how my inappropriate sexual activities were

false solutions for the intimacy I hungered for. I discovered how fantasy attempts to heal emotional wounds. In fact, my fantasy tells me what I am thirsting for. Unresolved emotions create an urge to act out (that is, cross a boundary into inappropriate or unlawful sexual activity). Now that I am aware of my emotions, I can identify them with confidence and new self-understanding.

I needed healing in two areas of my life. I needed healing in my marriage, and I needed healing in my sexual desire. Both healings required far more extensive and complicated work than I could have ever imagined.

Healing my marriage seemed to grow more and more complicated. My wife no longer trusted me. Her anger overwhelmed me at times because my emotional stability had collapsed. Deep sadness visited us often. I cried so much that I began to wonder how any of my emotions helped me. Friends reached out to us. Our emotions felt raw. Old habits became relational land mines that seemed to blow up daily.

I was becoming aware that my marriage required immediate attention. I was stunned when my wife told me how lonely and devalued she felt. I had believed I was a good husband and that our relationship displayed growing maturity. However, Betty had felt lonely during most of our marriage because I did not share my feelings and thoughts with her. She felt devalued when I would ask for her opinion only to dismiss it without

# THE EMPTY PROMISE OF A GLOSSY PICTURE— A MINISTER'S ANONYMOUS CONFESSION

he birds are chirping, and the sun is rising. Why am I still at work? I have been off work 3 hours, but I am still in front of my computer viewing accountabilityfree Internet. I am viewing pornography — with no chance of getting caught, and no strings attached — or so I think.

I get in my truck with two things on my mind. One is the attractive and outgoing young woman I work with. Is the attention she gives me for real? The other is the kind of man I am — a Christian, husband, father, and ordained minister who is living a double life. I cannot do this much longer. How far will my sin take me? I cannot be deep in sin and draw closer to God. Nor can I entertain thoughts of another woman and love my wife as Christ loves the church. Then again, maybe I can keep this up. No one at Church is the wiser. Maybe, just maybe.

The answer comes soon. The yelling starts again and escalates. As I have done a dozen times in as many years, I grab my wife and hit her. She threatens to call the police, but I pull the phone from the wall. I back off and cool down before the police arrive. I know my pornography addiction is at the center of my anger. A thousand times over I have tried unsuccessfully to overcome my addiction.

I never thought I would be arrested. As I wait in the holding cell, I contemplate many things. A close friend who is a police officer comes to talk with me. I credit him with saving my life. I calm down. Later, as I sit in a cell with an accused rapist and two drug dealers, I start to wonder again. What will life hold for me when I get out? When will I get out? Will my wife want to stay married to me, or will I ever see her and the kids again? Can I beat this addiction?

It is what I firmly believe about God that will carry me through. I know that God loves me as much now as He will when I break my porn habit. He can work in my situation and bring good out of it, if I let Him. I resolve to do whatever it takes to get free from this sin and be restored.

I dreaded the next few steps. Facing those I let down was hard. To my surprise, everyone was supportive. I expected people to turn their backs on me. My senior pastor and the church reached out to pick me up and helped me through the battle. A church that did not personally know me helped me with counseling costs. Counseling was the one thing I dreaded most; the step I avoided for years. To go to counseling was to admit I had a problem. If you do not admit a problem, it does not exist. However, this theory is not working real well for me right now.

I have worked hard during these several months of separation from pornography. I can live a life of purity. I did not have the right tools before. I need to overcome 22 years of running to the safe world of pornography. It is not easy, but I want to be a man of God, a holy man, and a true man. What does it mean to be a man of God? Satan had convinced me that it was not possible. Yet God's Word says, "Be holy, because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

very day is a battle. There are victories and there are setbacks. I am convinced that God has brought me through this process so I can help others know their true value in His eyes and to help them avoid the terrible sin of pornography. I cannot spend my life worrying about what others think; I must focus on my Father.

Pastor, pornography is a sin that will affect not only your life, but the lives of so many others. Men in your congregation are crippled by it (studies show that up to half are), and perhaps you are too. As we sit in front of our TVs and computers, the world becomes a more private place. Men are aching for meaningful, personal relationships. They want someone to teach them how to be godly husbands and fathers. God's plan for a man and woman is for them to be wholly committed to each other and their children. Yet families are being destroyed by the false promise of sexual fantasy.

I have been there, and God has mercifully delivered me from my sin and raised me to a higher place. He can do that for you and for the men in your congregation, but you must be willing to stand in the light. "Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double minded" (James 4:8).

Do you want the empty promise of a glossy picture or an intimate relationship with your Creator? Only one is possible.

telling her why. She felt devalued when I forgot to do things. For example, Betty would ask me to carry the vacuum cleaner upstairs when I returned from my next trip to the basement. Within 90 seconds my mind would focus on other things, and I would forget my agreement to bring the vacuum.

# NEW PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION FACILITATED HEALING IN OUR MARRIAGE

Through counseling, Betty and I learned how to communicate about our needs without resorting to entitlement thinking — that I deserve more than I receive. This was difficult for me because I seldom communicated my needs to anyone. We practiced sharing our feelings. At first, this exercise seemed forced and unproductive. When I would talk about my sadness, it seemed to me like whining. But as I learned to identify my feelings with greater precision, I discovered emotional intimacy — and I liked it.

Healing my sexuality required new resolve, self-discipline, and accountability. At first, my motivation to stop viewing pornography came easily. Profound embarrassment surrounded me like a dark cloud when my secret lifestyle became known. This shame empowered me to come clean. I made sure all my pornographic computer files were deleted or destroyed. I avoided television programs and commercials that might awaken thoughts from my past. I looked away from attractive women, or I made certain that eye contact was my only visual encounter.

As months passed, I was triggered by an endless supply of stimuli — some of it was harmless, but some of it was intentionally provocative. My self-discipline grew, which enabled me to confide in Betty when I was being triggered with thoughts and feelings from the past. For example, I told Betty that one product we were shopping for shared its name with one of my former favorite Internet pornographic websites. Confessing that to my wife somehow took away the temptation to revisit its pictures in my mind.

Accountability took on a new meaning for me. There were parts of my life I had shared with no one. My secret life had been hidden and was revealed only because it had been exposed. Through Laaser's patient approach, I found myself sharing veiled thoughts for the first time. Healing comes through confession and prayer (James 5:16). I needed a safe group of people with whom I could share my secret side. I also found it vital to give as well as receive support, often on a daily basis. "Encourage one another daily ... so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Hebrews 3:13). In the first months of my recovery, I spent hours on the telephone encouraging members and receiving encouragement from members in Laaser's counseling group. I am not sure I would have remained pure without this support group.

A special source of healing for my sexuality was "Everyman's Battle for Purity." This program contains four key components:

a Saturday rally, an hour and a half of daily training for 5 days, 16 weeks of weekly small-group work plus an additional, though optional, 16 weeks of small groups. Being of service to others through this ministry strengthened my resolve to remain pure.

Although I sensed God working through many people in my restoration, I was keenly aware of my own "Babylonian captivity" experience. Like the kingdom of Judah, I did not heed the Holy Spirit's warnings. I willfully chose my own path of disaster. I felt this captivity most keenly in my search for employment. Although it has been 20 years since I earned my master of arts degree in Library Science, I thought God was leading me to find short-term employment in a library. I quit trying after 36 attempts — a library job never opened. I often wondered if God cared about my self-inflicted wounds. "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11). Instead of filling my heart with hope and grace, verses like this seemed to mock me. But before these thoughts could take root in my spirit, God would send a friend to encourage and comfort me.

### WHAT I RECOMMEND

This is my story. It is unique to me. Nevertheless, you may have identified with some elements. Do you hide parts of your life from others? Do you hide parts of your life from your spouse? Keeping secrets indicates a troubled relationship or marriage. I was completely blinded to this truth. I believed my marriage was strong because it was working for me. I did not realize how damaging my secret lifestyle was. Are parts of your life becoming unmanageable? The only way out is through confession. You need to speak with someone about your sexual problems right away.



The staff knew this was going to get ugly when the pastor started to call his discipleship ministry an apprentice ministry, and when he referred to the bell tower as *Trump Tower*.

During my addictive years, I would read an article like this and think, I need to make a change. But I would talk myself out of taking any immediate action because I wanted one more pornographic picture. I intended to stop on my own so no one would find out, but it is much easier to restart an old addiction than to stop one. I know what it means to sow and to reap. Somehow our sins will find us out. It is a deception to believe anything else. Consider the following steps to get you started in your struggle with pornography:

- Ask: How much do I want to stop my secret sexual activities? Without an intense desire to walk away from sexual addiction, most people will resent help and support.
- · Practice your confession with an anonymous counseling service, like Love Lines or EMERGE. Call other ministers at random and confess to them anonymously.
- Make certain that your spouse reads this article. Your partner needs hope and an understanding of the issues before she can start on the road to healing.

- Schedule a meeting with a counselor whom you respect, and confess your secret life to your spouse with the counselor present. Counselors are trained in managing confrontations.
- Choose a group with whom you and your spouse can confess. Both of you will need their ongoing encouragement, support, and accountability.

In a personal way, I identify with God's people returning from Babylon. They met many obstacles when rebuilding the temple and the wall around Jerusalem. Likewise, I encountered difficulties in rebuilding my marriage and in overcoming temptation. But through this, Betty and I have experienced much growth and closeness in our relationship. There is life after addiction.



Marvin Smith, Eagan, Minnesota

# **BREAKING LOOSE — 13 STEPS**

I receive many letters, but few are more meaningful than the one I received last December.

More than a year ago, one of our ministers became caught in the moral spiderweb of Internet pornography. As events unfolded, he confessed, repented, and participated in a restorative disciplinary process. His humility and response have been exemplary.

He wrote, "I have contemplated carefully my experience over the past year. Some of the lessons I have learned are ones that the Lord has been trying to teach me throughout my life. I thought it would be helpful to put them in writing.

"Even though these will seem somewhat basic to you, I wanted to share with you what God is doing in my life and to once again thank you and the presbytery for your gracious and godly leadership.

"Here are some things I have learned:

- 1. "I always need a close confidant and friend who can provide a safe place for anything and everything to be discussed and confessed with permanent confidentiality so I know this information is always privileged information.
- 2. "I must give this friend the authority, and he must possess the determination to confront and challenge me as necessary, even when it is painful for both, especially if broader confession and accountability is needed.
- 3. "Always confess sin quickly and completely. Hide nothing. Sin flourishes undercover, but cannot survive in the light.
- 4. "I should discuss my spiritual walk and my ministry goals regularly and often with my partners and/or superiors in ministry.
- 5. "The key ingredients to spiritual success are hard work and singular focus. In the words of Nietzsche, it must be

'a long obedience in the same direction.'

- 6. "Innocence doesn't become virtue until it is tested and tried. Character is only developed through testing.
- 7. "I must expect and be ready for the test at all times.
- 8. "High moral boundaries are not optional for an effective Christian leader, specifically in relating to the opposite sex. I also need to establish boundaries concerning what I allow into my mind through viewing, reading, and thought life.
- 9. "I should never form a habit that I wouldn't want everyone knowing about.
- 10. "As a single male, I need close, personal relationships and activities with other single men for encouragement and accountability.
- 11. "Never downplay the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit. Always obey, even when it is painful, inconvenient, or seemingly trivial.
- 12. "Seek out mentors and their critique of my needed improvements.
- 13. "I don't work well alone. I need associates and ministerial relationships who have common or similar goals."

His letter concluded, "Thank you for your continual prayers for my ministry and my character, that I will always live the lessons He teaches."

Men like this who bottom out can grow again, large in stature, and when they do they hold a great treasure in their hands: healthy moral insight, courage, and a renewed heart. God bless him, and all those like him.

T. RAY RACHELS, superintendent, Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Irvine, California

# THE SEXUALLY ADDICTED MINISTER:

# The *Hidden*OBSESSION

BY HARRY W. SCHAUMBURG

omeone you know has a hidden problem. He may be on your staff, a pastor in the same town, a wife of a friend, a district leader, an evangelist, or a returning missionary. Perhaps it is your spouse or family member. You know them on a first-name basis, and you know their spiritual gifts. What you do not know is their secret life of sexual sin. What you do not see beneath the anointed preaching, the gifts of the Spirit, and the successful ministry is the hidden depths of this person's heart. There you will find the deceitfulness of "evil thoughts ... adultery, sexual immorality" (Matthew 15:19), a wickedness so unclean it defies sound logic and reason when it erupts and affects a growing church and a seemingly good marriage. The pervasiveness of this problem is one of the greatest spiritual challenges facing the Christian church in this postmodern age.

# **FACING THE TRUTH**

Ministers are in deep trouble and anyone who doubts that is spiritually asleep (1 Thessalonians 5:6). The numbers alone do not indicate the seriousness of the problem, but that is part of the nature of the problem. To understand the breadth and depth of this crisis pastors must have the courage to open the closed doors of their own ministerial lives and ask the Spirit to examine their hearts.

The problem is not the pornography on the Internet or the many opportunities for sexual sin in America's sexually saturated culture. It is the potential for wickedness in our own hearts coupled with the secrecy of a pastor's personal life. The critical questions to ask are:

- Is my personal life shaped by my beliefs, ideals, and traditions as it once was?
- Is my faith effectively shaping my integrity as a Christian leader?
- Do my beliefs make a difference in my private life?

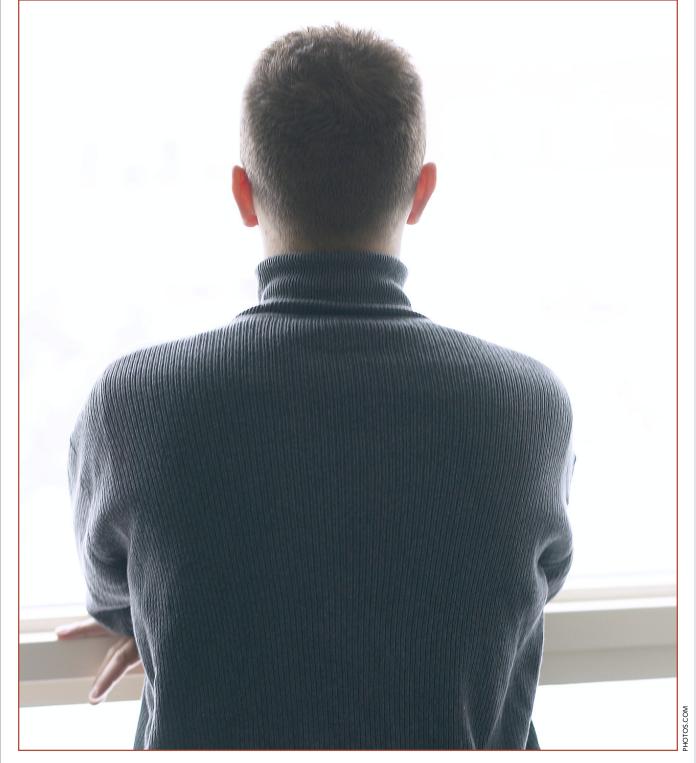
I grew up in an Assemblies of God pastor's home. I graduated from Central Bible College in 1969. I have lived my adult life in the Christian world, much of it spent in ministry to ministers.

There is a loud silence that must be pierced before the real problem of sexual sin will be understood and dealt with. We can start on the surface with the all too common examples, but we must also go to the unseen depths of the human heart. In humility, ask the Spirit of God to search your mind, look behind your closed doors, and examine the recesses of your heart.

# JOHN'S STORY OF DEDICATION AND DECEPTION

John (not his real name) was a 25-year veteran missionary. The call to serve God came early in Bible college. By his mid-twenties he and his wife Judy were living out their passion, their calling, and dream to serve God in Nicaragua. They planted churches and discipled converts. The work was demanding, but rewarding.

Early in his fifth term on the mission field John developed a nurturing relationship with Gloria, a 19-year-old Nicaraguan. She was bright, mature for her age, and passionate about learning more about Jesus. Increasingly, John spent more time investing in the spiritual life of this young devotee. She spent hours in the couple's home and became a close friend to Judy. Judy, however, was growing more and more concerned about



her husband spending a disproportionate amount of time calling, e-mailing, and talking with such a young attractive female. Her suspicions, and eventual accusations, were quickly rebuffed with strong rebukes for her immaturity, her petty jealousy, and her lack of commitment to the ministry. When Judy found text messages on John's cell phone that indicated the extent of his physical relationship with Gloria, she had the evidence to confront his sexual sin and seek the assistance of their field director.

When confronted, John admitted to a 5-year affair. With his reputation destroyed, his missionary career finished, his wife shattered, and the field director left to pick up the pieces, the couple returned to the United States to seek counseling and

spiritual restoration. Incredibly, in the middle of all this chaos, John continued his relationship with the young woman via e-mail. He rationalized his behavior by saying that he needed to continue his ministry to her.

# THE REAL ENEMY

How could a veteran missionary like John, called by God and anointed by the Spirit, become so disconnected from reality and from God and His Word? Why was he a prisoner of his own evil desires? For John and others, the symptom of the problem is a single relationship they find difficult to end. For many, it is hidden sexual fantasy and lust that may or may not lead to committing fornication or adultery.

Regardless of the behavior, its frequency, or duration why is sexual sin a pervasive problem in the ministry? This question must be answered. But it is often asked during a crisis when sexual sin is involved. People merely shake their heads and respond in disbelief. Without an adequate explanation, people often move on or blame the devil for attacking Christian leaders.

We must understand the real enemy. Ignorance is no longer an option. Closed minds and blind eyes salved by the comfort

of our public praise and worship are inexcusable. Paul's exhortation to the Roman church applies today: "The hour has come for you to wake from sleep." This is the day and hour that ministers must "cast off

the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies ... not in sexual immorality and sensuality" (Romans 13:11–13).

# THE REAL STORY

In my 24 years of ministry to hundreds of pastors and missionaries, I have helped many escape from sexual sin and restore their intimacy with God and their loved ones. Though the names and faces are now blurred, the real story has not changed. Sexual sin continues to destroy lives, weaken marriages, seriously damage ministries, and dishonor the Lord's name.

The stories I have heard are graphic, disturbing, and implausible. At times when I think I have heard too much, I shake my fist at the destruction that has come to so many people and ministries. But the real horror is unseen, below the surface, and in the human heart.

The tales of lust, sexual immorality, prostitution, homosexuality, sexual misconduct, addiction to pornography, and adultery should not be repeated. But to ignore the details causes further denial and spiritually corrodes the church. All too often those in authority are guilty of getting rid of the problem and moving on but fail to address the difficult issues that exist in the ministry. This is not the time or place to flinch at the external horror of our fallen brother, or fail to examine the content of our own hearts.

Some stories are uncommon, and we must agree with Paul, "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans" (1 Corinthians 5:1).

# The Uncommon Stories

- Driven by lust and sexual fantasy, a pastor and his wife engage in threesome sex with their 20-year-old nanny.
   The pastor rationalizes his behavior by citing the multiple wives of biblical characters.
- · For years a youth pastor corrupts his mind with sexual

- fantasies. He eventually has sexual relations with three underage girls and goes to prison.
- A senior pastor becomes sexually involved with a married woman he is counseling. She becomes pregnant, and he pays for an abortion to cover his sin. Meanwhile, his wife gives birth to his child.
- A women's ministry pastor develops an emotional affair with a lay-team leader. The two women eventually become sexually involved and refuse to end their

# Regardless of the behavior, its frequency, or duration why is sexual sin a pervasive problem in the ministry?

- relationship citing the importance of their spiritual and relational needs.
- A youth pastor engages in homosexual behavior with several young boys and commits suicide before he is
- An associate pastor who has been married for 19 years has a 17-year affair with his secretary, who is his wife's best friend. For years they vowed to God and to each other to end the relationship before it destroyed everyone in their lives.
- A youth pastor's wife leaves her husband and two children to work in a strip club.

## **The Common Stories**

The details are often repeated, but the pain, guilt, shame, and tears leave scars that will not disappear until Revelation 21:4 is fulfilled: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

The common stories include:

- The pastor who is caught with Internet pornography on his office computer.
- The minister living in adultery, which goes undetected for months, even years.
- The missionary who drifts into various forms of sexual sin
   sex clubs, legalized prostitution, and sex with minors
  - because it is easily available on the mission field.
- The pastor's wife who feels lonely and abandoned finds comfort in the arms of another man.

# A SPIRITUAL PROBLEM

In the church, and even in the pastorate, there are adults with the spiritual maturity of babies. There are also cases of child molestation, sexual misconduct, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and prostitution. Again, it is imperative that pastors

understand what constitutes the common and uncommon sexual sins that may be in their churches.

The church is already in danger of minimization, rationalization, or even worse — covering over the real tragedy with standard therapeutic labels. Pastors must not idolize psychology and accept without question every new method of change and technique. Sexual sin is a spiritual problem, not a psychological problem. It is a church problem, and a problem the church needs to confront, just as it did in the first century.

The real horror is not in the specific sin the person committed or in sin's inevitable destructive capacity. Whether common or uncommon, the real problem is the condition of a pastor's heart long before he was caught in sexual sin or even committed sexual acts. Sexually immoral behavior should disturb us because of the condition of the heart and the life that is revealed by the act. Then, and only then, can the horror be turned to mourning (1 Corinthians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 12:21).

Pastors must heed the words of Paul: "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). There will be no grief or gentleness until pastors see the deceitfulness of the human heart, the deceitfulness in their own hearts, and dig the log out of their own eyes. Then the Church can begin to adequately address the pervasive plague of sexual sin.

## The imaginations of the heart

Pastors, teachers, and church leadership cannot close their eyes to the biblical understanding of the heart and the wicked imaginations of their own hearts. Evil desires and evil behaviors are the supreme threat. They are spawned from the deep motivations of a heart that resists repentance and the will of God.

These deep motivations create a false reality of one's own making that denies the reality of God. It is critical to understand that whatever a person thinks he knows theologically and spiritually in his mind is affected by the imaginations of his heart. The truth of righteousness is replaced by the lie of impurity; what is not God becomes a god. The unthinkable then becomes the possible, and even the doable. What other explanation is there for a pastor who teaches vehemently on the evils of sexual immorality and the biblical mandate to keep the marriage bed pure and then becomes involved in adultery or pornography (Hebrews 13:4)?

A life driven to sexual sin reflects thinking that has long been infected by sensual images and self-pleasure. These thoughts may have become so common that a pastor is hardly aware of them. Therefore, what he knows or thinks he knows theologically and biblically is *less* important than the imaginations of his heart that eventually cause him to act out what he thinks.

A pastor may justify the imaginations of his heart by his

# FIGHTING LUST: THE FIGHT OF FAITH FOR LIFE

Lust becomes controlling when people are persuaded that they will be fulfilled if they follow their own desires. One force that pulls us into sexual sin is the false promise of happiness. Many Christians want to live for God's glory, but are pulled by the more powerful forces of their own desires to be happy than by the call of duty.

In more than two decades of helping those who struggle with sexual sin, I have learned that many Christian leaders have a view of salvation that is disconnected from reality, and this view invalidates the teaching of Scripture. As a result, they often think and live as pagans. Jesus taught that those who do not fight the battle with lust will not enter the Kingdom of heaven. "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better to lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell" (Matthew 5:28,29). It is better to lose one's eye than one's soul.

Anyone who gives himself over to impurity will be lost (Galatians 5:19–21). The poison of lust is a deadly eternal killer. The antidote is to make a covenant with our eyes (Job 31:1). This does not mean pastors can avoid everything that may be titillating. Rather, it means to enter the fight of faith with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17, NIV). It is the fight for eternal life.

Based on the promises of the Word of God, pastors must not only be sure of their calling, but must also remain satisfied with all that God will do in and through them for His glory. All the man-made, negative consequences will not prevent sexual sin.

Ministers must walk worthy of their calling with sufficient spiritual and personal satisfaction. This means enjoying a satisfied life now through His promises.

The pain and disappointment in ministry are nullified by the realization that pastors have nothing to lose, whether it is their lives or their ministries. Neither is there motivation for earthly gain such as wealth or status. Pastors have nothing to prove when they use their gifts and their abilities. But ministers live to hear the words, "Well done, faithful servant!" Therefore, "I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).



**HARRY W. SCHAUMBURG,** D.Min., LMFT, Larkspur, Colorado

#### **ENDNOTE**

1. Scripture references are from the English Standard Version unless indicated otherwise. The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.™ Copyright ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved.

past and present pain. He then finds relief through false intimacy on the Internet or he may actualize his imaginations through sexual encounters with needy women who are looking for a listening ear. In the end, pastors are deceived into believing their relational needs will be met and their search for significance secured through these activities. Only a biblical

paradigm of the heart will effectively alert him to these mortal dangers to his soul.

second car.

# Sexual sin is a spiritual

problem, not a psychological problem.

Sam's passion was to plant a church in the rapidly developing north side of a southern city. Sam and Lisa moved into the area, obtained secular jobs, and started an evangelistic outreach. Long hours and personal sacrifice coupled with prayer and fasting brought slow, but steady, results. Eventually the small congregation was able to pay Sam a modest salary. But short paychecks were common, and the couple continued to go without new clothes, adequate home furnishings, and a much-needed

In the midst of it all, Sam and Lisa enjoyed serving together and found satisfaction in the fruit of their ministry. Ten years later the church had grown from a handful to 1,500. Life and ministry were different now. Sam and Lisa had a new home, two late model cars, a savings account, and a modern worship center with dedicated staff.

At the end of a late night elders meeting Sam was pulled aside by a leading elder and rebuked for being too materialistic. As he drove home, his anger kindled and he said to himself, I've sacrificed all these years, and that's the thanks I get. From now on, I'm going to get something for myself.



The pastor invited the group he had when he was a youth pastor to a reunion. Only the most vibrant ones came.

Sam's theology was the same, and he still wanted to preach the Word. His conscious thinking, however, was now being shaped from imaginations deep within his heart, imaginations so long imbedded that he was no longer even aware of them. While apparently committed to his covenant of marriage with Lisa, his commitment to get something for himself coupled

> with years of guiltless lust became a greater danger. His secretary wanted Sam's attention and soon gave her all. Their affair began, but

Sam's sin did not end before he had lured three other women he was counseling into physically intimate relationships.

# **Dangerous self-interest**

Self-interest is a real personal danger. Sin predisposes people, even pastors, to be a law unto themselves where they do what they want regardless of the consequences. Instead of submitting to God as the final authority for their private lives, pastors often live their lives focused on themselves. They begin to worship God's creation (themselves or their ministry) rather than the Creator.

This heart attitude seems to free them to control life and obtain their desires. Pastors are, then, no longer slaves of righteous but are slaves to sin and slaves to themselves. Simply put, pastors become committed to what they believe to be in their best interest. This lessens their commitment to God and increases their commitment to themselves.

As soon as their loyalty to God changes, pastors are in danger of being more loyal to themselves. Before they know it, sexual temptation is knocking at their door. Church policies that limit or prohibit time alone with the opposite sex will not protect pastors, nor will glass walls in a church office, Internet protection on a computer, routine accountability, or a public stand for purity. James wrote, "But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire" (James 1:14).

The enticement of sexual sin always involves the self-centeredness, self-inflation, and self-deception of one's own desires. The root of sin develops primarily from one's self-interest, not merely from shameful childhood experiences.

Tim grew up on the mission field. The typical M.K., he never felt like he belonged. He was not Japanese, but he thought and spoke like the Japanese. He had an American passport, but when he was home on furlough, he did not fit in with his peers. Tim started to comfort himself with masturbation in boarding school. He eventually discovered pornography. Years later, as he studied to enter the ministry, he was still lonely. Wanting to be accepted, he yielded to the offer of oral sex in a massage parlor. He justified his actions by believing he would still be a virgin when he married Janet because he had not had sexual intercourse.

### Self-centeredness

The higher the pedestal, the greater the fall. Ministry, or even the call of God itself, can become sinful when pursued for personal fulfillment. When a minister is so preoccupied with his ministry that he becomes the most important person in his own life, ministry has become a sin for him. Members of the congregation, family members, his wife, and even God himself begin to matter less to him than his own opinion of himself and his ministry. Seeking God's approval is exchanged for seeking man's approval when the legitimate desire to be

well-liked turns into an unwillingness to risk any disapproval.

Many ministry couples who need counseling to deal with sexual sin fit the following profile. The pastor is outgoing, zealous, and liked by all who

sit under his charismatic preaching. But he begins to believe he is married to a lifeless pastor's wife. She has no life, no feelings, and no warmth. She has given everything and has done her duty to make her husband the greatest. He is on a pedestal and self-inflated, while living a double life of sexual sin. His silver tongue is a counterfeit for God's anointing. His position in the church provides him a facade of authority, status, and power. This man owns the local church. He is a taker, not a giver or a steward of the gifts of God.

The ministry can be insecure and frustrating, and some men obtain security by controlling and manipulating people in their congregations and communities. Controlling others through the symbolic acts of ministry reduces their fears and anxieties. In the end, they are only committed to what they want, and they get it — including sexual gratification. Sexual pleasure is only the decoration, but its function provides a powerful sense of significance.

# Deception

If sexual sin is a false intimacy - empty and vain - and a counterfeit for real intimacy, how do Spirit-filled leaders fall? Sexual sin is a great deception. Not only must a pastor lie to maintain a double life and a broken marriage covenant, but he is also deceived and "led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3).

When a pastor commits sexual sin and loses his spiritual virginity, he is deceived about true moral guilt and the need for forgiveness and repentance. Losing one's virginity before marriage is serious, but losing one's spiritual virginity before the return of Christ is much more dreadful.

The effects of sexual sin after our conversion (betrothal) are more difficult to understand: "I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ"

# A life driven to sexual sin reflects thinking that has long been infected by sensual images and self-pleasure.

(2 Corinthians 11:2). Paul's words are full of meaning and emotion as he presents himself as a spiritual father. Perhaps he remembered the Law that allowed a husband who found his new wife was not a virgin to bring her back home to her father and stone her (Deuteronomy 22:20,21).

Like Paul, pastors are responsible for the spiritual purity of others (Philippians 2:4; Hebrews 3:12,13). Paul's strong emotions come in the form of a godly jealousy and fear. As a spiritual leader, Paul was responsible for the flock and was committed to keeping it from drifting into sin. Likewise, pastors must preserve their own spiritual fidelity so they can protect the Body from being deceived and led astray into an insincere and impure devotion to Christ.

Deception may come from outside sources. But regardless of the source, deception affects the mind and influences what people think about God and themselves and easily leads them astray. To understand how we are deceived is one thing, but to guard against it is another. We often do not know when we are being deceived. That is the nature of deception. Deception attacks God-centered living through self-centered thinking and comes from within one's own heart and mind.

Every sexual sin is deceitful and affects the mind so the temptation is often not recognized for what it truly is until





# LIFESAVING PRACTICES FOR PREVENTING MORAL FAILURE

### Recognize your vulnerability

Sexual temptation is no respecter of persons, denominational labels, and leadership positions. Ministers who recognize the powerful force against which they minister live with the frightening but motivating knowledge that they could commit sexual immorality. Consequently, they take precautions to keep it from happening to them.

#### Guard your heart

Sexual sin is often the result of progressive steps. One of those progressive steps may be a failure to keep your first love — your love relationship with the Lord. Regular, honest checkups can prevent this from happening.

### Guard your mind

Immorality is the cumulative product of small mental indulgences and miniscule compromises: the immediate consequences of which were, at the time, indiscernible. Our thoughts are the fabric with which we weave our character and destiny. When an impure thought thrusts itself into a person's consciousness, he can choose not to dwell on it, but to replace it with something good or just.

#### Guard your marriage

Being in love with one's mate provides the best defense against sexual misconduct. We must intentionally engage in activities that will help build strong marriages and meet each other's top emotional needs. Practical suggestions for guarding your marriage include surrounding your work environment with reminders of your spouse and children — pictures, drawings, and mementos and try to only speak highly of your spouse in public.

#### Guard your monitor

In recent surveys by Christianity Today and Leadership Journal, 33 percent of clergy responded to having visited a sexually explicit website in the last year, and 18 percent of these admitted they visit sexually explicit sites between a couple of times a month and more than once a week.1

Pornography is not just harmless fun that doesn't hurt anyone. It's about a dehumanized, synthetic version of sex that eliminates love, honor, dignity, true intimacy, and commitment. The use of pornography is a self-centered, consuming experience that disconnects the person from God, from his spouse and family, and from his own feelings. The damaging effects of pornography on our lives, our families, and God's kingdom are immeasurable.

#### Recognize and address the warning signs

Know yourself and know the risk factors and warning signs. The instant you recognize signals from a member of the opposite sex, call it for what it is and consciously put preventive measures in place. A relationship can be headed in the wrong direction long before it becomes sexual. One of the most important responses to these subtle warning signs is to back off early. Emotions are controllable — ministers must keep a tight rein on their feelings at all times.

#### Hold yourself accountable to others

Accountability among ministers is critically important, yet most fail to seek it. Many pastors in small churches feel isolated, and even those in large churches with many staff can be lone rangers when it comes to facing their moral struggles. It is imperative that ministers find others, whether staff, laity, or from other ministries, who will love them as they are and regularly ask the questions of accountability.

#### Regularly rehearse the consequences

Ministers would do well to write their own list of specific consequences that would result from sexual immorality. As they consider the consequences — the anxiety, shame, and regret — they may want to visualize themselves standing in front of their spouse or church and confessing what they did. Then regularly review the causes and consequences of sexual misconduct. In a tangible and personal way, doing this brings home God's inviolate law of choice and consequence, cutting through the fog of rationalization and filling our hearts with the healthy motivating fear of God.

# Provide biblically based teaching on sexuality

The church needs to be talking about sex. Schools do, people on the street do, and the media does; but the majority of ministers do not. The church needs to address the issues. (See eshort "More Sex Please," page 11.) Ministers must challenge people under their care to live out the positive, wholesome biblical view of sex and sexuality that is needed in a day of infidelity and promiscuity.



CHERYL TAYLOR, D.Min., Springfield, Missouri. Abridged and reprinted from http://www.agts.edu/about/alumni\_resources/ index.html. Used with permission.

#### **ENDNOTE**

1. Christine Gardner, "Tangled in the Worst of the Web," Christianity Today, 5 March 2001, 44,45 and Erik Reed, "Hooked," Leadership: A Practical Journal for Church Leaders 22, no. 1 (2001): 89.

after the sin is committed. Christians are capable of being "deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures" (Titus 3:3, NIV).

First, deceit hides what we should clearly understand and consider — our faithfulness to God and spouse. Second, deceit conceals the consequences of sexual sin so our minds are diverted from understanding its danger. Deceit prevents us from seeing the foolishness of sexual sin in the moment of temptation. When we examine the impact of sexual sin on truth, on the life of the church, and on the purity of our faith, we begin to understand how deception is one of the greatest challenges to the church today.

The nature and power of deception to attack a person's faith combined with the subtlety of his self-centered heart is a lethal weapon against his soul. Jesus warned "many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold" (Matthew 24:10–12, NIV). The church in America, like the church in England, will likely not disappear. However, Christian morals will become more insincere and impure, leaving the Church deformed and Christians in danger of losing their souls.

# Pastoral neglect

The problem is not only the poor spiritual condition of leadership, but also dysfunction in fulfilling the pastoral role. The shepherd, by neglect, is destroying his own flock. A layperson may sin sexually and destroy his family, but a pastor who commits sexual sin harms not only his family, but the family of God.

Rebecca called me because her marriage was in total disarray. She was furious. "You counseled the pastor who was committing adultery with our counselor while she was trying to help us resolve my husband's unfaithfulness. We need help, but who can we trust?" Little did she know that while her former pastor had been writing sermons to feed the flock he was also writing pornography and leading others into sin.

Ezekiel addressed pastoral neglect: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, and the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered" (Ezekiel 34:2,4,5).

God's accusations emphasize the harm that results from severe pastoral negligence. Regardless of mutuality of relationship and/or consent, any woman who comes for pastoral care has a need, and any pastor who becomes sexually involved with her has taken advantage of her weakness and has fed himself. The severe criticism of Jude 12 about "shepherds who feed only themselves" (NIV) reinforces the warning of Ezekiel that pastors are required to follow a higher standard and conduct a selfless ministry.

# YOU ARE ONLY AS ACCOUNTABLE AS YOU WANT TO BE

In the past a minister was the last person anyone expected to fall into sexual sin. That is not true today. Ministerial life is disconnected and lonely, and pastors are good at covering this up. In addition, many pastors have no one to answer to and are therefore prime candidates for temptation.

Many ask, "Where does the caregiver go for help?" We also need to ask, "To whom does the pastor answer?" Someone needs to question, admonish, and encourage the pastor.

Herein lies the problem: a minister is only as accountable as he wants to be. That is why every series of questions on accountability ends with, "Have you just lied to me?" and "Have you just lied to me about lying to me?" A person can lie and still pass a polygraph test. So is there a solution? Yes. But pastors must begin to look on the inside and let someone in behind their closed doors.

In a mutual accountability relationship, both parties ask the questions, and the questions seek honest feedback, not a passing grade. For example, ask your wife, "Do you think I am placing God first in my life?"

Ask a trusted senior elder, "Do you sense any weaknesses in my relationship with my wife?"

Do not look for a "yes" answer, but look for feedback that indicates where changes can be made. Elders need to take a firm stand on less work and more family time for their pastor and see that he structures this time into his schedule. If he structures this time into his schedule and his family life still does not change, ask "Why?"

# THE DANGER IS A REAL THREAT

While Christians may think that people generally take a dim view of sexual sin, this is no longer true. The Church has entered an age when Christians are saying, "Pornography is only for self-gratification, a kept woman for feeding my neglected emotional and physical needs. A wife is to manage the home and give an image of a Christian family."

The biblical standards of human sexuality may not be easily accepted by new converts or maintained by Christian couples that have grown up in the church. The problem is not simply a weakened attitude toward sexual sin or the minimizing of sexual sin, but a failure to know the real enemy.

The consequences of sexual sin among clergy are worse than the consequences of war, disease, economic failure, or terrorism. What happens to people in this life is far less dreadful than what can happen to them in the life to come. Jesus

said, "Do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!" (Luke 12:4,5).

Pastors must be trained to fight this war and know the enemy within. We cannot know another person's heart, but deceitfulness keeps people from facing the truth of whom they Arrogance blinds the heart and mind and prevents one from seeing his own spiritual condition or the spiritual condition of his brother or sister. The Corinthian brand of spirituality produces insensitivity to sin. This insensitivity to sin diminishes the consequences of sexual sin in the minds of those who have a life in the Spirit.

Like the Corinthians, pastors cannot allow their spirituality

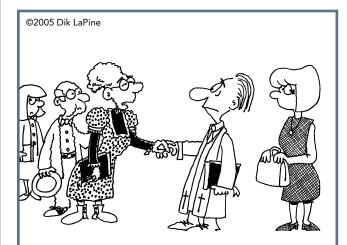
# Deceit conceals the consequences of sexual sin so our minds are diverted from understanding its danger.

are inside. An examination of the darkness and ignorance in one's heart should not be avoided. A look at indwelling sin is humiliating and takes courage and wisdom, but if pastors have any interest in pleasing the Lord, knowing His will (Ephesians 5:10,17), and avoiding sinful behavior that grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30), they must accept this challenge.

# **ARROGANCE**

Will pastors fail to follow biblical standards and live out a spirituality that continues to avoid the problem of sexual sin? Clergy must address anything in their heart and in the hearts of others that gives false comfort and disconnects them from biblical warnings (Hebrews 13:4).

When Paul addressed sexual sin in Corinth, the problem was more than the existence of sexual sin and how word of the problem was spreading. The greater problem was that the church took no action to correct the immorality. The church's problem was arrogance (1 Corinthians 5:2).



"Pastor, I've been thinking. You shouldn't have to preach and lead the congregational hymns. I think we should hire someone to help you with your preaching."

to become self-sufficient instead of dependent on the finished work of Christ. One pastor said in counseling: "All my attempts to control my sexual sin failed. Prayer, fasting, and casting out demons didn't work. I couldn't break free. I had to face myself

and admit to my lack of intimacy with God. I was substituting my thirst for God for other things. I simply did not know God. I had been deceived by a shallow desire to satisfy myself. Victory came when I sought to be consumed by the joy that is set before us."

# **SEEK REALITY**

The internal battle with the enemy will be difficult, but keeping the biblical commandment for purity will not be burdensome if God's servants prefer His holiness above other things (1 John 5:3). In doing so, the pastor's goal is not to simply avoid sexual sin, but to partake of the divine nature. We can do this because "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire" (2 Peter 1:3,4).

Temporary satisfaction will fully diminish when pastors respond to the radical call to pursue full satisfaction in God. It is a call to joy, freedom, and sacrificial faithfulness to God and others. It is always true. When a person seeks to find life through his own illusions of fulfillment, he will lose his life. When a person seeks to lose his life in the reality of God's glory, he will find life. ■



Harry W. Schaumburg, D.Min., LMFT, Larkspur, Colorado, is a licensed marriage and family therapist and executive director of Stone Gate Resources, a ministry committed to pointing people away from sexual brokenness to restored intimacy with God and oth-

ers. He is the author of False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction.

#### **ENDNOTE**

1. Scripture references are from the English Standard Version unless indicated otherwise. The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.™ Copyright ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved.



# IN THE CLUTCHES OF PORNOGRAPHY

# The Pathway of ESCAPE

# AN OPEN LETTER TO PASTORS

My Beloved Brother,

write this letter with tears in my eyes because I know the hopelessness and darkness you are experiencing. In spite of repeated promises to quit, you remain trapped in the uncontrollable habit of pornography and masturbation.

In the movie, Fellowship of the Ring, Aragon asks Frodo if he is frightened. Frodo responds, "Yes."

Aragon then ominously says: "You are not nearly frightened enough. I know what hunts you."

A devil is stalking you, luring you, and dragging you into ever-greater darkness. The "power of the ring" is growing stronger in its grip on you. If I sound too dramatic, the truth is that I am not being dramatic enough: you have every reason to fear.

y unshakable testimony is that God can lead you out of this dark valley and back into the blessedness of His presence. This path of escape requires painful self-examination and a heartfelt, no-excuses repentance. I promise that you will find freedom if you do what is outlined in this article. Let's begin by appraising the situation, using the lives of David and Samson to represent two different kinds of pastors who become addicted to pornography and sexual sin.

