

Msg #146 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

"Deliverance From Pornography"

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about deliverance from pornography. This is a subject that affects untold thousands of people, and Christians themselves are not immune from the temptation of written or graphic portrayals of sexual things. Christians everywhere, whether male or female, fight against it. Our flesh nature, that beast nature within us, rises up and we begin to act like animals. However, we can overcome this. If you stick with me for a few minutes, I think I can give you some help in this area if you are one of those who are struggling with the sin of sexual temptation. At least, I'll give you what I myself find helpful, and then you can do with it as you feel led.

Let me start by giving an example. Let's say that you are driving down the street and see a person who is dressed provocatively. Whether you are a man or a woman, I'm sure this happens all the time. Your first response is to feel desire. Maybe at first you just look because of curiosity. Then your eyes linger a little bit longer, and then you start having thoughts which your conscience tells you are wrong. So, you try to look away. But then, your eyes return once again to the person who is sexually stimulating, and you can't seem to avert your eyes. Then you try to look away again, but you find yourself once again looking, and the desire builds. Now, maybe this isn't your particular problem, but it is a good general example of inappropriate feelings. Resistance seems to fail, and although you resist, the temptation doesn't go away. So you start quoting the verse from the Bible in James 4:7, which says that if you resist the devil he will flee from you. So you quote this verse and try to resist again, but you fail again. This goes on and on until the situation changes, or you end up doing something which makes your conscience erupt

like fire. Then, the end result is that you feel terrible and also start to wonder if the Bible really is true when it says that the devil will flee if you resist him, because you don't seem to be winning many of these spiritual battles.

Does this example ring a bell? I believe things like this happen all the time to Christians, and it's not unusual for Christians to be overwhelmed with sexual desire. However, what I would first suggest is that you take the offensive instead of just being on the defensive. Here's what I mean. When you are tempted, and the inappropriate desire begins to manifest itself, then begin immediately to pray for the individual that is provoking your sexual desire. There's a couple of reasons for doing this. First, if someone is dressing provocatively, then they certainly do need prayer. The Bible says that holy women in past times dressed in a manner which would not draw attention to themselves. If a woman, or a man, dresses provocatively, they are attempting to draw attention to themselves instead of attempting to bring glory to God. What they need is help. Specifically, they need your help to overcome the wickedness that is in their life. And actually, this is what you've been called for. This is what Jesus Christ wants you to do.

Now, the second reason that you should begin to pray for the person is that when you begin to pray for them, your focus switches from focusing on the temptation to focusing on the need of the other person. When your mind focuses on the deliverance from sin for the other person, you can't, at the same time, be focused on your own problem. It is the changing of your focus which keeps your mind from being occupied with tempting thoughts.

Of course, everyone knows that Christians always practice the art of resisting temptation, but to really win, there always has to be an offensive battle as well as a defensive battle. Sometimes the reason we can't seem to resist sexual temptation is because we have never developed our skill and faith in the area of battling for the sake of others. Battling for your own self is common, but in Christian circles, battling for the sake of others is less common.

Now, just one more thing here. The key to winning is always in the fervency of the approach. Without being fervent in your prayer for someone else, you will always lose. Everyone knows that if a football team only plays a defensive game, they cannot win. They might keep the other team from scoring too much, but unless they go on the offensive, they will never score any points themselves. It's actually the same for Christians. And, even in spiritual warfare, the best defense is a good offense.

Now, let's look at the problem of sexual temptation from another angle, from the perspective that we Christians are born again spirit beings, but yet we are still bound to these flesh and blood bodies until such time as Jesus Christ appears in the clouds of heaven. The way that sexual desire works is that it stimulates our minds with suggestion. It is mental suggestion which makes us desire something fleshly. And here's something which is of prime importance, something that Christians must understand. It is through the mind that we are tempted. It is only by the lies of Satan that temptation can come to us at all. Satan is a liar from the beginning. This is why the Bible says in John 8:32, that the truth shall set you free. In addition, Romans 12:2 tells us that

the transformation that we want to take place in our lives is accomplished by the renewing of our minds. The renewing is a process whereby our ignorance of God's word is replaced with understanding. In this world, the lies of Satan permeate our existence until such time as the truth of God is established within us. When God's truth is established, when we are taught the understanding of God's word, then we become transformed into new creatures. Old things pass away, and all things become new.

