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Listed Scriptures

2 Tim 2:22; Mt 5:28-29, 8:9; Ps 19:14, 139:23-24; Eccl 11:9, 12:14

Lesson Aim

- 1) To enable our students to understand that pornography is a sin
- 2) To guide them to remain a pure vessel of God by focusing their extra energy and time on godly activities

Memory Verse

“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Tim 2:22)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

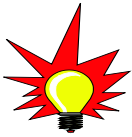
Proverbs 22-24

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Due to the nature of this lesson, there is no Bible background information available.

W A R M U P



We live in a world where people commit all kinds of sexual sins. Many date and sleep with multiple partners at one time. In stores, we have access to magazines that contain articles that are very explicit in their sexual content. Today, people don't even have to leave their own home to fulfill their lust because they have the Internet.

As Christians, we live in the midst of all these. It is inevitable that sometimes, we get invitations from friends to join them in such activities. Perhaps we may even be weak to the point of falling into such temptations. It is therefore very important that we understand God's take on these kinds of activities, and be firm in our spirit.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Pornography



A. *What is pornography?*

This is probably a question that needs no answering because we all know what pornography is. But what exactly constitutes pornography?

Pornography usually is found in magazines that are catered for a special audience. There are also pornographic movies that are openly sold or rented. And of course, there is the Internet.



B. *Was there pornography during biblical times?*

There is no record in the Bible about pornography per se. But from historical records, we know that in all cultures, there are explicit drawings that can be classified as pornography today. Whether those were widely circulated during the various biblical periods, we do not know. However, we know that the Lord Jesus has some teachings regarding guarding our hearts and eyes.

- a. Matthew 5:27–29 – “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”
- b. Matthew 18:9 – “And, if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”

From these verses, we know that the requirement of the Lord is that we keep our eyes pure. What we see can affect what we think in our hearts and minds. Hence, it is important to control ourselves regarding what we see so as to preserve our whole body in purity.



C. *Why is pornography a sin?*

There is no verse in the Bible that says, “thou shall not watch pornography.” However, we know that the general principle for us is that we should keep ourselves pure and holy, before God and men. We have to keep our hearts pure too. Read the following verses, and explain in your own words how that verse is a good reminder that pornography is a sin before God.

- a. Ps 19:14 – “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”
- b. Ps 139:23, 24 – “Search me, O God, and know my heart; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”
- c. Eccl 11:9 – “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these, God will bring you into judgment.”
- d. Eccl 12:14 – “For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”

A short summary, for the teacher to wrap up this section with the students: In all that we do, we must remember our status as children of God. God wants us to be separate from the rest of the people in this wicked generation. We have to

maintain our purity in all ways. Our words and thoughts have to be pure and acceptable to God (Ps 19:14). Sometimes, we must also ask Him to illuminate our hearts so that if we have hidden sins, we may know to change (Ps 139:23, 24). God has given us a lot of good things on earth to enjoy. As youths especially, we want to try many things and enjoy as many things as we can. But, remember our status as God's children and that we have to glorify Him. And, finally, in all things, we must remember that God is watching and on the last day He will judge us based on our actions.

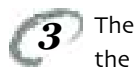
C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 Why is pornography a sin?



2 What does the Lord Jesus mean when He says we should pluck out our eye if that eye causes us to sin?



3 The Bible says that we can walk in the ways of our hearts, but what is the consequence that we have to bear in mind?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N

Part A- God Wants Us to Stay Pure



Hebrews 12:7 says, "If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?" When we do wrong, it is a great blessing if God punishes us. That's how we know we have done something wrong and probably would have a strong impression on our minds never to do it again. The following testimonies by some brothers and sisters illustrate the importance of keeping away from pornography. God wants us to be pure in every way.

Testimony 1

Sister W was invited by some friends to go to a movie. When she asked about the name of the movie, she knew that it was one with a lot of explicit sexual scenes. But she did not want to disappoint her friends. She thought it would be all right since it is just a movie. It is more important that she join in the activities of her friends or else they might think she's too "holy" and not include her in their future

activities. However, that is not the way God thinks. The next morning, when she got out of bed and looked into the mirror, she realized that both her eyes had become bloated and puffed up, and they were very red. Immediately, she knew that it was a punishment from God. She cried and prayed desperately. It was not until one week later that her eyes returned to normal. She knew for sure what God's message was to her.