David had a unique hunger for the Lord from the time he was a young boy tending sheep in the wilderness. His spiritual appetite intensified as he spent time with Samuel and deepened during his years of fleeing from Saul. Undoubtedly, David was at his spiritual peak when he became king at age 30. Yet, busy life." Maybe your work became more important than your walk with the Lord; your devotional life gradually withered until the heavens seemed like brass and the Word of God became stale and lifeless.

You did not notice the fearsome enemy dogging your every step, feeding your idol of success, and biding his time until you became so spiritually weak you could be lured into sin. It would be patronizing nonsense to claim you fell into sin as if you were walking along a dark path and suddenly — through no fault of your own - stumbled into a hole. There is a reason why it happens. Believers are vulnerable to temptation when they are not walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

Once you became spiritually weak, the enemy set into motion his malignant scheme to bring you down. Perhaps

> you became curious about pornography, but underestimated its power. One glimpse unleashed a poison that instantly affected your soul and spread throughout your entire being. However it initially happened, it seized your heart,

and you found yourself going back to it time and again.

Perhaps your situation is more comparable to Samson's. He also had God's call on his life, but never enjoyed deep fellowship with Him. From his earliest days he was given over to lust, taking every opportunity to seek out forbidden Philistine beauties. His life was one spiritual failure after another, until he found himself ensnared by Delilah with the Philistines upon him.

You may have struggled with masturbation and pornography since your teenage years. You knew the Lord was calling you into ministry and thought you could attain victory in Bible school, but freedom was as elusive there as it had been at home. Then you saw marriage as the way out, but alas, once again you returned to the hog trough. You may have experienced brief moments of God's presence, but "the sin" was always lurking one step away. You have never known what it means to truly walk in the Spirit.

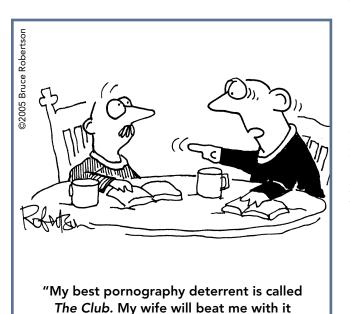
Regardless of which illustration you identify with, the bottom line is you are in the clutches of something evil. Whether you realize it or not, Delilah has deceived you and you are now languishing in the gloom and darkness of a Philistine prison. The eyes of faith that once held glorious visions of victories to be won for God have been mercilessly gouged out. The anointing that once flowed with power and unction has been quenched. The mouth that was once filled with Holy Ghost inspired messages now serves up weak, uninspired sermons. You have lost the God-given authority to speak His Word: "What right have you to tell of My statutes and to take My covenant in your mouth? For you hate discipline, and you cast My words behind you" (Psalm 50:16,17).1

Your life's work has disintegrated into a meaningless

# Once you became spiritually weak. the enemy set into motion his malignant scheme to bring you down.

within 20 years, he committed the unthinkable: he lured Bathsheba into adultery and had her husband killed. How did it happen? It seems palace life sapped David's spiritual hunger. Everything around him: his increasing responsibilities, his fame and fortune, and his growing pride combined to dry up his life in God. He became easy prey for a stalking predator.

Perhaps you can relate to David. You once walked closely with the Lord, knew the hand of God on your life, and experienced His power in your ministry. But little by little, your intimacy with Him waned. It is possible that you have experienced what Corrie ten Boom warned about: "The barrenness of a



if I ever look."

existence — pushing a grindstone in a Gazan prison. Heckling devils, who mock what your life once represented, surround you. "Our god has given our enemy into our hands" (Judges 16:24).

If your sins have become public knowledge, you have given the world one more excuse to disdain Christianity. Unbelievers love juicy accounts of yet another fallen minister. You have shattered the trust of your family, your congregation, your fellow pastors, and your community. Because of your actions, "the way of the truth [has been] maligned" (2 Peter 2:2).

You are likely in a sin-induced stupor, making you insensible to the great danger surrounding you. Most likely you vacillate between the extremes of faithless despair and stubborn denial. David was in his sinful condition for at least a year before the prophet exclaimed, "You are the man." It took piercing words to penetrate David's calloused heart.

If you feel I have been too hard on you, the truth is I have not been stern enough. You are a representative of the holy God — a frightening position to hold. No wonder James warned, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment" (3:1). Your danger is not only from a wicked foe, but also from God whose Son you have "trampled under foot" (Hebrews 10:29–31). Please remember that these hard-sounding words come from a man who also had to hear them.

# UPROOTING ENTRENCHED SIN

Over a 15-year period, I became increasingly involved in sexual sin until I reached the point where nothing was too shameful for me. But God, rich in mercy, heard my cries for help and helped me overcome sexual addiction. My heart, however, remained full of corruption and lust. The memories of sexual scenes I had witnessed or experienced were still vivid. In my despair, there were times when I struggled with the thought that I might never again have a pure heart. Could I be purged of this evil? Would I ever be able to forget those pornographic images that seemed forever etched in my mind? Would I ever stop lusting over pretty girls? Was it possible for me to make love to my wife without fantasizing about other women?

The answer to each of these questions is a resounding "yes." Today I can testify that the Lord has purified my heart. This freedom is there for you as well. I must warn you, however, that it will not be appropriated cheaply or easily. I refuse to offer you gimmicks, superficial solutions, or pain-free alternatives. Instead, I will share with you the biblical principles that have worked for me and many others.

Before a man can have a pure heart he must put away pornography once and for all. A pure heart requires confession and accountability with your wife, friends, and associates. A good Internet filter is also mandatory. Enough has been written on these topics that a passing reminder should be sufficient.

# DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU

Using wisdom and forethought in the following areas will help you live safely in this sex-saturated culture:

# **CURIOSITY**

The thought, I wonder what it would be like to see such-andsuch, has ruined more men of God than you can imagine. Pornography is a Pandora's box full of evils. Don't open it.

#### **TELEVISION**

TV drains and weakens believers spiritually, leaving them more vulnerable to temptation. Channel surfing is especially addictive and dangerous. When you watch TV, limit your viewing to one or two preselected programs, and then turn it off.

#### INTERNET

Surfing the Web is another spiritual drain and source of temptation. Make sure you have a good filter. Also available are buddy systems (http://www.max.com) that regularly send a list of the websites you have visited to a friend.

#### **DEVOTIONAL LIFE**

If you do not consistently spend at least an hour of uninterrupted time with God daily, you will be spiritually weak and vulnerable to temptation. If you "walk in the Spirit, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16, NKJV).1

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

It is wise to have at least one friend (or mentor) whom you trust that you can be honest with about any mental or physical struggles you may have. Pray and use wisdom about selecting this person and then be completely open with him or her.



STEVE GALLAGHER, Dry Ridge, Kentucky

1. Scripture quotations marked "NKJV" are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights

You must consider what God desires to do within you long-term. An Internet filter or an accountability partner will not wipe away memories, purge sin, or cleanse your heart. A deeper work must be accomplished in your inner man. The truth is your spiritual and ministerial life is corrupted. This is not a small matter, and minimizing it will only exacerbate your dilemma. Chances are that is exactly what you have done.

onsider an automobile that is running poorly. The owner has the car towed to the shop, convinced that a tuneup will rectify the problem. "Sir," the mechanic informs him, "the engine is shot. Getting a tune-up is a waste of

time. It needs a complete overhaul." You, too, need more than a few minor adjustments — you need God to do an overhaul of your life.

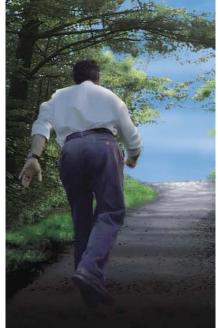
Consider one more illustration: a man breaks a bone in his ankle. He knows the physician will need to wrench his foot to reset the bone.

The thought of this terrifies him, so he ignores the problem, even though every step he takes brings wincing pain. Because of his unwillingness to face a moment of greater pain in the doctor's office, he chooses to live with a disability.

God wants to cleanse you, free you, and use you for His kingdom. Will you spend your ministerial career buried by



"Mr. Bentley, our very capable president of council, has just been put in charge of church finance, planning, outreach, and leadership training. Cards and letters can be sent to the balm of Gilead clinic for the temporarily avalanched."



this sin, unwilling to do the difficult thing? Will you eventually become one of the false teachers Peter speaks of, "who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires ... having eyes full of adultery ... that never cease from sin" (2 Peter 2:10,14)? When you stand before God, will the terrible judgment of 2 Peter 2:4-10 serve as an indictment against your life?

# THE WAY OUT

In your case, it is not a foot that must be wrenched; it is your heart. During

the last 20 years, I have experienced numerous breakings from the Lord's hand. I attribute the inner purity I now enjoy to those experiences: brokenness restores innocence. In his

# God wants to cleanse you, free you, and use you for His kingdom. Will you spend your ministerial career buried by

this sin, unwilling to do the difficult thing?

book, The Release of the Spirit, Watchman Nee asks, "Can one who is unbroken, but whose teachings are right, supply the need of the church?"

Brokenness is a precious thing to God because it allows Him to accomplish His perfect will, use His power, and be glorified. Unfortunately, in many people's lives, self becomes the Lord's greatest competitor. Jesus spoke of two kinds of brokenness. "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust" (Matthew 21:44). If a person will not allow Jesus to change his heart, his self-will, self-indulgence, and self-glory, then he will be "broken beyond remedy" (Proverbs 29:1).

Samson ignored numerous warnings from the Lord. His last days on earth were spent languishing in a Philistine prison where occasionally he was brought out to be mocked by his tormentors.

David, on the other hand, threw himself on God's mercy: "Wash me thoroughly ... cleanse me ... and purify me," he cried. "Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Create in me a clean heart, O God. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:2,7,8,10,17). Unlike those who attempt to minimize or justify their actions, David thoroughly acknowledged his guilt. He was truly broken over his sin and freed from its power. Every attempt to justify or minimize what you have done will weaken God's ability to purge your sin.

Perhaps you are in spiritual trouble, but do not know what to do. You would welcome a Psalm 51 experience, but feel dead and unbroken inside. You cannot cause yourself to experience brokenness. However, you can do what the old-time Pentecostals used to do: tarry before the Lord until you pray through and God meets your need.

Get alone with the Lord in a place where telephones and secretaries cannot interrupt; somewhere no one can hear you pour out your heart. Choose a remote cabin where you can fast and pray for several days. At the minimum, spend 4 to 6 hours on your face before God. What is purity worth to you?

Plead for His mercy. List in detail every sin you have committed. Do not be easy on yourself. Ask the

# The deeper you allow God to break you, the more profoundly your thinking will be altered.

is exactly what you need. A vibrant time with the Lord every morning will not only help you in your personal struggles, but it will also empower you in your ministry.

sexually. The power of selfishness must be broken.

Third, there will be a change in your attraction to the allurements of the world. Every fallen pastor I have known was more familiar with the world's offerings (sports, newspapers,

bed, fantasy lost its grip on me, and I began to enjoy my wife

Second, there will be a noticeable change in your devotional

life. Rather than dry prayer times and stagnant Bible study,

you will discover a renewed desire for God and His Word. This

Internet, television programs, and secular talk shows) than with sitting in the Lord's presence.

Lord to convict you of the selfish attitudes that allowed this sin to take root in your life. Do not take the painless path and never find freedom. Pray over and thoroughly study Psalm 51, 2 Timothy 3, and 2 Peter 2. These chapters contain deep truths about God's perspective on sin and repentance.

Above all else, do not lose focus of what you are there to do. Remember: *Deep repentance brings about profound and lasting change*. Paul said, "Godly grief and the pain God is permitted to direct, produce a repentance that leads to ... deliverance from evil" (2 Corinthians 7:10, Amplified). The Greek word for "grief" used by Paul describes a heartwrenching, inner anguish over one's sin. Allow the Holy Spirit to work deeply in your heart. You would cry for days if you saw the ugliness of your sin and how it has hurt those around you.

A word of caution here: I have known men who have cried out to God for deliverance, yet still clutched their sin and refused to let it go. A sincere penitent will do the hard things, such as confessing his sin to his superintendent. If you earnestly seek God and repent, He will not disappoint you.

# THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE

The deeper you allow God to break you, the more profoundly your thinking will be altered. You must ask your wife to forgive you. Undoubtedly, you have hurt her in many ways. Not only have you been fixated on the bodies of other women, but you have probably also neglected her emotionally. Pornography usually causes a man to become aloof and distant with loved ones.

If you have experienced a breakthrough, you will notice a number of immediate changes. First, your wife will immediately notice the change in how you treat her and your children. Your intimacy with her will become less carnal and more loving. When I committed myself to putting my wife's emotional and physical needs before my own in the marriage

Jesus said, "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell" (Matthew 5:29). This is serious business. You must sever everything that has fed your carnal mindset.

The greatest changes in your life may be almost imperceptible. People will notice softness in your countenance, a genuine passion for God, and love for others that was not there before. Nothing will restore your integrity more than for people to see you persist in the humility and love that come through brokenness.

If you continue to struggle with overwhelming temptations, consider getting out of ministry for a time of restoration. God's scalpel cuts deep in the Pure Life Ministries 6-month residential program: ungodly attitudes are transformed, sin is carved out, and the power of God is imparted. We also have a telephone counseling program available.

Whatever path of restoration you choose, you will need to fight to regain your lost innocence. Jesus said the violent take the Kingdom by force. You must become like Bartimaeus who refused to be silenced and like Jacob who refused to let go. Ask, seek, and knock, and I promise you that God will abundantly meet your need.



**Steve Gallagher** is the author of *At the Altar* of *Sexual Idolatry* and president of Pure Life Ministries, a leading ministry to Christian individuals and organizations dealing with sexual sin throughout the world. For more information, call 1-859-824-4444 or visit www.purelifeministries.org.

#### **ENDNOTE**

1. Scriptures quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright ©1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

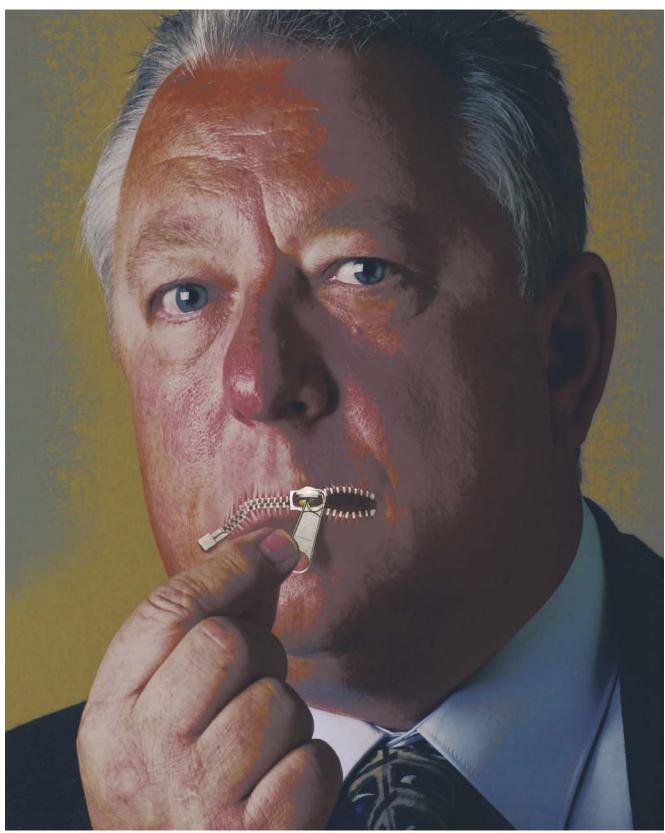


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY: GREG SCHNEIDER

# PRISON of SILENCE

Guidelines To Free Clergy From Sexual Sin

Anajor problem facing the Church and God's people today is Internet pornography. Bible-believing, Christ-centered Christians are giving in to this imitation of intimacy in alarming numbers — and members of the clergy are no exception. Recent studies show clergy are no more immune or prepared for these temptations than their people. Barring God's intervention, these developments will contribute to the ruin of His church.

astors are trapped by the need to remain silent about sexual temptation and sin, and they are dying inside. Whether they are caught or admit to using Internet porn, pastors are often immediately dismissed from their position. This creates the tangible fear that keeps pastors from seeking the help they so desperately need.

Faced with such dramatic consequences, what should a pastor do if he wants to disclose his struggle and get help? Where is a safe place to go? What barriers must be overcome to expose his secret sin?

# THE FIRST OBSTACLES

If a pastor struggles with the temptation to use Internet pornography or has already given in to the enemy's attacks on his life and ministry, there is hope. But before he reaches out for books on the subject, or praying more. Most pastors have tried this and found they lack the power to free themselves from this sin. This kind of self-treatment lacks lasting results.

There is no way around it. Healing involves confronting one's fears, getting one's secrets out in the open by confiding them to trustworthy people, and then stepping into the light of God's healing power.

Without deep healing of the wounds that led to this sin, most people lose their grip on this aspect of their lives and end up failing. This failure produces more guilt; powerlessness and shame creep in and one's solo effort, though determined, does not lead to healing. Ephesians 4:22-25 shows that healing comes through spiritual renewal at the deepest levels of one's soul, which results in a new nature. In verse 25, Paul, like James, admonishes the Ephesians to "speak truthfully to his neighbor" as it brings spiritual transformation.

# Pastors are trapped by the need to remain silent about sexual temptation and sin, and they are dying inside.

help, he must beware. He must first overcome the fear of the possible consequences of his disclosure. He must also decide that getting the help he needs is more important than anything else in his life, including his job or family.

Let's consider a few alternatives to telling the truth about sexual sin. If a pastor chooses to remain silent, the lure of Internet porn grows, his life becomes more and more unraveled, and his need to use porn continues to escalate.

#### LIFE IN THE SHADOWS

The first alternative to truth telling is living a secret life. Many books in this field, especially Out of the Shadows by Patrick Carnes, teach that keeping one's struggle with sexual sin secret only increases its power. Eventually, the secret will show its ugly face. I am amazed at the stories I hear in my counseling practice of pastors who were caught using porn when they had worked hard to keep it secret. It will come out.

Another option is to leave the ministry without telling anyone why. This also keeps the problem secret. But removing one's self from spiritual leadership allows the sin to flourish because the pastor has not followed God's plan for healing.

James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." Healing comes through telling others of our sin. What a radical concept. To find healing, we must face sin head-on, confess it to someone we trust, and expose it for what it is — sin.

A third option also keeps the struggle a secret. Many try to pry the evil out of their lives by white knuckling it, reading

# MOVING INTO THE LIGHT

Once a pastor confesses his struggle with sexual sin, healing can begin, but not until then. Though his fears are overwhelming, he must take the first and most important step in getting help.

He will feel shame, fear of rejection, and embarrassment as he tells his secrets to others, but telling creates the potential for healing.

At this stage, questions usually arise in a pastor's mind:

- Who should I tell and in what detail?
- Does my family need to know and, if so, what kind of help will they need to adjust to my shocking disclosure?
- Is a professional counselor required for deep, lasting healing? Or should I keep this between myself and a couple of men in my church or community whom I trust?
- Should I step down as pastor and accept another church or leave the ministry altogether?

No black and white guidelines exist, but pastors have been disclosing their sexual sins for years and have found forgiveness and healing through Christ and His people. Below are some insights from men and women who broke free from the trap of silence.

# FINDING SAFETY

To break free of the silence and share his secret world with others, a pastor must feel safe. This high level of safety is hard to find in most relationships. However, if he does not confess to someone, his struggles may inadvertently become public anyway.

The first step in confessing the struggles he faces is to carefully choose the appropriate person or persons in whom to confide. Choose one or two grace-giving people who are spiritually mature and have endured some serious pain in their lives. Usually those who know brokenness and are willing to minister out of their brokenness are the safest. This person will become the pastor's confidant, a carrier of his innermost secrets, and will hold his struggle and confession in confidence. A friend with these qualities is hard to find, but God will provide the right person when a pastor is ready to receive help. Safe groups may already be in place, possibly in another county for confidentiality, that he can attend and share his inner world.

# **HOW MUCH DISCLOSURE?**

When a pastor has found a trustworthy friend to confide in, he will need to decide how much to tell. He needs to show empathy to his friend. The struggles the pastor wants to share are personal and potentially upsetting to any listener. It is helpful to ask how much a confidant wants to hear before sharing one's struggles. In this way, the person can gauge how much the person handles at one time. More can be shared as the relationship progresses, but it is important to highlight the seriousness of one's sin up front without giving unnecessary details at first.

# YOUR SPOUSE IS INVOLVED

If a pastor is married, he will need to tell his spouse. This has potentially devastating consequences. But if he does not confide in his spouse, his marriage will not heal and intimacy is unattainable. His fear of being found out has determined how

# ECCLESIASTICAL GUIDELINES FOR HELPING MINISTERS AFFECTED BY PORNOGRAPHY

The General Council of the Assemblies of God Bylaws indicate that one cause for disciplinary action of a credentialed minister is "moral failure involving pornography."

The General Presbytery adopted policy that delineates the degrees of involvement with pornography and the appropriate discipline at each level.

- 1. **Curiosity stage:** The desire to learn about things that may not properly concern a person, but its veiled mystery invites personal searching.
- 2. Experimental stage: Initiating action to see whether something may be stimulating or compelling.
- 3. Regular usage stage: Recurring usage at certain set times, under certain conditions, or within certain contexts.
- 4. Habitual stage: Acquired by continual use until habit is formed.
- 5. Addictive stage: Compulsive behavior, giving oneself over to a strong habit.

The following scale represents the rehabilitation process for the minister depending on the degree of involvement with pornography.

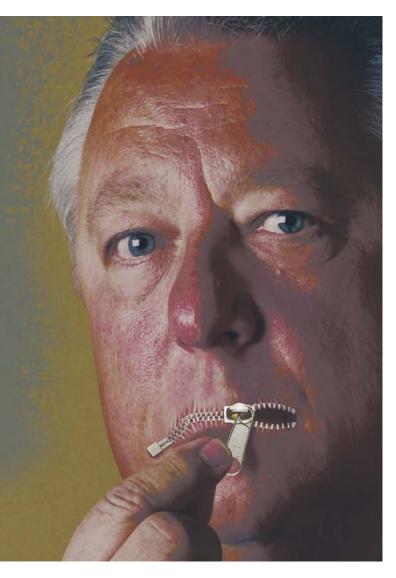
# RECOMMENDED SCALE OF INVOLVEMENT AND TREATMENT PROCESS

STAGE	SUSPENSION	TREATMENT PROCESS
Stage 1: Curiosity	No Suspension	Minimum 3 months with approved pastoral counseling
Stage 2: Experimental	No Suspension	Minimum 6 months with approved professional counseling
Stage 3: Regular	Minimum 3-month suspension contingent upon and concurrent with sustained abstinence and noninvolvement	Minimum 1-year rehabilitation with approved professional counseling
Stage 4: Habitual	Minimum 6-month suspension contingent upon and concurrent with sustained abstinence and noninvolvement	Minimum 1-year rehabilitation with approved professional counseling
Stage 5: Addictive	Minimum 1-year suspension contingent upon and concurrent with sustained abstinence and noninvolvement	Minimum 2-year rehabilitation with approved professional counseling

Pastoral counseling is defined as counseling that is provided by individuals who have been trained by EMERGE Ministries or a similar training program and who meet the requirements of the district involved. Professional counselors are those approved by the district and should have training in mental health, sexual addictions, and assessments.



**GEORGE O. WOOD,** D.Th.P., is the general secretary for The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.



When a pastor tells his spouse, he needs to take full responsibility for his actions and not blame her for causing his problem.

he relates to his spouse. This must change.

Honesty, openness, and trust are the benchmarks for a healthy marriage. If he is secretly using Internet porn or acting out sexually in other ways, he will have jeopardized all three.

When a pastor tells his spouse, he needs to find a time and place where he will not be interrupted for a couple of hours and where his spouse can have time alone following the disclosure. Restaurants, family gatherings, sports events, and church activities are not good places for disclosure. When he shares, he needs to give his spouse the latitude to end the disclosure should it become too painful for her to hear. This

ensures that his disclosure will not become abusive to her as she listens.

When a pastor tells his spouse, he needs to take full responsibility for his actions and not blame her for causing his problem. He needs to tell his spouse there is nothing she could have done differently to alter the poor choices he made, and he is aware of the betrayal she must feel.

After his disclosure, he needs to tell his spouse he will support her should she decide to get professional help, and he will go to marriage counseling with her. He must assure his spouse that even though he has violated his marriage vows, he wants to remain married to her and will commit to whatever steps it takes to preserve the marriage. His goal is to become a safe person she can confide in again. This can happen if he lets her heal in her way, in her time, and if he resolves his issues as well.

# SEEKING PROFESSIONAL HELP

professional counselor is needed when either the pastor's struggles or those of his spouse are not adequately addressed in other ways. If marriage issues are involved, and they often are, a professional counselor is usually required. If the pastor's struggles are of an addictive nature, he needs to seek help from a professional who specializes in the field of his addiction. If his spouse needs more support and guidance than a few friends can provide, then arrange to meet with a counselor.

I have worked for years to help men and their wives heal from sexual sin. God's desire is to heal, and He will do it. But He often uses a professional who guides the couple through the danger and potential disaster. Many wounded people have

> come to me for help who were desperate and felt there was little hope of finding the healing they needed. But God met them in their woundedness and performed a miracle rivaling those in the Bible. God can do the same for you.

When a man comes to me, he often will continue to jeopardize his health and that of his spouse by not accepting the extent of the damage and by trying to do the minimum required to

get back on track. Most men diagnosed with cancer would aggressively treat the disease. When a man's one-flesh union has been severed and his eternal soul is in danger, should he be any less aggressive in his battle to eradicate this sin in his life? Men must swallow their pride and accept the help God is willing to give them.

# TEARING DOWN THE WALLS OF ISOLATION

Healing and recovery take time. People do not heal in a hurry. If a pastor will hold himself accountable by meeting weekly

with others with whom he can confide his temptations and share his deeper wounds, freedom and empowerment from sexual sin will be greatly facilitated. This process should not cause fear. It provides a pastor the opportunity to let down his guard, end his silence, and begin to heal. It is time to be the

# Without recovery a pastor's life, marriage, and ministry will remain seriously damaged.

real you, the wounded you, not the smooth, polished person projected to others. When a person speaks the truth to those he trusts, he receives acceptance, not judgment. He is known, vet loved.

A pastor's faith will need reworking. He must spend time daily in the Word, especially in the Psalms, and let God guide him through these difficult days. God rescues lost sinners, and He wants to rebuild lives. A minister can be honest with God and share his struggle with sexual sin. God will honor a pastor's courage and faith in Him.

# WIDER DISCLOSURE

As a pastor progresses in his new life of truth, he will face the question of whether or not to tell his church leadership. This sensitive question is difficult to answer. Many pastors have overcome sexual sin without their churches ever knowing of their struggle or victory. Others have openly shared their sin, and some have been fired because of it. It seems that the answer to this important question lies in what his sin has entailed.

If the pastor has sexually sinned against someone inside or outside the church, such as having an affair, it is essential that he tell his district superintendent. The district superintendent will then assist him and give counsel as to when and how this will be shared with the church leadership and congregation. If the sin was use of Internet pornography, the question of telling the church is more difficult. Pastors do recover from Internet porn with the help of supportive friends and counseling without ever telling their church.

Some pastors will automatically know this is the right choice for them. One must examine his heart and determine honestly whether or not this choice is attractive only because it allows him to avoid the negative consequences of his actions.

The Bible warns God's people to flee from the devil, but many have failed to do that. They must not, however, flee the effects of their sin, but confess and repent to begin the difficult task of restoration and healing. God stands beside His people no matter what happens. Do not flee from His transforming hands, no matter how painful it may become.

Some pastors choose to work on their recovery without the church's awareness; but if they relapse, or their commitment to recovery weakens and they start using porn again, then

their commitment to the responsibilities of their job is in question. At that point, it may be wise to leave the ministry for a period of time to facilitate recovery. There are many places that provide counseling intensives for pastors with these struggles.

Without recovery, a pastor's life, marriage, and ministry will remain seriously damaged. Last, if a pastor has broken the law because of his sexual sin,

he must tell his church and step down immediately to protect the church and any potential victims. Though this is a serious matter, God is able to heal and rebuild his life if he will tell the truth and face the consequences. The truth does set you free.

Whether a pastor tells his church or not, the decision is best made in consultation with others he trusts. Making this important decision alone is not wise and may lead to further problems. After all, his own counsel did not prevent him from falling into sexual sin. Seek wisdom from other Christians and then trust God with the outcome.

# CONCLUSION

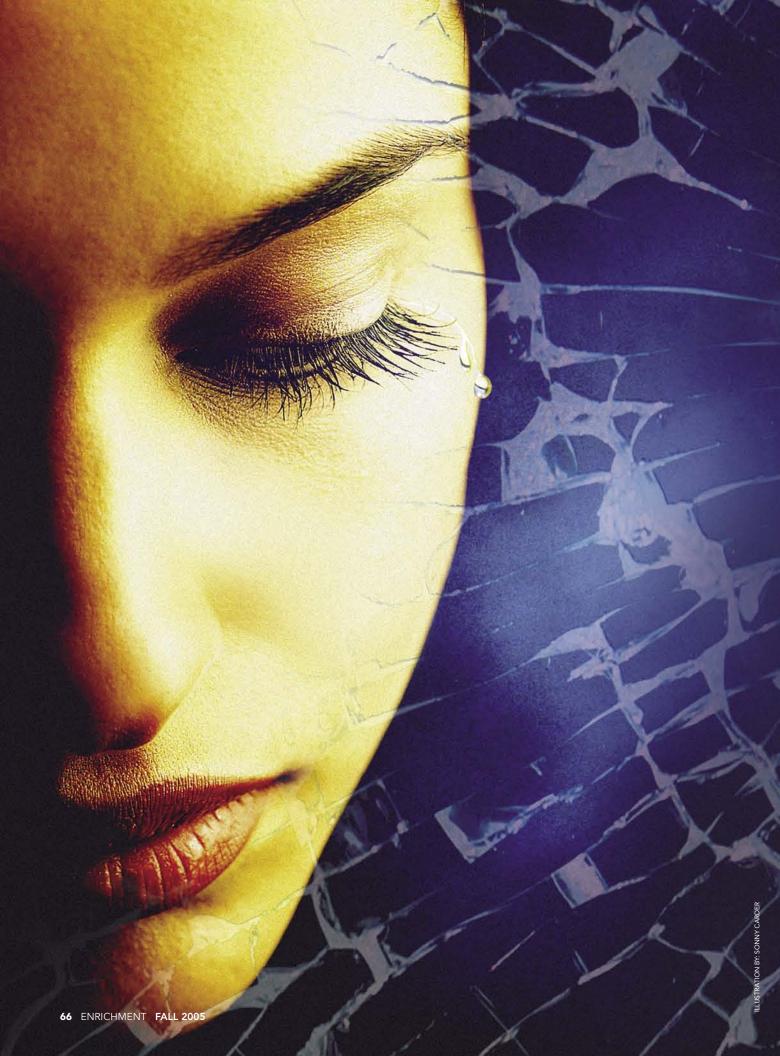
While the pastor is getting help, trusting others with his life, and receiving grace and accountability, he will find himself riding an emotional roller coaster because his life has been out of control. He will feel confused and afraid of the future because he is now choosing to let others know his real self and there is no guaranteed response to his trust. At times, he may even want to give up and resort back to a life of sin.

When a pastor is overcome by these feelings, he needs to share them with those he trusts. He must talk openly to God about them and keep a daily watch on his temptation with sexual sin. With an open heart, a committed life, and God's grace he will find healing and the new life he wants. Ministers no longer need to live in silence and be overcome by sin. God has provided a way out.



**Doug Boudinot** is director of Ascent Resources in Redmond, Oregon. He is a mental health practitioner and pastor providing resources and counseling to men and couples struggling with sexual sin. He also leads intensives for

those desiring a jump start on their healing and conducts workshops for churches wanting to acquire tools to prevent sexual sin in their congregation. He can be contacted at 541-420-6020, or by e-mail at: dougboudinot@hotmail. com.



# WHY AMINOT ENOUGH?

# Shattering Discovery for the Wife of a Sexually Addicted Minister

The attractive woman smiled nervously at the others who joined her at the table. She offered quiet greetings and initiated small talk. Her carefully chosen slacks and sweater were just right for the setting — not too dressy and not too casual — but exactly in between, the way she had learned was safest. Only her terrified eyes betrayed her discomfort as they darted everywhere, yet carefully avoiding the *Healing for Spouses* notebook on her place at the table. My heart ached for her.

BY MARNIE C. FERREE



This minister's wife made it easy to picture another spouse whom I barely knew, yet who was closer to me than any woman who had ever lived — my mother. I remembered her only from yellowed photographs and stories told by those who knew her. I could not recall my mother's touch, her smell, or her laughter, but I was well acquainted with her pain. I had seen its reflection in the eyes and stories of many women like the one now seated before me. It is the pain of women with anguished hearts and shattered lives who are married to ministers caught in sexual sin.

Like most ministers, my father was an extremely gifted man. An eloquent speaker with a servant's heart, he was deeply loved by the churches he pastored. He led many people to Christ. My father taught the Bible with a sincere heart and desperately tried to live in obedience to God. He loved his work, his church members, and his family. His calling was sure, and his efforts were blessed. He was successful and widely admired. He was also the most tortured man I have ever known. For years only his wife knew of his secret struggle with sexual sin. On a Sunday morning when I was 3 years old, my mother died while my father was preaching at church. She was grateful, I believe, for the release death gave her from the pain that consumed her life — pain caused not only by her physical cancer but also from the deeper agony of the spiritual sickness that had invaded her home.

Fifty years ago when my mother died, sexual addiction was not recognized or understood. Resources were not available to address a minister's involvement with pornography and sexual addiction. The pain of ministers' wives affected by that struggle was also not addressed, but simply endured. As I look at the faces of the women gathered for the Healing for Spouses workshop — one of a series of faith-based clinical

Scott Arthur Masear ◎2005 "Look, dear, he's tithing and teething." workshops dealing with sexual addiction and co-addiction — I am grateful for the opportunity to provide hope and healing for their pain. I wish my mother had understood the following principles.

# FOUR S's ABOUT SEXUAL ADDICTION

Sexual addiction is a secret sin that is carefully guarded by addicted ministers. Many church members, often unconsciously, idolize their pastor and assume he is above sexual temptation. Congregants expect their pastor to be a man of sexual integrity — as they well should. They think, Surely committed Christians, especially clergy, do not struggle with sexual issues. This assumption is especially strong for a pastor's wife. For her, the issue is as much personal as it is theological. She heard her husband's vow of fidelity on their wedding day, and she never anticipated he would break it. She believed he would not risk everything for which he has worked. Unfortunately, this assumption is extremely naïve. A shocking number of clergy are involved in sexual improprieties.

According to reports by Focus on the Family, at least twothirds of the calls to their pastoral help line involve some kind of sexual struggle. Fifty-one percent of pastors say Internet pornography is their biggest temptation. For 37 percent of pastors, it is a current struggle. Clergy can be counted among the exploding number of Americans counted as sex addicts. In fact, sexual addiction has become the addiction of choice among Christians. But it is a secret problem for ministers that is rarely mentioned, much less personally addressed. If a pastor's wife is newly shattered by the discovery of her husband's sexual addiction, she should know she is not alone.

# Sin

All who engage in illicit sexual activities, including viewing pornography, commit sin in the eyes of God. The biblical standards of sexual purity are clear, even if our sexually saturated society ignores them. Adultery is more than having intercourse with a partner other than one's spouse. The one-flesh union between husband and wife is more exclusive than just physical acts between human beings. Sexual fidelity includes purity of heart, which is automatically violated by using pornography, connecting through Internet relationships, ogling strippers, and engaging in all other forms of sexual lust.

The sinfulness of illegitimate sexual activity is probably the one principle ministers' wives most readily accept. Indeed, recognizing the spiritual nature of sexual misconduct only increases the pain. He's a minister; how could he?

# **Sickness**

If sexual indiscretion is clearly sin, why should we also call it a

sickness? This question is central to understanding the nature of sexual addiction. It is also a concept that is especially difficult for pastors' wives to acknowledge.

As a teacher, speaker, and writer on the subject of sexual addiction, the question I am asked most frequently is, "Is this a sin or is it a disease?"

hook. They still need to confess their sin, repent, and turn away from their illicit behavior. Viewing addiction as a sickness, however, does explain the complicated nature of the problem and why addicted pastors cannot readily stop their sinful behavior. Like the treatment of any other serious disease, pastors must seek help for the physical, mental, and

# If a pastor's wife is newly shattered by the discovery of her husband's sexual addiction, she should know she is not alone.

My immediate answer is "Yes." Sexual addiction is both a sin *and* a disease. Undeniably, compulsive sexual behavior always begins with a choice to commit sexual sin. A person makes a selfish decision to gratify the flesh rather than submit to God's standard of holiness. *Addictive* behavior, though, is beyond pure sexual sin and is diagnosed as a personal pathology.

Trained addictionists who specialize in the treatment of addictions ascribe to the disease model. This paradigm views addiction as behavior that fits four key descriptions:

- 1. *Compulsive*. The addict keeps doing what he does not want to do despite his best efforts to stop. This is similar to Paul's description in Romans 7. Compulsivity is a hallmark characteristic of addiction.
- 2. Obsessive. An addict constantly has sex on his mind. Sexual activity whether doing it, hiding it, or feeling shame about it is the organizing factor of the addict's life. Everything else is a lower priority. The addiction becomes the addict's god.
- 3. Continually. Someone who is addicted does not learn from his mistakes. Instead, he keeps doing the things that get him into trouble despite negative consequences. For example, church leaders confront a pastor for pornographic Internet material found on his computer, yet the pastor does not stop viewing inappropriate websites. This behavior is often the most perplexing to a minister's wife, especially in the early stages after she becomes aware there is a problem. At first she may rationalize that her husband made a mistake during a weak moment. When he repeatedly makes the same mistake, the pastor's wife wonders why he does not stop.
- 4. *Tolerance*. This concept is widely accepted in the treatment of substance-abuse patients, but many people do not understand that behaviors can create neurochemical tolerance as well. The sexually addicted pastor, like all addicts, will always want more, either of the same activity or of escalating activities. He will need more and more to feel the high he seeks.

To call sexual addiction a sickness does not relieve ministers of their personal responsibility for their sin. This disease model should not be used as an excuse to get pastors off the emotional aspects of their addiction as well as their spiritual problem.

#### Shameful

The stigma of sexual sin is more than that of other kinds of moral failure. A recovering alcoholic usually receives a supportive response. People respect the fact he is successfully addressing his problem. A sexaholic, however, typically receives suspicion, scorn, and rejection. For the pastor who struggles with compulsive sexual behavior, the shame is especially intense. A pastor is called to model a higher standard. His failure to maintain sexual integrity has widespread effects that include violating the trust of his congregants and his wife. This heightened level of shame makes it even more difficult

# A FEMALE SEXAHOLIC? HELP FOR A SEX ADDICT'S HUSBAND

If the situation is reversed and the pastor's wife is sexually addicted, he probably feels totally alone. After all, who has ever heard of a female sexaholic? This pastor can probably relate to the principles outlined here for wives of pastors who are sex addicts. He may wonder about his virility. He may fear the impact his wife's secret could have on his ministry should it be discovered. Perhaps he, too, covers up for her, fears she will leave him, or feels responsible for her behavior. He is probably obsessed with his wife's activities. This pastor can follow the same plan outlined for female co-addicts:

- Talk with someone about his situation. He has no obligation to keep his wife's secret.
- Get help for himself, even if his wife will not get help.
- Connect with other partners of addicts through groups like Al-Anon® or S-Anon®.

A chapter in *No Stones: Women Redeemed From Sexual Shame* is devoted to male co-addicts and addresses the problem of sex addiction in women.



MARNIE C. FERREE, M.A., Nashville, Tennessee

# A MINISTRY WIFE'S JOURNEY — FROM DESPAIR TO TRANSFORMATION

ark and I had been married 15 years before I knew about his sexual addiction. It is unbelievable even to me that I could have lived with my husband for that many years and honestly say I had no idea he had a problem.

Our lives seemed normal. Our daughter and our two sons were active, healthy children. We were finally settling into our new community after Mark finished graduate school. We were developing careers, becoming involved in our children's schools and activities, making friendships at our church and in our neighborhood, and serving in volunteer positions in the community. Life was good. We seemed connected. We were successful. We were a poster family to those who knew us.

When I look back on my life with the perspective and information I have today, I know I had many uncomfortable reserva-

tions about Mark's behavior. I often lived in the silence of my own intuitions and sadness. When Mark was too attentive to other women, I would withdraw because I felt inadequate or unat-

tractive. I blamed myself when Mark did not want to talk to me about his day at work. I felt inadequate and uninteresting. I justified his inability to be present in our marriage because he was overwhelmed with important work in the ministry. I did not want to bother him with my needs or desires.

Mark's work was public — ministry, counseling, school board, lecturing — and it was difficult for me to find anyone to talk to about my feelings and concerns. I did not want to disrespect my husband. I learned to cope on my own through work, staying busy, parenting, and withdrawal. I often dreamed of something more for our marriage, but I did not know what it was or what I wanted.

During our 15th year of marriage, several of Mark's colleagues from the counseling center came to our home and informed me that he had been acting out sexually. He had just been confronted about his inappropriate behaviors at the office, and they had immediately fired him. When he arrived home with the Christian medical doctor and the therapist, it was obvious that something was terribly wrong. They disclosed his involvement with clients and the counseling center's need to let him go. They asked if I had any questions. They stayed only a few minutes. I was numb and in shock. I was truly heartbroken, and the life I thought I had was totally destroyed. When I glanced over at Mark, he was slumped over in his chair in despair. At that moment I lacked the strength to think, so the thought that came to me was surely from the Holy Spirit. It occurred to me that this problem might be related to what I was missing in my marriage. I held on to an unexplainable sense of hope.

