

A2 – ACCESSIBILITY

“There has never been a generation in history with more ease of access to pornographic materials than ours.” - Dr. Charles Knutson

Porn has been around since humans have been able to draw. It is definitely not a new concept. Fortunately though, throughout history the use and access to porn has had various limitations. Mainly, the big limitation was that sexually explicit images were usually in sexually explicit places. For example, the temple where the temple prostitutes hung out was filled with pornographic artwork, statues and ornaments. Porn was used to express the purpose of that place and obviously also was used to arouse.

As walls and large decorative jars aren't easy to carry around, you could pretty much successfully avoid coming into contact with porn by staying away from those dodgy places. If you weren't engaging with the prostitutes, you weren't engaging with the porn and visa versa.



What we see over history is that with every new technological development, porn flourishes and its accessibility expands. Each new invention can be used for good or for evil. The invention of the printing press in the 1600's made it possible for Bibles to be easily printed and distributed, but soon after, pornographic literature was also being produced on a much wider scale. The 1800's introduced photographic technology which saw the development of pornographic photos, crude magazines and eventually film. This further developed in the 1900's with glossy magazines, television, video tapes and eventually DVDs.

Despite all this, up until the early 1990's, porn was relatively easy to avoid if you wanted to and if you did want to access it, you generally still had to leave your home and go somewhere to buy it. But in the last 20 years, there have been two big “game changers” that have radically effected the nature of how we access porn and how prevalent porn is in our society.

They are: T _ _ _ _ _ I _ _ _ _ _ & M _ _ _ _ _ D _ _ _ _ _

ANSWER: The Internet & Mobile Devices

- With the invention of these two things, how do you think (or how have you experienced) things have changed?
- What do you presently do to deal with the issue of ACCESSIBILITY?
- In the Bible, does God give us any instruction (or examples) to help us deal with the issue of accessibility (to any sexual temptation)?

Four ways we can deal with the issue of ACCESSIBILITY

Consider each approach – their strengths and weaknesses.

Are there practical ways that you could implement these in your life today?

1. “GO AMISH”

Matthew 5:29-30

This means to remove all sources of access to sexual sin with the aim of having absolutely no possibility of temptation. This is a bold and extreme strategy which at times may be necessary, and at other times may be helpful for a season while you work through your compulsive behaviour.

Suggestions to consider:

- *Throw out or delete any sexually explicit material you may have.*
- *Get rid of any movies or other media that cause you to struggle due to their sexual content, no matter how little.*
- *Get a mobile phone with no internet access (a “dumb” phone).*
- *Cancel the internet service to your home.*

2. AVOID

Proverbs 4:10-15, Proverbs 5:1-8, Matthew 6:13

This means that when you go out into the world, on the internet or turn on tv, you take steps to ensure that you stay away from sexually explicit or unhelpful places.

Suggestions to consider:

- *Change your route to work to avoid passing an unhelpful location or image.*
- *Don't go to places that you find particularly unhelpful.*
- *Develop helpful habits like going to bed before you get too tired or filling your social calendar if you know you will be vulnerable on a particular night.*
- *Avoid unhelpful tv channels, shows or movies.*



3. GUARD / BLOCK

Proverbs 4:20-27, Job 31:1

This means that you take steps to prevent sexually explicit or unhelpful images to enter your eyes or your mind.

Suggestions to consider:

- *Put a internet filter or accountability software on your computer.*
- *Get a safe browser app which filters explicit material for your smart phone.*
- *Turn off your tv, computer or phone if you are vulnerable to temptation.*
- *Close your eyes if necessary (not suggested whilst driving!). Your eyelids are your God-given filter to your eyes.*
- *If you can't avoid going somewhere that you find unhelpful, go with someone else and tell them about your potential struggle.*

4. FLEE

1 Corinthians 6:18, 1 Corinthians 10:13

This means that if you are ever in a situation where you are vulnerable or tempted to sin, you get out of that situation fast! Like “Going Amish” this is a bold and extreme response, but at times it may be the only solution.

Suggestions to consider:

- *Literally flee. Get out of the room or the location that you are finding unhelpful. Run if you have to.*
- *Be willing to end an unhelpful relationship (with a friend or person you are dating) if it is destructive or tempting.*
- *Be willing to quit your job, end a holiday early or walk out of the cinema if you are faced with a sexual temptation that you don't think you can handle.*



The example of Joseph:

Read Genesis 39:1-12 and reflect on how Joseph dealt with the issue of accessibility to sexual sin.

The example of King David:

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5 and reflect on how David dealt with the issue of accessibility to sexual sin. What could or should he have done?

- **How would you respond to someone who said avoiding and fleeing is just for “weak” Christians? Aren't men supposed to fight? Shouldn't we be able to resist the devil and HE will flee from US (James 4:7)?**
- **What are the realities about us that makes avoiding & fleeing godly and necessary strategies?**
Psalm 103:13-14, Matthew 26:41, Romans 8:18-30, Hebrews 4:14-16
- **Although avoiding and fleeing are godly and necessary strategies, why are they not a sufficient solution to fighting sin?**
Colossians 2:20-23, Mark 7:14-23

May Fighter Verse

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

For your reflection: "Fence-building is not enough"

Imagine this: A charity organization learns that 3.4 million people die every year from contaminated water-related diseases and they feel that something HAS to be done to stop it. So they raise a bunch of money and they go over to all the third world countries that they can get to, and you know what they do? They build fences. Big, electrified, barbed-wire fences covered in warning signs telling people to stop drinking the dangerous water. And after they've fenced off all the polluted water, they pat themselves on the back and say, "Our work here is done". And then they go home, satisfied that they've been able to save so many lives. But what happens of course? People look for any holes in the fence. They try to dig underneath it. They try to climb over it! They may not be dying of dirty water, but now they're dying of thirst.



This is the strategy we often use to fight porn. We set up internet filters and accountability software. We remind ourselves of the dangers of porn and how it contaminates our brains and our relationships. We avoid late night TV and develop lots of clever strategies to "fence off" sin. Now all these are useful things, but they are completely pointless if we do not also learn how to find our satisfaction in healthier waters. That's what those awesome charities actually do. They not only warn communities of the dangers of contaminated water, they also help communities build wells and provide for the fresh, clean water that will bring life and health.

In regard to porn, we need to do the same in our churches and in our communities. If we only have "fence off" strategies, we will always be looking for loop holes and ways to get around the strategies, even if we are the ones who set up the strategies in the first place! I once talked to a guy who reformatted his computer's hard drive in order to get around the accountability software that he installed!

The bible uses the analogy of water many times. In Jeremiah 2:11-13, it says, *"But my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols. Be appalled at this, you heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the Lord. "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."* And you also might remember Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well in John 4, where he says *"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

Jesus is the one that promises that true life and satisfaction will be found in him. It is not enough to warn ourselves, our kids and our congregations about the dangers of porn. We must point ourselves and others to the only one that will truly quench our thirsty souls. To truly win the battle against porn, we must learn to drink long and deep from Christ - the source of living water. Anything less is simply fence-building.