

# So You Believe The Bible But Still Struggle With Pornography. Now What?

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I'm not going to pretend this issue is always 'black & white.' Pornography is addictive - just as much as any hard drug. For many Christian men, it is a daily struggle. If you are addicted to porn and want to overcome its *enslavement* (and that's exactly what it is), you are facing perhaps the most difficult challenge of your lifetime.

## Three Categories Of Porn Users In The Church

If you are one of the estimated 50% of Christian men who view pornography, you fall into one of three categories:

**1. The Apathetic.** This category represents the men who enjoy pornography and *just don't care*. They have (a) resigned themselves to the idea that they are too weak to overcome their problem, (b) simply do not care enough to fight the temptation, or (c) their hearts have become calloused and actually love pornography more than God. In other words, they have fallen away from Christ and are Christians-in-name-only. What a sad category! I do not know the size of this group, but I'm sure it is relatively small.

**2. The Helpless.** This is perhaps the largest category of all (I estimate it represents at least 80% of Christians who struggle with pornography). These men understand that pornography is evil, but cannot seem to overcome their addictions. Every now and then they will attempt to abstain from viewing pornography, but after a while, in a moment of weakness, they will stumble and the addiction will again spiral out of control. They experience a relentless pattern of determination and failure, troughs and peaks.

Since The Helpless are deeply ashamed of their secret sin, they are too afraid to seek counsel or ask someone for help. They feel they can overcome their hidden problem through sheer willpower. But when they fail (and they nearly always do), they enter a period of depression and doubt. The devil has them in a foothold (cf. Eph. 4:27), and they do not fear death enough to overcome their addictions.

**3. The Determined.** This category represents the men who believe the Bible, realize pornography will lead to death, and are living in view of eternity. They are willing to go to heaven *at all costs*, meaning they will do *whatever it takes* to overcome their addictions to pornography. Like Abraham (Gen. 22), they are willing to *sacrifice anything* if it means pleasing God. Inevitably, this group of men, with the help of God, *will beat their addictions*.

## A Time For Honesty

If we trust God and His Word, we will believe what He says. God has promised His children that He will not expose them to any temptation they cannot overcome (cf. 1 Cor. 10:13). If you have a porn problem, you can beat it! It is possible! What encouraging words! But you have to do what it takes.

If you are one of The Helpless, you may *feel* like pornography is too strong for you to handle. But that is because you are not living in view of eternity and are not willing to sacrifice *everything* to please God. You are going to have to decide if you are going to be one of The Determined or one of The Apathetic.

The rich man in Mark 10:17-22 was unwilling to give up everything (i.e. his wealth) for eternal life. What are you unwilling to give up to beat your addiction in order to have eternal life? The convenience of technology? Pride? A flawless reputation? Your Respect?

If you truly feared the horror of eternal punishment and yearned for the joy of eternal life, you would be one of The Determined. But if you are not willing to give up everything for the Kingdom, you don't truly believe the Bible.

## How The Determined Can Beat Their Addiction

**1. Spend more time in the Word.** Scripture is an effective way to fight temptation. Jesus was tempted for 40 days in the wilderness, and responded to the devil with Scripture. “Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Psa. 119:11).

**2. Spend more time in prayer.** “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you” (Jas. 4:8).

**3. Think every day about the promises of God and eternity.** Heaven is worth *everything* (cf. 2 Cor. 4:17). Keep your eye on the prize (Phil. 3:14)

**4. Distance yourself from temptation.** This is not something you can overcome with brute, stationary force. You actually have to “flee” pornography (1 Cor. 6:18). Avoid temptation before it hits. If you have to, cancel whatever magazine subscriptions you have, turn off your cable, only access the Internet in public, or give your phone or mobile device to your spouse at night. In other words, cut off whatever is necessary (cf. Matt. 5:29).

**5. Fill pornography’s void with that which is pure and righteous.** Your battle against the flesh can only be won if you are replacing it with something else – the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:1). Put Philippians 4:8 to practice. Watch and listen to wholesome media, pray more frequently, study the Bible more often, and spend more time with other Christians.

**6. Realize you cannot overcome your addiction alone.** You’ve probably tried beating pornography alone, only to relapse later. This is not something you can do by yourself; you need God, *and* you need a friend. **If you are truly willing to do anything to overcome your addiction, you are going to need an accountability partner.** Find either a Christian friend, preacher, elder, counselor, or even me, and ask if them to keep you accountable in your fight against pornography. Talk to him *every day*. I know this addiction is serious because I am a man, and I know how nearly all men wrestle with the temptation of lust.

**7. Consider counseling.** There are some addictions that are so strong that they can only be met with professional help. Porn addictions should never be taken lightly. Ask your preacher, mentor, or one of your elders if they can recommend any Christian counselors. I know many Christian men who have benefited from seeking this kind of professional help.

The people who are this resolved to overcome their addictions are the one who succeed.

Being addicted to pornography will, over time, change who you are, stunt your spiritual growth, and in the end, will bring death. If you *really do* believe God's Word, and if you *really do* want to please Him, fight this battle. No sacrifice is too much to pay for eternal life.

**Question: Do you have any practical suggestions to help men overcome their addictions to pornography?**