



Mini Book

[www.ElectricSex.org](http://www.ElectricSex.org)

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*Vision Runners International*

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# Chapter 1: Why discuss Porn

## What Is It?

It's the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement

It can be found in:

- Videos
- Magazines (Playboy, Hustler)
- Books
- Internet Chat rooms
- Websites
- Phone Lines
- Strip Clubs

"Soft Core" images have quietly eased their way into network television, books, and movies that we hardly even notice it anymore.

## Why Talk About It?

This is typically an issue that church doesn't touch. It's often glossed over with a passing 'DON'T DO IT!', 'STOP', 'IT'S BAD!' However, the church rarely addresses WHY people feel the need to use pornography in the first place. Yet, many people are really struggling with this and it has the potential to be addictive. Like any addictive behavior it can overtake your life and destroy your relationships. We want to help people get to the heart of the matter. Let's dig out the root causes and give you the tools to be set free.

## Who Uses It?

If you think it doesn't affect you or it's not such a big deal, consider the following:

- 25% of all daily internet searches are Porn related
- 42% of all web users view porn weekly
- 1 out of 3 porn viewers are women
- 40 million US adults regularly visit Internet pornography websites
- Adult bookstores outnumber McDonald's restaurants in the U.S
- 47% of Christians said pornography is a major problem in the home

There's no doubt - Pornography has a HUGE following! And as you can see, it's not something reserved for people in the XXX industry.

## How is it used?

People use it to enhance their experience with their partner or use it for masturbation. It's a stimulant, intended to arouse and cause sexual excitement. It is a 'gateway drug' that opens the door to Lust which can take one down several dangerous paths.

## Things to ponder

Would you consider viewing porn a harmless activity?

Is it simply 'safe sex'?

We know sex sells, but what are they really selling?

What are the benefits of viewing porn?

## What can I do?

I will consider my real reasons for indulging in porn.

I will involve myself in activities that renew my mind and Spirit and make me more Christ-like

## Summary

We don't ever want to be in a position where any sin puts a barrier between you and God (Isaiah 59:2). When you indulge in Porn, you are closing off your mind and spirit to what God has for you.

In I Thessalonians 4:3-4, the Bible reads: 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.

**Prayer: Lord help me as I try to control my sex life. Help me to turn this area of my life over to you.**

# Chapter 2: Masturbation

## Here's the Deal

The Bible does not deal directly with the topic of Masturbation. Since it's not directly addressed in the bible or named specifically as a sin, is it right or wrong? Should 'self-service' be considered safe-sex? Where does God really stand on masturbation? Is it such a big deal?

Even though masturbation is not in the bible, let's consider the motives behind masturbation. As we mentioned in Chapter 1, pornography is a gateway to stimulate and excite, which often results in masturbation. It is next to impossible to watch porn without feeling lust. Masturbation is an expression of a lustful heart or 'Lust in Action'.<sup>i</sup> To lust is to want what you don't have and weren't meant to have (at least not right now).

Lust is a sexual craving for what God has forbidden.<sup>ii</sup> We can experience lust regardless of whether we are single or married. This is not just a male problem – women also experience and struggle with lust.

### The Dangers of Masturbation

Just like pornography opens the door to Masturbation, Masturbation can be addictive. Masturbation will start off recreationally. Then, as time goes on, we are trying to achieve that original level of excitement, so we engage more frequently, we need new material, we use different methods – all to reach that original high. It becomes an obsession and that obsession can lead to addiction.

Masturbation can also have damaging effects on the marriage relationship. Masturbation is built on a self-centered view of sex and as we will discuss later, God's design was for husband and wife to experience sexual intimacy together within the confines of marriage. Jeffrey Black writes, "The goal of pornography and masturbation is to create a substitute for intimacy. Masturbation is sex with yourself. If I'm having sex with myself, I don't have to invest myself in another person."<sup>iii</sup> However, masturbation is a cheap substitute for intimacy and if we're not careful, this 'self-love' can put us in direct competition with the intimacy that should be reserved for our spouses (if married) or close relationships, and even God.

## Things to ponder

Is it possible to masturbate without lusting?

How can masturbation & lust affect my family, my future and my faith?

Does masturbation have a place in a marriage? What if your spouse doesn't object?

