

## **The Deception of Pornography**

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**Pornography**; the mere mention of the word ought to raise a red flag in the mind and heart of every Christian. No child of God should ever even consider partaking of such a dangerously wicked form of entertainment. Yet, despite the clear warnings of Scripture against pornography, too many Christians have allowed themselves to get ensnared by it (**Heb. 12:1**). This is due to the great deception of pornography. Though it may seem that Christians are above such filth and perversion, we still must beware lest we fall!

*“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12, NASB).*

### **Do We Even Know What Pornography Is?**

Many get entangled with pornography because of their faulty definition of it. If your concept of pornography is limited to magazines at the back of a shelf in a convenient store or a movie officially rated X, you are setting yourself up for a fall. The fact is, pornography comes in a variety of forms, all of which we must beware.

The word pornography comes from the Greek word pornographia – literally meaning “the writing about or drawings of harlots” akin to the New Testament Greek word porneia where we get the word fornication. The American Heritage Dictionary defines pornography as: *“Sexually explicit pictures, writing, or other material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal.”* It is the “other material” that we should be particularly aware of, understanding that pornographic influences can come at us from many different sources, some that we may not expect!

Remember, the goal of pornography is to “cause sexual arousal.” By that very definition, we can more easily recognize pornography for what it is and be on guard for its various forms. “Wikipedia” the Free Encyclopedia online, gives this description: *“Pornography may use any of a variety of media — written and spoken text, photos, sculpture, drawings, moving images (including animation), and sounds such as heavy breathing. Pornographic films combine moving images, spoken erotic text and/or other erotic sounds, while magazines often combine photos and written text. Novels and short stories provide written text, sometimes with illustrations. In addition to media, a live performance may also be called pornographic. Notably, all of the above may be found on the Internet.”* By this description, it is plain to see that the influence of pornography is much bigger than we realize. Though society may not label something as pornographic, doesn’t mean that it is not. What the world may call art, music, romance novels, “a word from our sponsor” (i.e., commercials) and entertainment may in fact be pornography!

### **Pornography Doesn’t Always Involve Nudity.**

One of the great deceptions of pornography industry is the misconception that for something to be pornographic there must be complete nudity. Again, remember the goal of pornography: “to cause sexual arousal.” The truth is, many who told themselves they

would never partake of “pornography” (i.e., hard core, involving nudity), ended up ensnared anyway because they believed such a lie. Pornography addicts who have sought counselling readily admit that it began first by viewing people in immodest clothing which over time increased their appetite for more and more. Indeed, the progression of lust and sin will go from bad to worse when we use such reasoning (**James 1:14-15**).

We deceive ourselves if we think we are not partaking of pornography when we view such things as the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue, the Victoria Secret models, and TV shows that dress actors like prostitutes or gigolos. If God was not pleased with Adam and Eve’s attempt to cover themselves with fig leaves (**Gen. 3:6-7, 21**), what makes us think we can purposefully view such immodesty and be right with God? (cf. **1 Tim. 2:9**).

### **Pornography Is Addictive!**

*“Pornography consumption can be as mood altering and as addictive as narcotics.”* (Richard Drake, assistant professor at Brigham Young University College of Nursing). Like alcohol, nicotine, heroin, gambling, etc., pornography can become an addiction that will take over your life and destroy you over time. In the U.S., ten percent of adults are addicted to online porn. That’s over forty million regular users! That’s more addicts than alcoholics! We need to beware that even a “little” pornography “now and then” can easily become the first step toward becoming addicted. Sinful activity can become an addiction, and viewing pornography is no exception (**John 8:34; cf. 2 Pet. 2:18-19**).

### **Pornography Wrongly Teaches That All Sex Is Acceptable.**

The viewing of pornography will, over time, retrain our way of thinking -- that sex with anyone, married or not, is acceptable. Pornographers paint the picture of fun and excitement, yet leave out the temporal nature and consequences of such behavior (**Heb. 11:25b; 13:4**). Pornography will effectively desensitize our resistance against extra-martial affairs, thereby tempting us to become unfaithful to our mates. Sadly, online porn now plays a major role in the cause of many divorces today (involved in two-thirds of all divorces!). It is no accident that Jesus warned against committing “adultery in the heart” in the same context of the problem of divorce in His sermon on the mount (**Mat 5:27-32**).

### **Pornography is not Harmless Fun!**

*“Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned?”* (**Prov. 6:27**). The biggest deception of pornography is that it is a harmless activity for those who view it. Yet, in reality it can cost a person’s soul! (**1 Pet. 2:11**). Pornography is a form of lasciviousness (lewdness or sensuality), an unrestrained, shameless public display of sex acts. To willfully look at it makes our hearts morally unclean and we offend God and lose our fellowship with Him (**Mark 7:20-23; cf. Isa. 59:2**). Ultimately, those who continue to partake of pornography will be denied entrance into Heaven itself: *“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality ... those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God”* (**Gal. 5:19-21**). Let us beware of the deception and dangers of pornography and take heed lest we fall!