



## The truth about sexual lust; Part 6.

NUDITY AND PORNOGRAPHY



Is pornography nudity? Is nudity pornographic? I shall boldly answer my own questions: No, and no. There is nothing wrong with the naked human body. In fact, much is right with it. After all, God created it and called it, “Good.” Michelangelo’s “David” is a masterpiece. But doesn’t that famous sculpture depict a totally naked man? Indeed. What about the “Venus de Milo,” displayed at the Louvre in Paris? The sculpture depicts a

topless woman. Are we all fine with that? Can we all look at de Milo’s marble breasts, with God, and pronounce them, “Good”? Can we say the same about David’s circumcised penis? I believe we can. I hope we can.

Many people can’t.

It is clear to me that the naked human body—even a beautiful female body—does not constitute pornography. What, then, *does* constitute it?

According to the Miriam-Webster website, pornography is:

“... the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement.”

Is sexual excitement bad? This is the trickier question. Many Christian wives would say that sexual excitement is bad (for their husbands) if it is aroused by or directed toward anything or anyone besides them. These wives think that God frowns upon sexual lust. But if He does, then how does a man, in good conscience, become attracted to the woman who might one day *become* his wife? At the time he first feels the aforementioned thrill of sexual excitement, the person inspiring it is not his wife.

Nowhere in the Bible is sexual excitement spoken of as evil. Last week, I listed sexual sins from the law of Moses, and you noted that “sexual excitement” was not among them.

What about in the New Testament? If grace is more stringent than law (which of course it isn’t; I’m being facetious here), then we should find sexual excitement condemned there. But of course we do not find it.

Sexual excitement is part of being human; in fact, it’s one of the most wonderful and enjoyable parts. God made humans to like and want sexual excitement. We may just as well pose the query: *Is being attracted to the sight and smell of food a sin?* No. The sin, of course, is overeating the food (“gluttony”), not smelling it. Our question concerning sexual excitement, then, ought to be: What does one *do* with sexual excitement? That is



where potential sin arises.

### Not a single warning about pornography in the Bible

The Bible says nothing about so-called pornography. In fact, if judged by the modern definition of pornography—photographs or writing intended to cause sexual excitement—the Bible itself can easily be considered pornographic. Whether it intends to or not, several passages of Scripture clearly feed the human desire for sexual excitement. (I, myself, have become aroused reading *Esther*.) Have you ever read the Song of Solomon? It beats oysters as an aphrodisiac. Here are some choice passages from this amazing book:

♀ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

♀ A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

♀ My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.

♂ How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

♀ Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.

♀ Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

♂ How beautiful are thy feet with sandals, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

♂ Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

♂ Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.

Men, if you can read this without becoming sexually excited, perhaps you should try testosterone supplements.

As I was saying before becoming sexually aroused by the Word of God ...

The word “pornography” never appears once in all of Scripture. The Greek word, *pornei* (which many assume should be translated “pornography”), is properly translated, “prostitution”—every single time. In Part 5 of this series, (last week), I proved this from divine contexts in the Bible itself.

(In the book *The Lie of Every Man's Battle*, I have a chapter titled, “Everything That The Bible Has To Say About Pornography.” That chapter contains twenty-five blank pages.)

This word *porneia* is consistently translated “prostitution” in the *Concordant Literal New Testament*. As already discussed, *porneia* is a specific, sexual sin. It is certainly not a collection of images or writings intended to cause sexual excitement.

### Sin is whatever one thinks is sin

The main issue vexing husbands and wives in this department, then, is not whether images and words causing sexual excitement are sin, but whether or not a person *thinks* such things are sin. If any person thinks such things are sin, then to that person, such things are sin. The converse is also true, that “all is clean to the clean, yet to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is clean” (Titus 1:15). Paul writes in Romans 14:14—

I have perceived and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is contaminating of itself, except that the one reckoning anything to be contaminating, to that one it is contaminating.