With the help of a physician who was a recovering alcoholic, Mark entered an inpatient treatment program for sexual addiction. I joined him for family week during the third week of his hospitalization. There I found safe people to talk to and was given information about addiction. Participants and therapists listened to my sadness and anger. I was able to open up in ways that were new to me, and it felt wonderfully transforming.

The best decision I made was to join Mark in his therapy, growth, and healing when he returned home. I could have easily chosen to let Mark take care of his own problem. After all, his behaviors were the problem, and I was not responsible for his actions. I could have been angry that I spent time from my life working on his issues. But I realized in the first sessions of my women's group that I was there for me. I felt growth

God used Mark's sexual addiction to take me from a place of bondage (thinking that I could control my life and my marriage) to a place of freedom (surrendering my life, Mark's life, and our marriage to Christ).

> bubbling up from inside. My craving for God to transform my character was infectious. Not only did Mark and I change from our therapy, but our relationship also grew closer. Real intimacy was developing for the first time in our marriage.

> Mark's brokenness about his sinful behaviors and his willingness to listen to my feelings about his betrayal were extremely helpful to me. He did not run from the pain he had caused me, but patiently heard my sorrows and questions. Those were the first steps to restoring trust and hope.

> We both needed to learn how to be vulnerable with each other and how to ask for what we needed. There were many days when it felt as though we were going backward in our growth. We learned that changing the patterns we had established over many years would take time and practice, and we needed to trust in the process.

> When I began to believe that God had a purpose and was accomplishing His will through our pain, I understood our suffering in a new way. Sexual addiction was not about me — I did not cause it, I could not control it, and I could not cure it. I could, however, learn valuable lessons on how I could meet the need for greater intimacy within our relationship. I needed to understand why my methods of coping with loneliness, sadness, fear, and anger had hurt my relationship. I began to ask myself: What did I do when I was hurting? Could I share my feelings? Did I live with expectations that I did not express and with assumptions that I hoped Mark might figure out? Did I want Mark to fix my hurts or take care of needs that I was unable or unwilling to take care of myself? Why was I

not able to express my feelings or ask for I what I needed? Did I know "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22,23)? Was I being the woman God wanted me to be in my relationship?

Through the brokenness that resulted from my own sinful behavior, I was able to join Mark on a journey where we could find unconditional love and acceptance for each other. I learned that I wanted the same things in our marriage that he did — to be heard and understood, affirmed, blessed, safe, touched in healthy ways, chosen, and included. When he did not meet my desires, I, too, had chosen behaviors to help me cope with my disappointment. We knew the same pain, but we chose different ways to express it.

God used Mark's sexual addiction to take me from a place

of bondage (thinking that I could control my life and my marriage) to a place of freedom (surrendering my life, Mark's life, and our marriage to Christ). He has used the pain and suffering to change my life. Today, I can truly say that I am grateful. If Mark had not lost his job — had we no reason to enter therapy, learn about addiction, and join a community of people desiring to change — I would have stayed back in Egypt, with my thoughts and feelings held captive and with no tools to experience God's greatest gift: unconditional love.



**DEBBIE LAASER**. Debbie participates with her husband, Mark, in spouses and couples workshops. Together, with Patrick Carnes, they have written *Open Hearts*, a book that deals with healing couple relationships.

for the sexually addicted minister to ask for help.

This basic understanding of sexual addiction is a good starting point, but it is unlikely to provide much comfort for the wife of an addicted pastor. "Don't teach me about this problem," cried one distressed wife. "I get the problem. What I need is reassurance that I can survive this nightmare." Her plea is echoed in the cries of every betrayed wife. After her life has been shattered by her husband's sexual misconduct, a minister's wife needs something she can hang on to. She needs to know the truth.

THREE C's FOR MINISTERS' WIVES

Those in the recovery and clinical community call spouses or other immediate family members of addicts co-addicts. Co-addicts are part of the addictive environment because of their relationship to the addict. Beginning with alcoholism, partners of addicts came together to help each other navigate the difficult road of dealing with an addicted loved one. Eventually, these groups and clinicians recognized three truths that are common in the experience of a coaddict. These principles are extremely important for wives of sexually addicted ministers. Each one is in the

### Cause — "I didn't cause it"

form of a first-person statement.

Self-blame is the most common reaction a wife experiences after she has been shattered by the discovery of her husband's sexual addiction. What did I do wrong? Why am I not enough for my husband? Is it my weight? My nagging or fatigue? What did I do, or not do, that made him go outside our marriage for sex?

The sexually addicted minister may reinforce these fears. He is often quick to point out his wife's flaws and sometimes overtly blame her for his behavior. "If you were more interested in sex, I wouldn't have to look elsewhere," he accuses.

With her self-esteem shattered, the wife is more vulnerable to believing this lie.

Sadly, the church sometimes echoes the addict's blame. In one congregation, when it became known that the minister was involved in Internet pornography, some of the ladies in the church gave his wife some provocative lingerie. The implication is: if she were more sexual with their pastor, he would not stray.

"I was humiliated and angry," this wife said, "but deep inside I was also worried that maybe they were right."

As a teacher, speaker, and writer on the subject of sexual addiction, the question I am asked most frequently is, "Is this a sin or is it a disease?"

The minister's wife may be the most beautiful, alluring woman in the world, and still her husband would have fallen into sexual sin. No one is enough to curb addictive sexual behavior.

### Control — "I can't control it"

The second truth important for a minister's wife is the realization, "I can't control my husband's addiction." This mindset probably runs counter to a wife's immediate response. She naturally attempts to control her husband's addiction by punishing him in a variety of ways, rewarding him in others, coercing him into changing, or doing an endless number of things to manipulate him to straighten up. The truth is, a minister's wife is totally powerless to control her husband's sexual addiction. In fact, most of her attempts will only make matters worse instead of better, and ensnare her further in her own forms of unhealthy behavior.

### Cure — "I can't cure it"

A similar principle is the admission, "I can't cure it," which takes powerlessness one step further. It is easier to admit a lack of control than to admit an inability to solve the problem, especially one as serious as sexual addiction.

"Okay, I get that it's not my fault and that I can't control him, but surely I can *fix* him," wailed one minister's wife. This desire is legitimate, but again, her approach is usually wrong.

Often, a wife's cure means supporting her husband in moving to another church or taking over the finances to help relieve his stress. Maybe she buys him self-help books and lectures him about the information they contain. In reality, none of these approaches deals with the deeper issues that underlie the sexually inappropriate behavior. They are like putting a Band-Aid® on a gushing wound.

One of the biggest challenges for the wife of an addicted pastor is to refrain from self-righteousness.

What, then, is a minister's wife to do when she discovers her husband is sexually addicted? What proactive steps can she take? How does she respond in a healthy way? The answer is in following a plan of action.

### THREE A's OF AN ACTION PLAN

### Admit the problem

Admitting the problem and telling the secret of her husband's addiction is probably the hardest for most ministers' wives.

Oh, my! A \$5 raise! Be still my heart! Now I can buy that new BMW, take that world cruise, pay for Aunt Sophie's operation, put away enough to pay for all four kids to go to college and...

Sarcasm does not become you.

Ministers' wives may think they are protecting their husbands by keeping silent — and indeed, the impaired pastor probably insists on it — but, in truth, that approach enables pastors to continue in their addiction. Equally important, keeping the secret postpones the healing for both the minister and his wife.

One of the greatest benefits of admitting the problem is discovering that others are in similar situations. The wife of a sexually addicted pastor is not alone.

Admitting the situation is incredibly frightening. Life for the addict's wife has turned upside down; she now faces an unknown future. The minister may face serious consequences, including the loss of his job, if his sexual addiction becomes known. His family's life will also suffer. The minister's wife can find strength in many biblical promises and draw comfort from the declaration "the truth will set you free."

One wife said, "I thought I would die if anyone found out about my husband, but finally I couldn't pretend any more. When I eventually poured out the horrible story, the weight of the world was lifted from my shoulders. I wish I had known how freeing it would be to tell the truth."

Before disclosing her husband's addiction, a pastor's wife should prayerfully examine her motives. To

open the door for help is an honorable objective, but to publicly shame her husband out of her anger is self-defeating.

Next, a minister's wife needs to determine in whom she should confide. Perhaps it is a ministerial associate or other church leader. The best place to start may be with a personal therapist who can offer advice about what to do next. Whatever the avenue, healing begins with the crucial first step of admitting the problem.

### Ask for help

The primary reason for telling the secret is to ask for help. No wife can deal with this issue on her own. It is unhealthy for her to try. God intended Christians to bear each other's burdens. A minister's wife needs the support of others to carry this enormous load. Even if her husband is unwilling to get help, the wife can still get help for herself. In fact, professional assistance is crucial if her husband refuses to address his problem. Her life has been shattered along with her husband's, and she needs help to pick up the pieces. Others can guide her through the difficult choices her situation demands.

Unfortunately, finding the right help can be challenging. Many professionals lack the training to treat sexual addiction and co-addiction. Many wives report having tried several sources before they found someone who had a clinical understanding of the problem.

"Most people told me to read my Bible more or pray for my husband. I believe those are important, but I needed specific help to cope with my situation," said one wife. Many others echo her comments.

### The good news is the story does not end with the discovery of a pastor's addiction. God's power to heal is greater than any disease.

"If I was having a heart attack, I would pray, but I would also get to the hospital and find the best heart specialist around," said another pastor's wife.

The website for Bethesda Workshops, the ministry that sponsors Healing for Spouses workshops, has an extensive resource section that may be helpful. (Visit www.Bethesda Workshops.org.)

### Address your own issues

While a pastor's wife is not responsible for her husband's behavior, she is responsible for her own. She may struggle with her own behaviors, which might include: overeating, spending money, overcompensating at work, abusing alcohol or drugs, or through a different outlet for her personal problems. Maybe she carries secrets about childhood sexual abuse or other trauma. One of the saddest aspects of addiction is its power to affect generation after generation. Many addicts' wives grew up with a parent who struggled with an addiction, so this unhealthy environment feels unconsciously familiar.

"My dad was an alcoholic, and I promised myself I would never marry a man like him," said one pastor's wife. "And I didn't. Instead, I married a man who was a sex addict and workaholic." Her experience is common.

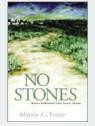
It is crucial that a minister's wife has the self-understanding to know how her experiences have shaped her choices, including

### A RESOURCE BY MARNIE C. FERREE

### NO STONES: WOMEN REDEEMED FROM SEXUAL SHAME

Marnie C. Ferree (Xulon press, 281 pp., paperback)

No Stones: Women Redeemed From Sexual Shame bravely addresses the taboo subject of female sexual addiction with frankness, compassion, and vulnerability. Readers will be surprised at the definition of this problem and the number of women



who struggle with it. This definitive work combines the best clinical knowledge with the truth of biblical principles. No Stones points the way to redemption.

her selection of a marriage partner. She needs to break the pattern of dysfunction that likely exists in her family.

Like most people, pastors' wives have learned to cope in a variety of ways. Some of these are unhealthy. Almost all wives of addicts grapple with co-dependency. They fight internal battles with low self-esteem and struggle to set healthy boundaries. They wrestle with personal obstacles that hinder them from finding intimacy in relationships. The wife of a sexually addicted minister must admit to having her own issues to face, and focus on herself instead of her husband.

One of the biggest challenges for the wife of an addicted pastor is to refrain from self-righteousness. Because sexual sin is so egregious, it is easy to be holier-than-thou and forget that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. A wife's best antidote against a haughty spirit is to name her own shortcomings before God and humbly ask for His forgiveness and help.

### **HOPE FOR WIVES OF MINISTERS** CAUGHT IN SEXUAL SIN

I know firsthand the devastation caused by a minister's sexual addiction. I have seen the impact it had on those who loved him — his peers, his congregation, and especially his family. Through the blessing of honest conversations with a few people who knew my mother, I have a glimpse of the unique pain that descended on this addict's wife. I, too, have felt the influence of my father's addiction in my own struggle with sexual sin.

The good news is the story does not end with the discovery of a pastor's addiction. God's power to heal is greater than any disease. There is hope for the wife of a sexually addicted minister. I have witnessed hundreds of wives experience freedom. I have been privileged to see their courage, and I am awed by God's faithfulness to walk with them through that process.

It may be devastating for a pastor's wife to discover her husband struggles with pornography or sexual addiction, but it can also be the beginning of a journey that ends with the kind of marriage she has always wanted. This journey will take her into a deeper level of intimacy with herself and with God who will sustain her through it. In a way that she has never imagined, she can discover the truth found in Isaiah 54:5, "For your Maker is your husband — the Lord Almighty is his name." ■



Marnie C. Ferree, M.A., is a licensed marriage and family therapist in Nashville, Tennessee. She directs Bethesda Workshops, a national outreach ministry of Woodmont Hills Church. Bethesda provides intensive clinical workshops for sex addicts, their spouses, and

couples affected by sexual addiction. Ferree can be contacted through www.BethesdaWorkshops.org, or toll-free at 866-464-HEAL.

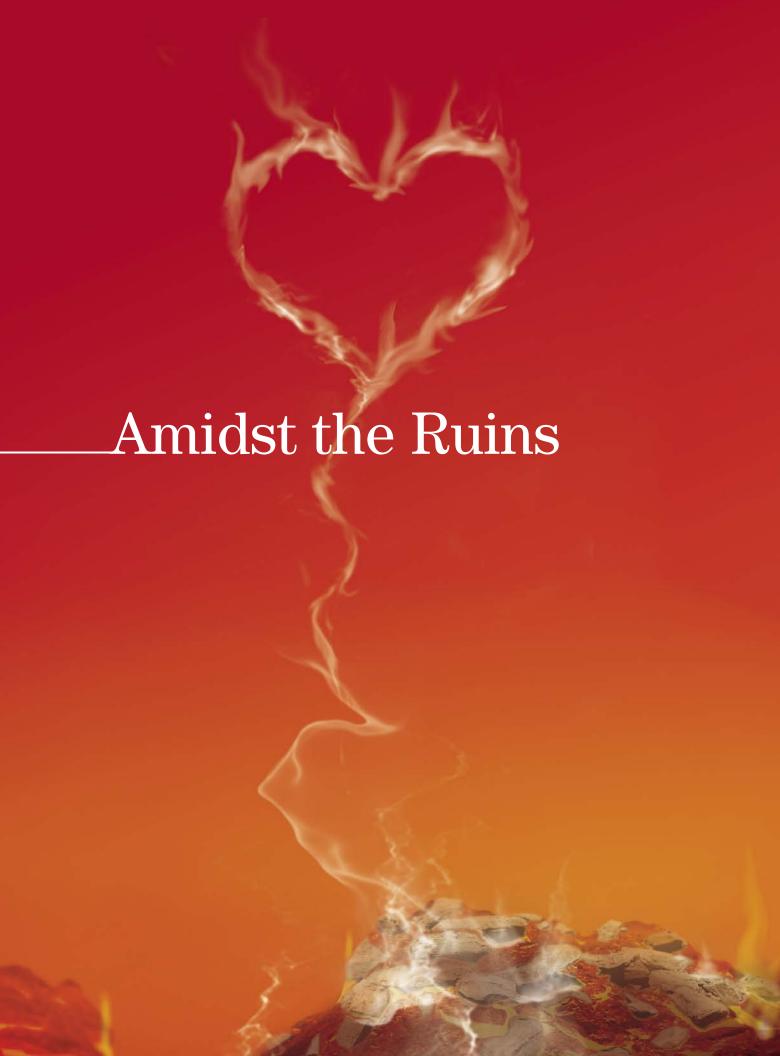
### PORN-RAVAGED HEARTS

# Rebuilding LOWE

Hurricanes can devastate people's lives. Tears stream down faces as victims dig through the rubble and find the now grimy photographs of their precious memories. They wonder, *What in the world hit us?* Picking through the shards of broken dreams, waves of confusion paralyze them. With phone lines down and cell towers flattened, who can they call for help?

Porn's aftermath is no less devastating for a wife, especially if her husband is a pastor. Standing in the rubble of her marriage, the angry, aching confusion grips her unmercifully. She asks, *What do I do now? Where do I go for help?* 

BY BRENDA STOEKER



### Pornography is not just pictures.

### Porn compromises a man's authority in the spiritual realm.

he pastor's wife has probably sensed something was brewing. Her husband has been staying later and later to study at his office, yet his sermons have lost the anointed edge they once had. Like a worldclass horse trainer with her favorite horse, she can easily spot that nearly imperceptible hitch in his gait as a preacher.

She has also noticed that hitch whenever her husband accessed sexual images while surfing the TV. He stops for an instant before moving on.

She may have felt so stricken by her uncharitable thoughts that she pushed them away until that nasty gale of his sexual sin blew their home into ruins. Connecting the dots seemed much easier in its wake.

### LINES FROM THE STORM

As a wife she had been wondering why her husband seemed so distant in bed, even during intercourse. He seemed to be in another world. Now she knows — he was in fantasyland.

It is no wonder she felt Satan was attacking her marriage. Her husband had compromised his spiritual protection over her with his own hands and eyes in cyberspace.

With the dots now connected, his wife is seething and feels like a fool. I believed in him and gave up my life for him. What an idiot I've been. She has a right to feel angry. Her dreams have been shattered. She despises her husband for how his sexual sin makes her see him. She is also panicked by how it makes her see herself. I knew he didn't have eyes just for me, but I never dreamed it could go this far. I feel so ugly now. If her husband remains blind to the full depth of her pain, it will crush her and render restoration impossible.

Even Christian leaders can be blinded to how shattered a wife can be when she discovers her husband is viewing pornography. I was sitting in make-up as we prepared for a major Christian television interview when a man exclaimed, "I know a woman who threatened her husband with divorce when she found out he had been hiding a stash of porn magazines around the house. I couldn't believe it. She's going to divorce him over a few pictures. Isn't that amazing?"

Yes, it is amazing, but not for his reasons. Pornography is not just pictures. Porn compromises a man's authority in the spiritual realm. It damages his sexuality. Scientists have measured a significant decrease in a man's concern for sexually pleasing his wife after viewing only six 1-hour sessions of porn. In addition, porn places a barrier between a couple's spirit in their marriage, whether the man senses it or not.

There is often blindness in both the husband and wife. This is not surprising considering the vast differences between men and women. To heal, women must completely understand the nature of male sexuality. That is why we included eight chapters on male sexuality in our book, Every Heart Restored.

A man is set-up to fail in this sexually charged culture unless a father or pastor has taught him early on how to control his eyes, mind, and passions. A man's eyes can draw sexual gratification from the sensuality around him, whether he is staring at the babe in the string bikini or viewing pornography on his computer monitor. When he does, a swirl of titillating chemicals washes over the sexual pleasure centers of his brain. As with alcoholics and drug addicts, addictive chemicals form the basis of this sin's power.

To complicate matters, a man's brain structure allows him to easily indulge in pornography while still loving his wife with all of his heart. He can separate the two into different mental silos. Women find this repulsive and difficult to imagine.

Once a wife educates herself about the male nature behind her husband's sin, she will find his sin was not about her, her sexiness, or his love for her. This allows mercy to take root in her heart. But if a man wants full restoration in his marriage, he must be educated, too. He must understand the female nature behind her pain and respond to that pain properly.

Sex and relationship are normally inseparable to a woman. This forms the bottom line regarding sexual sin. A man's sexual sin crushes his wife emotionally. A man needs to take responsibility for how sexual sin hurts his wife and stop. If his eyes keep wandering down the beach or through cyberspace, there can be no restoration in the marriage.

### THE BATTLE FOR TRUST

Considering the many differences between men and women, perhaps the best way to keep a balanced perspective on marriage restoration is to realize that once a man's sexual sin is out in the open, the marital battlefield must move from the sexual arena to the arena of trust. A man must fight to restore his purity and to heal his relationship with God. But as a husband, he is also fighting a joint battle alongside his wife to restore her trust. Regaining his purity will be part of that battle, but there is more involved than meets the eye.

When it comes to building trust, there is a catch. No one can manufacture trust on his own. Trust requires two ingredients: the husband must become trustworthy, and the wife must trust again. Each is responsible for bringing one of the ingredients to the table.

Trust will not grow without both ingredients, but a wife cannot bring hers into play until her husband brings his. Only one thing will allow her to begin to trust again — his consistent, faithful actions. Without right actions a husband will not have his wife's trust. If he wants her trust, it is up to him to earn it.

A husband may hate this responsibility, but his wife does not need to apologize or feel guilty should he sneer, "If you loved me, you would trust me."

Trust and love are different things. Even if he has been working as a pastor, he has also been acting like a pagan sexually, and that cannot be swept under the rug. It is God's will that he should "learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God" (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5).

### HER HEART IS NOT YOUR JOB

If a husband wants his wife's trust to grow, his first job is to stop reframing his wife's lack of trust in him as a stipulation of her love for him. He has been untrustworthy to her, and if her

trust is a condition for anyone's love, it is for *his* love — for *his* wife, and for *his* God.

• Am I impatient with my wife's rate of healing? Have I snapped, "I'm trying to become pure, and I'm growing with God so fast right now. What's wrong with you"?

• Am I impatient with my wife's endless questions about my sin? Have I snarled, "No more questions. I've put this behind us now"?

It is never behind *us* until a man has answered enough questions for his wife to put it behind *her*. A wife has every right to hear the complete truth from her husband about what he has done. Christ sacrificed all of His pride and position for the sake of His bride's beauty and holiness. Her husband must now sacrifice *his* pride and humbly return *his* marital relationship to one of beauty, openness, and connection.

• Am I impatient with my wife's lack of sexual desire for me? Have I lashed out, "Your body is my body, and you have no right to hold it back"?

### Once a man's sexual sin is out in the open, the marital battlefield must move from the sexual arena to the arena of trust.

In fact, if a man

believes his wife's lack of trust is *her* problem, it is a sure sign he has not repented, and he does not get it. A man sees this easily enough in someone else.

A senior high youth pastor was fired for sexual misconduct with a 16-year-old girl from his church. His responses to the charges were revealing. He first denied everything and blamed her unstable emotional state for her wild dreams and stories. But once the facts forced him to admit there was misconduct, he claimed it happened outside of his work as a youth pastor. Restoration is hard when repentance is weak.

My husband, Fred, has worked on several restoration teams for fallen pastors. This work and his previous life of sin have enabled him to instantly spot genuine repentance. One situation involved a recovering pastor who angrily barked at Fred after only a few weeks into the process. "My wife isn't even trying. Here I am meeting with you and the rest of the team constantly, but she won't even try anything with me in bed."

Fred was livid. "Listen to me good. You did this to her. You did it, and don't you forget it again. If she doesn't trust you, it's your fault. You are lucky she stayed married to you. As far as I'm concerned, you don't deserve to be in bed with her yet."

This pastor could not see his lack of genuine repentance, but it was clear to Fred. Fred did not think restoration would be permanent for this man. It was not.

### FLAGGING YOUR ATTITUDE

Here are some red flags that will help a man judge his own level of repentance:

• Am I taking full responsibility for my sexual sin? Or have I barked, "If you hadn't gained 60 pounds, this wouldn't have happened"?

If any of these flags are flying high, a man has not yet removed the enormous log from his own eye. Everyone around him should be concerned.

If a man's wife does not see any flags, it is time for her husband to ask her what she sees in their relationship. It is important to be a man, and be courageous. Simply note her words, and head to prayer.



### THE EYES HAVE IT

While a man's attitude of repentance is critical, total restoration requires his trustworthy actions, too. Most men have not been taught how to sexually discipline their eyes and mind. A key question, then, is: Pastor, are you willing to read a book like Every Man's Battle and discipline yourself sexually as you are commanded to do? "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his own body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18).

To flee sexual immorality means cutting off the sensual images that cause the addictive chemical rush to a man's brain. Men must control their eyes and refuse to draw in visual sensuality, and take every lustful thought captive and toss it out of their brain.

### SEEK CONNECTION WITH MEN

A lack of emotional connection with other men is a common reason pastors become addicted to sexual sin. Forming an intimate, close-knit group of men to offer help and support can help a man dramatically as he works to become pure again. Genuine intimacy with other men helps replace the false intimacy he has been drawing from his sexual sin.

### HELP YOUR HELPMATE

Besides becoming trustworthy, what can a husband do to open his wife's heart to trust him again? First, he can encourage her to fulfill her role as helpmate in their marriage. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18).

The word "helper" comes from a Hebrew word that means

### BRINGING HEALING TO A SEXUAL ADDICT'S WIFE

The foundation for marital restoration is renewed trust. If trust between a husband and wife is to grow, the façades must come down. If a pastor intends to help a couple through this restoration process, he must help the wife stop her husband's charades. If the husband is allowed to maintain his leadership positions — and the image that is given to those in church leadership — the laws of reaping and sowing are suspended and his spiritual growth is hindered. This lack of church discipline can also destroy a pastor's credibility with the women in his congregation.

If the man is in any leadership position — deacon, worship leader, or serving on any of the church's committees — he must step down. Secret sexual sin is a disaster in the spiritual realm. His leadership has been severely compromised. He needs to turn his heart toward home, his spirit toward the Lord, and he needs time to heal.

### THE VIEW FROM ABOVE

As the pastor comes alongside the wife, he needs to encourage her to take God's view of the restoration process.

### God's role

God targeted her husband's sexual sin long before his wife knew about it. While this discovery may seem like the end of her marital world, it is a new beginning. Her marriage has been a mirage. She might have gone her whole life believing this sham, but God loved her too much to allow it. Her discovery of her husband's sexual sin is a sign of God's grace in her life. Through His grace He intends to restore her dreams for a godly marriage.

### God's dream

Recently I stumbled across the movie entitled, Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind. I have never seen the movie, but its title certainly captures God's intent for married couples.

Jesus lived in eternal sunshine. He never smirked, "Just because I can't order doesn't mean I can't look at the menu." He never shrugged, "So I looked at her for too long. That's the way guys are made. Get over it."

Jesus had complete joy and no fear in spiritual battle because He was sexually pure. The eternal sunshine of the spotless mind is every Christian couple's birthright in marriage.

### God's perspective

A husband's sexual disaster can make his wife a better Christian. She will be forced to learn to love the unlovely, which is a bedrock trait of Christian character. God wants her to help Him heal her husband's long-festering wounds. Blowing her husband's cover gives God the opportunity to begin His work.

### God's heart

It is okay if a wife struggles and bounces between compassion and anger during the ebb and flow of her husband's battle for purity. Christ understands. He remembers what it felt like to suffer rejection.

A wife needs to remember she is her Father's little girl, the apple of His eye. When He looks at her, His heart skips a beat. God loves her so much He sent a Comforter so she would never be alone in difficult times.

### CONCLUSION

Victory is a place where the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind chases away the menacing darkness of porn's storm. With her pastor's help, God can bring total victory.



BRENDA STOEKER, Des Moines, Iowa

"a help as his counterpart." So what does a helper do? Fred explains it this way: "As a helper, a wife's role is to help lift her husband, boost him, assist him, and encourage him to Christian greatness (or maturity) in Christ."

If a pastor has been living a lie and is one way at home and a different way at church, he may no longer see himself clearly. A good helper can paint an honest picture of what a mature, Christian husband should be and point out her husband's blind spots for him.

A pastor should encourage his wife to speak freely into his life. If he silences her, the laws of reaping and sowing are largely suspended in his life. This enables him to keep a separate silo of sin.

It is time to stop hiding. Welcome her help in flattening those silos and, better yet, ask her to help define what trustworthiness means to her. Then, he should deliver the first blows to that silo himself:

- He should buy the porn filers for the Internet.
- He should place the computer in an open area like the family room or breakfast nook.
  - He should limit his time on the Internet.
- He should pick up the book she has been asking him to read, like Every Man's Marriage.

### HIDE AND SEEK

If a pastor's sin is still hidden, he needs to confess it to his wife now. She will likely be more merciful than if she catches him red-handed at his computer.

But there are higher stakes involved here. Sexual sin within church leadership dampens the flame of God's Spirit.



Christ warned the church at Ephesus: "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate" (Revelation 2:4–6).

The Nicolaitans believed their spiritual liberty gave them license to practice sexual immorality. Jesus praised the church in Ephesus for hating that.

If pastors do not hate the practices of the Nicolaitans and justify that it is not sinful to keep their porn hidden, Christ has a hard warning for them: You are far worse than they were. Not only have you forsaken your first love, but you also love what I hate.

God despises the sexual sin men practice in cyberspace. He was against the Nicolaitans. If pastors persist in hiding their sin, He will be against them as well.

The apostle Paul warned Christians to watch for such deception in themselves: "No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them" (Ephesians 5:5-7). Paul called immoral people idolaters.

It is time for a change. Ministers preach that David was a man after God's own heart. Do ministers want to be men after God's own heart? If they do, they must first stop posing as one.

When David was caught in his sin, he confessed it before God (Psalm 51). A pastor must also confess his sin. God will not despise a broken and contrite heart.

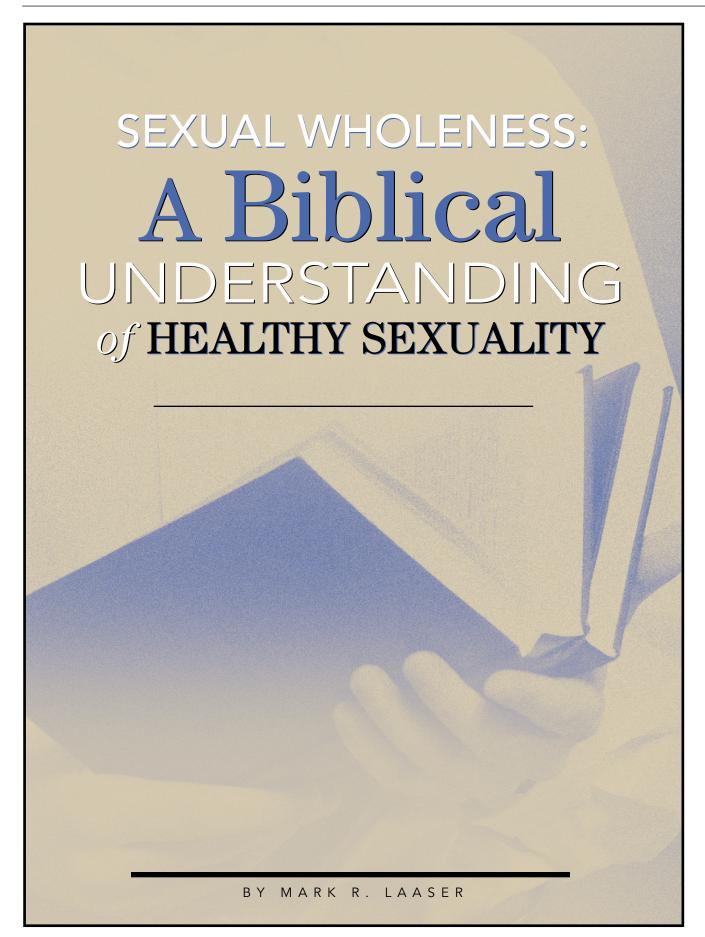
Even now Fred cries when he recalls hiding his own sin. It hurt him deeply to look into the eyes of his toddler son, knowing he would pass his sin down to his little boy. It ripped his heart out to remember his inability in church to connect in worship or prayer because of his sin.

Many pastors have been a mirage for years, and so has their marriage. They must open up to their wife. They must give God that opening He died for, to bring restoration to their heart, their wife, and their family. Courage exacts a heavy price at times. Pay it. Now is the time.



Brenda Stoeker, Des Moines, Iowa, is a registered nurse and seasoned marriage teacher with life experience in rebuilding a broken marriage. She and her husband, Fred, along with Steve Arterburn authored the book Every Heart Restored: A Wife's Guide to Healing in

the Wake of a Husband's Sexual Sin.



have just returned from a shopping trip to a local mall. While there I focused on how many immoral sexual stimuli confronted me on this normal outing. There were hundreds. It is sad to see how many kids, teenagers, and young adults are caught up in America's culture of rampant sexuality.

As I travel around the country, I attend a variety of evangelical churches. I am surprised at the inappropriate attire worn by our Christian youth. It is clear that youth pastors have failed to educate teens about modest clothing. No doubt it is hard to confront the norms of youth culture and keep kids in church. The next time you go out ask yourself, *What messages about sexuality am I being bombarded with every day?* 

If pastors do not educate themselves and their congregations about healthy sexuality, culture will educate their congregations about unhealthy sexuality. Paul warned, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

Historically, pastors have ignored their responsibility to educate their church members about sexuality. This is tragic when we consider the statistics about the problems unhealthy sexuality creates. According to national averages, one-third of the women in our churches are sexual-abuse survivors. They have talked to no one, and no one has talked to them. This reminds us of Absalom's advice to his sister Tamar after she had been raped by her brother Amnon: "Be quiet now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart" (2 Samuel 13:20). Are Christian women to be like Tamar who was a "desolate woman"?

According to some surveys by Christian organizations, two-thirds of evangelical men and 40 percent of evangelical pastors have struggled with or are now struggling with pornography. Many know of pastors who have lost their ministry positions and of men who have been asked to leave churches because of Internet pornography addiction. This shows that the pastors and men of our churches are leading lives of silent desperation. Christians have created a culture of fear

around sexuality and many think, If I talk about my sexual temptations or sins, something bad is going to happen.

Christians and Christian leaders must start talking about sexuality. I have often heard the argument that talking about sex will only encourage people to be sexually permissive. This attitude shows that many fear more knowledge about sex will lead to more sexual exploration. Research shows nothing could be more wrong. A lack of healthy information about sex creates thinking that is more exciting than accurate. To people who have been told not to have sex, sex becomes more dangerous and exciting because of its forbidden nature.

Have pastors done a good job of understanding what constitutes healthy sexuality? Have they considered it, thought about it biblically, and researched it like our secular counterparts? If pastors do not do this, their people will be left to rely on secular information. Some of that information is good and has helped many people understand sexuality as a normal biological phenomenon and has helped debunk harmful myths. This information has also helped develop many successful techniques for healing sexual dysfunctions. On the other hand, secular science can lead to conclusions that are completely misleading and often immoral.

When I lecture to teenagers and young adults, they often confront me by saying, "We hope you're not here to tell us what not to do. Our parents and pastors have been telling us that for years. We hope you are here to tell us what healthy sexuality is and what we should do."

Many Christians have been embarrassed and are afraid to address sexuality issues. But the time to address these issues is now. The church is engaged in a battle for the morality of our culture, and we are losing.

### A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SEXUALITY

After God created man and woman, the Bible gives this instruction regarding marriage: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Genesis 2:24,25). It is clear something sacred happened. A one-flesh union is a sacred covenant between a husband and wife. A husband and wife are to help each other as companions.

Adam and Eve, however, did not trust God and selfishly disobeyed Him. Pride or selfishness is at the heart of all sin. The foundational belief about marriage and healthy sexuality is that it must be unselfish.

Later, in the Ten Commandments, God instructed His people about sexual faithfulness in marriage. People are

to neither commit adultery, nor covet another's spouse.

The word sex appears only twice in the NIV (Genesis 19:5, Judges

Colossians 3:5, Paul wrote, "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry."

Paul taught, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24). John exhorts, "For everything in the world —

### If pastors do not educate themselves and

their congregations about healthy sexuality,

### culture will educate their congregations

about unhealthy sexuality.

19:22). In both instances it refers to wicked men who have sex with other men.

The Bible is also clear about certain forms of sexual immorality. The word prostitute appears more than 50 times in the Bible. There are repeated warnings about the dangers of sexual involvement with harlots. Paul wrote that a man who unites with a prostitute becomes one flesh with her (1 Corinthians 6:16). The Prodigal Son was criticized by his older brother for squandering his money on prostitutes (Luke 15:30). Proverbs 6:26 provides a colorful description of what will happen if men fall into the snare of prostitutes and adulterous women "for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life."

It is also important to understand the association of sexual sin and lust with evil desires and greed. This association shows that selfish desire is behind sexual sin.

The English word *lust* is derived from the German word that refers to all desires, not necessarily evil ones. In the Bible, the word *lust* is used to describe wrong, selfish desire. In

©2005 Scott Arthur Masear

"It's an old church pew. Our pastor thought it might help with your insomnia."

the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world" (1 John 2:16). Here again is another reminder that the ways of the world do not help Christians learn the truth about healthy sexuality.

In Romans 1:18-32, Paul describes how bad immorality had become during his day and listed the symptoms and sins to show how far from God people had gone. Included in this list are sexual immorality and homosexuality.

Many biblical stories illustrate important points about sexuality. In Judges 16:1, Samson, God's strongest man, spent half the night with a prostitute. Shortly after this, Samson fell in love with Delilah. The Philistines used her to bring Samson down. Samson may have been lonely and stressed with leadership, but his selfish, sexual, and romantic desires caused his demise — the loss of his strength.

David, God's greatest king, committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband to cover it up. David, it seems, did not have the best marriage. His wife, Michal, had criticized him for dancing before the Ark of the Covenant when it was being brought into Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:20). In verse 23, we learn that David and Michal had no children. In this context, David was on his balcony one night and saw Bathsheba bathing below (2 Samuel 11:2). Perhaps David would have viewed sexual images on the Internet instead, had it been available. The Bible definitely teaches that loneliness can lead to sexual vulnerability.

God's wisest man, Solomon, "loved many foreign women" (1 Kings 11:1), and they turned him from the true worship of God. Solomon was quite the romantic. His book, the Song of Songs, is the only descriptive narrative of marital love and sexuality in the Bible. Again, this shows that selfish love, even romantic fascination, can turn us away from God.

Satan used sexual lust to attack three of the greatest leaders in the Old Testament. He could not attack Samson through strength, David through military might, or Solomon by outwitting him. Satan used their own selfish and lonely desires to cause them harm.

The Bible is so concerned with sexual sin that the New Testament uses the accounts of sexual sinners to illustrate how pervasive and forgiving is God's grace and love. In John 4:4–26, 39–42, Jesus met a Samaritan woman who was an adulterer. At the well of Samaria, He told her about living water, the water of salvation. This woman returned to the city and, with her shame relieved, proclaimed the good news.

In John 8:1–11, Jesus intervened on behalf of an adulterous woman who was about to be stoned. He told her accusers that whoever was without sin should cast the first stone. Because of their encounter with Christ, the lives of both women were transformed.

The story of the Prodigal Son is perhaps the most powerful example of God's grace. The Prodigal was a selfish son who came to his senses in a pigpen after squandering his father's money on revelry and prostitutes.

The Bible often uses sexuality to warn us about self-centered desire. It is not surprising that sexual immorality also is used in contrast to selflessness. Ephesians 5:1–3, for example, begins, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people." We must die to our selfish desires to be sexually pure.

between Christ and the Church, the love between husband and wife must be the highest form of love. It must be selfless and sacrificial. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes this higher love: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not selfseeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs" (verses 4,5). This is selfless love.

The biblical view of sexuality teaches that sexuality is to be expressed within the sacred covenant of marriage. This marital love is to be selfless and sacrificial. If we know the kind of love that is necessary for marital fidelity, we also begin to understand how God loves us through Christ. This completely contradicts much that of our current culture teaches — that sex is of great importance to marriage and that sexual fulfillment can indicate the health of a marriage. The biblical view, on the other hand, holds that sex is not as important because it is only the expression of emotional and spiritual marital intimacy. But intimacy is based on a Christlike attitude toward each other.

I am not saying sexual problems in marriage should not be addressed using the best medical and clinical treatments available. I am not saying sex is bad. Sex is a natural, biological desire that is to be beautifully expressed in marriage. I am saying, however, that sex is not the ultimate sign a marriage is good.

During my years in the field of sexual addictions, it has become clear to me that the amount of sex in a marriage is not an indicator of healthy sexuality. Frequency of sex has little to

## According to some surveys by Christian organizations, two-thirds of evangelical men and 40 percent of evangelical pastors have struggled with or are now struggling with pornography.

have had sex with hundreds of partners in hundreds of ways, and they are miserable. I

do with happiness. I have known too

many men who

At the end of Ephesians 5, Paul returns to the theme of selflessness. After he instructs husbands and wives to serve each other, he describes the one-flesh nature of marriage (verse 31) and compares it to the relationship of Christ and the Church (verse 32). This comparison clearly establishes his teaching on the relationship between husbands and wives. They are to submit to each other as an act of selflessness and sacrifice. This is equally true for both husband and wife.

Those who do marriage counseling know a selfish attitude can hurt a marriage. A selfish husband often uses Ephesians 5 to sexually manipulate his wife. Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 7:4, "The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband," has also been used by husbands to demand sex. Paul is not teaching domination and manipulation of specific sexual responsibilities, but a specific attitude of selflessness.

If a marriage relationship is to be like the relationship

also know men who would be content if sex was infrequent because they feel spiritually connected to their wives.

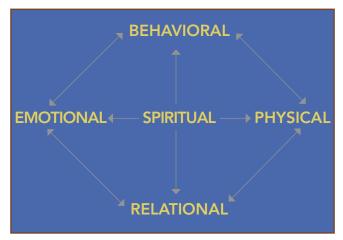
The struggle with sexual temptation arises from a selfish neediness that fuels sexual lust. This neediness may have its roots in life experiences where one is abandoned and neglected and has not experienced love and nurture. These wounds lead to loneliness and anger. Anger fuels the rebellious nature that is present in those who sexually sin. The antidote to sexual lust is working toward a greater Christlike selflessness. The following formulas help explain sexual selfishness and selflessness:

Sexual Selfishness = Normal Sexual Needs + Loneliness + Anger

Lust = Normal Sexual Desire + Selfishness Infidelity = Normal Sexual Desire + Lust Selflessness = A Life of Sacrifice and Service Fidelity = Normal Sexual Desire + Selflessness

### WHAT SHOULD PASTORS DO?

Pastors will benefit from developing a model of healthy sexuality as they strive to make a difference in their church. Pastors can construct a model of healthy sexuality from a biblical foundation and then develop guidelines based on this model. The following model provides a good distinction of the five dimensions of life that are important for sexual wholeness.<sup>1</sup>



### SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

A biblical foundation for healthy sexuality places the spiritual dimension at the center of the model where it affects the other four dimensions. The core of the spiritual dimension is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. True surrender includes an attitude of selflessness. Giving rather than taking is central to this model. To develop the spiritual dimension of healthy sexuality in your church:

- Preach and teach on sexual issues from a biblical perspective. Choose Bible stories and relate them to modern culture. Explain Ephesians 5 or 1 Corinthians 7 as Paul's discussion of an attitude of selflessness.
- Help people, especially youth, develop a vision for healthy sexuality. Challenge them with a clear and positive picture of the benefits of monogamy and premarital abstinence.

