

Women's Class on Pornography, West Allen Texas

Introduction

Thank you for coming tonight. As always, it is so fun to meet **new** Christian friends, and hang out with our **old** friends, Rod and Lejuana. When I accompany David on gospel meetings, it's kind of like a vacation for me. He works and I get to hang out with friends and eat out a lot. This trip is different.

Here's what happened. David asked me if I would be willing to speak to a group of women about pornography. I emphatically said, NOPE, not comfortable with that. So, David drafted my good friend, Sarah Davis to teach this class. She is much braver than me. Very sadly, as it turned out, Sarah's aged mother passed away on Friday and her funeral is tmrw. I am sad tonight because I can't be with her in this tough time. I am also sad that she is not here in this spot where I am standing. So, as of Friday morning, I began to prepare what I am about say to you. I am grateful to David and Sarah who both helped me so much with tonight's lesson. I hope and pray that all of us will be benefited by our study tonight. If some of the things we talk about tonight make you feel uncomfortable, just know I'm feeling the same way. Let us ask God to bless our study today. Amy, will you pray?

My Moral Purity (3 Dont's)

Before we talk about pornography, I am going to quickly present to you THREE DON'TS that will help you and me follow God's guidelines for our moral purity.

Don't Advertise (what you are not offering)

God doesn't give us specific rules for appropriate dress. Instead He gives us specific guidelines for our hearts and minds, so that our dress will be appropriate. I Timothy 2:9 reads, *"Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garment, but rather by means of good works as is proper for women*

making a claim to godliness.” How many times have we studied that verse? More than I can remember. This verse needs to be on our minds every day. The way we dress is important, because it is a display of the condition of our heart. If we are not thinking about how our dress affects others, we may have a heart problem. We could also be sending messages that we do not wish to send.

Don't Flirt (with anyone except your husband)

We must be careful not to intentionally or unintentionally flirt or tease any man other than our husband. The desire to be attractive to others is natural, of course. But, again, we must be aware that the way we behave and carry ourselves may be sending messages that we do not wish to send. Sometimes we flirt with men without really meaning to. So, be aware of how you dress, how you touch, how you talk with and the amount of time you spend with a man who is not your husband. Never develop a “special” friendship with a man who is not your husband. Never spend a significant amount of time alone with a man who is not your husband. Never have long, personal conversations with a man who is not your husband (face to face or electronically).

Don't Look for Greener Grass (in someone else's yard)

No marriage is perfect. No husband is everything you want in a life-long mate. The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. You just can't see the dead spots from where you stand.

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

Sometimes we feel that we are neglected by our spouse and fall short of meeting our emotional, intellectual, physical or spiritual needs. We can become vulnerable to sexual sin over time. If we

are not careful, Satan will provide us with someone to fill those needs. If the grass looks greener on the other side of the fence, then turn around and figure out what needs to be done to “green up” your own grass. Look for help. Ask for help. Work hard.

Pornography

Now that we have been reminded of a few don'ts that will help us keep our moral purity in-check, let us jump into a discussion of the most serious threat to our society's moral purity today, pornography. When I was a kid, pornography was the Playboy magazine wrapped up and hidden behind the counter at the convenience store. Sexually explicit movies were only shown in “adult” book stores.

Today, pornography can be accessed 24 hours a day, in the palm of your hand. Here are some facts about pornography and the internet.

1. 40 million Americans visit porn sights on a regular basis.
2. Pornography is easy to access. It's just 3 clicks away.
3. The internet offers unlimited content. There are around 4 million porn sites available.
4. Most of these sites are free.

The internet and pornography as you can see, is a dangerous combination. We have to deal with this problem.

You may already know that pornography is out there being viewed by millions of ungodly men. But what you may not know is how widespread the use of pornography is among Christian men (and to my surprise, Christian women). There is overwhelming evidence that there are men in **our** families who struggle with it at some level...**our** husbands, **our** sons, **our** grandsons...men who are active in the work of the church, men who are striving to be godly, who have been plagued with this sin.

Biblical Foundation

I don't think I need to convince you that viewing pornography is a sin, but let me offer some scriptures to reference. God has instructed us about sexual sin. He has given us rules to live by, rules for our benefit. Why? Because He loves us. He knows the damage sexual sin can cause in our lives.

Ephesians 5:19 "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality...etc." These things create desire for sex that is sinful. We have to stay away.

Matthew 5:28 "everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Lust is obviously wrong. We have to work hard every day so that we don't encourage a man to lust.