Everyone has different ideas about what constitutes sin. God has His ideas, but we're not much interested in those; we're too busy concocting our own. Some Baptists think dancing is sin. As the old joke goes, Baptists discourage extramarital sex because it might lead to dancing. One guy I know thinks it is an abomination for Christians to enter strip clubs. What if Christians visit bars? "That's fine," he says. *Huh? Why the discrepancy?* Because the friend I'm referring to drinks. Whatever *he* approves of is okay for others. Whatever *he* condemns, however, is condemned for everyone else.

This is called Pharisaism.  
Some call it hypocrisy.  
I call it "Christian."



### Men in front of computers

Many men, Christian and otherwise, spend a lot of time in front of computers looking at pictures of naked and scantily-clad women. This has endangered many marriages. Why does this happen, and what can be done about it?

*Every Man's Battle* combats this problem in the worst possible way, with those three wonderful words from

Leviticus: "Thou shalt not!" This method never works in the long run. It always works in the short run, but the short run is called that for a reason. (Some "short runs" last a matter of hours.) Whether it is hours or days, no permanent or healthy change comes when people impose upon themselves unnatural prohibitions. Whenever that happens, resentments build and the cookie eventually crumbles.

The law of Moses was designed to fail. It came to produce more offenses, not fewer (Romans 5:20), but not many stone-throwers got that memo. Certainly, the authors of *Every Man's Battle* were busily bouncing their eyes from Sally Field in *Forrest Gump* when the memo arrived.

In a future installment ("Romans, Chapter 7"), I will discuss the generally unknown Scriptural principle that law incites more sin. This chapter of Scripture solves the problem of pornography addiction, not by name, but because this addiction is like most others in that it results from religious prohibition.

Another memo lost.

Better yet, this future installment will tell you how to avoid making things like alcohol, chocolate, shopping sprees, and large-breasted blondes a problem in the first place. Today, I am discussing only the phenomenon of how sexually-charged pictures and words ruin peoples' lives. Because, honestly, it is a phenomenon. It ought not be happening. Again, there is nothing wrong with the pictures and words themselves; it's how we're dealing with these things that wreck really nice apple carts.

### Grace and pornography

Grace is the one of the most powerful forces on earth. But let's forget about grace for now and keep talking about our own personal ideas about pornography.

You will at first think I am justifying pornography and the men who look at it. It is true that I will offer an explanation for it, but I will never tell you that overdosing on anything (work, alcohol, chocolate, tobacco, decorative pillows, beautiful women) is not sin. When it comes to pornography, both husbands and wives are sinning. Most of my readers could easily cast stones at the husbands. After all, there they sit looking at nude photographs of Kristen Nicole. But what about the wives who are condemning the husbands? Are they committing sins? Yes, by the dozen. In fact, the sins of the wives are worse. The sins of the wives are, in many cases, driving the husbands *to* Kristen Nicole. Few dare discuss this. Modern Christian culture, I notice, never asks *why* a man is looking at porn. It is nearly universally assumed that the husband is a backsliding pervert,





while the wife is Doris Day. I will broach this delicate topic in a future installment, titled, “The Wives.”

### **The problem with pornography**

The problem with pornography is not pornography. The problem is our attitude *toward* pornography. If our attitude toward it were Scripture-based rather than religion-based; or if it were nature-based rather than culture-based, the problem would disappear. There would be no problem, no epidemic, no broken marriages. The sexes would live in harmony and probably enjoy the same movies again. Can you imagine that? But instead of calmly considering the topic of “pictures and writing of exotic behavior” in light of what God’s Word says about it (or doesn’t say), we: 1) invent sins that are not sins, 2) condemn one another according to our moral standards, not God’s, and 3) kill our own selves with the guilt cast upon us either by religions, by morally-cramped parents, or both.

### **Inventing sins that are not sins**

Concerning sexual images and writing, we are steeped in Puritanical rather than Scriptural standards. One would think, listening to Baptist preachers, moral crusaders, or our overly-careful parents, that the words “moral,” “morality,” “immoral,” and “immorality” are plastered throughout

Scripture by a dour-faced Deity. The thing is, none of these words appear anywhere in Scripture. Ever.

