

Total Fitness
Spiritual Fitness

Overcoming Pornography

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Every man's battle

- 90 percent of boys 8-16 have viewed porn online. Average starting age: 11
- Seminary professor: “We no longer ask if an entering student struggles with pornography; we assume he does. We now ask the student, ‘How serious is the problem?’”

Women and porn

- More women are watching porn, sexting, and chatting online about romance and sex.
- Novels and chick flicks might focus more on romance and fantasizing than on explicit images. But lust is still lust: adultery in your heart.

“You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. (Matthew 5:27-29)

It is God's will that you should be sanctified:
that you should avoid sexual immorality;
that each of you 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; and that in
this matter no one should wrong his brother
or take advantage of him. (1 Thess 4:3-6)

The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 4:6-8)

Triple trouble

- **World:** The culture around us treats evil as healthy. Porn pervades entertainment, business, technology, education, religion.
- **Flesh:** Our old, weak, sinful self hates holiness, is addicted to its own urges, and gets worse when told what's right.
- **Devil:** The prince of darkness, Satan, wants to twist and ruin God's creatures. He tempts, accuses, lies, and destroys.

Doing what I hate

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate... For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (Romans 7:14-20)

When conduct and conscience collide

Three options

1. **Self-indulgence:** try to drown conscience in a flood of sinful conduct (lawless)
2. **Self-improvement:** try to force conscience to control conduct by sheer willpower (law)
3. **Spirit-indwelling:** trust God's grace in Christ to forgive you and depend on the Spirit's power to battle the flesh

Walk by the Spirit

But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will **not gratify the desires of the flesh**.

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are **not under the law**. (Galatians 5:16-18)

The new you

- Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus... Do not offer the parts of your body to sin... but rather offer yourselves to God. (Romans 6:11-13)
- You have put off the old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. (Col 3:9-10)

Avoid temptation

Flee sexual immorality. (1 Cor 6:18).

I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl. (Job 31:1)

If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away.

(Matthew 5:29)

When you are tempted, God will also provide a way out. (1 Cor 10:13)

Truly make love

May you rejoice in the wife of your youth...
may her breasts satisfy you always, may
you ever be intoxicated with her love.

(Prov 5:18-19)

The husband should fulfill his marital duty
to his wife, and likewise the wife to her
husband... Do not deprive each other...
so that Satan will not tempt you because
of your lack of self-control. (1 Cor 7:4-5)

Help each other

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. (James 5:16)

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1-2)

Feast on God

Every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is looking for God. (Chesterton)

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. (Proverbs 4:23)

Spiritual fitness: Bible, prayer, rest, solitude, fasting, worship, fellowship

Don't despair

After each failure, ask forgiveness, pick yourself up, and try again. Very often what God first helps us toward is not the virtue itself but just this power of trying again. (C. S. Lewis)

Though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again. (Prov 24:16)

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