Is there a difference between lust and desire (our biological sex drive)?

What do I feel I am missing that makes me lust?

## What can I do?

I will identify my lust triggers

I will read the stories of Samson and David and consider the effects of lust (Samson – Judges 13 – 16, David & Bathsheba 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 11-12).

I will memorize I Corinthians 12:6, II Peter 2:19 or I Thessalonians 4:3-5

## Summary

The Bible says, there is nothing new under the Sun. Lust is not new! There are several stories in the bible that deal with lust and its consequences. By giving in to lust, Samson lost his eyesight, strength, leadership position and his life. David committed murder and lost his child as a result of his lustful heart. The Bible tells us that we are not to be mastered by anything (1 Cor 12:6). Masturbation and lust can lead to spiritual enslavement. Giving in to masturbation now, will make it more difficult to say no to other forms of lust in the future.

We all have sexual desires; there is nothing wrong with that. We just need to realize that when we choose to masturbate, we cause our intimate relationships to suffer. Of course, maybe not the first time you do it, will cause problems, but over time you are creating a wall that will affect the love you really want. God created us with sexual desire but He wants us to control our bodies. He has designed sex for us to enjoy in marriage, without secrecy and without shame.<sup>iv</sup>

**Prayer: Lord, thank you for creating me with Sexual Desire. I ask for your help in controlling that desire and not allowing the seed of lust to plant in my heart and draw me away from you.**

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<sup>i</sup> Sex is not the problem (lust is) Joshua Harris

<sup>ii</sup> Sex is not the problem (lust is) Joshua Harris, page 20

<sup>iii</sup> Sex is not the problem (lust is) Joshua Harris, page 105-6

<sup>iv</sup> Sex is not the problem (lust is) Joshua Harris, page 107

# Chapter 3:

## Addiction and Co-dependency

### **Cards on the Table**

Like any addiction or person with co-dependent behaviors, addiction to pornography, masturbation or any other sexual compulsion does not develop over night. Think about it - a person does not become a raging alcoholic after one drink – its many drinks, in many different settings, over a number of months or years.

So, whose fault is it? Just like an alcoholic, we may be inclined to blame others for our problem. An alcoholic could blame the family or the job that s/he claims drives them to drink. They could blame the alcohol makers for creating the drink in the first place. They may blame everyone except the person in the mirror. Addiction to pornography is the same. We may be inclined to blame our spouse who is ‘never in the mood’, or blame the media or the adult entertainment industry for putting the material out there in the first place which causes us to lust and masturbate. But it’s not their fault. We have to assume responsibility for our behavior.

### **Breaking the Cycle<sup>i</sup>**

Like most addictions you have to want to be better. For an alcoholic, they go through withdrawal & cravings because they have mentally and physically become dependent. It’s the same with Porn. We start to think about sex all the time, it’s all around us (in ads, TV shows, and magazines), then we physically need to have an orgasm. Now we choose to masturbate, have multiple partners or whatever we can do to satisfy that craving. Just to realize that overtime, the cravings get more intense and have to be satisfied more often.

Cut off temptation at the enticement stage. If you find yourself daydreaming or fantasizing, switch mental gears. Be mentally alert (I Peter 1:13-14). Stay away from your lust triggers. Don’t go to the strip club every Friday, don’t buy books by that author, delete those websites from your favorite’s settings, and get that reading material out of the bathroom. Don’t open the door to temptation. Work on shifting to more positive things. If we can set ourselves up for success by avoiding temptation and developing new habits, we are on the path to freedom from addiction.

Choose your Master. Christ has shattered the power of sin in our lives. We do not have to give in to lustful appetites. If we give ourselves over to God fully and completely and serve Him alone, we cannot successfully serve lust and fuel addiction at the same time. Look to Christ when you are tempted, and trust Him for the power you need to obey. Fighting lust under our own power is difficult, maybe even impossible. So, allow Christ to fight for you.

## The Lounge

What is the cost of addiction?

What are the consequences of continuing addictive/co-dependent behaviors?

What are the consequences of stopping addictive/co-dependent behaviors?

