

(CA2) EMAPW 9 – Pornography: What about Masturbation?**Theme music**

FOSTER: Hi, this is Foster Braun. Together with Kent Darcie we host Champions Arise. Champions Arise is a program by men, for men and one of the things we don't do is avoid the tough issues. Today we will continue our series on men and pornography by having a biblical discussion on self-gratification. Because this subject is sensitive for some, we want to make sure that any parents listening within the hearing of children have the opportunity to move your children to where they can't hear our conversation. Our intent is not to be sexually explicit, but terms and phrases we use during this discussion may create questions parents of children may not want to answer yet. So please act accordingly. We'll be back to explore this important topic when we return to Champions Arise.

Music Theme in

FOSTER: Kent, talking about sexual self-gratification causes a variety of responses.

KENT: That's true. To some, self-gratification, sexually, is a mortal sin. To others, it's not a big deal. Some say the Bible teaches against it. Others say the Bible doesn't.

FOSTER: Seems like, Pastors and experts often have different opinions. Is it good or bad for us? Does it honor God? Does it dishonor God? Does God care at all? But, it's amazing to me how little the church at large talks about a subject that impacts so many men.

KENT: Yes. We act as if not talking about it will make it go away, but there is a lot of confusion, discouragement, and shame out there among men. And it is very important that we talk about this.

FOSTER: Why?

KENT: Because the world is dictating what is permissible sexually. We've allowed the holy act of sexual intimacy between a husband and wife to be distorted—and its meaning and value dismissed. So people aren't receiving a true view of God's intent for sexuality because, in many cases, Christians don't have a clear view of what that is.

FOSTER: That's one reason we've been doing this series, and having this conversation today.

KENT: And just so we're all clear, when we talk about self-gratification, solo sex, or the M-word, we're talking about masturbation. I want to make sure there are no misunderstandings, particularly as we look at this biblically.

FOSTER: Okay, but first, how many men does this affect?

KENT: Depends what source you use. I've seen figures below 40% to over 90% of men self-gratify sexually. Some do it once in a while. Others several times a day. However, self-gratification seems to occur in every culture.

FOSTER: Not surprising I guess. But before we look at self-gratification biblically, are there any physical issues to be aware of?

KENT: One thing we do know. When you masturbate often, over time you train your body to respond in a very specific way. You know exactly how to touch yourself in order to produce the desired result at the desired time. One of the problems is, when you are intimate with your wife, her body doesn't touch you in that very specific way—which provided you with a fulfilling experience. So you have trouble performing and prevent her from having the full sexual experience she desires.

FOSTER: And probably blaming her for your lack of performance.

KENT: That's the way it often happens.

FOSTER: If you joined us late, this is Champions Arise. We are continuing our series on men and pornography with a discussion on self-gratification. As I mentioned at the beginning of our program, our discussion is addressing sexual issues and though we won't be graphic, children shouldn't be around to hear this discussion.

So Kent we've briefly looked at the physical problems with self-gratification. What are the biblical considerations?

KENT: I am not aware of any biblical passage that specifically says that the physical act of self-gratification is sin. However, there are numerous scriptures that address the mental side of it—what we're thinking during the act of self-gratification.

One of the major ones is in Matthew 5 Verses 27-30 say. *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*

And Jesus goes on to say, *"If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into*

hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.”

We are not to lust over other women and that is usually a major part of self-gratification.

FOSTER: What do you say to the man who claims he doesn't think about other women during solo sex. He just thinks about his wife...you're smiling.

KENT: Well...Yeah...I've heard that.

FOSTER: You don't sound convinced.

KENT: The Bible says the heart is deceitfully wicked. Who can know it? And I think it's highly unlikely that a man, during self-gratification, can just think about his wife. And if he messes up just once—starts thinking about a coworker for example, he's mentally committed adultery according to Jesus. But let's say it's true. You only think about your wife during solo sex. Earlier in this series we talked about how pornography is fed by our need for hits of dopamine. Remember that, Foster?

FOSTER: Yes. Basically, the way our brains are created, we need new stimuli to get the same level of dopamine which produces that exciting feeling we get when we get excited sexually.

KENT: Exactly. So if you're only thinking about your wife. AND in a way that is honoring to her, how long would it take before the type of excitement you're craving wouldn't be there anymore?

FOSTER: Probably not very long.

KENT: That's right. Ephesians 5 verse 25 says, "*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*" For the man who is only thinking about his wife when he self-gratifies, my question for him is, the last time you thought of your wife so you could get self-pleasure, was it in the loving way Christ loves you? If the answer is no. You are mentally using her for your pleasure and that, too, is sin against God.

FOSTER: Makes sense, but why do you think there are different opinions about this.

KENT: I think it's a matter of the flesh. I believe we see a parallel when Jesus was asked if it was okay to divorce a wife for any reason. This was asked because, at the time, there were two major opinions. One said you could divorce your wife for just about any reason. The other said it was basically only in cases of adultery. Which one do you think was the popular one?

FOSTER: The divorce for any reason one.

KENT: Of course. That way you don't have to grow. You don't have to deny yourself. You don't have to trust God through the tough temptations. You just quit. And I think the issue of self-gratification is the same. It feels good and we want to do it. We don't want to have to endure the struggle and self-discipline of denying our self—saying no to the flesh. Yet, that is exactly what the Bible commands us to do.

FOSTER: Luke 9:23

KENT: That's right. "*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*" Denying ourselves isn't very popular these days, but it is very biblical.

FOSTER: Okay Kent. Here is another question that will often come up. How do you respond to the single person who says self-gratification is keeping him from sinning with a woman?

KENT: First, single men are still bound by Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5, verse 27: "*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*"

Lusting in our minds is adultery in Jesus' eyes.

Second Ephesians 5 verse 3 says, "*But fornication and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you as is fitting among saints.*" Fornication is "sexual intercourse between two unmarried people." Based on Jesus teaching in Matthew 5, mental fornication is usually what's happening when we're gratifying ourselves. Let's be honest men. We are not having honoring thoughts toward women when we are self-gratifying.

And third, in 1 Tim 5 verse 2, men are strongly encouraged to "*treat the younger women in all purity as sisters in the Lord.*" That includes purity of our thoughts toward them.

FOSTER: So overall, if I'm hearing you correctly, self-gratification would be ok if we could keep our thoughts pure. But keeping our thoughts pure is impossible, and why would you have solo sex if your thoughts are focused on God's word?

KENT: Exactly. But I don't want to miss the fact that the Bible emphasizes the importance of guarding and renew our minds over and over. For example, Philippians 4 verses 6 – 8 say, "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. [and that includes the desire to quit masturbating] And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*"

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

FOSTER: Basically, choosing to follow the Spirit over the flesh.

KENT: Yes. Romans 8 verses 5 – 8 state, *“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.”*

FOSTER: And the first goal of every Christian is to please God. So Kent, let’s review what we’ve covered today.

KENT: Basically, it is virtually impossible to masturbate and honor the biblical principles that are taught in the Bible. As Christ following men, we are to guard our minds, deny ourselves, and please God. We need to turn to Jesus who overcame every temptation, when we are tempted to lust.

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. I hope this program has cleared up any confusion on the issue of sexual self-gratification. As Christ followers let’s give up the sin that so easily entangles us and love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, all our strength, and all our mind. 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 how the Bible views sexual self-gratification and how men can overcome their dependence on this for pleasure. You can learn more about men and pornography by listening to other programs in this series on our website championsarise.org.

I’m Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. I hope you’ll join us next time as we continue our series on men and pornography. 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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