

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

John 6:68



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Pornography Is Destructive

Craig Thomas

Pornography (porn) is “Sexually explicit pictures, writing, or other material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal.” In times past porn was rare and found only on the “seamy” side of town. Today porn is everywhere! Twelve percent (4.2 million) of websites offer porn. (Statistics from *TopTen Reviews, Inc.*) There are over 420 million porn pages on the internet and over 68 million search engine requests per day for porn (25% of total requests!). Every second over 28,000 people are viewing porn on-line. Every 39 minutes a new porn video is created in the U.S. Over 13,500 porn videos were released in 2005, a 138% increase since 1995! In the U.S. porn websites generate \$2.84 billion in annual revenue. Other pornographic material (e.g., movie rentals, magazines, phone sex, etc.) increase the size of this “industry” to over \$13 billion in the U.S. and over \$97 billion worldwide. Worldwide porn revenue exceeds the combined revenues of Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo!, Apple, Netflix, and EarthLink! U.S. porn revenue is larger than the combined revenues of all professional sports (football, baseball, basketball) and nearly double the combined revenues of the major television networks (ABC, NBC, and CBS). Porn is not going away!

1) **But, it’s not a problem at my house.** Perhaps, but it is a major problem in American society and you and your family are in much more danger than you may know! Did you know: 80% of 15-17 year olds have “multiple hard-core exposures”? 90% of 8-16 year olds have viewed porn on-line (most while doing homework)!? 40 million American adults regularly visit porn websites? 20% of men admit to accessing porn at work? 10% of Americans admit to an internet sexual addiction? 17% of all women struggle with a porn addiction? 9.4 million women access adult websites each month and 13% of them admit to doing so at their workplace? Sadly, 47% of “Christians” say porn is a problem in their home. Do you know what your children are viewing on the internet? Your husband? Your wife? You and your household may not have a problem, but “let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12).

2) **Porn is more addictive than “crack cocaine”!** That’s what experts said who testified before the U.S. Senate (*wirednews.com*). One expert said “Pornography addicts have a more difficult time recovering from their addiction than cocaine ad-

Trends

- ☛ 12% of websites are pornographic (>24 million sites).
- ☛ Every second over \$3,000 is spent on pornography.
- ☛ 40 million Americans regularly visit porn sites.
- ☛ 70% of men age 18-24 visit porn sites at least once a month.
- ☛ U.S. internet porn revenue is >\$2.8 billion annually; \$4.9 B worldwide.
- ☛ 2.5 billion e-mails per day are pornographic (~8% of all e-mails).
- ☛ The most popular day of week for porn viewing is Sunday.

—via OnlineSchools.org

I Thessalonians 4:3-5: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;”

Sentence Sermons

“I’ve met a lot of men who were motivated to commit violence just like me. And without exception, without question, every one of them was deeply involved in pornography.”

—Ted Bundy, infamous serial murderer

Proverbs 23:7: “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he..”

News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Please pray for my son and his wife as they seek to start a new congregation in northern Michigan. Please pray Ryan can raise enough support to do this important work. Please read his recent report I forwarded to all on my e-mail list.

Please pray for those at Grayling who chose not to follow the truth.

Please pray for Sandy Willis, wife of gospel preacher Mike Willis (Decatur Township). Sandy had successful heart valve replacement surgery and is now home recuperating.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets such a good example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for Hatti and her “new life” in Texas! We wish her only the very best and will miss her “something fierce”!

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people are now back to school.

There are many needy saints! Can you help?! Let me know.

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dicts, since coke users can get the drug out of their system, but pornographic images stay in the brain forever.” Other testimony revealed the sexual arousal caused by porn is more powerful than addictive drugs since it causes the

“...coke users can get the drug out of their system, but pornographic images stay in the brain forever.”

release of “naturally occurring opioids” and “does what heroin can’t do.” Another said porn addiction can lead to

“compulsive and destructive behaviors centered on pornography” more powerful than gambling or shopping addictions. One senator called the hearing “the most disturbing one I’ve ever seen.”

Pornography is poisoning minds and ruining lives throughout our nation. Christians must “flee fornication!” (1 Cor. 6:18). Interestingly, the word “fornication” is from the Greek word “porneia” which is the root of our English word “pornography.” That fact alone should be warning enough for the followers of Christ: porn has one purpose...to lead us to commit fornication, whether it be the overt act or through self gratification. In the process relationships will be damaged and broken, lives and homes will be shattered, and souls will be lost! Let us awaken to this insidious and ubiquitous danger and warn our brethren and children of its immense power and destructiveness!