God wants what's best for us. He wants us to be happy. The Bible is very clear about how God feels about sexual sin. Lust for someone other than our spouse is condemned because it leads to adultery and divorce, not to mention an unfulfilled marriage.

Research About Pornography

David has done a lot of research on the topic of pornography, some of which I will share with you.

1. Pornography is addictive and is progressive.
2. As a man becomes more involved in it, he becomes unable to perform with real women, like his wife.
3. Wide use of medications are used to help with this dysfunction.
4. Men will often suffer from depression, anxiety, brain fog, lack of motivation, even thoughts of suicide.
5. There is stuff happening in the brain of someone viewing porn regularly. It involves Dopamine (the pleasure hormone). Pornography is a powerful stimulus that triggers the pleasure system. The brain becomes accustomed to the stimuli and is not impressed with less powerful triggers.
6. Over time with use of pornography, a man will become detached and isolated from the family. Men will begin to have

- unrealistic expectations about intimacy with his wife.
7. Pornography does not spice of marriage. It will destroy it.
 8. Even non-religious men struggle with the effects of pornography. Even though they may not view it as sin, over time they realize that pornography is destroying them sexually. They WANT to quit.
 9. The good news is that the damage can undone. Men who struggle to give up the pornography addiction can succeed.

As I stated before, there is evidence of widespread use of pornography among Christian men. It is very possible that there are men in our families who struggle with it at some level, our husbands, our sons, our grandsons...men who are active in the work of the church, men who are striving to be godly, who have been plagued with this sin.

I pray that none of you here tonight will ever have to deal with this problem and find that a man in your family is addicted to pornography. I want to give you some suggestions if you are ever faced with it, especially if it is your own husband. Please remember, just like any person who is in sin, we have an obligation to help. Granted, if you find that your husband is addicted to pornography, it is a little harder to deal with than, let's say, you find out that someone gossiped about you.

Measure your response (1) Do not freak out. Do not misunderstand, pornography is sin and is very harmful to a marriage. There is no excuse for it. You must act, but, you must fight the urge to freak out and go nuts. You want your husband to know that he can come to you and that you will help him.

Its ok to be angry. Anger is appropriate. We should hate sin. Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry, and do not sin..." Don't hate your husband. Hate sin and love the sinner.

It's ok to be hurt. It's normal to be offended by this behavior, but don't let your hurt get so deep that you are unable to function. Many times, a wife will take the sin so personally, her sexual response to him can be extremely affected.

Pray for your spouse. James 5:16 says, "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for the one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." Philippians 4:6 says, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

Show compassion. Remember that Satan has got him in his clutches. Viewing pornography is an addictive sin. Your husband needs your help. If you've never struggled with any kind of addiction, it may be hard to understand. You may need to do some research or talk to others who have struggled with some addiction.

Show intolerance. This may seem to be the opposite of compassion. It is not. Clearly and lovingly communicate that what he is doing is sin, and that it cannot happen in your family and there are no justifications or excuses.

Do not blame yourself. Let me say that again, do not blame yourself. Each person is accountable for his/her behavior.

Expect transparency. Husbands and wives should be willing to totally be open with each other. All email and social media accounts should have open access to both spouses. This should also apply to all passwords and passcodes on phones and ipads. If your spouse is unwilling to share, there is likely a problem.

Seek counsel. Do not keep the secret. If your husband is caught up in the sin of pornography and you know it, first you must confront him. If he does not repent and confess, you must tell someone (elder, preacher). That's what Jesus taught in Matthew 18:15-17.

Do not ignore sin, AND get help. Remember that your husband is your brother in Christ before he is your husband.

Encourage accountability. Encourage your husband to find an accountability partner, like an elder, a preacher or an older man who he trusts, someone who he would be willing to report to at regular intervals.

Encourage activity. Encourage your husband to get involved in family activities, exercise, church work. He will need to get out and get busy, filling that void.

Do not give up. It is likely that your husband will relapse. Just encourage him to start over. Remember that you want your husband to have dialogue with you, not to be afraid to be honest and instead try and cover up.

Seek to forgive. Matthew 18:21-22 says, “Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” Jesus goes on to teach the parable about the unforgiving servant.

Some ladies have asked me over the last few days: “What should I say to my husband when I go home tonight? Should I confront him or accuse him?” I asked my husband about that and he made this suggestion. Don’t assume your husband is guilty. This is not a time to suspect or accuse, but instead a time to open dialog. Try going home and saying, “I learned some important things tonight. I realize that a lot of men struggle with this. If it’s ever a problem for you, I want you to know that I’m here for you. I want to help. Please don’t ever be afraid to share with me.”