### **BEHAVIORAL DIMENSION**

The behavioral dimension includes the accountability required to maintain a pure and healthy sexual life. Men need to be accountable to other men, and women need other women supporting and encouraging them to be sexually faithful and committed to a life of purity. This is even more beneficial for the man or woman who have sexually sinned or are sexually addicted. A man or woman needs the support of a group to recover from these challenges. Developing the behavioral dimension includes:

- 1. Considering your church policy for handling sexual sin. What do people need to do to be restored?
- 2. Making sure members of the church staff are accountable

- and have someone to talk with if they have problems.
- 3. Conducting sexual safety training to educate others how to treat dangerous sexual situations.
- 4. Putting Internet filters on all church computers.
- 5. Knowing the support groups for sexual addiction in your community. If there are none, consider starting one in your church. Allow any such group to use church facilities.<sup>2</sup>

### **EMOTIONAL DIMENSION**

The emotional dimension describes the emotional health that is necessary for sexual health. For example, experiencing sexual abuse as a child can dramatically affect a person's ability to be sexually intimate in marriage. Experiences of abandonment during childhood can lead to loneliness and anger that are major contributors to sexual sin. This model encourages healing for past wounds. Think about these:

- 1. Know the qualified Christian counselors in your area who treat sexual trauma cases.<sup>3</sup>
- 2. Conduct workshops or seminars that deal with sexual abuse and sexual boundaries at your church. Cloud and Townsend's book *Boundaries* is a good resource.
- 3. Preach on finding meaning in suffering. Matthew 11:28–30 and 2 Corinthians 1:3,4 are good texts.

### **RELATIONAL DIMENSION**

The relational dimension teaches that men and women need to be in community with other Christians. People are wounded in families and in culture, but healthy communities can bring healing to people who have been hurt by unhealthy relationships.

A husband and wife must have a healthy spiritual and emotional relationship if they are to have a healthy sexual relationship. When a husband and wife are committed Christians, they can develop the attitude necessary for healthy sexuality. Culture reverses the priorities in relationships: first sex, then friendship, and finally a spiritual relationship (maybe). Consider the following:

- Does your church have an effective couples ministry? Many churches have men's and women's ministries, but no couples ministry. Often the men do not know or pay attention to what the women are doing, and vice versa.
- 2. Schedule a couples seminar with a workshop. Find out if couples therapy is available in your area. Encourage couples to avail themselves of these resources.
- 3. Avail yourself of resources that provide for community ministry. For example, Rick Warren has a new initiative, "The Forty Days of Community."

### THE PHYSICAL DIMENSION

Finally, the physical dimension describes the healthy sexual

### The biblical view of sexuality teaches

that sexuality is to be expressed within the

### sacred covenant of marriage.

functioning of a married couple. Several aspects of this dimension must be clearly defined. This dimension has received the most attention clinically and medically during the last 50 years. Researchers like Masters and Johnson have described the human sexual response in great detail. In the Christian community, Joyce and Cliff Penner, a husband and wife team, and Doug Rosenau have written books that present sexual research from a biblical perspective. Thanks to clinicians such as these there are now many therapeutic techniques to help those with sexual dysfunctions such as frequency problems, premature ejaculation, impotence, and lack of desire. Yet, many Christian couples are still not aware of the basic truth about human sexual response.

My wife and I recently interviewed a couple that had just returned from the mission field. The husband had confessed to visiting prostitutes while he was there. His sexual sin had become an addiction, and he needed to submit himself to authority and become accountable. He also needed to humble himself and ask his wife for forgiveness so their marriage could be restored. While talking with this couple we discovered that in 23 years of marriage, they had never been able to have sexual intercourse. We referred them to Joyce and Cliff Penner's clinic, and as their marriage healed so did their sex life.

My work in sexual addictions has shown that there is never enough sex. It is a myth to believe, If we only had sex a few more times (a week, a month, or a year), everything would be fine. This belief has led many people to harass their partner for more and more sex. Brain chemistry adapts to whatever is put into the brain. An alcoholic needs more and more alcohol over time to achieve the same effect. Sexual thoughts and actions produce powerful chemicals in the brain. The brain adjusts to these chemicals just as it does to alcohol. Therefore, it takes more and more sexual thought or activity to achieve the same effect over time. This means whatever the frequency of activity, it will not be enough over time. One's sexual drive can always be satisfied, however, if the relationship is spiritually connected. This leads to the following conclusion: Biological sexual desire is never satisfied biologically. It is always satisfied spiritually.

The challenge for many couples is to overcome their difficulty in discussing their physical relationship. The relationship becomes painful when sexual intimacy is disappointing or absent. Sexual frustration can lead to a search for unhealthy intimacy. Pornography and other forms of sexual sin are a ready substitute for healthy intimacy and do not require the hard work needed to sustain a relationship. Physical

sexual arousal can be a wonderful source of love and intimacy in a monogamous relationship or it can override common sense and one's value system.

Consider the following:

- 1. Conduct seminars using speakers such as Joyce and Cliff
- 2. Avail yourself of training for pastors in basic sex therapy. Doug Rosenau and his group, Sexual Wholeness, offer this training.
- 3. Know the Christian sex therapists in your area. Read books and know to which counselors to make referrals.
- 4. Correct selfish thinking about frequency and subservience. No one has suffered physical harm from a lack of sex. It is spiritually abusive to teach that sexual submission is always proper, particularly when one partner is a sexual-abuse survivor.

### CONCLUSION

Pastors need to be challenged to discuss healthy sexuality from a Christ-centered and biblical perspective. This is especially important for youth leaders. Today's adolescents and teenagers are facing a sexual onslaught unlike any the world has ever seen. They demand answers, and church leadership must be prepared to give appropriate responses to their questions. Through open dialogue Christians couples can learn how to enjoy each other sexually as God intended. Christians can also become allies in avoiding the temptations of the world.



Mark R. Laaser, Ph.D., Chanhassen, Minnesota, serves as director of the Institute for Healthy Sexuality of the American Association of Christian Counselors (1-800-526-8673), and as executive director of Faithful and True Ministries.

### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. A more detailed description of this model is available in several of my books, most notably The Pornography Trap (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press,
- 2. You can check out resources for groups on three websites. Mine is http:// www.faithfulandtrueministries. Another good resource is http://www.iprodi gals.com. Finally, Life Ministries has information on starting Life Groups, which are Christ-centered, church-based groups for sexual addiction, http://www.freedomeveryday.org.
- 3. The Healthy Sexuality Division of the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) has a referral base of counselors around the nation. Call them at 1-800-526-8673.

## ABODY Mite Silvas

Leading Your Church

Experts on pornography and its effects on brain chemistry recently testified at a Senate hearing about whether porn was a form of free speech that should be protected by the First Amendment or whether it was an addictive and toxic material that should be legally banned in America. Psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover stated it was time to quit regarding porn as just another form of expression because it wasn't. "[The eye] is a very carefully designed delivery system for evoking a tremendous flood within the brain of endogenous opioids," Satinover said. "Modern science allows us to understand that the underlying nature of an addiction to pornography is chemically nearly identical to a heroin addiction."

### Into Sexual Purity

BY FRED STOEKER

r. Mary Anne Layden, representing the Center for Cognitive Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania, explained how prurient pictures are burned into the brain's pathways, adding, "That image is in your brain forever. If that was an addictive substance, you, at any point for the rest of your life, could in a nanosecond draw it up [and get high]."

The evidence these panelists presented to the Senate describes the overwhelming harm pornography brings into a person's life. But what about the other sources of vivid sensuality in our environment — the beer-and-babe commercials, the PG and PG-13 films, the sleek joggers, and the Sunday morning lingerie ad inserts? We tend to minimize the damage from this raw visual sewage dumped into our minds and hearts through our eyes each day, and yet viewing these can deliver the same drug-like kick to the brain as porn. This daily wash of sensuality can be just as addicting. I was once so hooked on sexual sin from all these other sources that it was crushing my spiritual life and my relationships. I even stopped to buy porn on my wedding day.

This same cultural darkness is now pounding women, too. A friend recently polled a large group of female interns at Teen Mania and found that 93 percent

For years, parents and churches have cowered in silence over the issue of open sensuality because they were terrified of being labeled *legalistic*. But Christians now know this was never an issue of liberty versus legalism; rather it is an issue of self-preservation and spiritual protection. The church might have seen it sooner, given God's warning: "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18).

Today, sexual issues cannot be dismissed. The meaning of the phrase "sins against his own body" has never been clearer. Recent brain research confirms the eye's role in flooding the brain with pleasurable drug cocktails. Standing against open sensuality is no longer an issue of cramping styles but of stopping an addictive compulsion in men and women before it starts. Perhaps the parental exhortation, "Stay away from Britney Spears videos," and, "No watching PG-13 movies," are no more legalistic than, "Don't play on the highway." Perhaps the modern hands-off, no-boundaries approach to parenting does not bring liberty to children, but instead dooms them to years of sexual struggle and pain.

## I was once so hooked on sexual sin from all these other sources that it was crushing my spiritual life and my relationships. I even stopped to buy porn on my wedding day.

had engaged in masturbation, 80 percent did so regularly, and 63 percent were struggling with the practice — they desired to stop, but were unable. While the measured pool was not scientifically composed, the sheer size of these raw numbers makes the staggering suggestion that our MTV culture may have spawned the first generation of women widely bound by the biting straps of pornography and masturbation.

But teens are not the only ones slipping into the morass. In a survey of their female readership, *Today's Christian Woman* recently found that 34 percent of women were regularly accessing pornography on their computers. Many women took their first venture into cyberspace because they wanted to check out what men found so fascinating there, only to be ensnared themselves and drawn back to pornographic websites again and again.

This is astounding, given that the baseline sexual nature of women cannot as easily explain this phenomenon as it can in men. After all, magazines like *Playgirl* have failed from lack of interest. As a lightning strike causes chaos in a computer's hard-drive, today's unlimited access to heavy sensuality in our schools, theaters, concerts, computer rooms, and family rooms is blasting women with such overwhelming, abnormal waves of sexual pollution that it is rewiring their natural sexual makeup.

For many Christians, a reassessment of their courage and attitudes as parents, lay leaders, and pastors is long overdue. It is time to begin parenting and teaching our kids and students the way God parents us. God knows how to parent His children. He tells them the truth and proclaims the way of life unashamedly, regardless of the cost: "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality" (Ephesians 5:3).

What about the people sitting in your pews on Sunday? Even more to the point, what about you? You cannot lead your church into sexual purity if you are not pure yourself. It is time to get serious, accept the truth, and crack down on the lusts of the eyes that for years have inundated our brains with opioids.

### STAY CONNECTED TO THE TRUTH

What is God's standard of sexual purity? "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality" (Ephesians 5:3).

Many are surprised at the impact this truth can have on one's spiritual life. One young pastor told me, "I'd never really thought about guarding my eyes before reading *Every Man's Battle*. I watched any movies I wanted, and I looked way too long at the women around me. I honestly didn't think these things affected my life. But I began paying more attention to my eyes over the next day or so, and I found they were

collecting more sexual gratification than I had thought.

"Once I got my eyes under control, the spiritual impact was dramatic. For instance, I used to get lustful thoughts popping up all the time during prayer. But now that my eyes are protected, it doesn't happen. Prayer has become so much deeper and uninterrupted. Worshiping God is better as well. Now I feel free to express my heart to God. Before, I didn't have the freedom to express my love to God, probably because I was too involved in my impure thoughts."

The enemy will use one's impurity against him in prayer and in other ways as well. One evangelist said, "At the altar after services, sexual scenes from movies I had seen would flash across my mind as I closed my eyes to pray for the pretty woman standing before me. You can imagine how that played havoc with

### **HOW** WILL YOUR CHURCH RESPOND TO THE HOMOSEXUAL?

ne night while she was still cohosting the 700 Club with Pat Robertson, Sheila Walsh felt impressed to pray for homosexuals. Honoring the Holy Spirit, she presented the gospel and invited any homosexuals watching the program to pray with her. After the prayer, Sheila encouraged them to go to a church in their area, meet with the pastor, and say, "Sheila Walsh sent me."

Later, Sheila received a letter from a gay man who had been watching that broadcast. He had asked Jesus into his heart, gone to a local pastor, and shared with him that Sheila had sent him.

The pastor responded, "We don't have room for fags in this church."

In his letter to Sheila, this man said he was grateful to her, but becoming a part of the church was impossible. I still cringe when I think of that poor, honest, broken, searching man pouring out his heart only to get slapped in the face by a pastor with a reckless tongue and an un-Christlike heart.

Churches often respond to homosexuality with anger and judgment. Conversely, some churches openly accept homosexuality as a viable alternative to heterosexuality. Both are equally wrong and are inaccurate representations of God's heart. Most pastors know the truth: homosexuality is not a viable or biblical alternative. But far too often the church has not extended God's grace to those who are same-sex attracted. For many pastors it is easier to be right that the gays are wrong than it is to love them.

As a teenager I struggled in silence with feelings that I had not chosen. I remember what it was like to sit in the pew and hear my pastor read 1 Corinthians 6:9,10: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." I remember how hopeless that made me feel because my feelings indicated I was homosexual.

I was indirectly condemned to hell by a pastor who did not hold any hope for someone like me. The guilt, shame, and condemnation became so unbearable that at age 18 I vowed I would never attend church again because the church did not offer a life-giving alternative for me. The body of Christ made it easy for me to run bloodied and bruised into the open arms

of the gay community. But the gay lifestyle only offered more loneliness, desperation, and death. If the church had given any indication that it was safe, I might have avoided immersing myself in the gay culture.

Thankfully, my brother introduced me to a church that called sin, "sin," and yet loved people who seemed unlovable. I had only attended there a few weeks when two bold and loving members purposely walked into a gay bar on Easter in 1991 to remind me of God's love. They were committed to walking with me on the journey out of homosexuality. I repented of my sin and lifestyle and was restored by that church. Their example taught me that change is more than pointing the way; change is taking a person's hand and walking with him.

I long for the church to be this kind of repentance-producing example of God's "kindness, tolerance and patience" (Romans 2:4). For that longing to become reality, we must choose to never forget our own desperation prior to receiving Christ. We must overcome our ignorance concerning the roots and causes of homosexuality. Some pastors have chosen to ignore the issue completely out of the fear that they might offend others or because they have the misguided belief that sexual sin does not exist in their congregation.

In reality, homosexuality and those who deal with it live among us. Those who are struggling must be given opportunity to choose Christ and change if they desire. We must not be afraid to offer the truth in love. We also need to remember that the opposite of homosexuality is not heterosexuality, but holiness.

Today, there are numerous resources available. Log on to the Exodus website (www.exodus.to), contact one of its 127 member ministries, therapists, or Safe Churches, and glean from their knowledge. Read any one of the hundreds of books on ministering to homosexuals written from a biblical perspective. I encourage pastors to face the issue head-on, learn all they can about it, and offer what they find to their congregations. By all means, ask for help; it is available.



**ALAN CHAMBERS** is president of Exodus International, the world's largest education and evangelical resource on homosexuality. He also serves as an adjunct pastor at Calvary Assembly of God, Orlando, Florida. For more information call 407-599-6872 or info@exodus.to

my faith in prayer. That kind of battle between my flesh and my spirit had to go. I now guard my eyes from every corner of my life."

### STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR WIFE

A pastor's eyes are a huge issue if he expects to lead his church into sexual purity. But a deeper connection with his wife is just as critical to his personal purity.

Pastors are often too busy to do more than pose as great husbands. Many are burnishing their peaceful marital image for the sake of the people instead of taking time to be a great husband. Furthermore, because of their rightful authority as

God's anointed leaders, pastors have the last say in every decision at church. It is easy to slip into this I-get-to-breakthe-ties leadership mode at home, instead of the mutual submission pattern that is

### Standing against open sensuality is no longer an issue of cramping styles but of stopping an addictive compulsion in

their sexual defenses.

to share it.

men and women before it starts.

discussed in my book Every Man's Marriage, and that Paul emphasized in Ephesians 5. This take-charge, tie-breaking mode will quickly trample a wife's heart, and her sexual desire for her husband will be squashed with it.

If a pastor wants to be sexually pure, he must take more care with his leadership patterns at home. Pastors who are leading their homes by the principles of mutual submission also struggle much less with their sexual purity. Coincidence? I think not, and it is not just because they have better sexual relationships with their wives.

### STAY CONNECTED WITH OTHER MEN

Strong, interpersonal human connections defend against



pleasure chemicals floods the brain's limbic centers during orgasm. This means it is easy for men to confuse true intimacy with the feelings they experience with porn and masturbation. An orgasm produces a strong sense of manhood. Men feel dominant and strong at the moment of release, even though the sensation is fleeting. Second, men also feel a strong intimate connection with the other person at that moment, even though the experience is over in a flash.

a second vulnerability in the male sexual makeup. The eye

is one obvious obstacle to purity, but men have a second,

less obvious vulnerability in their sexual makeup — a disconnection from people. The enemy can use this to breach

What does this vulnerability look like? By nature, men

fill their intimacy tanks primarily from what they do just

prior to and during intercourse. Essentially, it is their native language of intimacy the way they naturally long

But that presents a big problem. Nearly all of the body's

most powerful chemicals are involved when the wash of

Now, consider that pastors are often beaten down emotionally by mediocre marital relationships or by the endless - and often unfair — demands of their boards and congregations, leaving them wounded and vulnerable to the addictive lure of porn. For the lonely, hurting, or disconnected pastor, that sense of manhood and intimate connection is an extremely potent draw, which explains why porn and masturbation shine like a pan of fool's gold to his eyes.

Because a man's native language of intimacy is sexual, masturbation feels like intimacy to him and can become like an easily obtained feel-good drug. If life is going badly and a man is depressed, he can masturbate to feel better. If life is going good, he can masturbate to celebrate his good fortunes. If he is stressed heavily for time, he can masturbate to relax and to reassert control of his life.

This is relevant in the wake of the Catholic sexual abuse scandal. As Protestants, we can sometimes ponder, What do they expect when they demand that their pastors remain unmarried forever? It goes against nature.

But, have Pentecostals not done similar things? In the past, Bible schools warned young pastors to avoid forming tight relationships with individuals in their congregations. Some of the reasons made sense. But when one considers the male sexual nature and the damage that human disconnection produces in a man's sexual defenses, did this teaching create more problems — especially sexual ones — than it solved?

Much has been written recently about the importance of building friendships between men through men's ministry. These close friendships can help every man stay pure, including pastors.

### STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR CHURCH BODY

Individual connections are vital if a pastor is to remain pure and lead his church into sexual purity. But a pastor must also work wisely to maintain his connection with his church. He needs to ask, *What is going on in my church? Do I know? Am I missing some red flags?* 

Recently, the senior high pastor at my church was fired for sexual misconduct with a 17-year-old girl from our church. Many people in the congregation were devastated, but his dismissal barely raised an eyebrow with some people because they had seen the red flags for months.

Why didn't they say anything? There are several reasons. No one in the congregation wants to look small and petty to the pastor. Also, sharing red flags is risky business. No one wants to be viewed as a nosy nitwit snooping around into everyone's life.

Most important, even if people can get past these risk factors, most churches do not have a channel by which to communicate such serious charges. What does a church member do? Set up an appointment? Pastors are busy — most congregants feel uncomfortable doing this. Pastors cannot be pulled aside after a service for such a discussion. Serious concerns require a more formal format. The church must have a channel for sharing this kind of information because pastors need that information to lead well.

I recently visited a church where the pastor preached a message entitled, "Not Even a Hint." Can't beat that message! Yet, when the young worship pastor's wife led the singing before and after the message, she was wearing such a revealing outfit I had to look away from the platform. At lunch afterward, a friend mentioned she dressed like that every week, and men in the congregation had been complaining. The senior pastor did not seem to notice, and the other pastors did not want to confront their colleague about his wife's dress. So, while the pastor is concerned enough to preach about sexual purity, he is too disconnected from what is happening in his church to understand what is going on around him.

If a pastor desires a sexually pure church, he must break down these obstacles of communication by creating a way for people to share their concerns in a risk-free manner. Designate a deacon as the go-to guy for the congregation and encourage them to process their concerns through this channel. The pastor cannot be everywhere and know everything. Make it easy for deacons to be the pastor's ears and eyes.

### BREAK CONNECTION WITH THE CULTURE

Christians as a whole are having little preservative effect on their culture. They would not be useless if they feared God more than men. After all, what would happen if Christians stopped watching sensual halftime shows, refused to buy tickets to the latest PG-13 movie, and stopped purchasing videos that titillate their minds? The culture would change.

### FREEDOM—DEALING WITH SEXUAL SIN IN THE CHURCH

oster an atmosphere of truth and honesty. Men who struggle must know they can confess their sin without undue consequences. You may have to take a man out of a leadership position, but you should never do anything that would disrespect him or betray his confidence.

Renounce sin. Sin destroys lives, corrupts churches, and weakens the body of Christ. Living and preaching holiness may offend those who wish to compromise, but it will attract those who are sincerely hungry for God.

ducate your congregation about proper and improper sexuality. If struggling men feel that the pastor is uncomfortable with the subject, they will never come forward for help.

stablish and encourage men's ministry. Men tend to isolate, and one of the greatest helps to a man overcoming secret sin is getting involved in godly fellowship with others.

Disciple those in need. We have learned how to build big churches, but in the process we have lost our ability to build spiritual maturity in the lives of individuals. This lack of personal attention is one of the primary reasons men do not live in more freedom.

Offer restoration for fallen church leaders and members. Have something in place to refer men to, such as a biblical counselor or a ministry that deals with sexual sin from a biblical perspective.\*

Model godly character and consecration. Your personal walk with God will determine the level of spiritual authority you have to speak into the lives of others.

\*The Pure Life Live-in and Overcomers-At-Home programs are two options available. For more information, call Pure Life Ministries at 859-824-4444, or visit their website http://www.purelifeministries.org.



**STEVE GALLAGHER** is president of Pure Life Ministries, Dry Ridge, Kentucky, a leading ministry to Christian individuals and organizations dealing with sexual sin.

### **BOOKS BY FRED STOEKER**

### **EVERY MAN'S BATTLE**



Stephen Arterburn, Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey (WaterBrook Press, 235 pp., paperback)

From the television to the Internet, print media to videos, men are constantly faced with the assault of sensual images. It is impossible to avoid such temptations ... but,

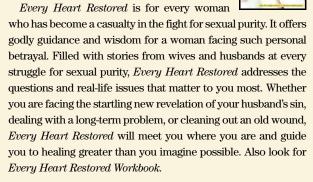
very heart restored

thankfully, not impossible to rise above them.

Shattering the perception that men are unable to control their thought lives and roving eyes, *Every Man's Battle* shares the stories of dozens who have escaped the trap of sexual immorality and presents a practical, detailed plan for any man who desires sexual purity — perfect for men who have fallen in the past, those who want to remain strong today, and all who want to overcome temptation in the future. Also look for *Every Man's Battle Workbook*.

### **EVERY HEART RESTORED**

Stephen Arterburn, Fred and Brenda Stoeker with Mike Yorkey (WaterBrook Press, 252 pp., paperback)



### PREPARING YOUR SON FOR EVERY MAN'S BATTLE



Stephen Arterburn, Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey (WaterBrook Press, 256 pp., paperback)

It's never been easy for a father or mother to talk to a son about sex. For Christian parents, it's always been a challenge to know

exactly how to teach God's standards of purity and integrity. Today, the stakes are higher than they've ever been.

The authors behind the best-selling Every Man Series have put together all the resources and guidance you need to experience frank, thorough, and natural conversations with your son about sexual integrity. They offer an effective new communication process that ensures a deep, abiding relationship between you and your son as he moves into his teen years and beyond.

Equip your young man with the biblical information and spiritual insights he needs to stand strong, overcome temptation, and experience the blessings of godly obedience ... for the rest of his life.

Some may think, *Be realistic, Fred. That's not possible anymore.* The fact some Christians cannot imagine this reveals the extent to which Christians have lost their saltiness. It also begs another penetrating question: What has the Church been doing during this era of porn? Has the Church been calling back the strays and setting the captives free? Not often enough.

In a quest to remain hip and relevant, churches can become irrelevant to the greatest issue of our day, and men can fall victim to the enemies deadly sexual temptations.

Having tricked pastors into using films and film clips in their sermons for the sake of connection, one can only imagine how hard Satan must be laughing at us, much as he laughed at the foolish Christians in C.S. Lewis' book *The Screwtape Letters*. I remember one youth leader who asked his group how many had seen *Dead Poet's Society*, a PG movie starring Robin Williams. Over 90 percent of the teens raised their hands.

## If a pastor wants to be sexually pure, he must take more care with his leadership patterns at home.

He then proceeded to preach the truths he had mined from that movie, yet he failed to mention the biggest-busted truth of all — a *Playboy* centerfold flips wide open, front and center, for at least a minute during the film's early scenes. Having just given tacit approval to watch the film, he openly indicated it was okay for teenage boys to look at pornography. A single viewing of such a film can set a boy up for years of masturbation and guilt, as this letter attests: "I was 11 when I first masturbated. It just kind of happened while watching a strip scene on a TBS movie. ... I was hooked, and I was locked into masturbation for years."

Male hardwiring is prone to addictive lusts of the eyes. Our churches can wound men in their desire to be relevant, when sermons or programs promote and approve the very things that rev a guy's sexual engine into the red zone. Once there, however, masturbation destroys a man's spirituality.

This is frustrating. We have had the truth for 2,000 years. Paul wrote that sexual sin is different, and Christians must flee from it or be bound by it. The Church could have continued to speak out against it, but church leaders did not want to sound old school or jeopardize their relationship with the younger people in the congregation.

I became a Christian in 1980, about the time many denominations began to relax their standards on Hollywood and the viewing habits of their people. Churches rewrote and watered down their entertainment standards for membership in their

by-laws. Eventually, pastors even began using feature films as their message texts.

Now, just 25 years later, the results are staggering. While mainstream feature films can pollute as surely as pornographic web pages, Christians ignore the truth because everyone else is watching them. These films damage our oneness with Christ as surely as cyberporn.

As a result, churches are left with husbands and sons who are stumbling on in their warped sexual behavior, who wonder why they cannot get control of themselves, and who are trapped by the church's silence. Meanwhile, the sheep bleat foolishly on, saying, "I'm glad the pastor is finally talking about movies in his sermons. Now I don't have to feel guilty about watching them."

What are Christians thinking? Pastors begin innocently enough, hoping to soften the church's seemingly stern standards to make things comfortable for the seekers sitting in the pews, but have forgotten that the primary call of the church is to equip the saints. When pastors approve viewing practices that play against a man's natural wiring (and play right into the hands of Satan), they not only fail to equip them, they emasculate them as leaders.

To add insult to injury, secular scientists now stand in Senate hearings crying, "The eyes are like a syringe of heroin straight to the brain. We've got to do something." Like two ships passing in the night, the pagans are now sailing the right direction, while the church in its quest to be hip is steaming the wrong way — full-speed ahead!



"Not to nit-pick, but other than 3 years of VBS, do you have any Bible school training that would be useful in pastoring?"

If pastors expect to have a sexually pure church, they must rethink their course. The spiritual temperature of the church will be inversely proportional to the sexual temperature of the people.

### HELPING THE ADDICTED

How do pastors help men and women who are sexually addicted? Many men and women who attend church cannot

### Parents and churches have cowered in silence over the issue of open sensuality because they were terrified of being labeled legalistic.

control their addictive compulsions. If they are to become pure, they must take the following steps:

### Stop the behaviors

To get control, men and women must read books like Every Man's Battle, Every Woman's Battle, and Every Young Woman's Battle and apply the principles of fleeing to cut off the sensuality spewing in through their eyes and minds.

### Get connected with others

If men and women are to escape sexual temptations and the false intimacy of sexual sin, they must develop a deeper connection with their spouse and develop friendships with other men and women in the church. Men's and women's ministries are vital lifelines for any recovering sex addict. Counseling is recommended to help them deal with the wounds that drove them into porn in the first place.

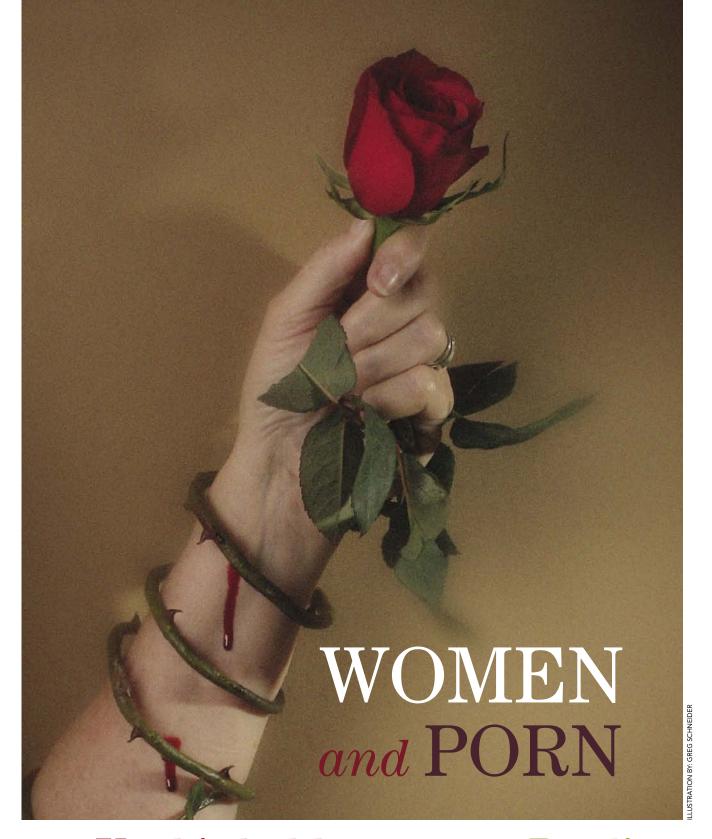
### Get connected with God

There is no intimacy like the kind available with Jesus. Pastors need to teach men and women to develop a deeper relationship with Christ that is personal and encourages worship at home. Christ is the finest accountability partner a man and woman can know. Once a personal relationship with Christ is developed, victory in this battle is more assured.

Purity is possible today, in spite of the obstacles. Christians must understand the times and, in wisdom, rise up and crush the enemy in his tracks. It will be costly, but believers know what they must do. Now, they must stand and do it.



Fred Stoeker, Des Moines, Iowa, is founder and chairman of Living True Ministries and coauthor of the best-selling Every Man series.



The Unthinkable Becomes Reality

BY KATHY GALLAGHER

usan's face betrayed her disgust the first time her husband suggested they watch an adult movie together.

"Honey, not only will it enhance our lovemaking," Jim exclaimed, "but it will also end the sneaking around. I will no longer have a sex life separate from you."

She had given up hope of him quitting his on-line addiction long ago, but this was too much. "We are Christians, Jim," she protested, "and this is wrong."

"Wrong?" Jim argued. "I know of Christian therapists who suggest couples use pornography to improve their sex lives. How can that be wrong?"

After years of dealing with Jim's secret sex life, Susan eventually acquiesced and joined what is becoming an ever-increasing number of Christian women who regularly view pornography. This phenomenon bucks the conventional wisdom that only men are visually stimulated and thereby more prone to viewing porn.

Traditionally, women are more likely to engage in wistful, romantic fantasies than crude scenes of people engaging in sexual acts. Over the past few years, however, a disturbing new trend has emerged: an alarming number of women are viewing pornography.

To illustrate, Nielsen NetRatings report that nearly onethird of the visitors to adult websites are female. They estimate that 9.4 million women in the United States accessed on-line pornography in September 2003.<sup>1</sup>

An article in *Today's Christian Woman* seems to support their assertions. "One out of every six women, including Christians, struggles with an addiction to pornography," claims author Ramona Richards. "That's 17 percent of the population, which, according to a survey by research organization Zogby International, is the number of women who truly believe they can find sexual fulfillment on the Internet."

I doubt that 17 percent of Christian women are viewing pornography. Nevertheless, even half that amount represents a distressing number of women.

### **INITIAL INVOLVEMENT**

Jim's introducing Susan to adult entertainment is typical of how most females become involved. The first time he brought home a movie, she was shocked at what she saw. It was so revolting to her that she tried to ignore the scenes on their television set. Instead, she focused her attention on her husband. As for Jim, she had never seen him so passionate toward her. It was thrilling. During the next few days, Susan grappled with what she had done, vacillating between guilt and excitement. In the end, she made a conscious decision that she was willing to exchange her self-respect for his affection.

As Jim had promised, there was a heightened level of excitement in their intimacy that had not been there since their wedding night twenty-some years before. Once she recovered from the initial shock of the movie's explicit content, she began to anticipate their special times on Saturday nights. The intense pleasure of their new love life also gave their relationship a new commonality.

Susan was surprised at the quality of the videos. The videos were not cheaply produced. The world of adult entertainment has its own producers, directors, camera crews, and movie stars. Everything is top-notch. Susan began to not only enjoy the effect the movies had on their sex life, but also the movies themselves. While Jim was fascinated with body parts and explicit scenes, Susan was drawn to the seductive storylines and her favorite actors — and actresses. Yes, a *lust for women* had been kindled within her.

Their relationship seemed idyllic those first few weeks. Although Susan had to silence her guilty conscience and stifle her nagging concerns, her relationship with Jim seemed better than ever before. But the pleasure of sin only lasts for a season. Unknown to her, an evil, corrupting influence had been loosed within her heart. The sex-is-everything mindset communicated by these videos began to break down her inhibitions. She began to fantasize about other men — and women. She even secretly watched the movies while Jim was at work.

Another troubling development occurred as well. Their relationship, which had become full of tenderness and devotion, began to deteriorate. Jim became more distant, causing Susan to become suspicious and argumentative. They squabbled over petty differences. When they were in public, Jim openly gawked at every pretty girl he saw. How could Susan scold him? After all, had she not allowed pornography into their home? Gradually things became worse, until finally Jim left and Susan filed for divorce. Now, Susan is a middle-aged woman with a failed marriage. The loss of her self-respect combined with the hollowness of soul that porn produces caused her to feel more miserable than ever.

This case is typical of what occurs when wives allow pornography in the home. As the number of men who attend church and are addicted to porn continues to increase, the number of wives and girlfriends involved in porn will also grow. While this is bad enough, there is another disturbing trend: women are seeking out Internet porn for themselves.

One such person is Julie, a serious-minded, young business-woman. Like Susan, before becoming involved in porn, Julie's life would have been considered normal by today's Christian standards. Although she participated in the singles group at her church, she struggled with loneliness. Julie secretly envied the bubbly girls who seemed to attract guys. Sometimes she despaired of ever finding Mr. Right. For some time she had



been watching one of the leading network soap operas, allowing the immorality portrayed on the show to fuel her secret fantasy of being a beautiful seductress.

She was embarrassed one evening when the pastor's wife came for a visit image of a copulating couple popped up on the screen and she quickly closed the site with trembling hands. The scene haunted her memory. A few nights later she revisited the site. She was so enthralled by what she saw that she was completely drawn in. After the exhilaration of that night her soap opera seemed tame and boring. She found herself returning to the adult websites time and again. She knew it was wrong, but, despite repeated promises to quit her behavior, she kept going back to them.

### PROTECTING THE SHEEP

Were Susan and Julie<sup>3</sup> normal, godly women who were caught off guard in a moment of weakness and succumbed to a powerful temptation? No. Paul said, "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16, NKJV).<sup>4</sup> The crucial element of a victorious life is not the object of temptation, but the spiritual condition of the person being tempted. A few pointed questions will help us focus on the issues at stake.

If Susan's life were right with God, would she have agreed to look at a dirty movie in the first place? She would have known the outcome of such a decision would be disaster. She faithfully attended church, but her decisions indicate a weak

(or nonexistent) relationship with God. Paul could have been describing Susan when he wrote, "But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives" (1 Timothy 5:6).<sup>5</sup>

If Julie were walking with the Lord, would she have been watching soap operas? Would she have been so obsessed

with romance that she would visit online chat rooms? Would she have clicked on an erotic website? The truth is she had adopted the *Cosmo* girl-me first mentality prevalent among today's young women. Yes, she attended church faithfully, but God was not the center of her existence, but an add-on to her worldly, selfish life. It was easy for her to cross moral boundaries and step over the line into pornography.

These two stories and the thousands of real situations they represent reflect how important it is for a shepherd to closely monitor his sheep. As Paul approached the end of his life, his chief concern was to keep the Church on course. He shared many powerful truths with his closest confidants; a few of these truths can be employed to better protect our young women from becoming casualties of our sex-saturated culture.

Paul understood that women without spiritual guidance could easily be led astray (2 Timothy 3:6). To help protect them, he enlisted a vital resource within church ranks: godly, mature women. He wrote, "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior ... teaching what is good, so that

## One reason a woman must maintain a vibrant devotional life is because she desperately needs the constant influence of God's perspectives on her thinking.

while the show she had recorded that day was playing on her TV. The older woman's face flushed when she saw a torrid love scene. Julie's feigned indignation masked the fact she had come to enjoy this kind of fare. The truth was she continually fostered romantic and sexual fantasies about several male acquaintances at her job.

Another pastime unexpectedly developed in Julie's life. One day she confided in a girlfriend from church about her struggle with loneliness. Her friend suggested that Julie visit Christian chat rooms on the Internet where she could develop risk-free relationships with men. At first Julie tried it hesitantly and carefully, but before long she was heavily involved. Eventually, she expanded her involvement to include larger, secular chat rooms. Initially, the amount of sexual talk alarmed her, but she gradually became fascinated with it. It made her feel like a star in her own soap opera.

Occasionally, Julie would see messages that linked to adult websites. In the beginning, she resisted her curiosity, but she eventually had no resistance left. One night she impulsively clicked on a link to an adult website. She panicked when an they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored" (Titus 2:3–5).

Listening to good sermons and reading interesting books is helpful, but the immature Christian — whatever her age — needs discipleship. She needs a mature saint to take her under her wing and guide her through godly instruction. A woman may hear sermons, but without accountability she will derive limited benefit. Lost in a crowd of listeners, she can easily ignore or disregard what she hears. Paul provided for this problem when he gave the fourfold method of true discipleship: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Most girls and women attending our churches are being indoctrinated with the world's values. They need godly women to instruct them about the Christian life. How should young girls dress? How do they handle dating? Is there anything wrong with watching sitcoms or soap operas? What does it mean to live a holy life? How can they know if their lives are pleasing to God? What can they do to escape the selfishness of our culture? What should a wife do when she discovers her husband is addicted to pornography? These are practical and meaningful issues that women encounter, and they need to be taught biblical ways to approach them. Special, temporary classes could be arranged to answer the questions raised by these important subjects.

Teaching is important, but women also need the personal involvement of a godly woman in their lives. Reproof helps individuals stay the course. Left to themselves, women can easily stray off the narrow path and, as we saw in the cases above, become backslidden. If a godly mentor had been involved in their lives, they might not have gotten so far off track. Reproof is necessary when the mentor sees her student going astray. She steps between her and the source of her temptation and in godly love says, "No. You cannot do that." Paul said "if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path" (Galatians 6:1, NLT).6

The corrupting effects of this world on the human mind should not be underestimated. Sexual addictions can alter a person's perspectives, values, and attitudes. One reason a woman must maintain a vibrant devotional life is because she desperately needs the constant influence of God's perspectives on her thinking. A mature woman mentor will soon discern any areas in a younger woman's life that are not scriptural. Correction will help guide her back into biblical thinking and living.

Women need training to live righteously. The term used by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16 (Greek, *paideia*) is usually translated

"discipline." Translators were correct to use "training," but *paideia* contains a stronger sense. There is an element of authority connected to this word that is clear in the passages where it is used: father-son, God-believer, and even Pilate-criminal (Jesus). While teaching tends to be impersonal and vague, training is personal and specific.

Last, Paul left this principle with Timothy: "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). This principle also applies to faithful women — especially your wife. As you delegate authority to these important soldiers, God will use them to rescue women who might otherwise be headed for disaster.



Kathy Gallagher is author of When His Secret Sin Breaks Your Heart. She is also vice president and cofounder of Pure Life Ministries. For more information, call 1-859-824-4444, or visit www.purelifeministries.org.

### **ENDNOTES**

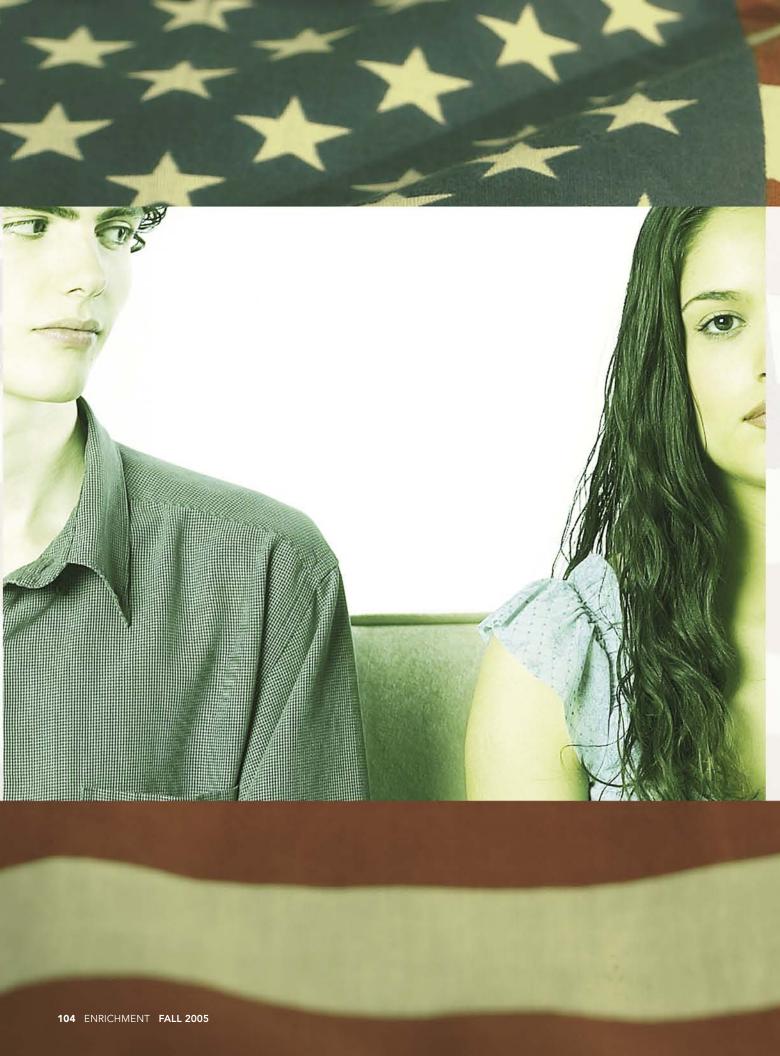
- 1. Jason Collum, "A Woman's Struggle." AFA Journal (March 2004): 20,21.
- 2. Ramona Richards, "Dirty Little Secret." *Today's Christian Woman* magazine (September/October 2003).
- 3. These are fictitious persons who are composites of women to whom we have ministered.
- 4. Scripture quotations marked "NKJV" are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright© 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
- 5. Scripture quotations, unless indicated, are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright© 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www. Lockman.org)
- 6. Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright© 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

### WOMEN AND PORNOGRAPHY

- 70 percent of women keep their cyber activities secret.
- 17 percent of all women struggle with pornography addiction.
- Women, far more than men, are likely to act out their behaviors in real life, such as having multiple partners, casual sex, or affairs.
- Women favor chat rooms two times more than men.
- $\bullet\,$  One of three visitors to all a dult websites are women.
- 9.4 million women access adult websites each month.
- Women admitting to accessing pornography at work, 13 percent.