“Morality” is a vague, subjective term having nothing to do with the Scriptures themselves. “Morality” is loosely defined as the customs of one’s particular social or religious culture. In fact, “custom” is the actual meaning of the word “moral.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, instead of an absolute standard, like the Scriptures, morals are based upon the customs and traditions of ever-changing cultures.

Clyde Pilkington writes in *Due Benevolence*:

In spite of the fact that the “moral” family of words do not appear in the Bible, a society’s system of morality is often made equal to the Scripture. One can hear the religious moralist: “A good Christian would never \_\_\_\_\_” —and the blank would be filled in by a currently accepted traditional religious moral taboo.

The fact is, religion loves and incubates things like the “Moral Majority,” i.e., customs based upon popular consensus (the so-called “majority”). Religious legalism feeds upon dominating others by pressing its version of morality upon the masses. They are moral lords over the people. This practically defines the oppressive heart of Roman Catholicism, and

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<sup>1</sup> Late Middle English: from Latin *moralis*, from *mos*, moral ‘custom’, (plural) mores, ‘morals.’ —*Oxford Dictionary*.

is likewise alive and well in Roman Protestantism. One must be careful not to confuse religion's idea of what is or what isn't immoral with the biblical concept of sin, which literally means, "missing the mark." God has no problem identifying sin. We need not assist Him by adding our customs as "sins." Adultery, theft, murder, slander, and gossip, for example, are all wrong. They are not wrong because they have anything to do with "morality." They are wrong because God's Word says they are wrong. Religious customs and traditions have nothing whatsoever to do with it.<sup>2</sup>

### **Condemning one another according to our moral standards, not God's**

**Romans 14:3**— Let not him who is eating be scorning him who is not eating. Yet let not him who is not eating be judging him who is eating, for God took him to Himself."

Paul speaks here about those things we are free to do in Christ. What things are we free to do in Christ?

**Romans 14:14**— I have perceived and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is contaminating of itself, except that the one reckoning anything to be contaminating, to that one it is contaminating."

It is tempting for the one eating all things with enjoyment to scorn those whose conscience disallows such pleasures. Scorn is ridicule. The weak person is made fun of because he or she refuses to enjoy simple pleasures created by God for human enjoyment. Yet, for one influenced more by social and personal mores rather than by God's standards, the temptation is to judge the person exercising the freedom. A damaged conscience resents the freedom.

Paul discourages this as well as the other. Paul refuses to say why we ought not scorn the non-partaker, at the same time readily volunteering why the eater ought to go free: "God took him to Himself."

Scripture is plain about what is sin and what isn't. If it's not on the list, there is freedom in Christ. (Even if it is on the list, Christ saves sinners.) The Pharisees added to the law of Moses until the Jews could barely move without examining themselves. Grace frees us. Nevertheless, I would rather live under the law of Moses than under the religious/social scruples of Scripture-ignorant Christians.

Christians invent new sins every day—and they throw bigger rocks at those refusing to conform to their artificial standards.

### **Killing our own selves with the guilt cast upon us either by religions, morally-cramped parents, or both**

Due to the application of strict religious confinements unknown to the Word of God, pastor's kids generally indulge in sin sprees the moment they leave home, or sooner. It's easy to see why. The religious confinements are likely of human invention, dictated not by correctly-grasped Scripture, but by arbitrarily-assigned social mores, i.e. society's ideas of "morality." Being culturally rather than Scripturally based, these stricter-than-God moral imperatives likely clash against what God made humans to like and to want. Listen, Pastors: You fight against what God made humans to like and to want, at your own peril. Listen, Arterburn and Stoeker (authors of *Every Man's Battle*): You fight against what God made humans to like and to want, at your own peril.

