

(CA2) EMAPW 1 - Pornography: Why is Lust a problem?

Theme music

FOSTER:

For most men, when asked about memories they never forget, things like, the first vehicle they owned, their first job, or the first kiss with their true love comes to mind. One thing these all have in common is they have passed. What I mean is the vehicle is long gone, you probably have another job, and true love's first kiss was long ago.

But there is another memory many men share that still affects them: the memory of the first image they saw of a naked woman. For countless men, this event started a years-long battle with lust and pornography use. But, I have some good news; there's hope for a different future!

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Today we begin a series of programs that will look at the struggle men face with lust and pornography.

We caution our listeners that though we won't get explicit, we will be discussing adult issues of a sexual nature. As a result, our conversation will not be appropriate for children. We'll start this discussion with the question, "Why is lust a problem?"

We hope you'll stay with us for this important conversation on Champions Arise.

Music in:

FOSTER: Kent, when I ask, "Why is lust a problem?" the answer seems obvious, but there are men listening who are thinking "why are we doing a program like this? A little lust and pornography doesn't hurt anyone."

KENT: I'm sure there are. Some men think lust isn't a problem because they don't know any better. Others know it's wrong, but justify it. And many men know it's a problem and want to stop their lustful behaviors, but feel helpless to stop it.

FOSTER: You mentioned that some men know lusting after women is wrong, but justify it. What do you mean?

KENT: When we sin, we often blame others for our actions. We see this happening all the way back with Adam and Eve. Eve eats the forbidden fruit, gives it to Adam, and instead of saying, "*No, God said we shouldn't eat this fruit,*" Adam eats it. When God asks, "Why?", Adam answers, "*The woman whom you gave to be with me. she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.*"

FOSTER: Adam blames Eve and God.

KENT: Yes, and we blame too. *“If my wife would be physically intimate with me more often, I wouldn’t need the magazines or to look at women on the computer.”* Or, *“You don’t understand, I’ve been doing this for years. I can’t just stop now.”* Or here’s a popular one: *“I work hard and I have a lot of stress in my life. I deserve a little relaxation.”*

FOSTER: Yeah, I’ve heard that one.

KENT: Me too. But God’s standard is clear. 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 3 says, *“God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin.”*

FOSTER: That’s pretty clear. But I want to make sure we’re all understanding the same thing.

KENT: Ok

FOSTER: In that verse, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, it says to stay away from “all sexual sin”. What is sexual sin?

KENT: Our standard for sexual sin in this series is based on the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 23, verses 27 and 28: *“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I [Jesus] say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

FOSTER: That’s a high standard.

KENT: It is, but as Christ-following men, that’s our standard. And that standard guides us to treat women as God-created-precious-gifts—not objects we can use and abuse. Lust is contrary to God’s two most important commands: loving God with all our heart and soul and strength and mind, and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

FOSTER: Kent, in just a minute I want to get back to that “women as objects” statement you made, but first allow me to remind our listeners that you are listening to Champions Arise. I’m Foster Braun, and I’m with Kent Darcie. Today we are discussing why lusting over women is a problem. Parents, please be advised that this conversation deals with adult topics of a sexual nature. Though we won’t be explicit, this discussion is not appropriate for children. Okay Kent, now tell us how we know when we are treating women as objects?

KENT: First, are we talking about women, viewing them, and treating them as God wants us to? Second, if you walked up to a group of guys and hear them telling sexual jokes and making sexual comments about a woman—only to find out their talking about your daughter! How would you feel? Would it still be funny?

FOSTER: We certainly don't look at it that way, do we?

KENT: No, but when a man clicks on that porn website, or buys that magazine, or sneaks a peek at his wife's lingerie flier, or tells that sexual joke, or watches triple-x videos, he is devaluing someone's daughter—the daughter God created and cherishes. And, by treating women as objects, we contribute to the sexual trafficking problem, prostitution, a billion-dollar pornography industry, and also divorce, homelessness, and despair. Lust, does not produce happiness. Lust creates victims.

FOSTER: That is so true, and so sad.

KENT: That is just part of why the Bible is so tough on lust and sexual immorality.

FOSTER: The Bible is very specific about this.

KENT: Yes. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 18, "*Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.*"

Hebrews 13 verse 4, "*Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.*"

Peter writes in 1 Peter 2 verse 11, "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul."

FOSTER: Wage war against your soul. That's serious talk.

KENT: God takes sexual immorality very seriously. Peter writes in 1 Peter 3 verse 7 "*Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*"

We, who are Christ-followers, have to come to the point where we accept and own that lust (in all its forms) is sin. And this sin is almost always rooted in pride. I want, I deserve, I'm going to have. *I* need.

FOSTER: Basically, we need to change our "I" focus to a "God" focus.

KENT: Yes. Lust is not an option for Christian men. Listen to 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 3-8, *“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being, but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.”*

FOSTER: Kent, that’s pretty clear, but how do you respond to men who say, *“I don’t have a lust problem. I’m in control.”*

KENT: Abstinence is control. Dabbling isn’t.

FOSTER: dabbling?

KENT: Some men think that because they don’t look at porn all the time or lust all the time, there isn’t a problem. “I just do it occasionally.” But what God hears is, “I just purposely sin, occasionally.” But we’ve talked about how God feels about that, and God knows that while men think they’re controlling their lust, they aren’t.

FOSTER: What do you mean?

KENT: In Romans chapter 6 verse 6, Paul writes, *“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.”*

Verse 12 says, *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”*

The theme of this section of scripture is, unless we allow Jesus Christ to change us and to live in us and through us, we have no control. “ruled by sin” “Reigns in our mortal body.” These are phrases indicating no control. To be ruled over really is to be addicted.

FOSTER: Are you saying it’s similar to being addicted to drugs or alcohol?

KENT: In many ways, yes. Think about the answers to these questions.

- Do you have lustful thoughts about women often?
- Do you try to hide your lusting over women?

- Have you repeatedly tried to stop looking at the magazines or surfing the net, or meeting the prostitute, or seeing the mistress, but can't?
- Are you able to stop viewing pornographic images for a while only to relapse?

If you answered honestly, and answered “yes” to any of these, sin is reigning in your body. That's the bad news. The good news is there is forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

FOSTER: Yes, 1 John 1 verse 9 says, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*”

KENT: That's a promise every Christ-follower has. And if you aren't a Christian, if you have not accepted Jesus Christ as your only Lord and Savior, Foster and I encourage you to do so. Simply pray like this:

Lord, I know I'm a sinner and I'm deeply sorry. I believe you sent Jesus, your only Son, here to die on the cross for my sins. Right now I accept Him as my only Lord and Savior. I commit to living for You all my days and growing in my love and knowledge of You. Help me to put my pride aside and put you first in my life. Thank you and Amen.

FOSTER: If you prayed that prayer please let us know here at Champions Arise. We'd love to share in your good news. Kent, we're about out of time. Please give us a review of what we've discussed.

KENT: Sure. We saw that lust is sin in God's eyes and His view is the only important view. We talked about how lust creates victims by making women objects instead of viewing them as precious creations and daughters of God. We discussed how many men are addicted to lust and don't realize it. And we talked about how God forgives sins through Jesus Christ.

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. We'll be right back with Champions Arise.

Music Theme in

Program Close

FOSTER: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed what lust is and how it is contrary to the heart of God. This is the first in a series of programs which will look at why men struggle with lust and pornography, and how God can free them. You can learn more about this topic on our website championsarise.org.

I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. I hope you'll join us as we continue our discussion on this important topic in our next program. Until then, thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

Closing ID

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