## Cruising the Strip

Ask God to help you see the blessings associated with an addiction-free life

List steps that can help you overcome addiction

Confess to God and accept and forgive yourself, just like God accepts and forgives you

## Summary

God loves you and accepts you as you are. Some of us believe God is disappointed with our struggle. But this is the exact time when you need Christ the most and when he wants to be there for you. This is the time when you need to experience God's love, grace and forgiveness. While you can do things to set yourself up for success, you don't have to do it alone.

Seek Christ for help. If you continue to struggle, there's no shame in seeking Christian or professional counseling as well.

**Prayer: Lord, I have confessed my sins to you and need your help to break the cycle of addiction. Thank you for loving me in spite of my shortcomings and making me a New creature in Christ. As I serve you, give me the strength to resist those addictive behaviors and lustful desires that are not like you.**

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<sup>i</sup> When Good Men are Tempted, Bill Perkins Chapters 5 - 8

# Chapter 4: Toilet Water

## Here's the Deal

Engaging in Desperate Sex is cheap imitation for real intimacy. Not only can sex outside of marriage have physical consequences (unplanned pregnancies, disease), there are spiritual, emotional and mental consequences as well. Everything that may feel good to you isn't necessarily good for you.

We would all agree that drinking toilet water is bad. But we know that if we were thirsty enough and that's all that was available to us, if we had to do it once it would not kill us. But what if we drank toilet water every day? It would eventually make us sick. Pre-marital sex and adulterous affairs work the same way. Even though we're only engaging 'once in awhile', eventually it will cause problems in our life. We can also think of it as arsenic poisoning. A little bit of arsenic may not kill you at first, but over time the effects would be painful and deadly. Our future relationships could be negatively impacted because we've given away precious pieces of ourselves and kept the scars. Our relationship with God is impacted because we are knowingly sinning against Him.

Desperate Sex is about a lack of faith – we don't believe God is capable of meeting our needs. We continue to settle for less and skirt the rules He has established for us because we're tired of waiting or don't think He's ever going to come through for us. God is in the process of giving us fresh, clean water to drink, but because He's doing it in His time and in His way, we want to speed the process and settle for Toilet Water instead. Perhaps we think "I'll never get married" or "My spouse just isn't capable of loving me how I need to be loved," and then we take it upon ourselves to fill that void in our lives that God is longing to fill.

We should live by faith and not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7). On the surface, it may seem that the situation is not improving. But through faith, we know that God is behind the scenes working things out on our behalf. We may think that God is keeping something from us good by requiring that we wait for marriage and are remain faithful to our spouses, but He's really trying to keep us from consequences of Desperate Sex. God is able to do more for our benefit than we ever could ever hope to do for ourselves if we will step back and let Him have control (Ephesians 3:20).

## Things to Ponder

How can I increase my faith?

How can I recognize when I'm getting ahead of God?

## What can I do?

I will allow God, and not sex, to fill the void in my life

I will trust God and practice walking by faith and not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7)

I will study the following Scriptures on Faith (*I will research and follow up with examples later*)

**Prayer: Lord, I know that you only want what is best for me. Help me to trust in you in all things and increase my faith.**

# Chapter 5: Pre- Marital Sex

## Here's the Deal

Pre-Marital Sex – what's the big deal? Here are just a few of the reasons that people give to justify engaging in pre-marital sex.

- Try before you buy, right? You wouldn't purchase a car you haven't test driven, so why should sex be any different?
- If I'm going to spend the rest of my life with this person, I need to be SURE we're compatible between the sheets!
- We're in love and we're getting married, so it's okay
- S/He'll leave me if I don't...

The Majority of us believe that sex outside of marriage is okay. While abstinence and celibacy are given a brief, passing mention, more attention is paid to birth control and safe sex. It seems the message is it's okay to have sex, just protect yourself and your partner. Very rarely do we hear the point to wait until you're married.

But each time we have sex with someone that we are not married to, we give away a little piece of ourselves to that person. Sex is more than a physical act; it is a spiritual covenant and union. In the creation story, when God created Adam and Eve the bible says "The two will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). This refers to the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual union that occurs during sex. Each time we have sex with someone, we are engaging in a spiritual marriage of sorts. We give away a piece of the gift that was meant for our future spouse. In the New Testament, Paul goes so far as to say "Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said 'The two will become one flesh' " (I Corinthians 6:16)

Most of us would not eat from the same fork or spoon as a stranger, yet we share much more when we engage in casual or pre-marital sex. The more we pass around our bodies and the gift of sex, the further we get from where God wants us to be.