Judgment and condemnation based on personal or societal moral notions, get shot either from the cannons of society, or from specific people in that society, such as wives, husbands, pastors, fathers, priests. Either way, the cannonball victims generally die. The cannonballs are hard, and they travel at maniacally high speeds. If the person

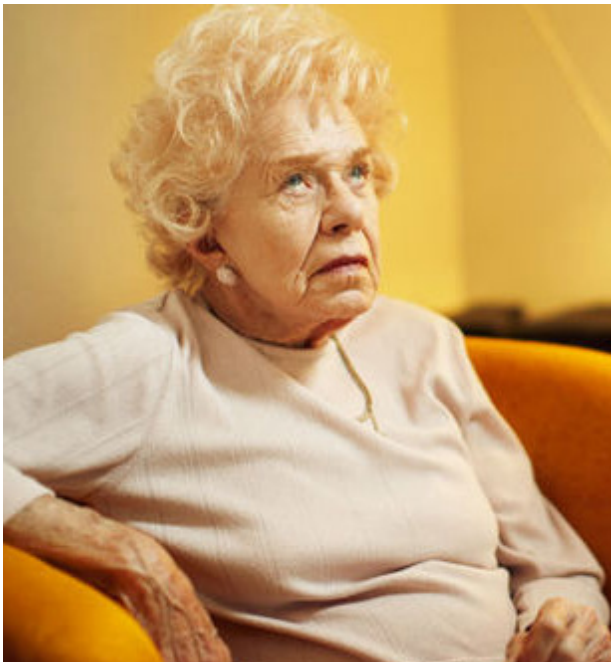


being judged and condemned believes the judgment and condemnation to be from God (Who is merely—in the viewpoint of the poor deceived cannonballed person—using the wife, or the father, or the priest as a delivery vehicle), then that person will become wracked with guilt. The guilt will do one of two things. It will either 1) make the person deny things God made humans to like and to want (in which case the person becomes a human time-bomb on the brink of a sin spree), or 2) over-indulge in the God-made “like and want” department, at the same time drowning beneath billows of guilt.

### **Pornography captures men; *why?***

I am unaware of too many cases where women find themselves addicted to pornography. (Shopping is another matter, and I will speak to this in the section dedicated to the women.) This billion-dollar industry caters to men. One reason for this is that men are much more desperate to see beautiful women than women are to see beautiful men. But the main reason, I think, is that our religious, Western culture has made men feel like sinners for appreciating and reveling in female beauty, even the beauty of their own wives. (I have actually heard some women say that it is wrong for husbands to lust even after *them*.) Because some men cannot even look at the beauty of their own wives, they turn to females who will not roll their eyes at them.

This is the Martin Zender definition of pornography: *Pornography is a bunch of beautiful woman doing and wearing sexy things and not rolling their eyes.*



Condemnation and prohibition lead to addiction. Memorize these six words. It shouldn't be too hard; it's only six words. Those who consider sexual images or sexual excitement to be evil, and who prohibit themselves from partaking of these and other God-given things catering to what humans need and want, will be able to think of nothing *but* these images, and this excitement. The sexually-hungry may very well resist these images optically, but the need for the images will rise in proportion to the insistence of the prohibition. Thus, religious men (pastors, priests, self-condemning men or those with condemning wives, avoiding all images for the sake of offended humans) are walking time-bombs, a moment away from addiction. Only one lapse, and down they will go.

This is ever the way of religious prohibition.

I will discuss this principle in depth in an upcoming installment. For now, I just wanted you to know there is a cure for pornography addiction, and the cure is surprisingly *not* prohibition and condemnation. The cure is a healthy acceptance of beauty and of sexual excitement as gifts from God. Again, religious prohibition and condemnation only make matters worse. Don't panic; this occurs by divine design. Once we grasp and believe the design, we can work within both its confines and its liberations.

### **Why do men do it?**

I do not believe that the majority of men who like and want to see clothed and unclothed feminine beauty on websites or in magazines are desiring the women themselves. Rather, they desire to *see* the women. I will say it this way: The men desire the desire. They desire a non-condemning attitude *concerning* the desire. Thus, I also contend that the greatest attraction of men to sexual websites and magazines is not primarily to the feminine image. The image is secondary. The primary attraction, I believe, is that the women in the images accept him. He can be himself in front of them. None of them roll their eyes at him. In most cases, the man is not getting this acceptance from his wife.

Full disclosure and grace from both parties—the husband and the wife—is the first step toward solving this problem, which should not be a problem at all.

The second step is a sober, detailed inquiry into everything the Bible has to say about pornography. (This is followed by 25 blank pages). —MZ (*To be continued.*)