For a comprehensive source on the most current statistics on pornography and surrounding issues go to http://www.nationalcoalition.org/resourcesservices/stat.html.

2004 TopTenREVIEWS, Inc. Used by permission.



## SEX AND YOUNG AMERICA

### Ministering to Sexually Addicted Youth

If someone had asked me when I was 12 if I wanted to remain a virgin until marriage, I would have said, "Of course I do."

At 13, I would have said, "I think so."

By 14, I would have replied, "Maybe."

At age 15, my response would have been, "I don't see how that is possible."

Indeed, my innocence became just a memory that year. Sex soon became a routine part of my dating relationships — the price that I felt I must pay for the attention and affection I craved. It was not until my twenties that I understood I was a sex and love addict.

ILLUSTRATION BY: SONNY CARDER

BY SHANNON ETHRIDGE

s dysfunctional as my private life was, my spiritual life appeared functional. I was raised in church and was president of my youth group. I headed many fundraisers for worthy causes and attended Christian concerts — The Imperials, Resurrection Band, and Amy Grant. Even with these Christian activities and influences, I do not recall feeling much guilt or remorse over the double life I was living. Back then, Christians did not seem to talk much about sexual issues. We did not ask, and we did not tell. What I did not know did not bring conviction.

Attitudes, however, have changed drastically since I was a sexually addicted teen in the 1980s. Churches and youth groups are talking about sexual issues. Musicians such as Rebecca St. James, Jump 5, and By the Tree make sexual purity look and sound cool. The True Love Waits movement has swept across our nation with great force. So, have the sexual practices of young people changed? According to a survey of nearly 600 teens, 61 percent of those who had taken abstinence pledges had broken them within a year. Of the 39 percent who said they had not broken their pledges, more than half disclosed that they had engaged in oral sex." Why are more and more young Christians living double lives? More important, what can pastors, youth leaders, and concerned adults do to help them have victory in their battle against sexually addictive behaviors?

### ACCEPTING OUR CALL TO LEADERSHIP

The church is learning to speak more openly and honestly about sexual issues, which is absolutely vital. But pastors are

### TEEN SEXUAL ACTIVITY STATISTICS

- In 2002, it was estimated that 3.2 million teens under the age of 15 were living with HIV.1
- Of the 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases that occurred in 2000, 9.1 million (48 percent) of those afflicted were young people ages 15 to 24.2
- 21 percent of ninth graders have slept with 4 or more partners.2
- 55 percent of teens ages 13 to 19 admitted to engaging in oral sex.3



SHANNON ETHRIDGE, Lindale, Texas

### **ENDNOTES**

1. Lisa Collier Cool, "The Secret Sex Lives of Kids," Ladies' Home Journal (March 2001): 156-159.

- 2. See Hillard Weinstock, Stuart Berman, and Willard Cates, Jr., "Sexually Transmitted Diseases Among American Youth: Incidence and Prevalence Estimates, 2000," Alan Guttmacher Institute vol. 36, no. 1 (January/February 2004) at http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3600604.html
- 3. Seventeen, "National survey conducted by Seventeen finds that more than half of teens ages 15-19 have engaged in oral sex," news release, February 28, 2000.

sometimes challenged by certain individuals not to talk about S-E-X to their kids. Pastors cannot let fear of offending a few stand in the way of educating the many. I have often kindly informed parents that we would be talking openly about sexual issues and that I would respect their decision to not allow their kids to come that evening or to attend that weekend retreat. However, parents need to respect the fact the church has been called by God to lead a generation to embrace His standards for living, which includes sexual purity.

If you encounter resistance in your church as you attempt to bring sexual issues to the forefront, I recommend taking an informal, anonymous poll of the teens and young adults in your church. Ask them to list what they see and hear in the culture about sex and what questions they would like the church to respond to. Compile their comments and questions and present them to the parents and other church leaders. Ask these leaders, "If teens cannot get rocksolid answers and biblical truth about sexuality from their church, where are they going to get it? In their schools? From their peers? Over the Internet?" It would be a travesty for the church, God's mouthpiece, to remain silent on these matters while the media wallpapers our world with sexually stimulating images.

### WHERE IS THE VICTORY?

Statistics show that while Christian youth are taught by the church to embrace a lifestyle of purity, the church is not doing an effective job of teaching how to do that. During my past 15 years of youth ministry and 6 years of teaching at Teen Mania Ministries, if I had a dime for every young Christian who confessed that he was merely a "technical virgin," or had even fallen into the "friendships with privileges" pit, I would

In case these terms are new to you, the technical virgin is one who accepts that premarital intercourse is a forbidden activity, but engages in doing everything else, including mutual masturbation and oral sex. While I hate to rain on the young people's purity parade, we need to speak the truth in love to them. Although they may be virgins (medically speaking), they are *not* sexually pure. One can be a physical virgin but a mental, emotional, and spiritual prostitute.

Once a young person has done everything except intercourse, it does not take much effort to kill his conscience and go that one step further. Once virginity is lost, sexual standards usually plummet. The "friendships with privileges" craze among young people is a perfect example. Rather than sex as a loving expression between two caring partners in a committed marriage relationship, today's generation often rejects romance and holds no expectation of a serious relationship of any kind after a sexual encounter. It is understood that both partners are only in it for sex, and once that

# PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR INSTILLING SEXUAL VALUES IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Differentiate between virginity (a medical condition) and sexual purity (a condition of mind, body, heart, and soul). Use the four-door car analogy to explain this concept. Talk about practical ways to guard not only our bodies, but also our minds, hearts, and spirits. Every Young Woman's Battle, Every Young Man's Battle, and the accompanying workbooks will challenge young people's thinking, equip them to pursue sexual purity from every possible angle, and help them embrace God's sexual standards as their own rather than assume that physical virginity is good enough.

Challenge young people to pursue an intimate relationship with Christ (through prayer, Bible study, quiet time, and worship) more avidly than they pursue a boyfriend or girlfriend. It is okay to desire a romantic relationship, but Psalm 37:4 says that God gives us the desires of our heart when we delight ourselves in Him.

Establish yourself as an askable adult. Give young people permission to ask you questions about sexual issues, and tell them to use whatever words necessary to ask them. Teens often assume they cannot ask an adult questions about sexual issues because they would get in trouble for using explicit words. Many do not know the appropriate vocabulary needed to speak of sexual matters properly and can only repeat the words they have heard others use. Give them permission to use slang in asking their questions and be willing to teach them

proper medical terms so they can confidently discuss sexual issues with adults.

Frequently discuss current events and studies that relate to sexual issues. For example, the RAND Corporation recently issued a study that "Adolescents who watch large amounts of television containing sexual content are twice as likely to begin engaging in sexual intercourse in the following year as their peers who watch little such TV." Let teens know that youth group, Sunday School, or church is a safe forum for Christians to talk openly about sexual issues. Remind them that God is the author of sex and that the church is an appropriate and safe place to talk about it.

Be relatively open to the extent it is appropriate about your personal pursuit of sexual purity and the stumbling blocks you have encountered. Share your strategies for maintaining sexual integrity. Remember, they need to hear about your successes. Sometimes they need to hear about your failures and what you learned from them. Kids do not need adults to be rocks as much as they need us to be real. This gives them the freedom to be real with us, too.



SHANNON ETHRIDGE, Lindale, Texas

ENDNOTE

1. http://www.rand.org/news/press.04/09.07.html.

is over, it is over. This behavior is not too far from the onenight stands of past generations. What is startling, though, is how socially acceptable it has become in today's youth culture.

Yale University student Natalie Krinsky wrote in her Yale  $Daily\ News$  column, "Sex and the (Elm) City": "Women know within the first 5 minutes of meeting a man whether they are

going to hook up with him or not. But ... women don't want the guy to know he'll be hooking up until he's actually doing it. ... Post hookup is when guys tend to get ambiguous [they ignore you]. It's their payback. Do they want to hook up again? Dunno. Do they want to date? Dunno. Are they straight? Dunno. Name? Dunno."<sup>3</sup>

According to a MSNBC article, a survey of 555 undergrads revealed that 78 percent of students had hooked up (had sex with someone they did not have a romantic relationship with) and the average student accumulates 10.8 hookup partners during college. If you asked these students if they were addicted to sex, most would tell you what I would have said as an addicted teen: "Of course not. I can stop any time."

## DEVELOPING A STRONGER LINE OF DEFENSE

How can we help young people guard themselves against sexual compromise? We have diligently tried to teach them how to guard against the temptation to become sexually intimate with one another. We have emphasized physical virginity and saving sexual intercourse until marriage, but I propose we

While I hate to rain on the young people's purity parade, we need to speak the truth in love to them. Although they may be virgins (medically speaking), they are not sexually pure.

look at the bigger picture. There are four doors that lead to sexual compromise.

Imagine that an attacker desires to harm you and you are looking for a place of refuge. You see a vacant four-door car on the street and you get in to take cover. What is the first thing you must do to prevent the attacker from coming in after you? Lock all the doors. Unless you lock all four doors

there is no sense in locking any of them. There is a vulnerable point of entry until each door is locked.

The same is true with sexual integrity. Our sexuality is not what we do with our bodies, it is who we are — mind, body, heart, and soul. Unless we carefully guard not only our body,

but also our mind, heart, and spirit, we are vulnerable to sexual temptations.

Christians do not just decide one day to commit sexual sin with their bodies or to become sex addicts. Sin begins in our minds when we allow the world's messages to infect our thinking and blur our spiritual vision. Our thoughts affect our

heart and distorted thinking evolves into distorted beliefs. Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks, and we find ourselves enjoying a fun game of innocent flirting with someone of the opposite sex (or same sex in the case of homosexuality). (See sidebar "Homosexuality in Our Youth Groups".)

As the fascination with this other person intensifies, we begin to see him or her as the fulfillment of our longings. If we place them on a pedestal higher than God's, it becomes spiritual idolatry. Then we are like a moth drawn to a flame, enamored by its brilliance but ignorant of its destructive potential. This is exactly how I changed from wanting to remain sexually pure at age 12 to being a sex addict at 15. Because I did not know how to guard my mind, heart, and spirit against inappropriate relationships, my body soon became a casualty of my own private war for sexual integrity.

### GUARDING OUR MINDS

In the e-mails that Stephen Arterburn, Fred Stoeker, and I receive from teens in response to our books, Every Young

32005 Henry Boye HERE WILL YOU SMOKING OR NON-SMOKING? "" HANNING HENRY BOXE Man's Battle and Every Young Woman's Battle, it is evident that Satan is fervently attacking young minds. As teens retrace their steps to tell us how their battle began, it usually leads back to early adolescence when they wanted answers to their innocent and age-appropriate questions about sex.

### Statistics show that while Christian youth are taught by the church to embrace a lifestyle of purity, the church is not doing an effective job of teaching how to do that.

Because today's teens often fear adults will panic or make false assumptions about their sexual curiosities, they use the Internet to find answers. Unfortunately, the answers they get in cyberspace do not satisfy their sexual curiosities. Instead, the flame is fueled as their curiosities are awakened to an even greater extent. Consider these statistics:

- The average age a person is first exposed to Internet pornography is 11 years old.
- · The largest consumers of Internet pornography are teens ages 12 to 17.
- 90 percent of 8- to 16-year-olds have viewed porn online.
- 80 percent of 15- to 17-year-olds have had multiple hard-core exposures.
- 35 percent of peer-to-peer downloads (1.5 billion per month) are pornographic.
- 89 percent of teen sexual solicitations occur in Internet chat rooms.
- 20 percent of youth have received a sexual solicitation over the Internet.4

Internet pornography and chat rooms are not the only ways young minds are being attacked. We must also warn our children and teens of the dangers of television shows, movies, music, magazines, romance novels, and other media that can turn their minds from sexual purity to lustful desires. If we can stop mental sexual temptations, we will not need to worry about our hearts, spirits, and bodies falling prey to temptation. But if we are not successful in keeping our minds pure, our battle intensifies.

### **GUARDING OUR HEARTS**

Pastors have probably preached Proverbs 4:23 many times. "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." But most young people cannot fathom what that means. In fact, it is difficult for many adults to understand and consistently apply as well. Guarding our heart seems to be a gray issue with no black or white guidelines. Therefore, we have colorized the issue in Every Young Woman's Battle using a traffic-light model that illustrates three different levels of emotional connection. Using this model, we can illustrate where our hearts can GO (the green-light levels), when we need to SLOW down and take caution (the yellow-light levels), and when we need to STOP (the red-light levels).

The green-light levels of emotional connection include *Attention* and *Attraction*. Because God created us as sexual beings, it is natural that certain people will get our attention and we will feel attracted to them. When teens experience this, they falsely assume they are in love, or they are guilty of lusting for that person. To prevent Satan from tormenting teens with false guilt, they need to understand that being attracted to someone is natural and normal, even being attracted to

someone else after marriage. We do not stop feeling attracted to other people even if we fast and pray for 24 hours straight or put a wedding band on our finger. Attraction ends at one's death. Feeling attracted to others is part of life — a part that cannot control us unless we allow it.

The yellow-light levels of emotional connection include *Affection*, *Arousal*, and *Attachment*. When people are attracted to someone as a potential mate, they feel compelled to express affection. There are healthy ways to express affection (such as a kind word, a pat on the back, or thoughtful actions), and there are unhealthy ways (such as a flirtatious comment, a suggestive look, or an inappropriate touch).

### HOMOSEXUALITY IN OUR YOUTH GROUPS

Is homosexuality an issue that needs to be addressed in your youth group? Many youth pastors quickly respond, "Yes, but I'm not sure how to talk about it."

Others may respond, "No, that's not a problem we have at our church."

But homosexuality is not just an urban problem, a San Francisco problem, or an out-there problem. Homosexuality is an issue for many young Christian men and woman who struggle with unwanted same-sex attractions. In fact, Exodus Youth helps many Christian students who love God, have unwanted same-sex attractions, and are afraid their youth group will find out.

Let me ask an uncomfortable question: Would a struggling youth in your church feel safe disclosing his or her secret to you? Would she expect compassion and grace, or would lesbian jokes and attitudes of anger or disgust toward lesbians and gays leave her fearful of being found out?

When speaking about homosexuality and lesbianism with your youth group, it is vital to speak the whole gospel, not just the biblical prohibition on homosexual acts. For example, 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 says, "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." This is true and good to share, but do not forget verse 11, "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." We know from this verse that some in the church in Corinth left homosexuality to follow Christ.

God's Word not only condemns homosexual acts as sin, but also expresses God's deep love for homosexuals and His power to save and transform their lives. For 30 years, Exodus has proved the truth of 1 Corinthians 6:11. Thousands of people have overcome homosexuality and now enjoy lives of holiness and fruitful service to Christ.

Several years ago, as a campus minister, I was faced with

how to respond to a young man in my church who told me through tears that he thought he might be gay. I felt confused, disgusted, and sad. I was not sure how to respond. Then I remembered Jesus was known as a friend of tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners. He calls us to follow His example of radical compassion for sinners and outcasts, including those who are homosexuals.

When someone discloses his struggle to you, remember the following:

- Do not shut down pastorally or emotionally. The person coming to you has known a lifetime of rejection and desperately needs a representative of Jesus Christ who will extend grace to him. Hug him when he leaves to show that you continue to love and accept him.
- Do not pass judgment. All of us have sins of which we are ashamed. Billy Graham said, "Don't take credit for not falling into a temptation that never tempted you in the first place."
- Do not disclose this person's secret without permission, even among church staff. There is nothing safe about the gay lifestyle. People struggling with same-sex attractions need to find safety in the church. Allow youth to share their struggle with their parents and others, as they are ready.

Exodus is a valuable resource for those who minister to youth struggling with same-sex attractions. Our local member ministries can provide speakers who will share their testimonies of overcoming homosexuality, counselors or mentors to meet with pastors and teenagers, and support groups. We can also provide books and other resources for pastors, youth, and their parents.

For more information, visit: http://exodusyouth.net/youth/youthpastor.html.



**SCOTT DAVIS** is director of Exodus Youth, a ministry of Exodus International. For more information visit http://exodus.to or call 407-599-6872.

Helping teens discern appropriate from inappropriate expressions of affection will help them have healthy friendships and help them to avoid becoming sexual for lack of a better way to express their affinity for one another.

Once two young people are involved in a romantic relationship, it is normal for them to feel emotionally *aroused* by one another and eventually emotionally *attached* to one another as their relationship continues to solidify. Encouraging accountability with responsible adults and teaching safe physical boundaries in relationships will help young people keep their emotions in check rather than allowing their passions to become sexual. My practical advice on where the line should be drawn in a dating relationship is this: The couple should not engage in any physical activity they would feel uncomfortable doing in front of their parents.

# BOOKS BY SHANNON ETHRIDGE

### **EVERY YOUNG WOMAN'S BATTLE**



Shannon Ethridge and Stephen Arterburn (WaterBrook Press, 225 pp., paperback)

Guys aren't the only ones fighting a battle for purity. The world promotes sex as the answer to just about everything. It's easy to compromise in little ways that are more harmful than

they seem. You just want to fit in, be liked, and look attractive to the opposite sex. But are you paying too high a price?

Whether you have so far protected yourself emotionally and sexually, feel that you've been robbed of your purity, or have given in to temptation in some way, this book can help you achieve or reclaim sexual integrity. It can also guide you through the temptations and pressures of young adulthood while demonstrating how you can live your life to the fullest — without regrets. Also look for *Every Young Woman's Battle Workbook*.

### **EVERY WOMAN'S BATTLE**

Shannon Ethridge (WaterBrook Press,  $193~\rm pp.,$  paperback)

The only way you as a woman can survive the intense struggle for sexual integrity is by guarding not just your body, but your mind and heart as well. *Every Woman's Battle* can help you learn to do that.

Using real-life stories and examples from her own struggle, Shannon Ethridge helps women like you — whether married, engaged, or planning to marry someday — to win the struggle for sexual integrity. *Every Woman's Battle* will lead you on a lifelong path to true joy and fulfillment, sexually, emotionally, and spiritually. Also look for *Every Woman's Battle Workbook*.

The red-light levels of emotional connection include *Affairs* and *Addictions*. An emotional affair begins when one pursues a more intimate, exclusive relationship with someone they should not have romantic involvement with (for example, a married person or someone in authority over them such as a pastor, teacher, or much older person). Often these relationships surface as crushes, and leaders usually dismiss them as unimportant. However, these inappropriate longings must be addressed. If not brought under control, such cravings can quickly lead to emotional addictions because people feel they cannot control whom they love or become sexually involved with.

### **GUARDING OUR SPIRITS**

Strip away the external behaviors of a sex or love addict and you will find an idolatrous spirit. This idolatrous spirit deceives us into believing that our fulfillment can be found in earthly relationships. After several years of marriage, I cried to Greg, "You don't meet my emotional needs." I was contemplating leaving him to pursue the love I felt entitled to.

But Greg looked beyond my weakness to my needs and spoke the truth in love. He said, "Shannon, you have a grand canyon of emotional needs. Until you look to God to satisfy your needs, there is nothing I or any other man can do to satisfy you."

Although the truth hurt, I could not deny it. Through years of promiscuity, no man could satisfy me. But could God satisfy the longings of my heart? After 6 months of counseling, intense prayer, and Bible study I was able to repent of my addictive relational patterns. I recognized that Jesus was not only my Savior, but also the lover of my soul. I was finally able to submit to Him as the Lord of my life.

Encourage young people to read the Book of Hosea. Sex and love addicts can recognize themselves in Gomer. We may have been unfaithful in the past, but our Lord remains faithful to bring us out of our selfishness and our pitiful relational pursuits so He can betroth us to himself in "righteousness and justice, in love and compassion" (Hosea 2:19,20). Embracing Jesus, understanding how precious we are to Him, and recognizing that no one can take His rightful place in our hearts is the best remedy for any enslaving addiction.



ery woman's battl

**Shannon Ethridge**, Lindale, Texas, is founder of Women at the Well Ministries and author of Every Woman's Battle and Every Young Woman's Battle.

### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. Mary Meehan, "Abstinence Pledges Not Very Effective," distributed by *Knight Ridder* (November 2003).
- 2. "AIDS, Sex and Teens," at http://www.avert.org/young.htm.
- 3. Natalie Krinsky, quoted in Mary Beth Marklein, "Casual Sex in Newsprint," *USA Today* (November 14, 2002).
- 4. http://www.internetfilterreview.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html.

# KEEPING YOUR HOME A SEX-SAFE PLACE BY RICHARD AND RENÉE DURFIELD

n a conversation with a hotel manager, I learned that the most adult-rated movies ordered in a single evening occurred during a time when his hotel was filled with guests, most of whom were attending a large Christian event. If this is true, not only does it dishonor the name of Christ, but it also signals a spiritual epidemic among those who are called by His name.

The body of Christ is experiencing a head-on assault by what might be the most powerful spirits ever unleashed from the gates of hell. If ministers are to be "wise as serpents," as Jesus commanded, they cannot assume that God will protect their children in spite of their negligence or failure to design effective safeguards to shield them — even in their homes.

Parenting can be a formidable task, but God has promised to empower His people with grace that abounds above prevailing sin. Psalm 127:3 declares that children are God's heritage. Pastors must believe that God will grant them the wisdom needed to be effective in executing their responsibility to be faithful stewards of that heritage.

### THE CHALLENGE

Effective parenting has always been challenging. For ministers, however, the challenges are magnified. Preachers' kids can suffer from what we call *the P.K. syndrome*. Preachers' kids can exhibit the worst kinds of behavior as they react to the constant pressure to conform to parental and biblical expectations. They feel they must act out to not stand out.

Parents can remedy this problem by building a strong sense of godly self-esteem in their children during their formative years. Children must feel they, too, are called and miles off the coast of Boston. Radio contact was lost while the vessel underwent deep submergence tests. The ensuing attempts to contact and then locate the *Thresher* were all in vain.

What happened? Apparently the submarine had gone to a greater depth than it was able to withstand. The water pressure on the outside exceeded the cabin pressure on the inside, and the vessel's walls collapsed. As a result, 16 officers, 96 enlisted men, and 17 civilian technicians were lost.

A pastor's children — and even the pastor and his wife — are like that submarine. The external pressures never let up and only increase as America's culture descends deeper and deeper into immorality. If a person's internal pressure is unequal to the culture's external pressure — if one's character is not strong enough to resist temptation — then he too will collapse. If a teen does not have self-control, the combined weight of hormones, media messages, and peer pressure will simply overwhelm him.

Many of the intrusions that pose the greatest threats are invited into the home. The most insidious intruders can almost always be traced to either unwise or inappropriate behavior within two major categories: marriage and family relationships and family leisure activities.

### **FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

### Role modeling

God requires His people to exhibit the virtues of the gospel in the home as well as outside the home. It is imperative that parents model the behavior they desire in their children. When parents model appropriate behavior, it empowers children. Children should be able to view their homes as

# If ministers are to be "wise as serpents," as Jesus

# commanded, they cannot assume that God will protect their children in spite of their negligence or failure to design effective safeguards to shield them — even in their homes.

to design effective safeguards to shield them — even in their nomes.

are an important part of their parents' ministry. They must be allowed to partake in and enjoy the benefits of the ministry, in addition to the sacrifices associated with living in a fishbowl environment.

Parents in ministry must earn the trust and respect of their children or face a possible backlash of rebellion, especially when they are entering adolescence. Only teens who have developed a personality marked by a strong sense of self-esteem and virtuous behavior are able to withstand negative peer pressure and the downward pull of their own human nature.

In *Raising Pure Kids in an Impure World*, we tell the story of the tragedy experienced by the crew of the American nuclear submarine *USS Thresher*.

On April 10, 1963, the USS Thresher disappeared about 220

peaceful havens where they can build confidence and self-esteem. It is the primary responsibility of parents to create a peaceful atmosphere in the home. Parents need to make sure each family member is treated with equal respect. Foul language, out-of-control arguments, and conversations marked by screaming and/or shouting should never be allowed. Families must relate to one another as though they were relating to Christ. They must acknowledge that Christ is the unseen guest in every room and live accordingly.

So-called adult entertainment must be considered off-limits for the entire household, including mom and dad. Entertainment that might be considered soft-porn or questionable for children should also be wrong for adult family members. The Scriptures declare, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"

## If a teen does not have self-control, the combined

weight of hormones, media messages, and peer pressure will simply overwhelm him.

(Galatians 5:9, KJV). In other words, whatever parents allow in part will eventually influence everyone in the home.

### Parental advocates

Jesus promised His disciples that He would send the Comforter to be with them in His absence. The Greek word translated "Comforter" is *Paraclete* and means "someone called alongside to help." Today, a *paraclete* is known as an advocate. Jesus knew that after His departure His disciples would face a formidable enemy whom they could not conquer without the help of a divine advocate. (See John 14:16; 16:7.)

Parents are to be an advocate for their children. They have the responsibility of emulating the love and care of the Heavenly Father in their role as parents. They should be able to say to their children, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Parents have the awesome opportunity to listen to, advise, guard, correct, and be available to their children regardless of their situation or circumstance.

The parents' role as advocates is of particular importance during their children's formative years, but that role does not diminish when their children reach their teens. Adolescence brings with it physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges that are frequently frightening and even painful — not the least of these is their awakening sexuality. While they are experiencing the personal fears and emotions associated with this tremendous time of transition, they are also confronted with the vicious whirlwind of today's secular youth culture that adds confusion as well as conflicting voices and values.

In Anne Ortlund's book, *Children Are Wet Cement*, she emphasizes the importance of influencing one's children and placing a protective wall around them in their wet cement years. The goal of good parenting is the successful emancipation of one's children. Good parenting prepares them to be responsible adults who have the ability to make independent and responsible adult decisions. In her book, parents are reminded that the cement hardens as children grow.<sup>1</sup>

The apostle Paul instructed the church at Ephesus to be "imitators of God" (Ephesians 5:1). That admonition could not be more appropriate.

### Parental involvement

A community's outrage arising from the story of a parent reading an elementary school library book to her child made the news. It appeared to be an innocent story about a prince who was searching throughout his kingdom for one true love. The story ends with the prince rejecting all the young maidens and

choosing one of the squires. We must guard against books that promote gay and lesbian lifestyles such as, Heather Has Two Mommies by Leslea Newman and Diana Souza, and Daddy's Roommate by Michael Willhoite.

One of the best ways to make one's home a sex-safe place is to be involved in selecting the books one's children read, the movies they watch, and the music they listen to. Parents often arrive home exhausted from work and the hour or more they just spent on a crowded freeway. It is easy to relax a few moments while the children are in their rooms entertaining themselves with their favorite activities. It is at these moments, however, that families can be the most vulnerable. The time between a child's arrival home from school and mom or dad's arrival home from work can be particularly threatening. A protective structure must be in place so parent(s) can be relatively certain of what each child is doing in their absence. Depending on the age of the child(ren), a few options for accomplishing this might include:

- 1. Scheduled reading or homework.
- Previously screened and approved videos and/or TV programs.
- Involvement in after-school activities such as band or sports.
- 4. Involvement in church programs designed specifically for latchkey children.
- 5. Involvement in a mentoring program sponsored by one's church or other responsible organization.

A critical element in each of these options is the parent's reasonable confidence in the safety and integrity of the activity and in the individuals with whom the child is interacting. Parents must conduct a thorough examination to ensure the activities, and those involved, are beneficial and not harmful. Unfortunately, members of the extended family who seem trustworthy often inflict the greatest harm. Jesus commanded His disciples, "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16, NKJV). This is particularly true when providing safeguards for one's children. Parents cannot afford to entrust their children's care to anyone with unproven integrity. Only those who are considered trustworthy — including baby sitters, friends, and even family members - should be given such a responsibility. If possible, parents should arrange for their children to contact them at predetermined intervals so parents know they are safe.

This point can be illustrated by the following series of events that changed a young man's life. When he was 7, his parents entrusted him to the care of a much-loved uncle who was also a Boy Scout leader. Little did his parents know that the uncle was not trustworthy and was responsible for committing multiple sexual assaults on the child for at least 5 years. At age 12, this troubled youth wrapped himself in a blanket, poured lighter fluid over it, and set it ablaze. Years of skin grafts and counseling have brought a measure of healing, but he is hopelessly ensnared in a life of confusion and homosexuality.

When children are left unguarded, they become susceptible to a wide variety of evils and tremendous stress. According to Dr. Kevin Leman in his book, *Keeping Your Family Together When the World Is Falling Apart*, a teenager's "life is full of pressures that add up to unbearable stress, so unbearable that between 500,000 and 600,000 of them attempt suicide every year, and some 5,000 succeed." He continues, "There is a widespread use of drugs, alcohol, and TV. Yes, I equate TV with drugs because so many youths, not to mention adults, are hooked on this habit-forming electronic escape hatch, which brainwashes them daily with materialism, hedonism, narcissism, and violence. Between the ages of 6 and 18, the average American youth spends 16,000 hours in front of a TV set and witnesses some 18,000 dramatized murders."

### **TECHNOLOGICAL SAFEGUARDS**

Safeguards must also be in place to protect children from threats posed by the evils made possible through modern technology.

The Internet has presented unprecedented opportunities as well as unprecedented challenges to individuals and families. Since children are able to navigate various websites and programs with greater ease than many adults, the Internet should be of particular concern because it contains a widespread proliferation of unsolicited filth. Many Internet filters such as Net Nanny 5.1 can prevent access to inappropriate sites, limit the time children spend online, and also prevent them from revealing private information via e-mail. Net Nanny 5.1 can also create profiles for up to 12 family members.

Also available are personal remote TV changers that allow children to only access preselected channels and/or programs. Parents must also be aware that many video games and music videos focus on violence, sex, and murder. Elementary-aged children should be protected from dolls and cartoon characters that expose them to sexually explicit clothes and themes. Young people should be discouraged from emulating the behavior and dress of many rock stars and other Hollywood personalities. Exposed midriffs, belly button ornaments, and tattoos signal detrimental trends. Despite a child's push for independence, parents need to encourage strong, healthy ties to the family through:

- Inviting friends of like moral values to group and same-sex activities.
- Making one's home a magnet for your children's friends.
- Helping children choose appropriate companions.

• Limiting a child's circle of companions to people within 2 years of their age.

It is critical that parents be aware of how significant their influence is during a child's formative years. Parents need to learn effective parenting styles to build family relationships defined by love and respect. Most important, families must make Christ the center of their personal lives and relationships.



Richard Durfield, Ph.D., teaches marriage and family studies at Azusa Pacific University. Renée Durfield is executive director of For Wedlock Only. They pastor Eagle Heights Community Church in Chino Hills, California.

#### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. Anne Ortlund, *Children Are Wet Cement* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1995), 47–49.
- 2. Kevin Leman, Keeping Your Family Together When the World Is Falling Apart (Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1993), 242. 3. Ibid., 243.

# TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

In *Raising Pure Kids in an Impure World*, we urge parents to consider the benefits of having a key talk with their children as part of their parenting strategy. Parents who have a child approaching the age of sexual awareness need to talk with their child about making a commitment to sexual purity. The simple approach outlined in our book will provide parents with all the tips they need to make the key talk a success.

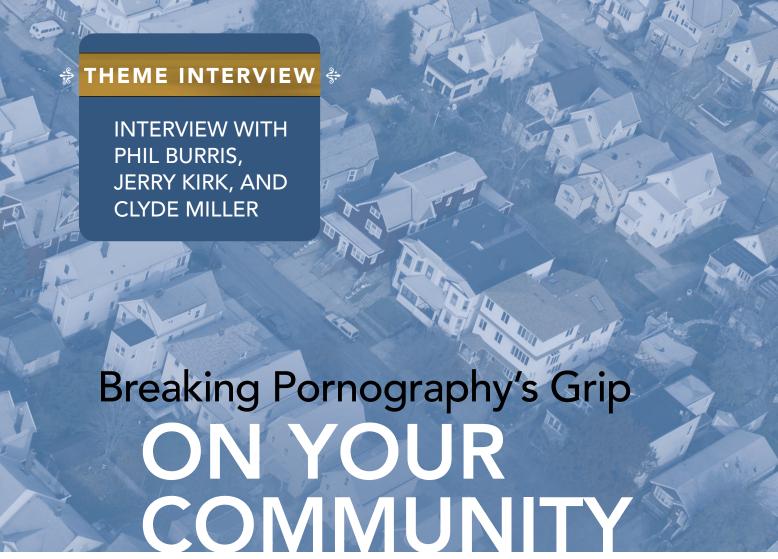
Beyond that special moment, a young person will experience a lifetime of challenges. Parents must be willing to invest the time, energy, and determination required to become their child's advocate during the exciting years ahead. The practical insights in our book will provide parents with a long-term strategy that will serve them well.

The key talk covenant can become a teenager's spring-board for moral excellence in many areas of his or her life and will give a foundation for parents and teenagers to tackle the serious issues of life together. Remember, a child is the only known substance from which a responsible adult can be made. Patience, wisdom, commitment, self-control, and integrity under fire are qualities of a godly character that will provide a lifelong foundation for fulfilling the destiny God has chosen for them. A covenant commitment to God to maintain sexual purity results in a unique grace, authority, and power to honor God with one's sexuality, and to influence others to do so. In a phrase, goodness is stronger than wickedness.\(^1\)

### RICHARD AND RENÉE DURFIELD, Chino Hills, California

### **ENDNOTE**

1. Richard Durfield and Renee Durfield, *Raising Pure Kids in an Impure World* (Grand Rapids: Bethany House Publishers, 2005), 182,183.



BY SCOTT HARRUP

## ONSIDER THESE SOCIETAL TRENDS:

- Americans spend \$10 billion per year on pornography.
- There are 800 million adult video and DVD rentals each year.
- 39 million homes receive the adult channels in scrambled form, while the number of children with potential exposure to explicit images is 29 million.
- There are more than 2,400 strip clubs in the United States.
- Approximately 40 million people in the United States are sexually involved with the Internet.
- One in five children ages 10 to 17 has received a sexual solicitation over the Internet.
- 2.5 billion e-mails per day are pornographic.
- Out of 81 pastors surveyed (74 males, 7 females), 98 percent were exposed to porn; 43 percent intentionally accessed a sexually explicit website.
- 48 percent of families in a 2003 Focus on the Family poll said pornography is a problem in their home.

These are a few of the statistics collected by the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families. The Cincinnati-based coalition has been in the battle against pornography for nearly 20 years and has seen some successes. But the overall trend in the United States is still one of increased sexualization and moral decay.

### REACHING "SIN"-CINNATI, TOUCHING A NATION

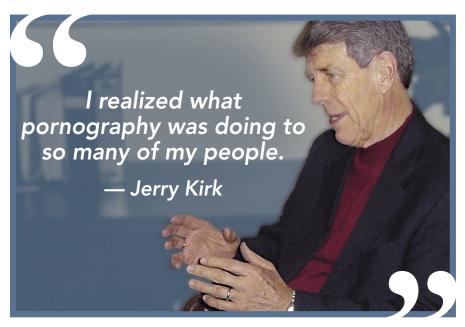
Coalition President Jerry Kirk has been instrumental in organizing several antipornography campaigns out of which a number of permanent associations have emerged including Citizens for Community Values and the Religious Alli-

ance for the Protection of Families. He continues to look for new ways to combat pornography's scourge. He entered the fray because Cincinnati is one of the nation's epicenters of porn production. Larry Flynt's *Hustler* empire called the city home. Countless strip clubs, adult theaters, and stores were in operation. In the '60s and '70s Cincinnati seemed hopelessly awash in filth.

"I went to a conference around 1981 held by a community group," Kirk remembers. "They asked me to look at some pornography. I had never seen any before, and I was so disturbed by my reaction to it. I joined the battle." Because he was pastor of College Hill Church, a large Presbyterian congregation, the decision to take on another cause was not made lightly. "I realized what pornography was doing to so many of my people," Kirk says, "and I decided to start working on fighting the problem a little bit every week."

His board of elders caught his vision and quickly offered to give Kirk 5 hours a week to take up the cause. This soon grew to 10 hours a week, 20 hours a week, and finally a year's leave of absence. Kirk eventually resigned to accept what he discovered to be a lifelong calling.

Other factors influenced Kirk. A woman in his church had asked him to read *The Death of Innocence*, a book that examined the sexualizing of American culture and the impact it was having on American children. As he read the book, Kirk realized that American children no longer have a real period of insulated innocence. They are immediately thrust into a



culture where sex is used to sell everything from toothpaste to toys.

Kirk had been involved in bringing Billy Graham to Cincinnati for a 1977 crusade. As Kirk began to look into how pornography was hurting Cincinnati, he recognized that the team of pastors who had helped him put together the Billy Graham crusade could be an effective team against porn. He called them together and asked them point blank, "Are you concerned over the morals of America?"

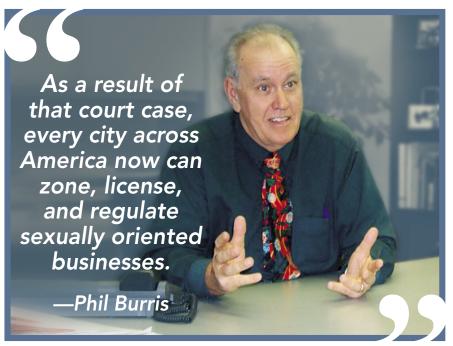
Clyde Miller pastored First Christian Assembly (Assemblies of God) at the time. He remembers that meeting and that question. "What could any of us say?" he admits. "Of course we cared. We formed Citizens for Community Values."

Phil Burris, a member at First Christian Assembly, remembers the early days of the battle and the personal investment he felt he owed to the campaign.

"I was 14 when I first stumbled onto pornography," Burris says. "I was addicted for 25 years and broke free in 1983. Clyde gave me the Scriptures and the tools to overcome that addiction."

The ministers were not the only ones who were disturbed by what was going on in their city. The local prosecutor had made the porn business his primary target. He was already getting results.

"Whenever you begin to put the porn business under close scrutiny," Burris says, "those businesses look for somewhere else to do business. Why? Because they are connected to



prostitution, illegal drug use, and organized crime."

Burris points back to a Supreme Court case from the 1980s that has given communities across the country the tools they need to control the spread of porn.

"The case grew out of Renton, Washington, where they didn't want a strip bar in their downtown district because they recognized it would cause problems," Burris explains. "They said the club could open but just not downtown. It went all the way to the Supreme Court, and in that case the evidence included studies of 16 major cities where strip bars and porn stores and massage parlors were located. They found three things that happened in all 16 cities: increased crime, decreased property value, and urban blight. And as a result of that court case, every city across America now can zone, license, and regulate sexually oriented businesses."

So, back in Cincinnati, Citizens for Community Values linked resources with the local prosecutor and supported his efforts to run the adult industry out of the greater part of Cincinnati. The results were dramatic.

Burris now serves as president of CCV, has affiliated with Focus on the Family, and maintains offices in Columbus, Ohio, with the intent of confronting that city's 200 sexually oriented businesses. He believes Cincinnati can serve as an inspiration for other communities. "There are 2,800 stores in greater Cincinnati that sell magazines," he says. "Most of them used to sell some form of pornographic magazine. Today, 95 percent of them don't even sell *Playboy*. There are no strip bars in

Cincinnatior Hamilton County. There are only five strip bars in the entire greater Cincinnati area, which includes some 2 million people. Several of these counties are free from any form of hard-core pornography. We've had 15 hotels get out of the pornography business that were selling in-room pornography."

# SPEND THE NIGHT, WATCH SOME PORN?

CCV's success with local hotels addressed another huge sector of the growing porn industry nationwide.

"White-collar pornographers now are out there and making a lot of money," Burris says. "Hilton, for example, owns a large percentage of Lodge Net that

sells in-room hard-core pornography. The same type of pornography that they sell in the rooms you can buy at an adult bookstore. It's sexually explicit, hard core."

With that problem in focus, CCV is about to use one of porn's preferred avenues, the Internet, against that industry.

"We're launching a website, http://www.cleanhotels.com," Burris says.

The tactic is simple, but effective. CCV has surveyed 70,000 hotels in America to create a list of all the hotels that do *not* offer in-room pornography. The plan is for Cleanhotels.com to be picked up by church groups and linked to their own webpages. Users can book a porn-free room through the site. Their reservation will automatically direct a commission toward the agency sponsoring that page.

"We're going to be offering this to the Assemblies of God or anyone else who wants to do this. We've talked to the Southern Baptists about this. They're all on board," Burris says. "The church or the organization that has the website will get 4 percent of the commission of everything that gets booked through there. So, it's a win-win situation for us. We've been working on this for 4 years. This technology is very deep and very complicated. We're testing the system right now and we're about ready to launch it."