Emotionalism in Worship

Larry Ray Hafley

Humans are creatures of emotion. Emotion is part of all we do. It affects our judgment. It causes us to act, react, and interact in certain ways. Emotion is a cause. It is an effect. It is a response. It colors every phase and facet of our being.

In religion, as in all other areas, emotion plays a part. Sin is interlaced and intertwined with emotion from beginning to end (Gen. 3:6; Psa. 32; 51; Matt. 26:75; Lk. 15:5-7, 9, 10, 20-24). Jesus’ life exhibited emotion (Mk. 3:5; Jn. 11:35). So also did Paul’s. Certain of his emotional responses were “negative,” or sad; others were “positive,” or happy (2 Cor. 1:8; 7:5-7). Of course, “rejoicing” is generally recognized as an emotional reaction. While emotion plays a part in it, rejoicing is not necessarily limited to cheerful feelings (Acts 8:39; 16:34; Phil. 4:4-9).

Liberal theology is recognized for its misuse of emotion in religion. “Seepy-weepy” eyes are supposed to indicate great compassion and deep spirituality. However, conservative religionists, as typified by Pentecostalism, also are well known for their exhibitions of emotionalism in worship. From traditional “holy-rollerism” to “holy laughter,” from shouting to shaking (all of which is allegedly produced “by the Holy Ghost”), charismatic Christendom has both invoked and evoked emotionalism. Indeed, without excited, emotional demonstrations, there would be little to mark and distinguish Pentecostalism. Take away fright, and you cannot have a “horror movie.” Take away their fanatical frenzy of emotional ecstasy, and you cannot have Pentecostalism.

Be assured that righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit involve and include emotions, but the emotions related and connected thereto are not the essence, the heart and soul, of true and pure religion (Rom. 14:17; 15:1-3, 5-7; Jas. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:7). As our dear brother J. L. Long said, “Every baptism is

immersion, but not all immersion is Bible baptism.” Likewise, all rejoicing in righteousness inherently involves one’s emotions, but not all expressions of emotion are righteous rejoicings.

Worship, An Emotional Experience

Worship is an emotional experience. Who will deny it? Worshiping man, though, like the salesman, wants to “sell the sizzle.” It is the “felt experience,” the deep and intense emotions, that are offered to God. Surely God will see and accept them, for they are from the heart. The emotion becomes the center, the sacrifice, the “sizzle,” if you will, that God is supposed to buy. As proof thereof, note this excerpt from Dave Miller’s, *Piloting The Strait*, 52, 53:

“Care must be taken to refrain from justifying religious practice by confusing spirituality with mere physical or emotional sensation....(Some) equate emotion and feeling with being spiritual. The changes in worship which they advocate are targeted at stimulating emotions and making worshippers feel their religion. These emotional sensations are then mistaken for spirituality....

“For example, Lynn Anderson (evangelist, Fifth and Highland church, Abilene, TX LRH) cites a(n)...assembly in which a ‘communion trio’ sang to the congregation and thereby ‘helped us to express emotions for which the congregation knew no song.’ ‘The congregation sat profoundly moved with uplifted faces as tears flowed....’ Apparently, shedding tears is...proof that the activity is...spiritual, and scriptural....

“But the Bible simply does not teach that stimulating the emotions is God-honoring or proof of the Spirit’s presence. God does not call upon us to refurbish worship so that people are not ‘feeling emotionally left out....’ If it takes a trio singing to the congregation during the Lord’s Supper for the people to affirm, ‘Surely the Lord was in this place today’...those people have been conditioned to confuse emotion and newness with spirituality. I suppose if the trio had not sung, the Lord would not have been in that place that day! I suppose the observance of the Lord’s Supper for centuries without trios has prevented the Lord from being present!”

Yes, one sincerely may weep at the table of the Lord. He also may weep while sternly rebuking and sharply reproving “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3:18). When the former tears are seen as genuine but the latter ones are regarded with suspicion, it is time to examine ourselves, for one may be as genuine or as counterfeit as the other.

“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (Mic. 6:8)? “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit” (Psa. 34:18). “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Psa. 51:17). “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28, 29).

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Micah 6:8