## Things to Ponder

Should other forms of sex (outside of sexual intercourse) be considered pre-marital sex?  
How can you offer your body as a living sacrifice to God?

## What can I do?

I will find an accountability partner to help me deal with the temptations of pre-marital sex

I will memorize Romans 12:1-2

## Summary

Our bodies are precious, valuable and worthy of respect. You don't have to test drive a Lexus or wear a diamond ring for weeks on end to know and understand that they have intrinsic value. A Lexus will still be a luxury car and a diamond will still be a precious, valuable gem whether we use them or not. Our bodies and our sexuality are the same way. If we are trusting that God will direct us to our future spouse, then we should trust that He will bless us and bless our sexual relationship with our future spouse to be fulfilling and satisfying if we enter into marriage according to His plan.

**Prayer: Lord help me to remain committed to waiting until marriage to have sex. I know You will honor my decision and I will gain much more by following your plan.**

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# Chapter 7: Adultery

## Here's the deal

Picture this: A 35-second commercial shows an unhappy-looking man lying in bed alongside a snoring woman. As he gets up and leaves the bedroom, a narrator's voice declares, "Most of us can recover from a one-night stand with the wrong woman, but not when it's every night for the rest of our lives"<sup>i</sup> then they proceed to tell you about a service to help you cheat on your spouse.

Unfortunately, this company is one of many services that helps a person have an affair. There is another service that will actually create an alibi for their customers – they will falsify travel documents and hotel reservations, all to help a person cheat on their spouse. New players are entering the infidelity industry every day. One provider went so far as to say “We don’t encourage extramarital affairs. We understand them.”<sup>ii</sup>

What is Adultery? Adultery refers to sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than his or her spouse. Adultery ruptures the “one flesh” relationship of marriage.<sup>iii</sup>

The Old and New Testament of the Bible gives a clear message about adultery – don’t do it! You shall not commit adultery is stated in the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament (Exodus 20:14). The entire fifth chapter of Proverbs is a warning against adultery. In Proverbs 6:32, Solomon tells us that a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself. In the New Testament, Jesus references the Ten Commandments and take takes it a step further and says “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.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

Let’s face it – we tend to find things that are off limits to us, very appealing. We want something that we were not meant to have. We may make many excuses for why we choose to have an affair, but ultimately it is our decision. Adultery is another form of Lust In Action. Adulterous affairs can occur on a variety of levels. The most common affairs that we think about are physical. But what about flirting with that coworker over lunch? What about emails to your friend about how your spouse doesn’t understand you?

If you aren’t sure if you are involved in an affair, ask yourself some of the following questions:<sup>iv</sup>

1. Is my behavior secret?
2. How would my spouse react if they knew about this relationship?
3. Does my behavior involve impure thoughts?
4. Am I in control of my behavior or am I being controlled by lust?
5. Is my behavior preventing me from meeting my spouse’s needs?

## Things to ponder

Why do forbidden things have such an appeal?

What are the different ways we can commit adultery?

Is it possible for a single person to commit adultery?

In Matthew 5:29 – Jesus says if a part of your body causes you to sin, remove it. Is disfigurement really what He’s referencing here? What does this mean?

## What can I do?

I will read Proverbs Chapter 5 and meditate on the dangers of adultery

I will choose not to engage in adulterous affairs

## Summary

Marriage does not mean that you will never find another person attractive ever again in life. But when that attraction turns to lust, we find ourselves on a dangerous path. When entering into marriage, we commit before God to be faithful to our spouses. The Bible says, “What God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6). Adultery separates what God has joined and breaks the marriage covenant.

