

(CA2) EMAPW 2 - I THOUGHT I WAS THE ONLY ONE**Theme music**

FOSTER: The front door to Oliver's house opened and closed. In a panic, Oliver closes several screens on his computer. "She's not supposed to be home for an hour!" he mumbles. Oliver is still frantically closing pop-ups when she walks into his office with a smile. "*Hi Hon. You finishing your Bible study notes for class tomorrow?*" He gets up, so she can't see the screen, and, gives her a big hug. "*You know I'll be ready to teach tomorrow.*" She gives him a kiss and goes to another room. Oliver slumps in his chair. He'd had close calls before, but this was the closest. "*Why do I look at this stuff? Why can't I stop? I feel like such a failure.*"

(Small pause)

My friend, does this sound familiar? If it does, you're not alone and we're here to help.

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Today we are going to discuss one reason lusting over women and pornography use traps men. We'd like to caution any parents that though we won't get explicit, our conversation will be inappropriate for children. And that conversation begins when we return to Champions Arise.

Music Theme in

FOSTER: Kent, struggling with pornography is hard enough, but when men think they are the only one struggling, it's so hard for them to reach out for help.

KENT: You're right. When you're with a group of men at your church, or at work, or wherever, and you think you're the only one with this dark secret, it can be a heavy burden. But the good news is you're not alone.

Of course the bad news is, you're not alone. The ultimate good news though, is with God there is hope and strength to overcome lusting over women and using pornography.

FOSTER: That is good news, but I want to go back to how widespread this problem is.

KENT: The pornography industry makes billions of dollars every year. That's more money than all the professional sports teams combined.

FOSTER: Really!

KENT: Yes. A lot of people (mostly men) are looking at pornography. This includes men at work and in your church. Managers and Bible study leaders. Bowling buddies and Pastors. It is a widespread problem among men. For example, a man named Bob started looking at pornography when he was ten.

FOSTER: Ten years old? That sounds shocking, but its more common than we think, isn't it?

KENT: Unfortunately it is. Bob struggled with looking at pornography for many years. At one point he said, "*I became overwhelmed with despair. I was empty, lonely, and felt so isolated that I thought about suicide. I felt no one would understand, and if anyone truly knew what I was doing, they would reject me as a pervert.*"

FOSTER: I think that's a big reason why men don't share this burden

KENT: Yes. They fear they'd be rejected.

FOSTER: But before you continue with Bob's story, I want to remind our listeners that you are listening to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm speaking with Kent Darcie. As we mentioned earlier, this program is discussing pornography's impact on men. Though we won't get explicit, some of the content is not appropriate for younger ears. So Kent, back to Bob. He was at a desperate point in his life.

KENT: Yes, but God intervened. One of Bob's friends was having a time of prayer and Bible reading when God told him to go to Bob and share his battle with lust. Bob's friend was so afraid of sharing that he made Bob promise and promise *and promise* not to tell *anyone* what he was going to share. After he promised confidentiality, Bob's friend confessed that he looked at pornography and employed self-gratification everyday.

FOSTER: That's a big thing to confess.

KENT: Yes, but Bob wasn't shocked. He was excited!

FOSTER: Excited? (perplexed)

KENT: Excited because he realized he was not the only one. And he finally had someone to share his burden with.

FOSTER: Sounds like quite a relief for Bob.

KENT: It was. And his friend's boldness encouraged Bob to ask five of his closest buddies if they struggled with using pornography. All five said 'yes'.

FOSTER: all five?

KENT: All five. So while we are not condoning lust or using pornography, (which is clearly unbiblical) the message here is if you are struggling with lust and pornography, you aren't alone.

FOSTER: Romans chapter 3 vs 10 says, *“There is none righteous, not even one.”*

KENT: None righteous. But there are three things we need to remember that can give us hope. The first thing to remember is, God forgives through Jesus Christ. 1 John chapter 1 verse 9 says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

No matter what you’ve done, what you’ve looked at, or how many times you’ve fallen, confess your sins to God. God forgives.