Burris sees Cleanhotels.com as an invaluable resource when church organizations and other family-friendly groups want to book conventions.

"The average church doesn't stop and realize what happens

when they put people in some hotels," Burris says. He has already used the list himself. "I was just invited to Bristol, Tennessee, to speak to Southern Baptists. They asked me if I wanted them to book me a hotel, so I sent them our list of clean hotels we have in that area and asked them to book one of those. And that's going to be available to everybody pretty soon. It's going to be a wonderful proactive thing we can all do—taking money away from the bad guys and giving it to the good guys plus making a little bit for the ministries."

### OVERCOMING COMMUNITY APATHY

Miller, who continues to serve on the CCV board, sees a huge contrast between the Cincinnati of 1963 he encountered when he first came to the city and the Cincinnati of today. But he is

also aware of the national trend of continued growth in sexually oriented businesses. A big part of the problem, he explains, is a lack of enforcement of existing obscenity laws.

"We get the kind of law enforcement that we demand," he says. "There are probably thousands of laws on the books that we don't even know

about. Our side needs to stand up and demand that those laws are enforced; and if they are not, we need to ask if we as Christians can honestly vote for those leaders."

Burris agrees. He outlines a basic four-step strategy to combating pornography from the community side on the strength of existing laws.

- 1. Approach local elected officials and make sure they zone, license, and regulate all adult-oriented business to the requirements of the law.
- 2. Follow up initial contacts with local officials and determine whether or not progress has been made.
  - 3. In the absence of enforcement, build a coalition.
- 4. Play hardball. If an elected official refuses to do his or her job, mount a campaign to elect someone who will.

"If you have an elected official who does not do his job," Burris says, "you have to realize that pornography is not the problem; the problem is politics."

People are usually unaware of the extent to which existing laws define indecency and the level of penalties involved when those laws are broken — if lawbreakers are prosecuted. Burris promotes one helpful website that can educate residents of any state on the appropriate statutes aimed at fighting porn. Http://www.moralityinmedia.org includes a "Law Center" button that provides direct links to federal and state obscenity statutes.

"Consider what the Supreme Court has written on the subject," Burris says. "We emphasize that it is not our function to propose regulatory schemes for the states. That must await their concrete legislative efforts. It is possible, however, to give a few plain examples of what a state statute could define for regulations under part b of the standard announced in this opinion.

'A. Patently offensive representations or descriptions of ultimate sex acts, normal or perverted, actual or simulated.

'B. Patently offensive representations or descriptions of masturbation, excretory functions, or lewd exhibition of genitals.'

"That's every X-rated movie that's ever been made. It's prosecutable."

Burris also points out that everyday citizens can become the first line of defense

against the spread of pornography by simply confronting storeowners with their convictions.

"The Ground Zero campaign," he explains, "is you find the place that's closest to you that sells any kind of pornographic material, and you go in and you talk to the manager. You download from our website (http://www.ccv.org) information on the harms of pornography, and you just talk compassionately with them in love. You say, 'You know, what you're selling here is hurting our community and where we live, and I really would like for you to read this information. Read about the harm pornography causes and then I would like for you to reconsider whether or not you should sell this material.' That person then is going to make one of two decisions. He's going to make a moral decision: 'This is wrong. I shouldn't be doing this.' Or he's going to make a money decision: 'I don't care whether it's moral or not. I make money off of it.' Then you just basically say, 'Well, I'm really sorry that I cannot shop here any longer. I'm going to have to go somewhere else. And I'm going to tell my neighbors that they shouldn't shop here either.' With that loving kind of approach alone, we got about

"We now believe the culture has impacted the church so profoundly that the church is not salty enough to impact the culture." — Jerry Kirk

90 percent of the stores that used to sell pornography out of the pornography business. And when it comes to gas stations, just about every major oil company has a policy that they will not sell gas to stations that sell pornography. Again, it comes down to reporting infractions of existing policies and laws."

### CLEANING HOUSE BEFORE THE BATTLE

Jerry Kirk, meanwhile, has refocused his vision. Though started by ministers and led by Christians, CCV has evolved to help communities address pornography through broad-based secular action. What about the church's continued unique role

in being salt and light in society? The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families has shifted its focus to churches themselves with the intent of preparing and mobilizing them to become agents of change.

"We now believe the culture

has impacted the church so profoundly that the church is not salty enough to impact the culture," Kirk says. "So we are going to redirect 90- to 95-percent of our effort to work with the church in hopes that God will make us all more salty and more light so we can impact the culture. We're doing this in Kansas City. We're doing it in Atlanta. We're working toward doing it in Charlotte, in New England, in Dallas, in Southern California, and in Seattle."

Kirk's four-step plan is reproduced below (visit http://www. nationalcoalition.org) and was enacted over several years:

- 1. We must start with three to five key churches and pastors who make at least one and hopefully two commitments: The first commitment is to establish sexual purity within their own congregations. The second commitment is to recruit three or four additional pastors who will make the same commitment during phase one of the effort.
- 2. The goal during phase one, lasting 12 to 15 months, is to find 15 to 20 pastors who have a growing passion for Jesus Christ, believe the Scriptures are God's Word for what they believe and do, pursue a personal priority of prayer and Scripture, and have a commitment to sexual purity in their individual lives and in the life of their congregations. During the first phase, Coalition staff will make it our priority to serve and network these 15 to 20 churches.
  - 3. It is anticipated that in months 12 to 24 these pastors will

help lead the second phase in ways they feel comfortable: by telling their story; evaluating their progress; and helping choose and recruit other pastors whom they believe best fulfill the criteria listed above. The goal of phase two is to engage 15 to 30 new churches whom our staff will help recruit. Our staff will focus on and, insofar as possible, network these two groups of churches during the second year.

4. Our goal is to expand the vision so that during the third phase in years 3 and 4 God would raise up 50 to 100 additional pastors with the same or similar vision and commitment to sexual purity and faithfulness among God's people. We believe

that will happen naturally and organically when other pastors hear the stories of what God is doing in and through these original pastors and churches. These additional pastors will be those who desire similar strength and impact for their own lives, families, and congregations.

"We've had 15 hotels get out of the pornography business that were selling in-room pornography." — Phil Burris

"The key is exponential growth," Kirk says. "By the fourth year, with 75 to 100 pastors, you have got a team that can change that city."

When acting alone, Kirk explains, pastors feel overwhelmed. "Every pastor is being assaulted so much," he says "The issue is not just pornography now. It's the sexualizing of the culture. It's assaulting all of us. None of us is exempt. We've got to have our minds, and hearts, and eyes purified continually."

Pastors attempt to do a thorough job of helping families within their own church, but they generally believe they cannot impact the culture because it is too big.

"Everybody we love and everybody whom God has called us to love is being impacted greatly," Kirk says. "It's an avalanche. How do you stop an avalanche? How do you stop a hurricane? You build a strong cell in your own family, you build a strong cell in your congregation, and then you yoke those cells with one another with a vision for the whole body of Christ and your city. We cannot win unless God builds the team with a passion for sexual purity."

Miller, who continues to serve on staff at First Christian Assembly in his retirement years, believes this is the kind of plan the Fellowship can embrace. "We have a base in the Assemblies of God," he says, "that is so accepted in communities and strong enough that if we could get the bitter taste of what's happening to us in our mouths, we could stand up for

righteousness and see that our nation is once again exalted."

### REMAINING VIGILANT, REMAINING PURE, REMAINING COMMITTED

When fighting pornography, it is vital that precautions be taken so that the people intent on cleaning up their communities are not drawn into bondage themselves.

It's a scriptural principle; "Snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear — hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh" (Jude 1:23).

"You never expose yourself to this material," Burris says. "It's like taking drugs to prove that drugs are bad. You don't do that. If you're going to fight abortion, you don't have to have one. You can fight this problem without exposing yourself to it. If a store is selling X-rated videos, you don't have to go in and look at them. That's law enforcement's job."

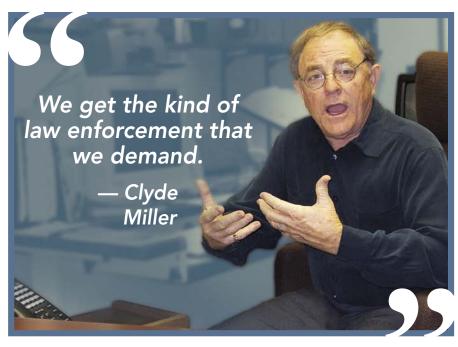
Burris has remained free of his own addiction. He remains committed to freeing others and is concerned when he sees porn threatening those he loves. A grandfather of eight, he recently confronted one grandson.

"I just asked my 11-year-old grandson whether he had seen any porn and he said, 'Yeah.' I said, 'Where was it?' He said, 'It was at a friend's house. He had a magazine.' He never came home and told us about it. But I asked him and he was honest."

Burris points out that 95 percent of kids have been exposed to some level of porn. "Parents fall out of their chairs when we tell them that," he says. "And I tell them to go home and ask their child if they have seen it. If they're over 9 years old, 95 percent of the time they will tell you yes."

It is the plight of America's children that weighs heaviest on Kirk's heart and gives him daily motivation.

"Let me tell you what happened to me," he says of his early days in the Cincinnati campaign. "I was walking up the hill across the street from my home to pray early in the morning. And I said, 'Father, You tell me You love the little children. Why don't You do something?' And I began to cry. And I said it again. I said, 'Father, You tell me You love the little children. Why don't You do something?' And I said it over and over



again as I was walking up the hill.

"By the time I got to the top of the hill, I was weeping convulsively. I was shouting. And then I said something that verged on the edge of blasphemy, and I acknowledged that. I said, 'Father, don't tell me You love them. Show me. I want to see it.' I don't know how long I prayed or how long I wept. But, I finally stopped. And these were the words that came to me."

Jerry, I love the little children, but I've chosen to love them through My people. I love the young people, but I've chosen to love them through My people. I love the men who are addicted. I love the marriages that are falling apart. I've chosen to love them through My people. Why don't you do something?

"And then I thought I was having a heart attack. The pressure I felt was so great. I said, 'Father, I can't carry this burden. If this is You speaking, then I ask You to raise up other people to help carry the burden.' And with that I believed God. I realized then and I realize today that God is going to raise up His people to love the children, young people, and the marriages. I believe that means He's going to bring a revival.

"I came home that day literally skipping down the hill. And my wife said, 'What happened to you?' And I said, 'God's going to do it!' "



**Scott Harrup** is associate editor of *Today's Pentecostal Evangel*, Springfield, Missouri.

### SEXUAL ADDICTIONS RESOURCE LIST

### INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS

Louis, McBurney, M.D. and Melissa McBurney Marble Retreat

Marble, Colorado Phone: 970-963-2499

Website: http://www.marbleretreat.org

Christ-centered therapy in a retreat setting for Christian leaders and others.

Ralph Earle, Ph.D. New Hope Educational Foundation

7530 East Angus Drive Scottsdale, AZ 85250 Phone: 602-947-5739

Website: http://www.pcsearle.com E-mail: pcs@pcsearle.com

Ralph H. Earle, Ph.D., coauthor of Lonely All the Time, provides team treatment for clergy families, including sexual abuse and sexual addiction.

Earl, Ph.D., and Sandy Wilson, D.Min. Wilson Counseling Associates Phone: 503-659-4082

E-mail: skwilson@westernseminary.edu

The Wilsons, seminary professors and coauthors of Restoring the Fallen, offer intensive sexual addiction counseling programs lasting 4 days or more, depending on individual needs and circumstances. They also offer ongoing counseling for sexual addicts and spouses at both their Portland and Roseburg, Oregon, offices. The Wilsons are available to help churches form spiritual care teams to oversee the restoration process for pastors or congregations recovering from infidelity/sexual addiction.

Douglas Weiss, Ph.D. Heart to Heart Counseling Center P.O. Box 51055 Colorado Springs, CO 80949 Phone: 719-278-3708

Website: http://www.sexaddict.com E-mail: heart2heart@xc.org

Douglas Weiss, Ph.D., is the author of several books on sexual addiction, leads 3-day intensives in Colorado Springs for individuals and couples impacted by sex addiction. He also offers telephone counseling. His website lists numerous recovery resources he has written or

produced for sexual addicts and their spouses.

### **ADDICTS**

Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) P.O. Box 111910 Nashville, TN 37222 Phone: 615-331-6230 E-mail: saico@sa.org Website: http://www.sa.org

### **COADDICTS**

Codependents of Sex Addicts (COSA) P.O. Box 14537 Minneapolis, MN 55414 Phone: 763-537-6904

E-mail: cosa@shore.net

Website: http://www2.shore.net/~cosa

Cosex and Love Addicts Anonymous (CO-SLAA) P.O. Box 650010

West Newton, MA 02165-0010 Phone: 617-332-1845

For partners of sex and love addicted people seeking support and recovery from their own addictive patterns with their sex and love addicted partners.

S-Anon International Family Groups

P.O. Box 111242

Nashville, TN 37222-1242 Phone: 615-833-3152 E-mail: sanon@sanon.org Website: http://www.sanon.org

S-Anon is a 12-step group that helps those who are affected by the sexual addiction of a family member or a friend.

Recovering Couples Anonymous P.O. Box 11872

St. Louis, MO 63105 Phone: 314-830-2600 E-mail: rca-wso@aol.com

Website: http://www.recovering-couples.org

For couples in which addiction (not just sex addiction) and codependency exist, who desire recovery from their addictive behavior with each other.

### COUNSELING SERVICES AND MINISTRIES

American Association of Christian Counselors P.O. Box 739 Forest, VA 24551 Toll free 1-800-526-8673 http://www.aacc.net

The American Association of Christian Counselors is a Christian organization for counselors, pastors, and lay leaders that provides a list of counselors, professional conferences, resources including videotapes, audiotapes, books, and other printed material.

AVENUE Resources 2615 Camino Tassajara Danville, CA 94506 Website: www.AvenueResource.com

Phone: 877-326-7000

AVENUE is a nonprofit, interdenominational organization that exists to equip churches to effectively minister healing to people impacted by sexual sin by:

- · creating safe, confidential environments where individuals are unconditionally loved and accepted in front of God and others;
- $\bullet$  providing easy-to-assimilate programs for the prevention, intervention, and healing of inappropriate sexual behavior and anger;
- · healing the brokenness in men, their wives, couples, and teens, and;
- · training leaders to facilitate these programs so God's abundant life may be experienced.

Bethesda Workshops Marnie C. Ferree c/o Woodmont Hills Counseling Center 3710 Franklin Road Nashville, TN 37204 Phone: 866-464-HEAL or 615-269-6220

Website: http://www.bethesdaworkshops.org

Christian Counseling Center of Houston 2350 North Belt East, Suite 270 Houston, TX 77032 Phone: 281-590-1313 Fax: 281-590-5655

E-mail: info@christiancouns.org Website: http://www.christiancouns.org

Clergy Recovery Network Dale Wolery P.O. Box 215 Brea, CA 92822

Phone: 714-529-6227

Website: http://www.clergyrecovery.com

EMERGE Ministries, Inc. 900 Mull Avenue Akron OH 44313-7597 Phone: 800-621-5207 toll free

800-867-4011 (confidential counseling for Assemblies of God ministers only.)

330-867-5603 Fax: 330-873-3439 E-mail: emerge@emerge.org Website: http://www.emerge.org/

Faithful and True Ministries

Ministries for sexual wholeness, counseling,

and consultation Mark Laaser, Ph.D. 6542 Regency Lane Eden Prairie, MN 55344 Phone: 952-903-9208

Website: http://www.faithfulandtrueministries.com

Heart to Heart Counseling Centers P.O. Box 51055 Colorado Springs, CO 80949

Phone: 719-278-3708 Website: http://www.sexaddict.com

International 17530 NE Union Hill Rd., Suite 160 Redmond, WA 98052 Toll free 1-888-535-5565 or 1-425-869-6468 http://www.iprodigals.com Pat and Marsha Means

International is a Christian organization that provides information, support-group materials, and assistance for sexual addiction and sexual coaddiction

The Journey to Wholeness in Christ P.O. Box 50635 Mobile, AL 36605 Phone: 251-643-7755 Fax: 251-643-7626

E-mail: bodishba@aol.com Website: http://www.christanglican.com

L.I.F.E. Ministries Johna and Bob Hale P.O. Box 952317 Lake Mary, FL 32795 Phone: 407-647-9560

Website: http://www.freedomeveryday.org

Living Waters/Andrew Comiskey materials
— Sexual and Relational Healing
Desert Stream Ministries

P.O. Box 17635

Anaheim Hills, CA 92687-7635 Phone: 714-779-6899

Website: http://www.desertstream.org

The Meadows Patrick Carnes, Ph.D., director 1655 N. Tegner Wickenburg, AZ 85390 Phone: 800-MEADOWS or 928-684-3926

Website: http://www.themeadows.org

National Association for Christian Recovery P.O. Box 215 Brea, CA 92822 1-714-529-6227 http://www.nacronline.com Dale Ryan

The National Association for Christian Recovery is an organization for recovering persons and

includes online support groups and suggested resources and conferences.

National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families 800 Compton Rd., Suite 9224 Cincinnati, OH 45231 HelpLine 1-800-583-2964 or 1-513-521-6227 http://www.nationalcoalition.org

The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families is a Christian organization that provides help and referrals for people struggling with pornography or those interested in fighting pornography.

New Life Ministries P.O. Box 650500 Dallas, TX 75265-0500

Phone: 1-800-NEW-LIFE (639-5433) Website: http://www.newlife.com

(Offers Every Man's Battle Workshops and Other Workshops. We encourage you to visit their website (www.newlife.com) for information on all conferences.)

Pure Intimacy (Focus on the Family) Offers information on pornography and sexual addiction.

Website: http://www.pureintimacy.org

Pure Life Ministries

Offers programs directed at breaking free from sexual sin

Counseling Department Pure Life Ministries 552 East Fairview Road Williamstown, KY 41097

Phone: 859-824-4444 — Administrative Offices Phone: 859-824-0870 — Counseling Office Phone: 800-635-1866 — To Request Information and Applications

Phone: 888-293-8714 — To Place an Order E-mail: info@purelifeministries.org
Website: http://www.purelifeministries.org

### **AUDIOTAPES / VIDEOTAPES**

"Pastor to Pastor: Overcoming Sexual Addiction"

Audiotape Series, vol. 11 Focus on the Family Phone: 1-800-A-FAMILY

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

Covenant Eyes (Internet Accountability Resource) http://www.covenanteyes.com

### **BOOKS ON SEXUAL ADDICTION**

Arterburn, Stephen. 2003. Addicted to "Love": Understanding Dependencies of the Heart: Romance, Relationships, and Sex. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Vine Books.

Bodishbaugh, Signa, and Conlee Bodishbaugh. 2004. Illusions of Intimacy: Unmasking Patterns of Sexual Addiction and Bringing Deep Healing to Those Who Struggle. Waynesboro, Georgia: Send the Light Inc.

Carnes, Patrick. 2001. Facing the Shadow: Starting Sexual and Relationship Recovery. Center City, Minn.: Hazelden Publishing and Educational Services.

Davies, Bob, and Russell Willingham. 1999. Breaking Free: Understanding Sexual Addiction and the Healing Power of Jesus. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity.

Durfield, Richard and Renee. 2005. *Raising Pure Kids in an Impure World*. Grand Rapids: Bethany House Publishers.

Earle, Ralph, and Gregory Crow. 1998. Lonely All The Time: Recognizing, Understanding, and Overcoming Sex Addiction, for Addicts and Co-dependents. New York: Bradt Publications.

Grundner, T.M. 2000. The Skinner Box Effect: Sexual Addiction and Online Pornography. Lincoln, Neb.: Writers Club Press.

Hall, Laurie. 1998. An Affair of the Mind: One Woman's Courageous Battle To Salvage Her Family from the Devastation of Pornography. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing.

Means, Patrick. 1999. *Men's Secret Wars*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell.

Melody, Pia. 1992. Facing Love Addiction: Giving Yourself the Power To Change the Way You Love — The Love Connection to Codependence. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

McBurney, Louis and Melissa. 2005. Real Questions, Real Answers About Sex. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Payne, Leanne. 1995. Crisis in Masculinity. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Young, Kimberly S. 1998. Caught in the Net: How To Recognize the Signs of Internet Addiction — and a Winning Strategy for Recovery. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.

#### BOOKS ON COADDICTION/ CODEPENDENCY

Beattie, Melody. 1996. Beyond Codependency: and Getting Better All the Time. Center City, Minn.: Hazelden Publishing and Educational Services.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1996. Codependent No More: How To Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself. Center City, Minn.: Hazelden Publishing and Educational Services.

Henfelt, Robert. 1996. Love Is a Choice Breaking the Cycle of Addictive Relationships. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishing.

Means, Marsha. 1999. Living with Your Husband's Secret Wars. Grand Rapids: Revell.

Norwood, Robin. 1990. Women Who Love Too Much. New York: Pocket Books.

Schneider, Jennifer. 2004. Back from Betrayal: Saving a Marriage, a Family, a Life. South Boardman, Mich.: Crofton Creek Press.

Weiss, Douglas. 1997. Partners Recovery Guide: 100 Empowering Exercizes. Denver: Discovery Pr. Publications.

Whitfield, Charles L. 1994. Boundaries and Relationships. Deerfield Beach, Fla.: HCI.

### **BOOKS ON GENERAL RECOVERY**

Amen, Daniel. 1999. Change Your Brain, Change Your Life: The Breakthrough Program for Conquering Anxiety, Depression, Obsessiveness, Anger, and Impulsiveness. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Cloud, Henry, and John Townsend. 1996. Safe People. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

 $\underline{\hspace{1cm}}$ . 2002. Boundaries. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Dodd, Chip. 2001. *The Voice of the Heart*. Franklin, Tenn.: Sage Hill Resources.

May, Gerald. 1991. Addiction and Grace. San Francisco: Harper.

Milkman, Harvey and Stanley Sunderwirth. 1987. *Craving for Ecstasy: The Consciousness and Chemistry of Escape*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Press.

Peck, M. Scott. 2003. The Road Less Traveled, 25th Anniversary Edition: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Stoop, David. 2005. Real Solutions for Forgiving the Unforgivable. Ventura, Calif.: Regal.

### BOOKS ON INNER HEALING/ RESTORATION

Anderson, Neil. 2000. *The Bondage Breaker*. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers.

Cloud, Henry, and John Townsend. 1992. Boundaries: When To Say Yes; When To Say No, To Take Control of Your Life. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House.

Eldredge, John. 2003. Waking the Dead: The Glory of a Heart Fully Alive. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Frost, Jack. 2002. Experiencing the Father's Embrace. Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House.

Harris, Joshua. 2003. Not Even a Hint: Guarding Your Heart Against Lust. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers.

Joy, Donald M. 1986. Rebonding: Preventing and Restoring Damaged Relationships. Dallas: Word Publishing.

Omartian, Stormie. 2001. Lord, I Want To Be Whole: The Power of Prayer and Scripture in Emotional Healing. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Payne, Leanne. 1995. The Healing Presence: Curing the Soul Through Union With Christ. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1996. Restoring the Christian Soul: Overcoming Barriers To Completion in Christ Through Healing Prayer. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1996. The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness Through Healing Prayer. Wheaton, Ill. Crossway Books.

Sandford, John, and Paula Sandford. 1982. The Transformation of the Inner Man. Tulsa, Okla.: Victory House.

Smith, Ed M. 2000. *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*. Campbellsville, Ky.: Alathia Publishing.

Springle, Pat. 1990. Rapha's 12-Step Program for Overcoming Codependency. Houston: Rapha Publishing/Word Inc.

### **BOOKS ON HEALTHY SEXUALITY**

Arthur, Kay. 2002. Sex ... According to God. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press.

Bevere, Lisa. 2002. Kissed the Girls and Made Them Cry: Why Women Lose When They Give In. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Hart, Archibald. 1995. *The Sexual Man*. Dallas: Word Publishing.

\_\_\_\_\_\_, Catherine Hart, and Debra Taylor. 1998. Secrets of Eve. Dallas: Word Publishing.

Maltz, Wendy. 2001. The Sexual Healing Journey: A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Revised Edition. New York: Harper Perennial.

Penner, Cliff, and Joyce Penner. 1993. Restoring the Pleasure: Complete Step-by-Step Programs To Help Couples Overcome the Most Common Sexual Barriers. Dallas: Word Publishing.

Rosenau, Doug. 2002. A Celebration of Sex: A Guide To Enjoying God's Gift of Sexual Intimacy. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers

Young, Edwin. 1997. *Pure Sex*. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers.

### **♦ POSTMODERNISM AND THE CHURCH** ♦



## Being there for each other

# The Church as a Genuine Community?

BY STANLEY J. GRENZ

guess the bottom line is that, contrary to the name on the marquee, Mary and I haven't sensed that this church is a genuine community."

After speaking these words, Jack Smith stood and quietly exited Brad Jones' office, leaving the recently installed pastor of Grandview Community Church alone with his thoughts. Why does this congregation find it difficult to retain younger people such as Jack and Mary Smith? Brad wondered. We seem to have the kind of programs that should meet their needs. So what am I missing here? Just what do people like Jack mean when they say that they are searching for "genuine community"?

One of the most popular TV programs of all time, the sit-com *Friends*, takes its story line from three single men who share an apartment across the hall from three single women. The weekly episodes present these friends laughing together, hurting for each other, and supporting one another through thick

and thin, the good times and the bad. But above all, they gain their sense of personal identity and meaning from their shared friendship.

The central message of the series is encapsulated in the program's theme song, "I'll Be There for You." Like the episodes, the lyrics of this song capture the imagination of its faithful viewing audience. After candidly voicing what many people believe — life isn't all it is cracked up to be — the song offers the hope that genuine community can be experienced among true friends who promise to always be there for each other, because, to cite the last line of the song, "you're there for me too."

# Friends offers a picture of the vision many people bring with them when they attend church.

Friends offers a picture of the vision many people bring with them when they attend church. Many members of the Friends generation — if they find their way to church after all — desire above all that the church be a community — a group of friends who are there for each other. But they readily leave in dismay when they discover that the church is filled with warts.

The church is to be a group of people who are there for each other. Yet, we must not elevate *Friends* as the paradigm of the fundamental manner in which the church is to be a community. As much as being there for each other is central to the nature of the church, we dare not elevate this dimension as the essence of the church's communal character. The church's calling to be community and the paradigm of what it means to be a genuine community arise from a source that surpasses anything Hollywood can envision.

### **GENUINE COMMUNITY AS BEING STORIED TOGETHER**

To better understand this, let's focus on conversion, the event that marks the entrance into a life of discipleship.

One of the crucial tasks that all people face throughout their lives is answering the question, Who am I? The basic way to understand who we are is to tell our story. The story we tell, however, is not simply a chronicle of every incident that has happened since we were born. Instead, we organize the diverse aspects of our lives and the many events through which we have journeyed into a meaningful whole. We bring the isolated bits of our lives together to form a plot that we believe tells our story.

Contrary to what we might initially surmise, we neither devise this plot nor does it come from within us. Instead, we borrow our sense of identity from the social group(s) or communities in which we participate. Thus, my sense of who I am is largely determined by the group(s) of which I am a member. This is one of the central themes of *Friends*.

Seen in this light, conversion is a radical reinterpretation of who we are. Conversion entails replacing the old plot of our personal story with a new one. Conversion involves reordering our story in accordance with one particular plot, the biblical story of God's saving action toward us in Jesus.

Have you noticed that nearly every personal testimony sounds strangely similar? The details may vary from Christian to Christian, but the basic plot is the same. This plot speaks about past sins that have been forgiven through an encounter with Jesus Christ. When we become Christians, we begin to speak this same language. We talk about the old life and the new life in keeping with Paul's statement, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We begin to resonate with the testimony of hymnist John Newton, who drew his lyrics from images found in the New Testament: "I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see."

By reinterpreting our story in this same manner we are accepting the story of the Christian community as our own. Becoming a Christian, then, means to share the shared plot — the shared story — of the Christian community. When we begin to tell our story in this shared manner, we become part of a new people, the Christian community. We are part of the Christian community — the church — whether we want to be or not.

This unbreakable link — this shared story — that connects our lives means we cannot help but pledge to each other, "I'll be there for you." It gives the assurance that you are there for me too. In short, the realization that we are storied together forms the basis for genuine community.

### GENUINE COMMUNITY AS BEING IN LOVE TOGETHER

The most foundational dimension of this matter has not yet been mentioned. Ultimately, the church's essential nature as a genuine community arises out of the character of God and the connection to the triune God that Christians share. This connection means we are in love together.

To see this we must remember that God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is throughout all eternity the divine community of love. Furthermore, God's goal for people is to bring them together in reconciled fellowship with others who reflect God's loving character and thereby they become the image of God. From Pentecost to the return of Christ, the reconciled God-reflecting community is the Church. According to the New Testament, God wills the Church to be a loving community who reflects God's character.

How does all this happen? The answer: through the Holy Spirit. The communal character of the Church is not something we produce. Rather, it arises out of the presence of the Spirit within us. Ultimately, true community comes from the communion in the Spirit we enjoy together as Christians and is with the Father in the Son.

Paul reminded us of this when he declared the Father has poured out the Spirit in our hearts and the Spirit's presence within us means we are children of God (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6). Viewed from this perspective, conversion is becoming God's children by the Spirit. Being God's children means we are sisters and brothers of, and hence, coheirs with Christ. Christians share the filial relationship the Son enjoys with the Father and are the recipients of the perfect love the Father eternally lavishes on the Son. Communion in the Spirit means we participate in the love that lies at the heart of the triune God.

Christians do not enjoy the dynamic of Trinitarian love as individuals in isolation. Rather, believers share this glorious privilege together. The Spirit's goal is to unite us so we may participate together in the love of God. Because we participate together in the Spirit who brings us into the divine community of love, the community we are called to be is no mere group of friends. Nor is our fellowship merely the result of some common religious experience, as important as such experiences might be. Instead, what forms us into a community and provides the basis for our fellowship is the Spirit's presence among us. The Spirit enables us to participate together as God's children in the eternal communion shared between the Father and the Son. Christians are a community because we are bound together by the Holy Spirit, who is God's eternal love. We are in love together because we share in the divine love poured out on us by the Spirit.

Being in love together leads us to

become a genuine community who are there for each other. The words of John Fawcett's hymn may seem archaic, but they express well the benefit that being in love together produces among us: "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain; but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again."

### **BEING THERE FOR EACH OTHER AS THE OUTWORKING OF COMMUNITY**

Jack is correct. Grandview Community Church had failed to live up to the name on its marquee. The primary failure, however, was not connected to the second word in the church's name, but to the first. Grandview Community Church was not the kind of community Jack and Mary desired because the congregation did not share a sufficiently grand view of who they are in Christ. They did not sense strongly enough that they share a common story through which they can understand their personal identities. They also were not sufficiently aware that they are a fellowship, who by the Spirit, participate together in the love that characterizes the triune God.

The failure of churches today to be a community of believers who relate to each other in the way that people like Jack and Mary are seeking results from a

### Conversion entails replacing the old plot of our personal story with a new one.

fundamental failure in vision. As such, it cannot be fixed merely by adding another program to the church's repertoire. What is required is a renewed vision of what being a genuine community entails. Only when we realize anew that we are storied together and in love together, can we understand what it means to be there for each other and for those whom the Holy Spirit sends across our path. Only when we seek to live out this fundamental vision can we hope to live up to the glorious names on our marguees — like Grandview Community Church. ■



The late **Stanley J. Grenz** was Pioneer McDonald professor of theology at Carey Theological College, Vancouver B.C. and professor of theological studies, Mars Hill Graduate School, Seattle, Washington.

# Pentecostal Preaching (Part 4): The Heart of Annointed Preaching

BY CRAIG BRIAN LARSON

One characteristic of those who preach with a full regard for the Holy Spirit is they welcome emotion both in themselves and in their hearers. Emotion is central to our humanity, and God wants to control every facet of what makes us human. Jesus said we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

That makes the heart a central focus in preaching. Emotion is not merely incidental, like steam rising from water being boiled for coffee. Rather, to create an emotional effect is one purpose of preaching. Pastors preach so people will feel the truth, and feel what they believe. Pastors are like the boiler in a hot-water heating system — boiling water to use the steam.

But how does emotion function or participate with the Holy Spirit? Scripture teaches that emotion can result from the Holy Spirit's presence and work. Human feelings can be a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus experienced this. After His disciples returned from a ministry trip and reported the results, Luke 10:21 says, "At that time Jesus, *full of joy through the Holy Spirit*, said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth' " (italics added). Jesus overflowed with joy because of what the disciples had done, but this verse ties His joy directly and explicitly to the work of the Holy Spirit. Just as fire and water produce steam,

a combination of Kingdom circumstances and the influence of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in joy.

The fruit of the Holy Spirit has a strong emotional dimension: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22,23).

Similarly, Romans 15:13 says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may *overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit*" (italics added). Here, hope — one of the essential feelings of Christian living — is said to be a powerful manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Who has not walked into a church service weighed down by discouragement and 2 hours later walked out brimming with joy, peace, and assurance? The change

## Some try to stir emotion apart from a deep comprehension of the truth of Scripture, seeking fruits without roots.

did not result merely from human conversation or the natural effects of music and preaching (these could just as easily depress an already discouraged person). The Holy Spirit uses conversation, music, and preaching like wood is used to stoke a fire. But the root cause of the spiritual change was the power of the Holy Spirit manifested in the heart.

Ezekiel 36:26,27 says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees." According to these verses, the Spirit causes us to feel differently about God and His will. He moves us. He changes our heart from hard stone (unable to feel in a godly way) to tender flesh (moved by what moves God).

Preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit is intrinsically emotional both for the preacher and the hearer. If emotion is lacking, the preaching is said to be dead, not because the message lacks truth, but because the wood of the truth was never ignited by the power of the Spirit to produce emotional fire. People did not feel what anyone with a spiritual heart of flesh (to use Ezekiel's term) ought to feel.

This idea agrees with the teaching of the Great Awakening's premier theologian of revival, Jonathan Edwards. Reflecting on what Edwards wrote in his landmark book *Religious Affections*, Gordon T. Smith observes, "Edwards came to the following conclusions. First, he said the substance of true religion is found in the

affections, emphasizing that 'the Holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affections; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal.' He affirmed that as humans we have understanding, affections, and will, but he insisted that it is in the affections that we find the center point of the spiritual life. The affections represent a person's defining orientation; thus conversion is fundamentally a reorientation of one's affections. The affections, for Edwards, are the crucial indicator of the character of one's spiritual life. Though the affections are not the whole of religious expression, they are the central part."1

As with any truth, this principle can be abused and taken to extremes. Some try to stir emotion apart from a deep comprehension of the truth of Scripture, seeking fruits without roots. Some stir up emotion as a self-indulgent end in itself rather than as a means to godliness, loving strong feelings more than God. Emotionalism, frenzies, mindlessness — obviously these are misdirected, but as with any truth, the extremes do not invalidate sound, balanced reality.

God has provided a way to have balanced reality. Romans 12:2 says, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The great British preacher Martyn Lloyd-Jones had a deep conviction regarding the importance of both the anointing of the Holy Spirit and of godly emotion. He believed strongly that you reach the heart through the mind.<sup>2</sup> Nothing brings more lasting godly emotion — zeal, joy, hope, peace, love, tenderness, compassion, assurance — than practical scriptural truths combined with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. There must be wood for the blaze.

What does such emotion look and sound like? Emotional preaching is not necessarily loud. The voice does not necessarily quaver, nor do tears necessarily fall. But the preacher speaks not just from his mind, but also from his heart; he speaks not only to the hearer's mind, but also to the hearer's heart. And one senses that these emotions are not worked up and put on, but flow from a heart gripped by the truth of God and — most important — made tender by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The emotion is welcomed and sought, but not manufactured for effect. The feelings are sincere, genuine, and brought on by God himself.



Craig Brian Larson is editor of Christianity Today International's preaching resources — Preaching Today.com and Preaching Today audio — as

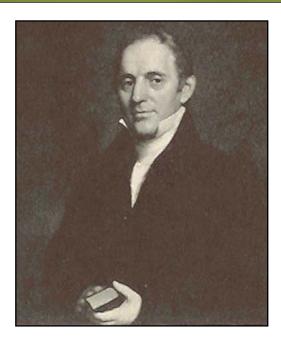
well as pastor of Lake Shore Church (Assemblies of God) in Chicago. He is coauthor of Preaching That Connects (Zondervan 1994).

### **ENDNOTES**

1. Gordon T. Smith, The Voice of Jesus (Downers Grove, III.: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 49 2. For further reading on Lloyd-Jones on this subject, see Tony Sargent, The Sacred Anointing (Wheaton, III.: Crossway, 1994).

# Asahel Nettleton THE FORGOTTEN EVANGELIST

BY WILLIAM P. FARLEY



(This is the third of four essays on significant Christian leaders of the Second Great Awakening.)

In 1812, a 29-year-old pastor traveling to New York stopped to speak to a small congregation in South Britain, Connecticut. He was shy and unimpressive looking.

A recent graduate from Yale and newly ordained, he dressed humbly like the farmer's son he was. Neither his appearance nor his deportment predicted the remarkable power that would overshadow his ministry over the next 20 years. At South Britain that potency first manifested itself. When he left the church one week later, it was profoundly changed by the many conversions that had taken place. Thus began the ministry of Asahel Nettleton (1783–1844), one of the great evangelists in American history.

Few have heard of Nettleton today, but he was the Billy Graham of the 1820s. His name was familiar in every New England household. It is estimated that more conversions occurred under his ministry than any other since Whitefield. He was responsible for at least 30,000 additions to the church, even though most of his work was confined to Connecticut, a small geographical area.

"In 1844, *The New York Observer* said that Nettleton was 'one of the most extraordinary preachers of the gospel with whom God has ever blessed this country.' *The New York Evangelist* agreed, 'Few men, since the apostolic days, have been honored with such a signal success in preaching the word, and in the conversion of sinners as he.' "1

Who was Asahel Nettleton, and what can we learn from his life?

### HIS TIMES

Nettleton's life spanned a period of epochal change. It was the age of Lewis and Clark, Adoniram Judson and the emerging missionary movement, and the birth of the telegraph and railroad.

At Nettleton's birth in 1783, the United States population was nearly 3 million and confined to the 13 original colonies. By his death in 1844, the citizenry numbered 20 million, had spilled over the Appalachian Mountains into the vast western forests that bordered the great Mississippi, and was even traveling rutted wagon trails to the far-flung Oregon Territory.

At the time of his birth, most Christians were Congregational, Presbyterian, or Baptist, and almost all embraced the reformed theology of their forefathers. But by 1844, Methodism was the predominant denomination, many new denominations had sprouted, and the Puritan New England theological consensus had collapsed.

Significant to our story, Nettleton's life also spanned the Second Great Awakening (1792-1835), one of the most potent spiritual movements in American history. His life influenced and was influenced by many of these changes.

### **NETTLETON'S YOUTH**

Nettleton was the son of a Connecticut farmer, Samuel Nettleton, a soldier who fought in George Washington's army. At age 18 (1801), Asahel was converted when a revival swept the church he attended. His regeneration was the culmination of many months of agonized soul-searching.

Determined to be a foreign missionary, he decided to attend Yale. However, the untimely death of his father interrupted his plans, and he returned home to care for his family. After a 4-year hiatus, he entered Yale in 1805 at age 22.

The Yale student body in 1805 numbered less than 250. Timothy Dwight, the renowned grandson of Jonathan Edwards, was president. Yale was the citadel of New England orthodoxy that had dominated American thought and culture since the Pilgrims arrived in 1620. Under Dwight's leadership, the college experienced revival in 1802 and again during Nettleton's student days in 1808.

In 1808–09, Nettleton befriended Nathaniel W. Taylor (1786–1858), a fellow student who would figure prominently in the future history of the American church. Unknown to both, their lives would sum up the great convulsions that would tear and rend American Christianity for the next 40 years.

In 1810, at age 27, Nettleton received his B.A. In 1811, when he was ordained to preach, his settled intention was still foreign missions.

### **NETTLETON'S THEOLOGY**

By the time Nettleton graduated, his theological convictions were settled. Convinced that man was dead in sin, he believed that conversion was the work of God, not man. To Nettleton, new birth was a radical change that produced repentance and a life of growing holiness. In his final analysis, this transformation was the ultimate proof of salvation. His evangelistic strategies reflected these assumptions.

Presuming that confidence guilt, keeps most people from the gospel, his aim in preaching was to convince his hearers of the reality and horror

## in personal goodness, not Like many men of God, Nettleton lived during a time of tumultuous changes in society and church.

of sin. He skillfully addressed each listener's inherent self-confidence in an attempt to expose it in the light of God's pristine holiness. When by God's power he was successful, great results followed.

Nettleton believed conversion usually begins with the conviction of sin, that God alone produces this, and that radical life transformation resulted. Of these techniques his biographer, Tyler Bennet, wrote, "Conversion was shown to be a 'deep radical change of all the moral feelings' and thus, when men came under conviction, 'it became difficult for them to persuade themselves that they had become Christians 'till a real change had been wrought in them.' For this reason these leaders were against treating anyone as a convert simply on profession of faith."

### **GROWING POPULARITY**

After his success at South Britain, Nettleton preached at the church of Lyman Beecher (father of Harriet Beecher Stowe) in New York where similar results accompanied his ministry. God converted many and church membership grew dramatically. Referring to this visit, Beecher wrote, "The power of his preaching included many things. It was highly intellectual. ... It was discriminatingly doctrinal, giving a clear and strong exhibition of doctrines denominated Calvinistic, explained, defined, proved, and applied, and objections stated and answered. It was deeply experimental in the graphic development of the experience of saint and sinner. It was powerful beyond measure ... and at times terrible and overwhelming in close, pungent, and direct application to the particular circumstances of sinners."4

Invitations began to come from across New England, and the itinerant ministry

that Nettleton had not sought was born. He settled into a pattern. He would visit a church and preach nightly for an extended period, sometimes several months. He was able to live this way because, in his twenties, he decided to forgo marriage for the sake of the gospel. He lived simply, accepting little money beyond his basic needs.