Now, here's the important thing. Consider this. If it is the truth of God which sets us free, then instead of trying to fight the fight of resistance just by our own will power, we must fight the fight of resistance by the power of God. And, the power of God is by the word of God. Prayer comes first, as I'm sure all Christians do. And certainly, what comes next is God's deliverance. However, most Christians assume that God will just intervene to give us more strength to resist or will make Satan back off from bothering us. And sometimes God does it this way immediately, but most of the time God delivers us with the truth of his word. He delivers us by establishing the truth within us, by giving us his truth line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until we finally come to a knowledge of the real truth of the matter. It is then that we become free, because the truth has been fully shown to us and we are transformed.

Here, think of this. When we are first saved, Satan comes right away and tells us that we weren't really saved. He will pull some trick on us and try to get us to doubt that we have really received salvation. He tells us that it is just our own thoughts, and that God doesn't really exist, etc., etc., and etc. But after a person has been a Christian for a long time, Satan can't pull that stunt with us anymore. If Satan came to me today with that same old tale of saying that I'm not a Christian, I would flatly reject it. I wouldn't even have to think twice. At this stage in the game, that basic lie isn't even going to get a response from me. However, in the beginning of my Christianity, it caused me to get ruffled a lot. But as we live out our Christianity, we become more and more knowledgeable of God's word, and pretty soon Satan begins to lose his foothold in us. As we come more into the knowledge of God's word, Satan's ability to tempt us gets less and less. This is why Jesus could withstand Satan in the wilderness when he was tempted. Jesus resisted Satan with the word of God, and Jesus knew the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

So, O.K., you're about to say, "Randy, you're talking basic stuff. Everybody already knows that the truth sets you free." Well, you're right. This is basic stuff. However, what Christians don't realize is that if you're not set free, then the truth has not yet been established. Christians make the mistake of thinking that just because they are Christians and that they read their Bible, that they are not deceived. But Christians are still continually plagued with temptations which they cannot seem to get victory over. And victory is the bottom line.

What I'm getting at, and what I would like you to see today, is that it is the truth which will set you free. But this does not mean that some or part of the truth will set you free. What it does mean is that if there is sufficient truth, if there is a lot of truth, then you will be set free. If there is enough of God's word which you come to understand and comprehend, then you will be

transformed by that word and Satan will lose the battle that he has been waging against you. You are not set free until you have enough truth to set you free. If you're not set free, then there is a problem with your understanding of God's word some how, some way.

Now, don't make the mistake of thinking that God's promises are not true. God promises that he will set you free with the truth, and you can take that to the bank. God's promises are, "yea and amen!" The problem does not lie with God, nor is there a problem with you concerning whether or not you believe in God. I'm sure that if you're listening to this program today that you have faith in God. You have probably overcome a lot of things, but maybe there are some major obstacles yet which you need to get past. And the answer is always that you need more truth and less deception, because it is the truth which will set you free. If you get rid of the lies and get more of the truth, Satan cannot resist you. And here is a suggestion on how you can do this well enough to make a difference with your fight against pornography so that you can resist the devil and he actually will flee from you.

Now, listen to this next statement closely. Here it goes. In order to get the victory over something which is major, and which has been plaguing you for a long time, you must take drastic measures. I presented a message just a few weeks ago called drastic measures. And, by the way, it is free for the asking. It will help, along with this message today. Anyway, here's what you can do to conquer this thing. What you need to do is to come to the understanding that you will have to get rid of more things in this life than the other people in our Christian society tell you that you have to. Even the church today is reluctant to tell Christians to turn away from the delights of this world. But it is the things of this earth which will destroy our determination, and it is the things of this earth which will destroy our understanding of God's ways. And Satan's greatest tool for keeping your mind confused is the image of the beast. As I said at the beginning of this program, it is your beast nature which is rising up, therefore, it is the beast nature which must be put down. You can't put down the beast nature while you are still being brain washed by the image of the beast. The truth of God cannot set you free if the truth is being continually replaced day by day by the lies that come out of the image of the beast.