If you are cheating or have cheated on your spouse, confess to God and ask for His forgiveness. If your spouse has broken trust and cheated on you, we encourage you to seek couples counseling. We all fall short and none of us are perfect. When considering your next steps with your spouse and whether your marriage can survive adultery, consider the following: *There is a mercy bank in all of our lives. The more you deposit mercy into your bank, the more you will receive when you need it.*<sup>v</sup>

**Prayer: Lord, please forgive me for my adulterous thoughts and actions. I commit to being faithful to you and my spouse.**

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<sup>i</sup> <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/Story?id=5499877&page=1>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/WolfFiles/Story?id=116490&page=3>

<sup>iii</sup> What does the Bible say about Sex, page 50

<sup>iv</sup> When Good Men are Tempted, Bill Perkins, page 193

<sup>v</sup> What every man wants in a woman, John Hagee, page 55

# Chapter 8: Temptation

## Here's the deal

The bible says “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness...” (Matthew 6:22-23). This is why it is very important to guard our minds and bodies and be mindful of what we see and hear.

So, how can we resist the temptation of falling into old habits? In the previous chapters, we've asked you to identify your lust triggers. If we can identify the areas where we struggle most, it is easier to avoid the temptation altogether. However there will be times when the unexpected occurs and we find ourselves struggling. During these times, remember that “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to us all. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” (1 cor 10:13) This means that God will always provide a way of escape when we are tempted. Perhaps you are debating whether to rent that movie or visit your old hang-outs and at that moment you get the urge to call a prayer partner or perhaps your prayer partner calls you. God will give us an out, but it's up to us to accept His help.

## Things to ponder

How can you guard your mind and body against pornography imagery?  
What are the benefits of having an accountability or prayer partner?  
Is Temptation a Sin?

## What can I do?

When tempted, I will Pause and consider how my actions will impact my family, future and faith  
I will memorize I Corinthians 10:13  
I will find an accountability or prayer partner that I can trust

## Summary

Lust certainly isn't a new phenomenon, and neither is Temptation. Everyone struggles with different forms of temptation each and every day. The sin isn't in the temptation, but in the action that we take as a result of being tempted. The Lord is near to all who call on Him in truth (Psalms 145:18). We have a direct line to God whenever we need help. When struggling with temptation, we should not hesitate to pray and ask for His help.

**Prayer: Lord help me to remember that I can always call on you when I am tempted. Please help me remember what is at stake when I am tempted and give me the strength to do the right thing according to your Will and your Word.**

# Chapter 8: Homosexuality

## Here's the Deal

A major point of discussion in society today is homosexuality. Same-sex relationships receive a great deal of attention in our nation as gays and lesbians demand full acceptance of their lifestyle. Whether it's legalizing gay marriages or allowing gay adoptions, it's a topic that's often in the headlines. <sup>1</sup> So, where does God stand on the issue? We are not here to debate whether God makes a person homosexual or whether it's a personal choice (nature versus nurture). We are here to clarify what the Bible says about homosexuality and how we should respond as Christians.

God's original design for sex was for man and woman (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6). There are references in the Old and New Testament of the Bible which makes clear God's stance on homosexuality. Leviticus chapter 18 outlines a number of rules around unlawful sexual relations which includes incest, bestiality and homosexuality. Leviticus 18:22 deals specifically with homosexual relationships. In the New Testament, Paul lists that homosexuality is a form of unrighteousness (I Corinthians 6:9-11). This may seem harsh but God's Word is clear – homosexuality is a sexual sin.

However, the bible says “Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Matthew 7:1-5). We cannot judge someone for being a homosexual while we consistently engage in sinful activities ourselves. As we discuss in the “sin” chapter, God views all sins the same, and we have no right to judge others because their sin is more public than ours.

## Things to ponder

Is homosexuality a sin?

Is homosexuality a choice? Does it matter?

Should homosexuals be allowed to hold leadership positions in church?

What are your views on gay and lesbian rights in society?

## What can I do?

I will not judge others' lifestyles and choices

I will read about Jesus' ministry to learn tolerance and acceptance

## Summary

So, is God Homophobic? God loves us with a love so great that we can hardly comprehend it. However, whenever we commit any sin against God, He is disappointed – just as any loving parent would be. We have all sinned and fallen short (Romans 3:23). Yet, God is able to forgive us and He rejoices when we repent for any wrongdoing (Luke 15:10). So for anyone struggling with any kind of sin, a safe environment where they are assured of God's love and forgiveness and can learn God's word is the best possible place they can be.