### **CONVERSIONS** THAT STUCK

Nettleton's conversions lasted and bore fruit. For example, of the 84 converts in an 1818 revival at Rocky Hill, Connecticut — according to their pastor's report 26 years later — all 84 had remained faithful. Similarly, only three spurious conversions out of 82 professed commitments were noted by another pastor in his report on revival services held in

Ashford, Connecticut.

What accounted for this success? Nettleton did not recognize a conversion just because a person said he had

accepted the Lord. Instead, he watched for the fruit of repentance and the life transformation that always follows true conversion. Only after an extended period of fruitfulness would he and his coworkers consider that person truly converted.

This approach occasionally caused converts unneeded anxiety because it failed to recognize true conversions that started slow and consistently grew. But Nettleton believed the pluses outweighed the minuses. It reinforced two truths that Nettleton believed were foundational: God converts, and the sign of conversion is radical life transformation.

### CONFLICT WITH FINNEY

In 1821, a young lawyer, Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), was converted in upstate New York. (Our next column will discuss Finney in more detail.)

Then in 1822, Nathaniel W. Taylor, whom Nettleton befriended at Yale, was appointed the first professor of the newly founded Yale School of Divinity. Taylor began to teach a radical interpretation of the Bible that was quickly labeled, "New Haven Theology." In essence, Taylor rejected the New England orthodoxy of Jonathan Edwards, which Nettleton and most of his peers assumed.

New Haven Theology rejected the doctrine of original sin. Taylor believed man does not become sinful until he commits a sinful act. Taylor's position led him to assume that man saves and transforms himself by an act of will, and that all men are capable of such a decision.

Nettleton began correspondence with his old friend, deeply concerned by this new teaching and its potential effect on the church. At this time, Finney also read and embraced many of Taylor's new ideas.

In 1825, the remarkable ministry of Charles Grandison Finney burst upon upstate New York. Influenced by Taylor, Finney was decidedly Pelagian.<sup>5</sup> He rejected the doctrine of original sin. Referring to Finney's struggle with orthodoxy, Nathan Hatch, quoting *Finney's Memoirs*, writes, "I found myself unable to accept doctrine on the ground of authority. If I tried to accept those doctrines as mere dogmas, I could not do it. I could not be honest in doing it; I could not respect myself in doing it."

Finney's theology greatly impacted his evangelistic techniques. Since he was convinced that conversion depended on human decision and men had not fallen into sin, then a human decision rather than a supernatural work in the soul was all that was needed for conversion.

Based on these assumptions, Finney popularized an emotional approach to evangelism. He sought to influence the will through the emotions. He made altar calls popular, an innovation that concerned many adherents of the old theology.

By contrast, Nettleton sought to influence the will with the power of truth. The two men held opposite viewpoints. Nettleton preached doctrinally in subdued tones. His meetings were marked by "the death-like stillness, which were becoming the hallmark of his revivals." Nettleton relied entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit by using biblical truth to bring conviction of sin and new birth.

Although Nettleton was a shy man who avoided conflict, in January 1827, at the urging of many friends, he sought out Finney to share his concerns. Finney was polite, went home and thought about Nettleton's concerns, but then rejected the older man's suggestions.

### LATER YEARS AND LEGACY

In 1822, after he had 10 years of fruitful ministry, Nettleton's health failed. From this time until his death 22 years later, he struggled with continual physical problems that impeded his ability to maintain the pace of his previous ministry. He took fewer calls to evangelize, and he began to recede in the public eye just as Finney's star was rising. The momentum switched to Finney and his new evangelism measures. Today, few people know of Nettleton or his conflict with Finney, whereas, the name Finney is recognized by most evangelicals.

With the decline of Nettleton and his New England Theology came a new approach to evangelism, championed by Finney, whose assumptions and methods have been considered orthodox by many Christians.

Unable to travel the last 10 years of his life, Nettleton invested himself in the divinity students at the newly formed Theological Institute of Connecticut. In 1839, still loved and honored for his great success, two colleges awarded him honorary doctorates. He died in 1844 at age 61.

Like many men of God, Nettleton lived during a time of tumultuous changes in society and church. Neither he nor his friends could foresee the end results.

Did Finney's new evangelism measures, influenced by Taylor's New Haven Theology, harm or help the church? Should the church return to the New England orthodoxy of Nettleton? Was Nettleton's theology a relic of a bygone era that should remain buried in the archives of history? Each reader must form his own conclusions.<sup>7</sup>

Nettleton and his times teach us two valuable lessons. First, there will always be theological controversy, and we should correct doctrinal error. Second, as with Nettleton and Finney, our theological presuppositions influence our practice.

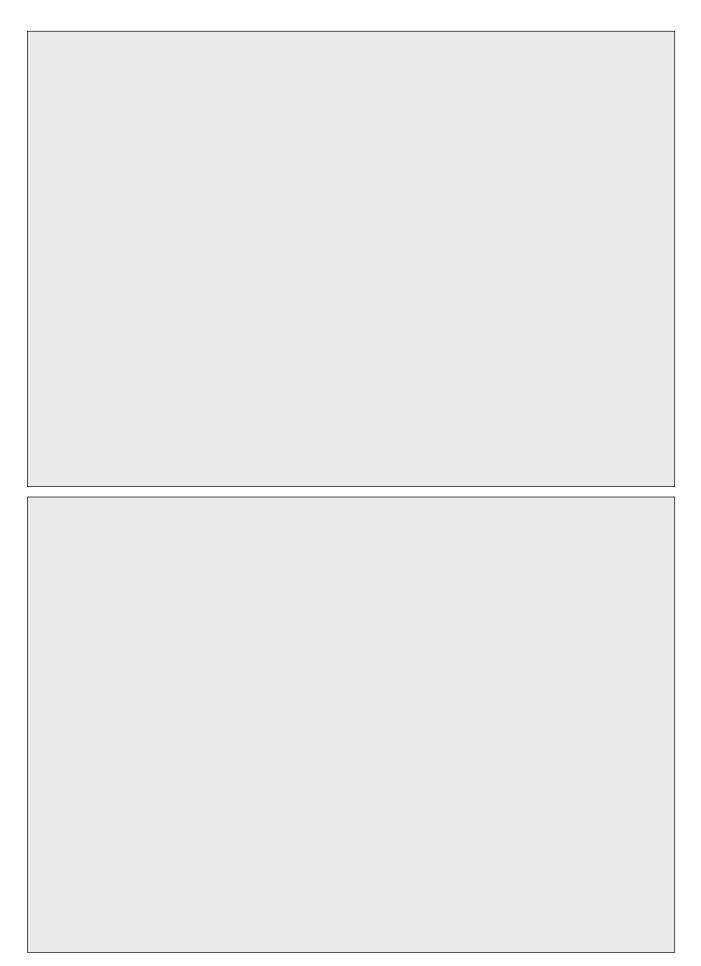
History is His Story. ■



**William P. Farley** is pastor of Grace Christian Fellowship in Spokane, Washington. He is the author of *For His Glory*, Pinnacle Press, and *Outrageous Mercy*, Baker. You can contact him at 509-448-3979.

### **ENDNOTES**

- 1. http://www.ccwonline.org/anett.html.
- 2. The exact date the Second Great Awakening ended is controversial. It ebbed and waned during a period of years. I use the end of Finney's ministry as an ending date.
- 3. Iain Murray, Revival and Revivalism (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 215.
- 4. Comments of Lyman Beecher quoted in Iain Murray, Revival and Revivalism (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 199.
- 5. Many readers may find this hard to believe, but Finney was open about these beliefs. For confirmation, read his *Systematic Theology*.
- 6. J.F. Thornbury, God Sent Revival (Darlington, United Kingdom: Evangelical Press, 1977), 71.
- 7. For more information read lain Murray, Revival and Revivalism; Nathan Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989); J.F. Thornbury, God Sent Revival; and Charles G. Finney and Helen S. Wessel, ed., The Autobiography of Charles G. Finney (Bloomington, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 1977).



### ♣ REACHING SECULAR UNIVERSITIES



an God work through your short-comings to spread the gospel? This story might encourage you.

As I departed the cafeteria at a national conference center, a recent university graduate stopped me. "Hi," he said, "I'm Gary Fuller. I trusted Christ as my Savior 3 years ago when you spoke at Sacramento State University. Since then I've led 50 of my friends and family members to Christ." He was preparing to become a missionary.

I remember well my visit to Gary's campus. Students and campus workers labored to organize an outreach lecture on love and sex from a Christian perspective. The presentation title was rather hot — perhaps too hot for some churches — but definitely geared to secular students. The title was "Dynamic Sex: Unlocking the Secret to Love."

Posters, fliers, and classroom chalk-board announcements blanketed the campus. Students invited their non-Christian friends. Some probably wondered how a Christian speaker (posters clearly indicated Christian sponsorship) could say positive things about sex and love.

As students filed in the auditorium, I greeted audience members. I am somewhat shy and mixing with an audience does not come naturally. But Josh McDowell taught me that it often helps audiences connect to speakers. Gary was one of many people I met that day.

Onstage, I used humor to help explain that I would present principles that

contribute to a fulfilling love life. "Principles, not techniques," I assured listeners. "And this will be a talk, not a demonstration."

I made it clear I would speak from a Christian perspective and assured students I respected their freedom to disagree. My aim was not to force Christian views on them, but to encourage them to think and to have some fun. A university is a marketplace of ideas.

In my presentation of a biblical perspective on sex, I used secular illustrations and quotations. I also used funny stories about love and dating, intertwined with advice from secular experts. A fulfilling sex life requires focusing on the relationship, developing qualities like love, commitment, and communication. Premarital sexual involvement can diminish one's chances for a fulfilling love life in marriage because it undermines those qualities. There are practical reasons for waiting.

A complete marriage relationship exists on three levels: physical, psychological, and spiritual. Christ facilitates healthy spiritual relationships. An explanation of His love, sacrificial death, resurrection, and offer of forgiveness and eternal life led to a tactful invitation for listeners to accept Jesus. Gary and other students made that decision. Interested students indicated on comment cards their desire to know more.

The students seemed open-minded to the principles they heard. Not all agreed, but many had fun and heard practical ideas for relationships. Christian workers and students personally contacted inquirers to share Christ with them and help new believers such as Gary become established in the faith.

God had used the outreach to glorify himself. But it might not have happened without a significant setback.

### A SIGNIFICANT SETBACK AND SOUND ADVICE

A few years earlier, before I had studied sex in depth, I spoke to an Arizona State University human sexuality class. I communicated true concepts about love and sex but did not seem to be getting through, especially about premarital sex. Though students applauded politely, effective connection was lacking.

Later my wife — an accomplished writer, author, and communications teacher — told me, "You're a good speaker, but you're not a great speaker. You could be a great speaker if you worked at it."

After my blood stopped boiling, I asked what she meant. She said I needed to research the topic thoroughly, discover critics' objections to biblical views, develop answers from a Christian perspective, and find respected secular experts who support those answers. I should start where my listeners' minds and hearts were, use logic and emotion to move step-by-step to where I wanted them to be, and

eliminate red flags. I should write out my presentation and practice it so I could deliver it naturally and personally.

What my wife suggested would require much work. I balked at first, but later decided to follow her advice. I am glad I did. I do not claim to be a great speaker, but that counsel has made the difference between a half-attentive audience and one where most listeners are fully attentive, awaiting the next story, laugh, or insight. By God's grace, university students, professors, television and radio audiences, magazine and newspaper readers, and Internet surfers around the globe have been touched for Christ because wise counsel helped turn a weak presentation into an effective one.

What happened to Gary? He and his wife, Debbie, have a fruitful ministry that has spanned the globe. Their Utah State University disciples helped establish an ongoing ministry there that still reaches lost students today. Some of their California disciples have been leading people to Christ for years through an international music outreach. The Fullers helped build a thriving national ministry in Ukraine and now reach and disciple professionals in Colorado and abroad, assisting Central Asians in touching predominantly Muslim regions with God's good news.

### LESSONS FOR REACHING SECULAR UNIVERSITIES

Consider some lessons this story might offer for secular university outreach.

### Sow broadly

Secular universities are filled with needy people. One-on-one and small-group ministry is crucial, but also consider campus-wide outreaches as God might lead. Properly conducted, they can galvanize Christians, draw seekers and skeptics to consider the Savior, and create lasting awareness that facilitates personal conversations.

### Analyze your audience

Effective outreach scratches where people itch. Discover the felt needs students and professors have and address those, not as ends in themselves but as bridges to their real needs. Sex, of course, interests many students. Discover their emotions and thoughts on this — or any theme — and fashion your communication accordingly. Be sure your theme has legitimate connection to the gospel. You do not want to bait and switch.

### Personalize your contact

Frequently, those I greet personally before a meeting — such as Gary — seem to listen and respond positively, even trusting Christ. Personal follow-up is an important component of outreach ministry. Gary was contacted by a Christian worker who helped him become established in the faith and involved in a community of believers. Chi Alpha National Director Dennis Gaylor emphasizes, "Believers must make vital relationships with people outside of the church their No. 1 priority."

### Use humor and stories

Good humor can help open minds and hearts. Humor refreshes like a cool drink on a hot day. It can dissolve tensions, rejuvenate listeners, and hold their attention. One experienced speaker says he tells humorous stories with a specific point. Then, while listeners' mouths are open wide with laughter, he can pour down large doses of truth. Many will listen to and remember your stories.

### Work hard to communicate well

Effective communication, whether interpersonal or in groups, can be hard work.

Study communication. Watch other communicators — Christian and secular — who successfully relate to non-Christian individuals and groups. Observe how they tap felt needs, relate to people emotionally and logically, keep their attention, and get their point across. Apply these lessons to your own ministry.

### Accept valid criticism

My first reaction to my wife's critique was anger. I felt hurt. I was serving Christ and speaking to a semi-hostile audience. Did that not deserve praise? As I put my ego aside, her words made sense. I am grateful for that painful advice. I cringe when I think of the millions of people who might not have encountered a clear, attractive presentation of Christ had I ignored her.

# Trust the Holy Spirit to work in lives over time

The Holy Spirit used Gary's friends, the Word, and opportunities for ministry to help him mature in the faith and reach out to others. Of course, not all come to faith and not all new believers are born running. A variety of complex factors - including background, personality, spiritual forces, and individual circumstances - influence receptivity and growth. Our job is to be faithful communicators and friends as we team with other believers. Paul wrote, "We're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work as a team with the same purpose" (1 Corinthians 3:5,6,8). ■



Rusty Wright is an award-winning author, syndicated columnist, and university lecturer with Probe.org. He has spoken to secular audiences on six continents.

### **♦ TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHURCH ♦**

When have seen it before, and we will see it again — technology is changing our world. Major technologies that have impacted our lives are the automobile, telephone, radio, television, VCRs, microwave ovens, personal computers, and the Internet. Now get ready for WiMAX. What is WiMAX? How will it affect our lives and ministries?

### WIMAX? WHAT'S THAT?

WiMAX is a new wireless technology that is sweeping across our land. Our previous wireless connective options were cellular, Bluetooth (used to connect devices to each other — such as cell phones with earpieces, or computers with mice — within 30 feet), and WiFi (used to connect computers to other computers, computers to networks and/or computers to the Internet within 300 feet). WiFi's current maximum connection speed is 54 megabits per second. WiMAX's maximum connection speed is 75mbps, and its range is up to 30 miles.

Philadelphia and San Francisco were the first large cities to announce free WiMax throughout their city. Many more are sure to follow. According to Intel, the spec will be ready for indoor implementations by the last half of 2005.

### **HOW WILL THIS IMPACT ME?**

If your community decides to offer WiMAX citywide and if you have a WiMAX-enabled PDA (palm pilots and pocket PC devices), palmtop (small notebook computer), or laptop, you will be able to connect to the Internet almost any place you go. With a more constant connection to e-mail and research tools, the possibilities are endless.

E-mail and Instant Messenger will become the communication tools of preference. The challenge for people will be to disconnect often enough to maintain their sanity and face-to-face relationships.

# Our World Is About To Change... AGAIN

BY NICK B. NICHOLAOU

### HOW WILL THIS IMPACT OUR MINISTRY?

The jury is still out on this. Imagine, for instance, if people decided to open their WiMAX-enabled devices and surf the Internet during your worship service. How could you stop them? Even worse, what if they decided to view a pornographic site. Without any filtering options, how could you control what websites they might choose to view in plain sight of others in attendance?

There are possible benefits too. Consider using that same technology to provide headphone sets and/or live text translation for the hearing impaired. Or consider the ability to receive contributions online during the service. Some church management software providers are making it possible to take attendance via wireless technology.

### PLANNING NOW CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What we do not yet know is whether we can block the signal in our buildings, or overpower it with a filtered connection. Letting your network-engineering firm know that you are interested in solutions will help them focus their attention in this direction.

Another aspect of planning for this revolution is to talk with your website host to ensure that your website will automatically resize for smaller PDA monitors. WiFienabled PDAs can already do this, and many websites (for example http://www.google.com) already detect PDA screen sizes and modify the layout accordingly.

### WHAT ABOUT BUYING HARDWARE?

According to Intel, WiMAX-enabled PDAs, palmtops, and laptops will be available by 2006. This will need to be a consideration for your church's hardware purchases.

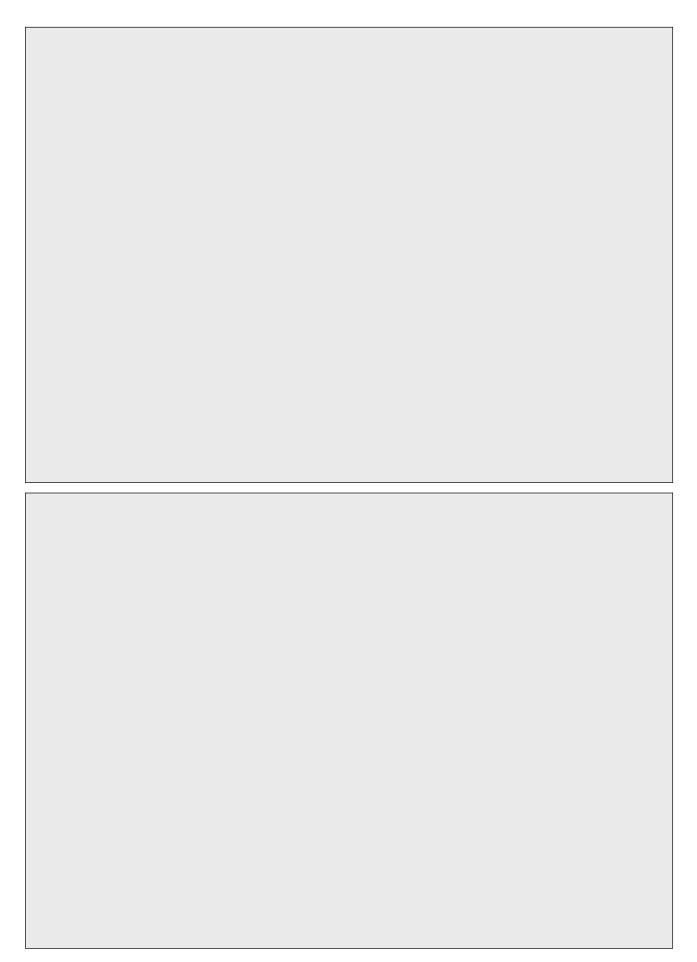
### NOT YOUR DADDY'S CELL PHONE

In addition to PDAs, palmtops, and laptops this may also impact your cell phone. Cell phones are being reengineered to recognize when there is a WiFi connection so they can connect via Voice over IP, saving the phone owners minutes on their calling plan. It remains to be seen how this new technology will impact wired and cellular phone companies when entire cities provide free WiMAX access. It may mean, however, that cell phone users will be able to call anywhere they want with a VoIP connection when they are in a WiMAX location.

Certainly, WiMAX will be a technology revolution in the United States and around the world. Like Dorothy said, "We're not in Kansas anymore." ■



**Nick B. Nicholaou** is president of Ministry Business Services, Inc. Adapted from *The Clergy Journal's Faithful Finances*. © 2004 Used by permission.





# Flourishing Like a Tree in the House of God

BY STEPHEN R. PHIFER

But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God;

I trust in God's unfailing love forever and ever.

I will praise you forever for what you have done;

in your name I will hope, for your name is good.

I will praise you in the presence of your saints" (Psalm 52:8,9).

As I prayed through the Psalms last fall, I found this incredible testimony of David. After reflecting on this psalm, I added its concepts to my daily prayers.

In Psalm 52, David compared the wicked Doeg to the righteous. Doeg boasted of evil (verse 1), but the righteous praise God (verse 9). Doeg trusted in his great wealth (verse 7), but the righteous trust in God's unfailing love (verse 8). Doeg would be uprooted and

torn from his tent (verse 5), but David was "like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God" (verse 8). David compared himself to a thriving tree that produced a steady crop of olives every year.

The historical context of this psalm involves the events surrounding Doeg and Ahimelech, the priest, that transpired when a demented King Saul was pursuing David (1 Samuel 21:1–9; 22:6–23). What did David do to earn Saul's jealousy? He succeeded in the name of the Lord. He struck down Goliath and won the adoration of the people. Women sang of David and danced in the streets. They used exaggerated numbers to compare David's statistics to those of the king. Saul's own son, Jonathan, the rightful heir to the throne, was also David's best friend and ally. Even Saul's daughter Michal loved David, married him, and aided him in his flight from her irrational father. Worst of all, Saul needed David and his music. A troubling spirit from the Lord would torment the king's mind and steal his rest. His only relief came when David played music. On two occasions these private recitals ended with David dodging Saul's spear. Even Jonathan was a target for his father's venom-tipped wrath. A jealous king is a dangerous thing — absolute power driven by paranoia.

Where could David find a place of safety? First, he went to Samuel (1 Samuel 19:18), and then to the priests' conclave at Nob, a high place not far from Jerusalem. Here David found the compassionate priest Ahimelech who, though trembling and fully aware of the risk he was taking, provided David and his men with bread he had recently removed from the Holy Place. This act of kindness cost

the priests their lives. When David reflected on this moment of provision in Psalm 52, he proclaimed that he found life and sustenance in God's house.

After years of ministry, some ministers may find it difficult at times to flourish in God's house. Instead, anointed leaders sometimes find God's house to be a toxic place, not a place of safety. There seems to be a burr beneath the easy yoke Jesus promised His servants. Injustice reigns where there should be justice. Deceit lurks in words spoken by lips that should speak life and truth. Pastors expend vital energies intended for ministry watching their backs.

James said, "My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10, KJV). But too often, like David, anointed ones find themselves in trouble in God's house. Is there a solution to this dilemma in the words of David?

### **TRUST**

"I trust in God's unfailing love forever and ever" (Psalm 52:8). The call of God on our lives — the easy yoke Jesus promised — is rooted in the unchanging character of God. God's love for His servants is unfailing. Pastors need to realize the toxicity of the current situation falls safely within the boundaries of God's sovereignty.

Trust believes when reason tells us to doubt. Trust means staying when our senses tell us to flee. Our obedience is not rooted in shifting circumstances, but is built instead on the rock of God's unalterable veracity. As David fled from Saul, he hid in caves, fields, and heathen cities, but his *trust* was always in God's unfailing love.

### **PRAISE**

"I will praise you forever for what you have done" (verse 9). David expressed his trust through praise. His confidence in the future grew from his daily rehearsal of what God had done in the past. Praise builds faith, and faith yields courage. This is the courage required for the besieged leader to get out of bed each day, to go to

# After years of ministry, some ministers may find it difficult at times to flourish in God's house.

the office, to answer the phone, and on Sunday to mount the platform when the sanctuary feels like enemy territory. And it only comes from a fresh review of God's impeccable record of caring for those He has called. Daily courage is the product of daily praise. Even in the valley God is with us.

"In your name I will hope, for your name is good" (verse 9). The names of God reveal His character. The covenant names of Jehovah show His precise, comprehensive care for us. He is our healer, peace, friend, victory, sanctification, and provider. Jesus' name is a refuge and a weapon. His good name is our strong tower. Speaking His name floods the soul with peace and courage as the enemy arrayed against us breaks formation at its sound.

"I will praise you in the presence of your saints" (verse 9). Added to David's daily private praise was public devotion. Conflict centers on people, but public worship is about God. In the presence of the saints the leader's praise (his faithfulness, sweetness, peacefulness, and spoken words) is significant. As leaders worship publicly, the focus shifts from them to God. People are watching leadership for their reaction to the strife behind the scenes. What they need to see is a worshiper giving all to the glory of God.

Never is the sacrifice of praise as costly as in times of conflict and stress. This is not playacting; it is genuine, desperate ministry to the Lord. When ministers come

to God's house, they must lay their burdens down as they enter into public worship. In these precious moments in the presence of God and His saints, they must worship, not worry; praise, not pout; give thanks, not make political pronouncements. The concentration required by worship in spirit and truth is the break needed from the strain of unnecessary combat with those who should be fighting alongside us.

How can a minister flourish in God's house? The words of Paul to Timothy are the Lord's words to us, "Do not neglect your gift" (1 Timothy 4:14); "fan into flame the gift of God" (2 Timothy 1:6). Our giftedness is the key to flourishing. If we are gifted to study, then study will become our refuge from the storm. If we are gifted in music, then music will become our sanctuary from strife. In times of personal danger and stress, we tend to neglect our gift. But flickering within the disciplines of our giftedness is the flame to fuel our peace.

The Lord is telling us to tend to His gift in us; fan it into flame. We need its light for the present darkness. We need its warmth deep within us as we face the cold winds of conflict. The study you do, the songs you write, sing, or play, the writing you produce will not only get you through the valley, your art will become a part of your testimony, a record of God's faithfulness in your time of trial. The season of testing can also be a season of flourishing in God's house.

It may seem difficult at times to flourish in the church. In seasons of distress, the minister can delight in the words of David. The righteous will flourish as they praise God, trust in His unfailing love, and abide in the house of God. "In your name I will hope, for your name is good" (Psalm 52:9).



Stephen R. Phifer, D.W.S., is music pastor at Word of Life International Church, Springfield, Virginia.

# Rich Dad, Poor Dad: Rich Theology or Poor Theology (Part 1)

BY RANDALL K. BARTON

he personal finance book *Rich Dad*, *Poor Dad* by Robert T. Kiyosaki and Sharon L. Lechter became a No. 1

New York Times best seller because it challenged many popular notions of what leads to financial success.

The story line describes the paradox of what the author's father (Poor Dad) taught and what a mentor (Rich Dad) taught regarding the road to financial freedom. Examine the lessons learned from *Rich Dad* through the lens of biblical stewardship.

# LESSON ONE: THE RICH DO NOT WORK FOR MONEY

This lesson suggests that people need to work hard, but more important, that they need to work *smart*. *Rich Dad* teaches that most people work because they are motivated by fear (security and paying the bills).

Rich Dad models that people should be risk takers — not looking for security, but looking for opportunity — not spending as consumers, but investing. In other words, Rich Dad shows that financial security comes from letting money and others work for you.

Scripture teaches that fear prevents people from realizing the financial blessings God has in store for them. Fear keeps people from taking a chance on investing for their future. Instead of stepping out in faith, they take steps to avoid risk. Matthew 25:14–30 describes a steward with one talent (not much when compared to what the others had). To avoid suffering a loss, he buried his money. He was averse to risk, and this fear doomed him to not letting his talent work for him (and his master).

# LESSON TWO: TEACH FINANCIAL LITERACY (BUY ASSETS, NOT LIABILITIES)

*Rich Dad* observes that in society, the poor primarily have expenses, and the middle class buys liabilities but believe they are buying assets. *Rich Dad* notes that an asset puts money in one's pocket. The challenge in our culture today is that people purchase primarily liabilities (bigger homes, expensive cars, and more toys) instead of assets, such as income-generating real estate, stocks, bonds, and mutual funds; or business interests that others can operate. Financial literacy teaches that the only way to get ahead is to spend less than you make and buy assets with the difference.

God's Word teaches the principle of this lesson from *Rich Dad* — with contentment comes great gain: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that" (1 Timothy 6:6–8).

Lack of contentment causes people to spend all they make or more than they make. The result: many people never having money to invest. The Prodigal Son was unwise and spent his entire inheritance (Luke 15:11–32). Without both moderation and contentment, people will never experience great gain through the buying of assets — the gain that brings financial freedom.

### **LESSON THREE: MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS**

This lesson from *Rich Dad* teaches that most financial struggles are the result of people not taking time, not being disciplined, or being unwilling to risk minding their own business and doing something they love doing.

People often confuse their profession with their business. The educational system reinforces this idea by claiming that a person must have a good education to get a good job. *Rich Dad* concludes that schools do not teach (or teach little) financial or business principles that form the basis for financial independence.

Work is not meant to be a curse or a daily grind. Many Christians struggle because they do not possess a passion for their work. They are afraid to start their own business because they cannot afford to quit their current job. So they spend their life talking about lost opportunities.

Proverbs 14:23 clearly teaches that mere talk (opportunities we have passed up) leads to poverty, but hard work leads to profit.

These first lessons from *Rich Dad*, *Poor Dad* empower Christians because they are consistent with biblical stewardship principles.



The final lessons will be explored in part 2 of "Rich Dad, Poor Dad: Rich Theology or Poor Theology." ■

**Randall K. Barton** is president and CEO of Assemblies of God Financial, Springfield, Missouri.

### **⇔** GROWING GODLY MEN **⇔**



# Second-Step SUCCESS

BY ANDREW D. TEMPLETON

All too often men's ministry has been equated with events. Promise Keepers has done an excellent job placing men's events at the forefront as a catalyst for men's ministry. Events are good and provide a powerful venue to reach men and challenge them to a deeper and more personal relationship with Christ and with their family. Events allow men to see what God has called them to be. Men often return from events changed, excited, and encouraged to be great dads, husbands, and servants of God. This excitement, however, seems to quickly fade.

During the last 5 years, I have spoken with hundreds of pastors and church leaders concerning ministry to men. They often say, "We had an event last fall and little happened to change our men's ministry. We cannot sustain momentum." While events serve as a wonderful experience for men, an event is only the first step.

Sustaining a men's ministry program is the most difficult challenge for pastors and men's leaders. Many churches no longer try. For other churches, men's ministry consists of a monthly or quarterly ritual such as a Saturday morning breakfast, a Sunday School class, or a

yearly camping retreat. These serve as important facets of men's ministry, but they will not create sustained growth in men's ministry. How do we capture momentum and sustain it for the long haul?

### A DISCIPLE-MAKING MINISTRY

The second step to sustaining men's ministry is to funnel the momentum and energy created at the event into a disciple-making ministry to men. When I first heard the phrase "disciple-making ministry," I was perplexed. Despite years at seminary and serving in a church, I first heard this phrase when I became involved in men's ministry. After learning what it meant, I quickly added this phrase to my vocabulary. I also added it to a short list of necessary items a church must have.

We need to ask: Are we looking for disciples or for workers? Men's ministry in the church must be biblically based. Matthew 28:19,20 says, "Therefore go and make disciples ... teaching them." The Great Commission is one of the last commands

### Sustaining a men's ministry program is the most difficult challenge for pastors and men's leaders.

Jesus gave while on earth. Jesus did not say to make leaders or to make workers; He said to make disciples.

To sustain momentum in men's ministry it is necessary to provide discipleship that is all-inclusive and relevant. Men's ministry is for every man in the church and must be developed to reach each man. It is also equally important to provide a relevant ministry to men that reaches where they are and provides an environment that appeals to their interests and needs.

Men's ministry is often built on events and tasks. Churches may call on men to change oil on car-repair days. Such tasks bring men together, but the context of the event limits relationship building, the essential ingredient to sustaining men's ministry.

When we ask men to take this second step into discipleship, some may choose not to. That is okay. The Parable of the Sower is at work. Some of our seed will be received, and some will fall on hard ground. Be encouraged; men choose this second step because they are now more closely involved.

A system for making disciples should be built using short intervals to help sustain interest. The book *The Purpose Driven Life* is a good example. Men need short intervals (40 days) to keep them involved and motivated. Men also need to feel a sense of accomplishment. They need short-term goals so they can see the end and feel the satisfaction of completing them.

Another key ingredient to a disciple-making ministry is designating someone to disciple others. The first designated person must be the senior pastor. When a pastor disciples and mentors a few men and challenges them to disciple and mentor a few more men, growth happens quickly and exponentially. The pastor is also seen as involved, interested, and concerned about men. These three elements need to trickle down to each person who is commissioned to disciple others. It is important for men to know someone cares about them.

#### **MEASURING SUCCESS**

Reaching men is not easy. Many men are content to watch 3 uninterrupted hours of football on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Providing a ministry that engages men is difficult. To relate with others and to participate in a group goes against a man's nature. While events are good and necessary, there must be a plan of action in place to move men from sitting and receiving (cruise ship) to being active

and involved in drawing near to God and their family. In addition, men must also be on a mission to reach other men (battleship). Once this shift in their personal philosophy is made, the result will be spiritual and numerical growth.

Too many men are losing interest in what seems to them to be a feminized church. By creating a disciple-making ministry and encouraging men to cultivate healthy and strong relationships with God, their family, and other men, we will witness the miraculous change of lives, families, and churches. That is men's ministry, a ministry to men and by men.



Andrew D. Templeton, Springfield, Missouri, is former assistant director, HonorBound: Men of Promise.

# BETWEEN BELIEVING AND SEEING

TEXT: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

#### MESSAGE

- 1. "A vast army is coming" (2 Chronicles 20:2).
  - a. A formidable enemy (verse 1).
  - b. An insurmountable problem.
- 2. "Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 20:3,4).
  - a. Did not immediately rely on his army.
  - b. Fasted and asked God for help.
- 3. "Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army" (2 Chronicles 20:15).
  - a. "The battle is not yours, but God's" (verse 15).
  - b. "You will not have to fight this battle" (verse 17).
  - c. "Stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you" (verse 17).
  - d. "The Lord will be with you" (verse 17).
- 4. I believe, but I do not see a change. What now?
  - a. Sing to the Lord (2 Chronicles 20:21).
    - (1) During the delay between believing and seeing, keep your

- eyes on the Promise Giver.
- (2) When facing a battle, keep your mental attention on God (Deuteronomy 20:1).
- (3) When we focus on the Promise Giver, we are strengthened. Focusing on delay weakens us (Numbers 13:30,31; Isaiah 40:29,31).
- (4) Singing about the Lord lifts our attention toward Him, but delay is discouraging.
  - (a) In the Psalms there are 99 commands to sing.
  - (b) Jesus sang before His greatest battle (Matthew 26:30).
  - (c) Paul sang during his battle (Acts 16:25; 1 Corinthians 14:15).
- b. Praise Him for His faithfulness (2 Chronicles 20:21).
  - (1) What is believing? Resting in God's faithfulness to His promises.
  - (2) We are not acting strange when we believe without seeing; we

- are living by faith (John 20:29; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Hebrews 11:1).
- (3) Praise forces us to rely on God's faithfulness (Psalm 89:1,2).
- (4) Worry may attack but it never gains control.
- 5. "As they began to sing and praise" the victory became visible (2 Chronicles 20:22–30).
  - a. God intervened (verse 22).
  - b. The armies destroyed each other (verse 23).
  - c. God gave an abundant provision (verses 24-30).

#### **CONCLUSION**

While our problems may seem insurmountable, nothing is too difficult for God. When we seek Him, He can provide the answer we need. While we wait for His answer, we can turn our eyes on Him and worship Him.

James Fields Corpus Christi, Texas

# **CONQUERING TEMPTATION TEXT: James 1:12–18**

#### INTRODUCTION

We can more easily conquer temptation when we follow four basic principles in James 1:12–18.

#### **MESSAGE**

We can more easily conquer temptation when we . . .

- 1. Desire and value God's blessing in our lives (verse 12).
  - a. Our relationship with God is hindered by sin in our lives.
  - b. Sin impedes God's blessing.
  - c. When we stop to think about the cost of sin, it really isn't worth it.
  - d. When we desire God's blessing above all, it will curb our desire to disobey Him.

# 2. Take responsibility for our actions (verse 13).

- a. We cannot blame anyone but ourselves for our own sin.
- b. True repentance involves taking responsibility for our actions.
- c. When we take responsibility for our desires and actions, it is a tremendous step toward conquering temptation.
- 3. Know how temptation works and refuse to let it trap us (verses 14,15).
  - a. We are tempted by the lure and trap of desire.
  - b. We must understand that sin, once conceived in the womb of desire, will be born.
  - c. We must stop immediately before

desires hit the point of no return.

# 4. Remember that we are destined for a higher purpose (verses 16–18).

- a. God has given us every good and perfect gift.
- b. God chose to give us new birth through the gospel.
- c. As a result, we are destined to be the first results of God's new creation as He redeems and transforms our fallen world.
- d. We have a holy, God-ordained purpose for our new lives.
- e. Living in gratitude and recognition of our holy purpose motivates us to live up to our potential in Christ.

Greg Allison Beech Grove, Indiana

# PSALM 1 — TWO WAYS TEXT: Psalm 1

#### INTRODUCTION

This psalm gives us schooling for a successful life — for *eternal* life. This teaching revolves around the fear of the Lord, around God's Word.

#### **MESSAGE**

- 1. The way of the Law is the way of life (Psalm 1:1-3).
  - a. A Christian avoids the walk, stand, sit pattern that spirals down into hell (Psalm 1:1).
    - (1) A Christian does not walk, or build a lifestyle according to the counsel of the wicked.
    - (2) A Christian does not stand in the way of the sinners.
      - (a) Pharisaical approach to sinners (Mark 2:17).
      - (b) Wise approach to sinners (Proverbs 4:14–19).
    - (3) A Christian does not sit in the seat of mockers, making permanent what he first only dallied in (for example, Psalm 78:8–11; 2 Peter 3:4).
  - b. A Christian loves God's Word (Psalm 1:2).
    - (1) Disposition: delight (Psalm 19:7–10; contrast with Romans 3:13; the Law, Romans 7:7,12,14; the Law fulfilled, Galatians 5:14).
    - (2) Activity: meditates on it day and night.
      - (a) Not meditation on your own thoughts, dreams, or hopes, or upon your fantasies, phobias, and nightmares.
      - (b) But mediation on Scripture.
    - (3) The Psalmist practiced what he preached (for example, Psalm 119:47,48,52,54,62).
  - c. The Christian lives a fruitful life (Psalm 1:3).

- Resources never dry up: like a tree planted by streams of water.
- (2) Productivity never lags: like a tree that yields its fruit in season.
  - (a) When the Jews produced no fruit, God called them "not my people" (Hosea 1:9,10, compare Romans 9:25,26).
  - (b) So we should be well-warned, "If God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either" (Romans 11:21).
- (3) Successful lifestyle: whatever he does prospers.
- 2. The way of the wicked is the way of death (Psalm 1:4,5).
  - a. The wicked are unlike the righteous (Psalm 1:4).
    - (1) The wicked are not like trees planted by streams of water.
    - (2) The wicked do not yield their fruit in season.
    - (3) The wicked do wither.
    - (4) Whatever the wicked do does not prosper.
    - (5) The wicked ... are like chaff that the wind blows away.
  - b. The wicked are facing judgment (Psalm 1:5).
    - (1) Divine segregation of the righteous and the wicked:

The blessed	The wicked
believer	unbeliever
(Psalm 1:1)	(Psalm 1:5)
does not	will not stand
stand in the	in the judgment
way of sinners	
does not	will not stand
does not walk in the	will not stand in the
4565 1156 111	Will file t Stearter

- (2) The wicked have no basis for an appeal to God's justice in this world.
- (3) The sinner will have no right of an appeal against God's final judgment.

#### 3. God sustains the contrast between the righteous and the wicked (Psalm 1:6).

- a. The righteous go the way of blessing (Psalm 1:1), because the Lord watches over the way of the righteous (Psalm 1:6).
- b. On the other hand, the way
   of the wicked has nothing to
   support it in a fallen world
   subjected to futility, things are
   moving toward dissolution and
   chaos.
- c. So the way of the wicked will perish.

#### **CONCLUSION**

- 1. Jesus described this as the final divinely supervised parting of the ways: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory" (Matthew 25:31).
  - a. Response to the blessed man (Matthew 25:34).
  - b. Response to the scoffer (Matthew 25:41,46).
- 2. Are you ready for that judgment day?
  - a. If not, flee from the wrath to come.
  - b. If you are ready "the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared" (Proverbs 3:26).

—Dale A. Brueggemann Cambridge, United Kingdom

# RECONCILED TEXT: Colossians 1:19–23; 2 Corinthians 5:18,19

#### INTRODUCTION

When we have been purposefully and repeatedly wronged by people who do not love, appreciate, understand, or respect us, we are pleased with estrangement. God is not like us. We did not understand Him. We did not appreciate Him. We did not respect Him, and we did not love Him. We have purposefully and repeatedly sinned against Him. Yet, God was not pleased with our estrangement from Him. He would not be pleased until He reconciled us to himself. In this text, Paul reveals four aspects of our reconciliation with God.

#### **MESSAGE**

- 1. Paul reveals the Christ of reconciliation (Colossians 1:20).
  - a. The Christ of the cross is the agent of reconciliation.

- b. The cross of Christ is the method of reconciliation.
- c. Our reconciliation to God is exclusively and entirely the work of Christ on Calvary.
- 2. Paul reveals the candidates for reconciliation (Colossians 1:21).
  - a. We who were alienated from God by our carnal minds have been reconciled to God.
  - b. We who were the enemies of God
     by our wicked works have been
     reconciled to God.
- 3. Paul reveals the cause for reconciliation (Colossians 1:22).
  - a. Since Christ has reconciled us to God, He sees us as holy.
  - b. Since Christ has reconciled us to God, He sees us as blameless.
  - c. Since Christ has reconciled us to God, He sees us as above reproach.

# 4. Paul reveals the conditions of reconciliation (Colossians 1:23).

- a. Since Christ has reconciled us to God, we are to remain grounded and steadfast in the faith.
- b. Since Christ has reconciled us to God, we are to be immovable from the hope that is offered to us in the gospel.

#### CONCLUSION

Since God has reconciled us, He has given us the privilege and the responsibility to share in His ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18,19). The ministry of reconciliation is both an indescribable privilege and an inescapable obligation. We, who have been reconciled, should endeavor by God's help to reconcile others to God.