The image of the beast is prophesied in Revelation 13. The beast itself is the symbolic representation of Satan's animal nature. But, the image of the beast is Satan's biggest and most destructive tool, which Revelation 13 tells us has been created by the people of earth. It is an image which has the added ability to make speech. Speaking images. Talking pictures. Never before heard of in the history of the world until these last days. But now it has become so common that everyone from every walk in life has this image of the beast set up in their homes. And the image speaks, and it portrays the lusts of the flesh. It does not portray heavenly things, but demonstrates all that is common, all that is base, and Christians allow their eyes and ears to take in everything. No, they may not watch everything, but they watch enough of it until they become brainwashed by Satan's twisted lies. The society which has been established on earth has become convinced that sexual stimulation is good as long as it is somewhat controlled and doesn't affect children. However, this perspective is not God's perspective, and the form of society presented by the television and movie industry is totally contrary to God's word.

Remember, it is the truth which will set you free. This is why Satan's image of the beast is such a powerful tool of destruction. Television and movies do not present the truth of God, they present Satan's twisted lies. They present a social perspective which is contrary to God's word. In short, the very truth that Christians need to set them free is destroyed by the image of the beast. The truth you have is distorted daily by the images and sounds portrayed on television and in the movies. And in addition, the computer, if used at all as an entertainment device instead of just a work tool, also presents the image of the beast.

The real key to overcoming hard problems of temptation is in bringing to a halt the input of Satan's lies through your input senses. This means through your ears, and your eyes, mostly. Images are seen with your eyes, and the sounds of speech are heard with your ears. The image of the beast presents women and men in sexual situations. The image of the beast presents actors and actresses who are dressed provocatively, or not dressed at all in some cases. This is nothing new, but it is diabolical in the sense that a person is first brainwashed for hours at a time with sexual innuendoes and graphic portrayals of lustful things until the person who is being tempted has no strength left to resist.

If you doubt what I say, think of it this way. Which would give you the best chance of resisting the devil? Spending four hours praying to God just before the temptation came, or spending four hours in front of a television or movie screen? You know, because we are a people who are still locked within our flesh and blood bodies, we have a terrible time overcoming the temptations of the flesh when we are continually stimulating our bodies instead of stimulating our spirit. It is a fact that bodies can never get too much stimulation, and that stimulation of the body, just requires more stimulation. When it comes to sin, we are never filled up. The abyss of hell has no bottom. The blackness and darkness of the pit is never ending. Neither is the stimulation to sin ever enough. If you want deliverance, there is a basic concept you can take hold of.

First, get rid of your television. When you no longer have a television, you will no longer be tempted through your eyes and ears. When the temptations of televisions are destroyed, the next step is getting rid of movies. They are the same thing. They are images which speak, and they do not bring glory to God. The next step is to either get rid of you computer, or keep you computer as a work horse only and never use it for any entertainment. Believe me, what I am talking about is drastic measures, and Christians always want to reject any kind of drastic measures in exchange for something that seems easier. You know, it seems that most Christians don't mind carrying the cross of Christ as long as the cross they carry is a light one, and as long as the job of carrying the cross is only part time.

I once heard a minister say that he wished he could block out the nude scenes and the swearwords on his TV. My response to him was that he could easily do that by just turning off the TV completely. He became completely defensive and defended his right to watch TV. However, this minister was also complaining that he could not figure out how to control the pornography. He wanted his cake and he wanted to eat it too.

So, when do we finally give up and get rid of all those tools of Satan which are weakening us to the point that we can no longer stand against the wiles of the Devil? The Bible did say that God will not give us more than what we are able to bear, but the Bible doesn't say that we ourselves won't turn right around and give ourselves more than we are able to resist. I will state this plainly. If you throw out your television, and stop watching movies, and also stop using your computer for any kind of entertainment, then I truly believe you will quickly gain the strength to resist the temptation of sexual stimulation.

No man or woman can watch sexually provocative actors and actresses for hours at a time without expecting those images to affect them. Satan knows that if he can introduce enough sensual delights through your eyes and ears, it is only a matter of time before you give in to sexual temptation. And, sadly to say, it works all the time. Drastic measures are needed. And drastic measures are the key to victory. And to put it very simply, drastic measures are nothing more and nothing less than complete obedience to God. When we become servants of God, it is because Jesus Christ has purchased us. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, "What? Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? 20 For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Jesus Christ has purchased us with his blood. We no longer should live as we want to live, but should live according to whatever he desires for us. Drastic measures may seem like they are unnecessary, and that Christians should not have to go to extremes to serve God. But serving God is what we are all about, and drastic measures should be the expected norm instead of the unusual. If you really want deliverance, then you should also be ready to do whatever it takes. And, take it from me, life without TV and movies is a wonderful thing.