**Prayer: Lord, Thank You for your unconditional love and forgiveness. Help me to be tolerant of others just as You are patient and tolerant with me.**

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<sup>i</sup> What does the Bible say about Sex, Arthur & Lawson, page 59

# Chapter 9: Abortion

## Here's the Deal

Another controversial issue that society has grappled with for years is the subject of Abortion. We've heard of Roe versus Wade, Pro-Life versus Pro-Choice and the "Morning After" Pill. Should abortion be illegal? Should a minor be able to have an abortion without notifying her parent or guardian? The list of questions could go on and on. So, what is God's view?

A bible verse often quoted on the Pro-Life side of the abortion debate is Psalm 139:13-16 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before I came to be." So, does life begin at conception or birth? This verse doesn't clearly answer that question, but it does make clear that God's loving involvement with our lives starts long before birth.<sup>1</sup> In Jeremiah 1:5, the Lord tells the prophet that "Before I formed you in the womb I knew (chose) you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." God has a plan for every life regardless of the circumstances of how that life came to be.

However, God has given each one of us a free will, which is the ability to make independent choices. While we may clearly know what God's Word states or have a clear sense of what is right or wrong, we may still make the wrong choice and we are well within our rights to do so. God does not force or impose His will on any of us; however we will have to deal with HIS consequences as a result of our choices.

## Things to Ponder

When does life begin?

Is Abortion ever an acceptable option?

Are you Pro-Life or Pro-Choice? Why?

Is Abortion murder?

Are some forms of abortion more acceptable than others? Why or Why Not?

## Summary

So, Is God Pro-Life or Pro-Choice? He's Both! He's Pro-Life in the sense that every life is precious to Him and He has commanded us not to kill (Exodus 20:13). Yet, He has given us free will and the power to make our own choices and choose our own path. If you have ever had an abortion or encouraged someone to have an abortion, you may be struggling with guilt and

shame over that decision. The great thing about God is that once He forgives us, He can wipe the slate clean; you can get a fresh start (Psalm 51, Psalm 103:12). All you have to do is ask.

**Prayer: God, I thank you for my life and my free will. I pray that you help me to value both of these gifts and use them wisely to honor You.**

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<sup>i</sup> The New Student Bible, Psalm 139:13.

# Chapter 10: Sin

## Here's the Deal

When watching legal dramas on television, we often hear conversations around the criminal charges: Is it Felony Murder or Capital Murder? Voluntary Manslaughter or Negligent Homicide? But, despite the different terms and penalties for each charge, ultimately it boils down to the fact that a murder has been committed. The same goes for burglary, larceny, robbery, theft, embezzlement and fraud - aren't these all forms of stealing? It is natural for us to assume that certain crimes and offenses are worse than others, as evidenced by the penalties assigned to these charges by our judicial system.

However, in God's view, sin is sin. It may be hard to believe but "Thou shall Not Steal" not only applies to robbing someone's home but also to that candy we may have stolen from the drug store back in the third grade. While we may think stealing candy is harmless, it is still stealing and we are in violation of God's commandments.

It is not up to us to judge which sins are worse than others – they all carry equal weight in God's eyes. Throughout this series we've been discussing sexual sin and we've mentioned that sexual sin is a form of unrighteousness. However, if we take a closer look at I Corinthians 6: 9-11, Paul also states that Idolaters, Drunkards, Swindlers/Cheaters, Abusive and Greedy people will not inherit the Kingdom of God. This may fly in the face of everything we've believed because we've been conditioned to believe that a serial killer is much worse than a petty thief.

## Things to ponder

Which sins seem harmless?

Why do you consider some sins worse than others?

What do you use to judge sin?

## What can I do?

I will allow God to judge the sins of others

I will read Matthew 7:1-5

## Summary

It is not up to us to pass judgment on which sins are worse than others. It is up to God to judge and to forgive each person's sins. We cannot think that just because we've never committed

adultery or struggled with lust that we are better than those who have. If lust is not your struggle, maybe lying or stealing is. We're all sinners and we all need God's forgiveness – not harsh, unforgiving judgment for one another.