—Stanley E. Holder Crestwood, Kentucky

# THE LAWS OF THE LOAVES AND FISH TEXT: John 6:1-3

#### INTRODUCTION

Everyone faces seemingly impossible situations when the available resources are not enough to meet the need. Christ can take the meager resources we have and multiply them to meet our needs. Six laws that govern Christ's provision were revealed when Jesus multiplied the loaves and fish.

#### **MESSAGE**

- 1. The law of assurance (John 6:5).
  - a. The Lord is concerned about our needs.
  - b. The Lord is planning to meet our needs.
- 2. The law of adversity (John 6:6).
  - a. The Lord may place us in an adverse situation to test us.

- b. Adversity was not a sign of the Lord's displeasure with His disciples, but was an opportunity to stretch their faith.
- 3. The law of accounting (John 6:7).
  - a. A lack of money is not a problem with Jesus.
  - b. He is Jehovah-Jireh.
- 4. The law of availability (John 6:8,9).
  - a. The young boy made what he had available to Jesus.
  - b. Jesus will take what we make available and multiply it.
- 5. The law of acknowledgment (John 6:11).
  - a. Jesus acknowledged that God was the source of provision (Thanksgiving).

- b. Blessing and provision are linked with thanksgiving and acknowledgment.
- 6. The law of abundance (John 6:12,13).
  - a. When Christ provides, He does not barely meet the need but supplies more than enough.
  - b. He is *El Shaddai*, the One who is more than enough.

#### CONCLUSION

When a situation seems impossible and resources are meager, put the six laws Jesus gave when He multiplied the loaves and fish into action and watch the need be met.

> —Chris McMillan Laurel, Maryland

# THE STRONGHOLD IN LIFE: A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD TEXT: Psalm 27

#### INTRODUCTION

Quality of life depends on the quality of relationships a person develops. A relationship may be defined, according to *Webster's*, as:

- 1. A state of being related.
- 2. A specific kind of kinship.
- 3. A state of affairs existing between those having dealings.

#### **PROPOSITION**

A genuine relationship with God is characterized by certain elements.

#### **MESSAGE**

- 1. Confidence in God (Psalm 27:1-3). What does confidence in God do for us?
  - a. Confidence in His presence displaces our objections. "The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear?" (Psalm 27:1).
  - b. Confidence in His preservation disconcerts our opponents. "When my enemies and my foes attack

- me, they will stumble and fall" (Psalm 27:2).
- c. Confidence in His peace defeats our odds. "Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear" (Psalm 27:3).
- 2. Communion with God (Psalm 27:4-6).
  - a. Our contemplation focuses on His fairness, "to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord" (Psalm 27:4).
  - b. Our concealment frustrates His foes. "He will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock" (Psalm 27:5).
  - c. Our commendation fans His fame.
     "At his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy" (Psalm 27:6).
- 3. Communication with God (Psalm 27:7–12). This communication proceeds through predictable stages.
  - a. Our prospect provides His means. "My heart says of you, 'Seek his face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek" (Psalm 27:8).

- b. Our prayer prompts His mercies."Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Savior" (Psalm 27:9).
- c. Our pliability proves His methods. "Teach me your way, O Lord" (Psalm 27:11).

# 4. Confession for God (Psalm 27:13,14).

- a. Our willingness precedes our witness. "I am still confident of this: I
  will see the goodness of the Lord in
  the land of the living" (Psalm 27:13).
- b. Our waiting produces our winning. "Wait for the Lord: be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).

#### CONCLUSION

A genuine relationship with God should be characterized by certain elements.

- 1. Confidence in God
- 2. Communion with God
- 3. Communication with God
- 4. Confession for God

—Steve D. Eutsler Springfield, Missouri

# THANKSGIVING IN GILGAL TEXT: Joshua 5:1-15

#### INTRODUCTION

After the people of Israel crossed the Jordan River, they established a memorial of stones on the beachhead at Gilgal where the Lord brought them into the Promised Land. Another memorial was established in the center of the Jordan. At Gilgal, the people were called to remember what they had been and what they had become in God. Thanksgiving was a part of remembering.

#### **MESSAGE**

- 1. They remembered God's redemption.
  - a. From Egyptian bondage.
  - b. Through the Red Sea.

#### 2. They remembered God's guidance.

- a. Through Moses.
- b. Through the tablets of the Law.
- c. Through the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.
- d. Now through Joshua.
- 3. They remembered God's covenant that was first made with Abraham (Genesis 17:7–12).
  - a. An everlasting covenant (verse 7).
  - b. An everlasting possession (verse 8).
  - c. The sign of the covenant (verses 10–12).

#### 4. They remembered God's provision.

- a. In the wilderness manna, water, quail.
- b. Now the fruit of Canaan

(Joshua 5:11,12).

#### 5. They remembered God's revelation.

- a. At Sinai.
- b. That was renewed now as the Captain of the Lord's host appeared to Joshua (Joshua 5:13–15).

#### **CONCLUSION**

We need a Gilgal thanksgiving where we remember God's redemption, guidance, covenant, provision, and revelation in our lives. It will produce great thankfulness and worship within our hearts for God. It will also provide impetus to live for Him.

—Terry L. Terrell Burlington, Iowa

### HEALING THE WOUNDS OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

Mark R. Laaser (Zondervan, 240 pp., paperback)

Even if you have read Mark Laaser's book Faithful and *True*, you will want to read *Healing the* Wounds of Sexual Addiction. Laaser begins with a section entitled, "There Is Hope" — words every addict needs to hear.

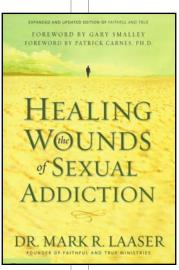
Laaser's book has four parts that give a comprehensive overview of sexual addiction and recovery.

Part 1, "What Is Sexual Addiction?" answers many questions about sexual addiction. Laaser also describes the Internet pornography epidemic and the many other sources of sexual addiction.

In part 2, "The Roots of Sexual Sin," Laaser describes healthy and unhealthy families and how early wounding plays a significant role in the later development of sexual addiction. Laaser also addresses the struggle women have with sexual addiction.

Part 3 is devoted to the healing process. Although Laaser supports the 12-step program of recovery, he also stresses the importance of accessing the Christian community in the healing process. Desperately needed, a chapter is devoted to "Healing for Couples."

In Part 4, Laaser takes a bold step in dealing with healing the wounds of the church. He provides a plan for addressing these wounds and working together as the body of Christ to heal them.



This book is a must read for anyone who has a sexual addiction. Pastors, counselors, and lay leaders will also greatly benefit from it. I highly recommend Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction. —Reviewd by Deborah Wallace, M.A., LPC, Carlinville, Illinois

#### **BIBLICAL CHURCH GROWTH: HOW YOU** CAN WORK WITH **GOD TO BUILD A** FAITHFUL CHURCH

Gary McIntosh (Baker Books, 192 pp., paperback)

Gary McIntosh has written a valuable resource for any pastor who is looking for a balanced approach to church growth. Biblical Church Growth is a thought-provoking and informative resource.

BIBLICAL

CHURCH

GROWTH

McIntosh builds this work on the original work of Donald McGavran. a biblical missiologist and the father of church growth. Each chapter of

McIntosh's book contains McGavran quotes and a prayer that gives insight into his views of church growth.

McIntosh uses a biblical foundation and provides practical application to the work and ministry of church growth. He offers nine biblical church growth

principles and practical ideas throughout the book. Each chapter ends with "Questions To Ask and Answer."

If you want a book to read and place on your bookshelf, this may not be the book for you. If you want to read a resource that will force you to look at your current situation with honesty and in anticipation of its potential, I recommend this book.

McIntosh states that his prayer is for the book to be "the beginning of a journey that will result in your church cooperating with God in building a faithful church."

-Reviewed by Michael Hilger, senior pastor, River of Life Worship Center Assembly of God, Stewartville, Minnesota.

#### LIVING IN VICTORY: THROUGH THE POWER OF MERCY

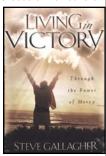
Steve Gallagher (Pure Life Ministries, 224 pp., paperback)

Known for his work in helping sexual addicts find wholeness in Christ, Gallagher challenges Christians to live a victorious life and to become conduits of God's mercy toward others. He maintains that abundant living is the result of acknowledging our need, understanding how God deals with us according to His mercy, turning that mercy into victorious living, and then bearing the fruits of victorious living.

The author's frankness in speaking about his own battle with the flesh allows us to examine ourselves. Those who desire a victorious life must enter it through an awareness of and admission of spiritual need that is manifested in a desperate brokenness before God. Gallagher plows the popular fields of selfhelp, self-esteem, and self-promotion to expose our underlying dilemma: the need for deliverance from our sinful flesh.

Gallagher counters our aversion to acknowledging our brokenness with an encouraging description of God's mercy and love toward us. He defines mercy as "love in action." The ultimate goal of God's mercy is for Christians to extend the same mercy they are given as they intercede for and meet the needs of others. Gallagher believes a Christian is waging spiritual warfare when he surrenders to God's will and performs deeds of mercy. Victory over habitual sin culminates in godly service and intercession for others.

Living in
Victory is wellgrounded in Scripture and excellent
for small-group
study. Not for
the faint of heart,
this book will get
under your skin,



stir you up, bring you to your knees, and release you to live a life of victory.

—Reviewed by Ronald Turner, Akron, Ohio, vice president, EMERGE Ministries, and director of clinical services to ministers and missionaries.

#### PORNOGRAPHY TRAP: SETTING PASTORS AND LAYPERSONS FREE FROM SEXUAL ADDICTION

Ralph H. Earle, Jr., and Mark R. Laaser (Beacon Hill Press, 140 pp., paperback)

The Pornography Trap is a must read for pastors, pastoral staff counselors, and church lay leaders. Earle and Laaser address the issue with clarity, practical biblical insight, and professional experience and skill.

The authors write from their training, knowledge, and experience helping pastors and laypeople out of the deadly entrapment of pornography addiction. Their knowledge of the insidious, seductive, and pernicious nature of pornography in the body of Christ and

its leadership is clearly evident.

The authors accurately portray how Satan uses pornography to seduce, deceive, silence, and drive people into hiding and denial. Satan's tactics today are similar to those used in the Garden of Eden — luring, looking, longing, lusting, and losing at great cost. For Adam and Eve, it resulted in being banished from paradise. Today, pornography has forced many pastors and laypeople into denial, secrecy, withdrawal and hiding, and forfeiture of ministry.

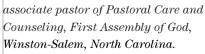
However, Earle and Laaser present a clear and hopeful pathway to freedom from addiction to pornography. They provide insight into the antecedents to pornography addiction. Their exercises ("Genogram," chapter 2; "Thorn in the Flesh Inventory," chapter 3; "Intimacy Disablement and Enablement, and Circles of Intimacy, Responsibility, and Impact," chapter 8; and "Intimacy Rating Scales," chapter 9) are helpful and effective for isolating and identifying spiritual strongholds.

The

**Pornography** 

The Pornography Trap provides the essential tools needed to help people break free from pornography addiction.

—Reviewed by Carl Miller,



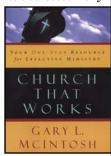
#### CHURCH THAT WORKS: YOUR ONE-STOP RESOURCE FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

Gary L. McIntosh (Baker Books, 266 pp., paperback)

Busy pastors and church leaders are inundated with book titles and articles related to doing church in contemporary and, sometimes, radically changing church environments. Choosing the right book can be a challenge. There is a need for books that can be read quickly, are to the point, and leave a sense that something of worth has been garnered when the last word is read. *Church That Works* responds well to the need for a timely, helpful, and informative read.

Church That Works addresses many

current pastoral concerns in a manner that empowers leadership to respond to 21st-century issues with new insight, wisdom, and effectiveness.



A small sample of the topics covered includes small-group ministry, church revitalization, personal development, pastoral compensation packages, developing a culture of serving, church management and staffing, worship, and leading a church through change.

Because McIntosh covers many topics and because of the brevity of information on most topics, the reader may be left wanting more information or guidance on a subject. Although the book is comprehensive in scope, many topics are covered in a cursory manner. While the succinct treatment of important and complicated topics could be viewed as a weakness, this pointed brevity gives the book the feel of a primer on current church issues, trends, strategies, and how to proactively respond to them.

Church That Works provides dependable guidance for ministry in a contemporary environment. Like an encyclopedia, it seems to say something about everything and McIntosh says it well.

—Reviewed by Howard Young, D.Min., senior pastor, Evangel Assembly of God, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

# FALSE INTIMACY, UNDERSTANDING THE STRUGGLE OF SEXUAL ADDICTION Harry W. Schaumburg

(Navpress Publishing Group, 247 pp., paperback)

Sexual addiction — our televisions and newspapers describe it, and the tragic failures of

laypeople, leaders, and some pastors remind us of the magnitude of this problem. The constant bombardment from the media that uses sexual temptation to promote products is only going to get worse. Those who struggle in this area will

become increas-

ingly more controlled by this addiction.

Sexual addiction is all around us. Pastors must understand the challenges our people face and know the solutions for their addictive behavior. Sexual addiction occurs throughout American society. Both Christians and non-Christians are involved in this battle for their minds and bodies.

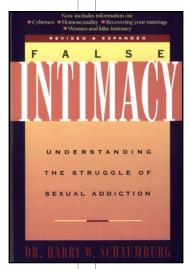
Schaumburg gives us an understanding of the problem of sexual addiction and the solutions and tools for overcoming it. He explains that many people use sexuality to meet their unmet needs, hence, false intimacy. He points out ways to recognize sexual addiction and what people can do to overcome it. He gives the counselor/pastor advice on how to help the innocent spouse or parent when they realize their spouse or child is addicted.

Only when we understand the problem can we give the wisdom and the hope necessary to address the

> problem. False Intimacy gives a biblical perspective on both the dynamics of sexual addiction and the healing potential there is through Christ.

One word of caution: It is my personal conviction not to discuss sexual issues with women, except for my wife. As a pastor, however, I

do teach on sexual issues to men. -Reviewed by Wayde Goodall, senior pastor, First Assembly of God, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.



#### **REAL QUESTIONS, REAL ANSWERS** ABOUT SEX

Louis and Melissa McBurney, (Zondervan, 321 pp., paperback)

Everything you've ever wanted to ask

-nitty-gritty questions from real-life Christians on every sexual topic you can imagine. Thus reads the review on the

back cover. The review

continues: Finally! A book that

answers the real-life private questions that Christians are asking about sex - even questions you've been afraid to ask. Real Questions, Real Answers About Sex offers frank, humorous, sensitive, biblically grounded answers for Christians who are looking for more than mere technical advice.

Based on the thousands of questions sent to the editors by readers of Marriage Partnership magazine, Real Questions, Real Answers About Sex is not for the prudish. With signature humor and authentic husband-wife dialogue, Louis and Melissa McBurney tackle the issues that need to be talked about, all within a solid spiritual, psychological, and therapeutic context. With its unique, easy, quick-reference format, this comprehensive guide is an ideal reference for all couples, whether newly engaged, recently married, or married for decades. Pastors will want to recommend this book to parents and to anyone wanting Biblebased answers to tough questions Christians are asking about sex. -Reprinted from back cover of Real Questions, Real Answers About Sex.

THE POST-**EVANGELICAL REVISED NORTH** AMERICAN EDITION

Dave Tomlinson

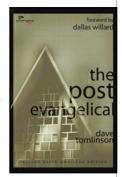
(Zondervan, 146 pp., hardcover)

Originally published in Great Britain in 1995, Tomlinson brings his encore to America with this revised edition (2003). It is a thought-provoking glimpse into contemporary evangelical Christianity in an increasingly postmodern culture. Tomlinson writes out of frustration with evangelicals who act with stunning irrelevance and intolerance toward believers who are seeking critical realism rather than naive understanding. Sidebars written by five Americans provide

commentary — both insightful and critical — on the author's ideas.

As a pastor, Tomlinson has observed an exodus of believers who vacate the church after a short period of discipleship. His chapter entitled "Longing To Grow" discusses the sophomoric level of discipleship engendered by

many evangelical churches. Having described current evangelicalism and the historical factors significant in shaping it, he discusses some of its most sacred principles, includ-



ing truth, inerrancy, and the Church's relationship to the world. He passionately calls for "more communal reflection on issues raised by contemporary culture."

You will disagree with Tomlinson frequently, but the book will challenge assumptions you may have that you were previously unaware of. The sidebars, even though they are sometimes irritating because they interrupt one's reading, also give food for thought. Though short on both evangelical blunders (the book gives a few glimpses in the mirror, but leaves you wanting more specifics) and practical application, the book is a worthwhile stimulus for the starting place — asking important questions. -Reviewed by Lori O'Dea, D.Min., program coordinator, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri.

# REAL SOLUTIONS FOR CARING FOR YOUR ELDERLY PARENTS

Grace Ketterman and Kathy King (Servant Publications, 139 pp., paperback)

The number of families with elderly parents to care for continues to

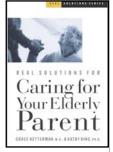
increase dramatically. By 2030, 65 million Americans will be 65 years of age or older. How do you plan to care for your parents as they grow older? What will you do if your mother or father:

- suffers from serious depression or grief?
- becomes seriously or terminally ill?
- encounters spiritual problems?
- falls into financial troubles?
- endures mental deterioration?
- needs assisted living?

You will find the answers to these and other pressing questions in this book. It is an excellent, short, quick-read handbook that prepares families to provide total care for an elderly parent. It addresses the issues of caregiving as

well as caring for the caregivers.

Ketterman and King, a motherand-daughter team of counseling professionals, consider the important and



urgent questions about care for elderly parents from their unique perspective.

I recommend this book for those who are involved in senior adult ministries or those who desire a better understanding of the issues facing today's seniors. It is an excellent resource for those who are part of the ever-increasing sandwich generation, caught between the needs of their children and aging parents.

—Reviewed by Stephen Sparks, director, Senior Adult Ministries, Springfield, Missouri.

#### RADICALLY UNCHURCHED: WHO THEY ARE — HOW TO REACH THEM

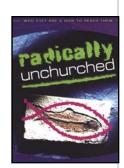
Alvin Reid (Kregel, 208 pp., paperback)

In his book, Radically Unchurched,

Southeastern Baptist seminary professor Alvin Reid gives an overview of the unchurched in America today, and some thoughts on how the church could better reach them.

The book is written in two parts. Part 1, "A Profile of the Radically Unchurched," discusses whom the unchurched are. He defines the radically unchurched as "people

who have no clear personal understanding of the message of the gospel, and who have had little or no contact with a Bible-teaching, Christ-honoring



church." According to his calculations, this describes approximately 120 million people. Quotes such as "You will be more like Jesus based on the lost people you reach than the saved people you impress" drive his point home well.

In part 2, "A Plan To Reach the Radically Unchurched," Reid suggests practical ways to better reach unchurched people around us. Evangelistic worship, using stories, planting new churches, and servant evangelism are tools he recommends.

This book provides a good overview and introduction to these topics. This strength can also be its weakness, however. Reid covers many topics in a brief way — postmodernism, youth culture, worship, and evangelism methods — that may leave the reader wanting more.

—Reviewed by Brent Sorlien, senior pastor, Oak Harbor Assembly of God, Oak Harbor, Washington.

#### ♣ NEWS AND RESOURCES

#### SAGU ANNOUNCES THE MARK MCGRATH AIM PARTICIPATION **SCHOLARSHIP**

Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, Tex., announces the Mark McGrath AIM Participation Scholar-

ship. This scholarship is offered to students who have participated in an official district, invitational, affiliate-led, or national AIM trip. Students are eligible to receive a scholarship of \$1,000 per district, invitational, or affiliate-led trip. Students who have participated in an official national AIM trip are eligible for



a scholarship of \$2,000 per trip. Scholarships may accrue to a maximum of \$5,000.

The scholarship is named after the former Global Ministries director for the Assemblies of God's national Youth Ministries, who died June 2004. McGrath had also been Arizona District youth director for 7 years. During that time, he was supportive of the university. While serving in the national office, McGrath served on the SAGU Board of Regent's Commission on Recruitment. During his time on the commission, he was a major proponent of creating a scholarship to acknowledge students who had participated in AIM trips.

Southwestern is offering the scholarship in memory of Mark McGrath. The university also encourages more young people to participate in district and national AIM trips and to continue their education in whatever avenue they choose. These students have demonstrated their commitment to reaching the lost and ministering to their world, and SAGU feels they should be honored for their commitments.

Southwestern will begin to offer the Mark McGrath AIM Participation Scholarship in the fall of 2005. For more information concerning this or other scholarships at SAGU, contact the admissions office at 1-888-YES-SAGU.

#### SATELLITE PRAYER CENTERS

The National Prayer Center needs churches to partner as Satellite Prayer Centers. First, America's success and stability depends on prayer. Many families in our nation are in crisis and need God's provision. Second, congregants who par-



"With one accord in prayer..." Acts1:14 importance, and pray more. Third, when peo-

ple lift the needs of others before the Lord, they create unity in the body of Christ. Some needs may be serious or difficult to understand, but the church will grow as God answers these needs in a dynamic way.

Scripture teaches that Christians have a duty to pray, and

the National Prayer Center needs help to fulfill its mission. Consider joining the National Prayer Center and begin today to pray one for another.

For more information, visit http://www.prayer.ag.org, call 417-862-2781, ext. 1551, or write: National Prayer Center, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo. 65802.

#### **NEW SPANISH CURRICULUM FOR MISSIONETTES**

The Stars Club Sponsor Guide and Activity Book are now available in Spanish. Spanish churches can now use Rainbows Club through Stars Club curriculum as well as leadership training materials and support items.

The new Missionettes Leadership Development Units: Bronze is also now available in Spanish. Leaders can receive additional training in the following topics: Missionettes With Special Needs or Disabilities, The Dynamics of Mentoring, and Understanding Learning Styles.

#### **CURRÍCULO NUEVO EN ESPAÑOL PARA MISIONERITAS**

Club Estrellas Guía de la Instructora y el Libro de Actividades están disponibles en Español. Iglesias hispanas ahora pueden implementar los recursos Club Arco Iris



hasta Club Estrella como también los recursos de adiestramiento y recursos suplementarios.

El nuevo recurso, Misioneritas Unidades para el Desarrollo del Liderazgo, nivel Bronce, también esta disponible en Español. Líderes pueden recibir adiestramiento adicional en los siguentes temas: Misioneritas con necesidades especiales o discapacidades, Las dinámicas de la mentoría, y Comprendamos los estilos de aprendizaje.

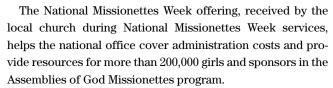
#### 2005 NATIONAL MISSIONETTES WEEK AND NATIONWIDE MISSIONETTES **SLEEPOVER**

"Honor the Past, Imagine the Future." Missionettes turns 50 in



2005. During National Missionettes Week, Sept. 11-17, girls and sponsors will honor the legacy of Missionettes and envision what God can do through Missionettes in the 21st century and beyond.

## ♣ NEWS AND RESOURCES ♣



"Happy 50th Birthday." The annual Nationwide Missionettes Sleepover is Sept. 23, 24. However, regional sleepovers for each weekend of September have been suggested to allow as many girls as possible to be invited to the Missionettes 50th Birthday Party. To find out if your district is planning to participate in a regional sleepover, contact your district Missionettes coordinator.

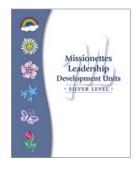
The annual Coins for Kids offering is also received during this event. All funds collected this year will benefit Hillcrest Children's Home in Hot Springs, Ark., and the street children of Mexico City (Doug Thomas, missionary). Hillcrest Children's Home provides a home for the homeless; security for the neglected; and love for the unloved. Many children who come to Hillcrest accept Jesus as Savior. An estimated 5,000 street children benefit from the ministry of the patio in Mexico City. The patio provides a safe haven where children can eat, nap, and shower, as well as receive general medical and dental attention. Counseling services are also available. All Coins for

Kids funds sent to the national Missionettes Ministries office will be included in your church's total BGMC giving.

Every church reporting a Missionettes ministry on the Annual Church Ministries Report will receive a free combination annual Theme/Sleepover packet. If your church has not received the annual Missionettes Theme/Sleepover packet, contact the national Missionettes Ministries office. The packet contains promotional plans and resources, a Sleepover planning guide, and a new catalog. You may contact the national office at 1-417-862-2781, ext. 4074 or http://www.mettes@ag.org. The Theme/Sleepover packet can also be downloaded from the Missionettes website at http://www.missionettes.ag.org.

# MISSIONETTES LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT UNITS: SILVER LEVEL RELEASED

The second continuing development book for Missionettes leaders is now available. Topics covered in the Silver Level leadership-training book are: Blending the Generations (benefiting from each generation represented in



#### **♦ NEWS AND RESOURCES ♦**

your church), The World in Your Clubroom (learning to effectively minister in a multicultural setting), and Your Missionettes Model (adapting and customizing Missionettes for your church setting). The units incorporate Missionettes-specific ideas and suggestions to help leaders determine how each topic relates to them and their clubs. A Spanish translation will be available by 2006.

#### NATIONAL MISSIONETTES MINISTRIES SPONSORS MISSIONS TRIP TO HILLCREST CHILDREN'S HOME

The national Missionettes Ministries office is sponsoring its third missions trip in October 2005. District Missionettes coordinators and other Missionettes leaders approved by DMCs will accompany members of the national staff to Hillcrest Children's Home in Hot Springs, Ark. Operated by the national Benevolences Department, this home provides a place for neglected and displaced children. Goals for the missions trip are to minister in area churches, paint and decorate children's rooms, and minister to the children.

#### CHILD CARE HARVEST FESTIVAL DATES

Visit the Benevolences Child Care ministries during their annual Harvest Festivals and see what God is doing in the lives of the boys, girls, and young women. The Hillcrest Children's Home Harvest Festival is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. Highlands Child Placement Services will hold its Harvest Festival Friday, Oct. 14.

To find out more about these compassion ministries



#### AGED MINISTERS ASSISTANCE DAY



First Timothy 5:17 says those who minister in preaching and teaching are worthy of double honor. Aged Ministers Assistance Day, Nov. 13, is an opportunity to express in a tangible way

enevolences

our appreciation to the retired and disabled ministers who are in need after years of sacrificial ministry.

To order AMA Day bulletin inserts visit http://www.ama. ag.org or call 1-417-862-2781, ext. 2182. Send your offering to Aged Ministers Assistance, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

The Christmas CARE-A-VAN provides opportunity for you or your church to take or send a Christmas box to a specific retired minister on AMA. To participate, call 1-417-862-2781, ext. 2184. Visit the AMA website http://www.ama.ag.org.

# U.S. MISSIONS CANDIDATE ORIENTATION

U.S. Missions is dedicated to evangelism in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. More than 900 missionaries and 5,000 field representatives are working to reach the lost in America. Luke 10:2, however, is still relevant: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

U.S. Missions fall candidate orientation will be Sept. 11–16, 2005, in Springfield, Mo. Orientation helps prepare candidates for the emotionally and spiritually trying aspects of missions work. This also includes time for interviews, training, and evaluation. For more information, contact U.S. Missions at 417-862-2781, ext. 3252, or visit usmissions.ag.org.

# DONATIONS, TOTAL MISSIONARIES INCREASE FOR U.S. MISSIONS

U.S. Missions closed out 2004 with record giving and an increase in the missionaries and chaplains commissioned.

Chaplaincy, Chi Alpha, Intercultural Ministries, and Youth Alive all increased in the number of missionaries commissioned. The number of endorsed chaplains increased 5 percent, according to statistics compiled by the U.S. Missions Promotions Department.



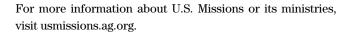
"U.S. Missions could not continue to grow without the long-term partnerships we have developed with churches and districts," Hackett said. "Because of these partnerships, we are able to reach outside the walls of the church to touch Americans who do not know God's grace or love."

#### 2004 U.S. Missions Statistics at a Glance:

Chaplaincy	429 endorsed chaplains, up from 409 last year	
Church Planting	159 missionaries 280 churches opened	
Chi Alpha	250 missionaries, up from 229 in 2004	
U.S. MAPS	17 missionaries 1,446 workers	
Intercultural Ministries	411 missionaries up from 388 in 2004	
Teen Challenge	77 missionaries	
Youth Alive	44 missionaries, up from 40 last year	

To pursue this story for your church's annual report on U.S. Missions, contact Angela Wilson at 417-862-2781, ext. 3266.

## ♣ NEWS AND RESOURCES ♣



#### U.S. MISSIONS CHRISTMAS OFFERING

October 23 is designated for the U.S. Missions Christmas offering. U.S. Missions is asking Assemblies of God churches to consider giving generously to U.S. missionaries this year. U.S. missionaries work diligently to bring our nation back to God and the Christian principles on which this country was founded. Funds are often tight during the holidays; a monetary gift for Christmas will encourage U.S. missionaries to continue their ministry. For more information, contact U.S. Missions at 417-862-2781, ext. 3252.

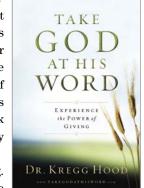
# NEW STEWARDSHIP TEACHING FROM AG FINANCIAL

Dedicated in its mission to encourage stewardship teaching in churches, AG Financial is offering *Take God at His Word* free to senior pastors. Designed as a 4-week practicum, *Take God at His Word* will enable pastors to teach their congregations how to experience the power of giving through stewardship. Author Kregg Hood, senior vice president of Church Business and Stewardship Services (a division of AG Financial),

focuses on four powerful, positive truths from Scripture to motivate generous giving. Senior pastors are encouraged to use this book as the first step in leading their congregation in a faith-building experience.

AG Financial has developed a strategic program packaged for pastors that will assist churches in the spiritual act of

giving. The pastor and congregation will discover God's abundant financial promises and rewards as they study each week. Their understanding of giving will be revolutionized and their level of faith increased. When used as a program package this 4-week practicum will also significantly increase weekly giving.



Experience the power of giving. Nearly 2,000 church leaders have

used this church-wide study. Don't let your church miss a blessing.

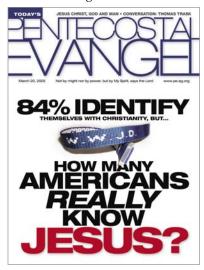
To order a copy of *Take God at His Word* visit www.takegodathisword.com, complete the website request, and send it via e-mail.

#### ♣ NEWS AND RESOURCES ♣

# CHURCHES MINISTER VIA LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Assemblies of God churches across the United States are latching onto a form of ministry that was initially presented during the 1917 General Council in St. Louis — providing their local public libraries with a subscription to *Today's Pentecostal Evangel*.

A resolution adopted nearly 90 years ago promoted the circulation of good literature and "that the various assem-



blies be recommended to subscribe for the *Evangel* to go into the Public Libraries in their cities ... where permitted."

Last fall the Evangel actively encouraged churches to consider this form of ministry that reaches their communities with the gospel in a direct, yet non-threatening manner. As a result, churches from Oregon to New

Jersey began sponsoring *Evangels* for public libraries in their hometowns.

An Iowa church not only provides the *Evangel* to its city's facility, but to a library in a neighboring county.

"Our early leaders had vision," says *Evangel* managing editor Ken Horn reflecting on the formative years of the AG. "They knew that putting the *Evangel* in libraries multiplied the readership far more than the number of magazines, since many people would likely read each copy.

"Magazine racks at libraries continue to be a hot spot for readers. I remember the first time I saw *Today's Pentecostal Evangel* in a library rack. I was thrilled. Why? Because it extends our ministry."

Pastor Tom Cogle and the members of Calvary Grace AG in La Plata, Md., couldn't agree more.

"Our congregation has really been excited about the opportunity to share the *Evangel* with the community," Cogle says. "I'm always after any method of getting involved in outreach.

"The articles in the *Evangel* have improved so much in recent years. I wanted to share the publication through the local library. Our community has an outstanding facility and it is well-used by the public, especially the reading area."

"Providing the *Evangel* to libraries means reaching more people, especially unchurched and unsaved who pick up the

issues because of their covers, then continue to read," says Horn, encouraging all churches, even those with limited budgets, to minister to their communities. "An *Evangel* in a public library has the potential to reach hundreds of lives."

A church can sponsor a one-year subscription that includes 52 issues of the Evangel for just \$20, an \$8.99 savings off the normal gift rate.

"I asked, 'What are the chances of doing this?'" says Cogle when he inquired about bestowing the Charles County Public Library with an *Evangel* subscription. "The lady provided me with the library's mailing address and showed me where the magazine would be displayed. I was prepared to offer reasons why the library should accept our gift, but I didn't need to. I was pleased with the open response to our offer. Other pastors can take a similar step of faith and do this in their communities."

Any church wanting to provide a sponsored *Evangel* subscription to its local library should contact the facility for its approval. Once permission is received, the church can call GPH Customer Service at 1-800-641-4310 and a request an "LC" subscription to receive the special \$20 annual rate.

#### NATIONAL RV CONVENTION

Mission America Placement Service will host the 19th National RV convention in Carlinville, Ill., October 2–6,

2005. Critical Incident Stress Management training will be held September 29,30, prior



to the convention. To learn more about MAPS or this convention and training, call 1-877-346-6277.



Felicia R. Allen Pomona, California

**James H. Anderson** Lindale, Texas

Samuel Ayala New York, New York

**Donald E. Baldwin** Laguna Niguel, California

Hoyt E. Barnard Okemah, Oklahoma

**Dorothy M. Beair** Colorado Springs, Colorado

Thurman M. Blue Campbell, Texas

Maxine E. Brewer Canton, Ohio

Michael E. Broberg Pillager, Minnesota

Carl L. Brodrick Tecumseh, Oklahoma

Harriet E. Brown Anchorage, Alaska

Janie D. Bruton Fort Worth, Texas

Willyla Bushnell Huntington Beach,

California **H.B. Byrum**Gladewater, Texas

Arsenio M. Castillo

Miami, Florida

Dwight E. Chaffin

Bryan, Texas

Ellen Cochran Waynesboro, Mississippi

Viola G. Croasmun Grants, New Mexico

Philip A. Crouch

Springfield, Missouri Loren S. Curtis

Macomb, Illinois
Leonard P. Cutts

Winter Haven, Florida

**Charles V. Davis** Grand Prairie, Texas

**Taylor H. Davis** Springfield, Missouri

M. Jeanne Dean Wichita, Kansas

Bradley S. Dyer Gans, Oklahoma

**Gordon F. Earls**Bay Minette, Alabama

**Thomas V. Estes** Afton, Oklahoma

**Donald W. Evans** Rogers, Arkansas

Mark E. Flathers Everett, Washington

James T. Foreman Sedgwick, Kansas

John L. Galitello Columbus, Georgia

**Benito T. Gonzalez** Moca, Puerto Rico

**Leonard E. Gordon** Medina, Ohio

**Loton Gordon** Brooklyn, New York

Thomas G. Gray Cibolo, Texas

**Brian A. Haima, Sr.** Baldwinsville, New York

Myrtle Hale Hayden, Idaho

Wayne A. Hall Bentonville, Arkansas

Ruth E. Hand Rogers, Arkansas

**G.W.** Hardcastle II Rancho Cordova, California

**Esther L. Harrup** Springfield, Missouri

**Richard W. Hartman** Penn Valley, California

**Dibrell Helton** Longview, Texas

W.G. Hinecker Charlestown, Indiana

Frank M. Jones Ada, Oklahoma

**Leonard J. Jones** Vancouver, Washington

**Eugene H. Kim** Honolulu, Hawaii Harold Kohl Winchester, Virginia

J. Walter Leppke Collinsville, Oklahoma

Carl O. Lindberg, Jr. Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

**Stanley A. Lyon**Jacksonville, Florida

Robert C. Marks Baroda, Michigan

Pauline B. Mastries Springfield, Missouri

William P. Mayberry Greensboro, North Carolina

**Einar E. McGhee** Tigard, Oregon

William D. McGinty Havelock, North Carolina

Federico R. Mena Fort Worth, Texas

William A. Motley, Jr. Ball, Louisiana

Mauel Nunez Bronx, New York

**D. Fern Ogle** Atwater, California

Marian N. Olson Wilmar, Minnesota

Larry B. Pace, Jr. Lincoln, Nebraska

Mrs. Earl Pardue Butler, Alabama

**Virgil Patton** Kiowa, Oklahoma

**Tommie G. Paul** Bald Knob, Arkansas

**Francisco Perez**Bridgeport, Connecticut

**Pedro L. Perez** Santa Cruz, New Mexico

Ernest B. Perkins Artesia, New Mexico

**Grover G. Pollard** Modesto, California

Solomon N. Price Columbus, Georgia

James D. Raley Ormond, Florida

**Clyde A. Reese** Palestine, Texas

Harold E. Rhodes Santa Rosa, California Walter L. Richmond Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**Georganna Roberson** Albion, New York

**Burl Jerry Rogers** San Angelo, Texas

**James O. Rosenberg** Saint John, Kansas

**Hector Sanchez** Munday, Texas

Hilda Santana Maywood, Illinois

J. Gordon Shaw University Place, Washington

**Daniel Sinner** Vancouver, Washington

Timothy Smith Grand Blanc, Michigan

**Lewie E. Spencer** Managua Nicaragua, Central America

Lawrence P. Spratt Cuba, Illinois

**James H. Standifer** Birmingham, Alabama

**Albert E. Sutton** Spokane, Washington

Lucy R. Swann McCrory, Arkansas

**Jeff W. Taylor** Lakeland, Florida

**Wilma E. Thornton** Winston-Salem, North Carolina

**Deloise E. Tyler** Las Vegas, Nevada

Eldon E. Vincent Yucaipa, California

Dale C. Waldemer Nampa, Idaho

**Stephen R. Wallace** Forney, Texas

Mitchell E. Webb Lakeland, Florida

Robert J. Wilkes Jasonville, Indiana

Jack R. Williams Port Huron, Michigan

**John Wilson** E. Palo Alton, California

# ♣ ADVERTISING INDEX ♣

Acrylic Podiums1	58
Advance/Pulpit	99
AG Financial 30, 155, inside back cov	/er
AG U.S. Missions51, 154, 1	55
Asia Pacific Media Ministries 1	53
Bethany House 126, 1	56
Bearing Fruit Communications	17
Benevolences	54
Beyond the Gates of Splendor	17
Bible Alliance inside front cover,	, 1
Carpenter Bus Sales	59
Central Bible College	2
Chaplaincy	55
Christian Higher Education Department	58
ConnectionPower	29
Church Planting	. 5
Church Mutual Insurance	33
Districts Insurance & Risk Management inside back cov	/er
Dream <sup>3</sup>	63

Enrichment journal	. 83, 127, 141, 158
Focus on the Family Pastoral Ministries .	15
Gospel Publishing House	6, 75, 111
Global University	49
HelpLine	81
Life Publishers	65
MEGA Sports Camp	6
Ministerial Enrichment Office	81
North Central University	39
Office of Public Relations	73
Raising Pure Kids in an Impure World	126, 156
Robison Gamble Creative	outside back cover
Southwestern A/G University	45, 152
Stevens Van Lines	133
Steward Church Insurance	21
Today's Pentecostal Evangel	97, 156
U.S. MAPS	143, 156
Women in Ministry	129



# One Pastor's Failure Affects Every Pastor's Image

BY GEORGE O. WOOD

was a young and inexperienced pastor when a married couple of 30 years came to me for pastoral counseling. The wife dearly loved her husband and was desperate to save the marriage. He was nonresponsive and indicated he had no desire to stay married. Nothing I said had any impact on him. The wife left the session disappointed that their marriage had not been reconciled.

She turned to a more experienced pastor. Her husband agreed to come with her for one session. The seasoned pastor was only a few minutes into the conversation when he asked the husband: "Are you having an affair?"

He said, "Yes."

"Then," the minister said, "there's no use talking further unless you are willing to end the relationship with the other woman."

The man walked away from his wife, leaving her devastated. Sexual infidelity often destroys the lives of the spouse and children.

But when a minister fails morally, the trauma extends far beyond his spouse and children. One pastor's failure affects every pastor's image.

Trust in all ministers is undermined by the failure of a few. Reproach is also brought on the name of the Lord and His church. The failure of prominent ministers becomes fodder for late-night television personalities to trash the cause of Christ. People who are new in the faith or who are young have their confidence shaken. They think, If a pastor with his church background and Bible knowledge cannot make it, is there hope for

us? Or they may walk away from the faith saying, "Ministers are all hypocrites. How can we believe what they preach when they do not live it?"

The moral failure of a minister because of sexual sin provides, in some cases, an impetus for those standing on the brink of temptation to sin. Isn't that why Jesus gave this stern warning? "Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves" (Luke 17:1–3).

So, how can ministers best watch themselves?

G. Raymond Carlson, the late general superintendent of our Movement, said he had never heard of a moral failure committed by a minister who was consistent in his prayer life. That sentiment could probably be born out by research. Failed human relationships stem directly from failure in one's relationship with the Lord.

Moral transgression does not occur because pastors lack information on the difference between right and wrong. It comes because they do not act on what is right.

Daily prayer in our mother tongue and in the language the Spirit gives us is the greatest antidote to moral failure. A prayerless Christian is, in all likelihood, a careless one as well.

I am not so naive to suggest that a praying leader is immune to temptation, but the pray-er has a greater resistance because of his intimate walk with the Lord.

When temptation to immorality begins to aggressively occupy a pastor's thoughts, then he must add to prayer the element of confession. Scripture indicates that we are not to bear our burdens alone. Sin dwells in secret places. Exposing those secrets through confession to the Lord and to a trusted person is a vital component of victory over sexual immorality.

Ministers often feel they have no one they can go to with their struggles. That is an excuse. Surely, a pastor knows someone who can be trusted to help him and hold him accountable. It could be his spouse, a trusted and qualified counselor, a spiritual leader or mentor, or an older Christian he respects.

The enemy wants pastors to think they must bear their temptations alone, and that no one can be trusted to help them with their struggles. Sexual sin by its nature is secretive. The fear that hinders pastors from getting help also drives the inner struggle further into the dark.

This issue of *Enrichment* provides us with a wealth of resources in this sensitive area of sexual morality. Keep this issue of *Enrichment* as a resource for pastoral life and ministry. Let's honor God and one another through conduct pleasing to Him (Romans 12:1,2).

**George O. Wood**, D.Th.P., is general secretary for The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.