FOSTER: Now there may be consequences from our actions—even though they are forgiven.

KENT: Very true. That’s why the second thing we need to remember is so important: God provides help. There are several Bible verses that urge Christians to help each other. Galatians 6 verse 2 says,

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Romans 15:1 says, *“We, who are strong, have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”*

James 5:16 says, *“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”*

If you are struggling with lust and feel trapped by pornography, seek out a pastor or elder, or a trusted Christian friend, and share your burden with them.

FOSTER: You may be surprised to find out they have the same struggle you do

KENT: Definitely a possibility. And then James 5 verse 16 could really apply. *“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other.”*

You could confess to each other and each of you would have a prayer partner.

FOSTER: Kent, I particularly like the end of that verse – *“that you may be healed.”* Men can overcome using pornography, can’t they.

KENT: Absolutely. But the journey toward that goal starts with remembering three things. The first is remembering that God forgives. The second is remembering that God provides help. The third step is to remember that God provides a way out—a way to avoid repeatedly falling into the pornography trap. We find this wonderful truth in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 13. Can you read that for us please, Foster?

FOSTER: Sure. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13: *“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*

KENT: God provides a way out. But let’s look at this verse in more detail. It starts with *“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.”*

FOSTER: That’s basically saying the first point we covered today, you are not alone.

KENT: That’s right. Don’t listen to Satan’s lies that say you are the only one that struggles with lust and if anyone found out, they’d disown you as a friend and brother in Christ. We know that many men struggle with this issue. “Common to man”, means you’re not the only one.

FOSTER: That can be very encouraging, but what else do you see in this verse.

KENT: God is faithful.

FOSTER: Amen

KENT: Amen. God is faithful. God is faithful to forgive. God is faithful in pouring out His grace on us. God is faithful in providing help. And that verse also tells us God will not let us be tempted beyond our ability. He provides an escape.

FOSTER: Okay Kent. Champions Arise is by men, for men, so we don’t shrink from dealing with the tough issues. Today’s topic is proof of that. But if God provides an escape, why are so many men trapped in the pornography snare.

KENT: That question has a lot of answers—and we won’t get to them all here, but one reason is we don’t want to escape.

FOSTER: What do you mean we don’t want to escape? Don’t men want to stop using pornography?

KENT: Yes, and no. No, because it fills a need in our life.

FOSTER: What do you mean?

KENT: It’s serving a purpose. It’s a bad way to fill the purpose, and it’s a counterfeit of God’s design for us, but it’s meeting a need. And we’ll look at this issue in a later program, but right now we want to focus on the hope God offers. Again, 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13 says:

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

God always provides an escape, but another point here is temptation is not a sin. The Bible says in Hebrews 4 verse 15, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.”*

FOSTER: That verse is talking about Jesus Christ being tempted.

KENT: Yes, but not sinning. 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13 ends with *“that you may be able to endure it.”* You’ll be tempted, but you don’t have to give into the temptation.

FOSTER: Kent, the time went quickly. Please review what we’ve discussed today.

KENT: The first thing we learned is that a lot of men struggle with lust and looking at pornography. We also looked at three things to remember when we struggle with lust and pornography. The first was God forgives. There is no sin so dark, so deep, so wretched that God won’t forgive it when we confess it to Him. But as you mentioned Foster, there may be consequences...

FOSTER: painful consequences.

KENT: Yes they could be painful, but confessing our sins to God is very, very important and lusting over women is a sin. The second step was remembering that God provides helpers. We don’t have to fight this battle alone. Find a trusted Christian friend, elder, or pastor and allow them to help you. And the last step was to remember God provides a way out. The next time you are tempted to click on that site, open that magazine, or turn on that movie, pray that God will show you your escape plan...and take it!

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. I know there are many men who were helped by today’s program. We’ll be right back.

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 steps men can take to overcome lust and using pornography. You can learn more about this issue 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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