**Prayer: Lord, please forgive me for the times when I have passed judgment on others. Help me to remember that it is up to you to judge and forgive when I am tempted to point out others' sins.**

# Chapter 11: God's Love

## Here's the deal

Adam and Eve, the first human beings, disobeyed God's rules for them. By their disobedience, sin entered the world and destroyed the perfect relationship mankind had with God. Jesus was the only perfect person who ever lived on this earth and lived a sinless life. As a perfect human being, Jesus took the penalty of each of our sins upon Himself and died in our place on the Cross. Jesus made the perfect sacrifice for our sins. I Timothy 2:5-6 says There is One God and one way human beings can reach God. That way is through Christ Jesus, who is Himself human. He gave Himself as a payment to free all people.

God accepts the death of Jesus as the payment for our sin and declares us righteous. (Romans 3:24-26). God does not expect us to be perfect. Accepting Christ and being saved does not mean you live a perfect, blameless life. Sin is something that we will struggle with our whole lives. However, it does mean that your relationship with God is restored and you become a new creature in Christ.<sup>1</sup>

## Things to Ponder

Why is salvation important?

## What can I do?

I will ask my Pastor about Salvation

I will pray for Salvation

## Summary

Jesus loves us and died for us. If you have struggled with any of the areas of sexual sin we've addressed in the series, Jesus' ultimate sacrifice has covered them all. You can be forgiven and you can be saved. He is not waiting for you to change, just to accept him and allow him to shape you into who he has designed you to be.

**Prayer:** *"Jesus, You loved me so much that You gave Your life for me. I believe You are God's Son. I believe You lived a sinless life and that You died for my sins. I believe You rose from the dead so that I can live forever with You in Heaven.*

***Jesus, please forgive me for all my sins. I invite you to be my Savior and Lord.  
Thank You for making me a child of God."***

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<sup>i</sup> Here's the deal taken from 'Quick FAQs on Salvation' Thomas Nelson

# Chapter 12: Submission

## Here's the Deal

Webster's dictionary defines submission as *the act of submitting to the authority or control of another*. We all tend to have problems with submission in various relationships, whether it's getting our children to obey or struggling with our supervisor at work. Submission tends to be a delicate issue within marriages as well.

An often quoted scripture from Ephesians 5 says "*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.*" At this point, guys may be ready to stand up and cheer! Ladies, you're probably a little less thrilled.

So, what does this verse really mean? It means that in God's design, the husband is the head of the household and as such he makes the final decisions. However, women were created as helpmates or a 'help suitable' for men. So, a wife's input and suggestions are valuable and should be considered in the decisions for your marriage, family and household. Also, for any woman that may be married to a non-believer, submitting to your husband is also a form of evangelism and leading your spouse to Christ. I Peter 3:1-4 says *1Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup>when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup>Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. <sup>4</sup>Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

Take a look at the rest of Ephesians 5:25-33. Guys, you're not completely off the hook here! Being the spiritual authority in a relationship is a tremendous responsibility. *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup>After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.* Men, your wives should submit to you as the spiritual authority just as you submit to the spiritual authority of Christ. You are also called to love your wife as you love yourself which means that as the authority in the relationship, you are also called to be a protector and be aware of and sensitive to your wife's needs. It is much easier for your wife to follow your lead if she knows you are following Christ and that you value her input and consider her needs when making a decision. In I Peter 3:7, we see that husbands are called to be considerate and respectful of their wives, so that their prayers are not hindered.

## Things to ponder

Why is submission a struggle?

Is submission mandatory or optional?

How can husbands and wives practice mutual submission?

## What can I do?

We will practice mutual submission in our relationship

I will read Ephesians 5:21-33 and I Peter 3:1-7

## Summary

Before Paul states the husband's and wives' specific roles, he first says in Ephesians 5:21 *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ*. Both parties have some work to do! For women, true submission occurs when you follow your spiritual authority's lead, even when you feel it's the wrong path to take AND you do it in a willing and respectful way.<sup>i</sup> For men, your authority does not make you a dictator, but you should be a loving leader that is aware of your wife's needs.<sup>ii</sup> John Hagee puts it like this "Wives, follow your husband's lead, and husbands, meet your wife's need".<sup>iii</sup>

**Prayer: Lord, submission is a struggle for me. Help me to submit to your authority so I can submit to my spouse according to your will.**

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<sup>i</sup> What Every Woman Wants in a Man, Diana Hagee, page 25

<sup>ii</sup> What Every Man Wants in a Woman, John Hagee, page 77

<sup>iii</sup> What Every Woman Wants in a Man, Diana Hagee, page 32