Testimony 2

Sister P's experience was very similar to sis W's. Instead of a movie, she was actually at a party where people were dancing and drinking heavily. She had never thought going to such parties was wrong. She always believed that as long as she did not get drunk and did not participate in any physical "activities" with anyone, it was fine. That night, the party went really wild. Towards the end of the party, many people were so drunk that they lost all inhibitions and started getting really physically intimate with their partners or members of the opposite sex that they had picked up at the party. Although sister P felt at that time that she should leave the party right away, she did not. Of course, she did not join the people in their physical intimacy, but still, the damage was done. The next day, when she woke up, she saw that her eyes were all red and puffy. No matter what medication or eye cream she tried, it was of no use. She knew then that it was God's chastisement. She repented and wept bitterly before God. Thank God, she recovered within a few days. But that lesson stuck with her until today, and she realized that many of the parties of gentiles are indeed activities that we, as children of God, should never attend.

Testimony 3

Brother L is an exemplary youth in his local church. He received the Holy Spirit when he was in elementary school. Even when he was only in the junior class, he was often scheduled to lead hymns and even help out with the RE classes of the younger children. In his first year of college, he attended the NYTS. There, during one of the prayers, he discovered that he could no longer pray in tongues. In the subsequent prayers, he tried and tried, and he realized one alarming fact: The Holy Spirit had left him! He was so troubled but he didn't want anyone to know. This is because he knew why the Holy Spirit had left him. Actually, he had been surfing certain websites containing pornographic pictures for quite some time. Each time, he would feel very guilty and prayed for forgiveness from God. He would even pray in tongues to make sure the Holy Spirit had not left him. But, he was not able to resist the temptation and he continued in these activities for a few months. When the Holy Spirit left him, it was then that he realized that he had sinned terribly before God. As he listened to the words of God through the les-

sons taught at the NYTS, he decided that he had to confess and pray to God to give him the Holy Spirit again. He took up the courage and told a pastor about it. The pastor told him that he must truly repent and never do it again. During that NYTS, brother L always knelt in the first row during the prayers for the Holy Spirit. He also fasted and prayed during meal times. At the end of that NYTS, he still did not receive the Holy Spirit. The pastor told him that he must never give up repenting.

Questions to think about:

1. *The testimonies give us three types of pornography related activities that we should flee from. What are some other related activities that you can think of that we should totally abstain from?*
2. *We know that God watches everything we do, and knows everything we are thinking about. Do you think being chastised by God like in the cases we just read is better than having nothing bad happen to us when we sin? Discuss your reasons.*
3. *What are the three most important lessons for you from these testimonies in terms of how to say “no” either to friends or to yourself?*
4. *If you have heard of similar cases, share the testimony (anonymously, of course) with the rest of the class.*

Part B- Resolve to Stay Away From Impurity

We have seen how important it is that we do not transgress in this area of purity. The Bible says, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (Jas 4:7). Where sin is concerned, the best strategy is to not even go near it. Let us now look at some of the ways we can say “no” to pornography related sins. For each of the following temptations, think of two possible reasons why it may happen and how you can resist the temptation. Then share it with the rest of the class.

1. Say no to friends’ invitations to join in

Temptation: A friend tells me about a “hot” website and asks if I’d like to go over to his house to view the site together.

How I could reply: I would tell him that I am a Christian and that I do not have any wish to view those pictures. Even though no one would know, God knows,

and as a child of God, I want to glorify God’s name whether or not people are watching me.

2. Say no to self

Temptation: (Think of some situations where you may be tempted to want to give certain things a try, e.g. when you feel really bored)

How I could reply: (students’ answers)

3. Do not even try to go near

Temptation: (Think of situations when these temptations “appear” in your environment, e.g. when you walk past a magazine stall)

How I could reply: (students’ answers)

When we fight against temptations, we do not merely adopt avoidance strategies. We need to be proactive and occupy ourselves with spiritually edifying or other beneficial activities. In groups of two or three, come up with a list of things that you can think of which will help you spend your time wisely. Here are a few examples to get you started: Proactively do other things, e.g. attend services, Bible studies, organize fellowships, sports. What others can you think of?

REFLECTION & PRAYER



Sing Hymn 224. This hymn teaches us to examine ourselves, and ask for God’s cleansing. It is important for us to be pure both inside our hearts and outwardly in front of men. Our hearts and thoughts are hardest to control and the responsibility is on us to discipline ourselves with the help of the Holy Spirit. If we are good only outwardly but full of filth inside, we are like the whitewashed tombs that the Lord Jesus mentions. Tombs appear beautiful outwardly but they are full of dead bodies and bones inside. Read Matthew 23:27. We have to constantly examine ourselves: Am I a whitewashed tomb? May God give us strength to resist the worldly temptations and keep ourselves pure, in every way.