

(CA2) EMAPW 12 – Pornography: The Gospel and Sexual Purity

Theme music

FOSTER: Two men sat at a table. One's head was hung low. The dejected man finally said, *"Every night I'm looking at pornography. I know it's wrong, but I can't find the power to stop. I've prayed and cried out to God. I know the verses that say this is wrong. I'm so ashamed and wondering if I'm really a Christian at all. If I were God, I wouldn't love or accept me."*

My listening friend, is that how you feel sometimes?

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. We're so glad you joined us today. In this series, we've explored pornography and how and why it traps men. In this program, we are going to share how the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power of God's word can help you overcome the temptation to pursue lust and pornography.

Because we will be discussing sexual issues, we want to advise parents that, though we won't speak in a graphic way, some of our conversation won't be appropriate for children to hear. With that said, we'll look at the power to break the chains of pornography when we return to Champions Arise.

Music Theme in

FOSTER: Kent, my heart goes out to the listener who has tried and tried to give up lusting over women, either real women or women in magazines, movies, or on the computer, but keeps failing.

KENT: It can be very discouraging. I was particularly moved by the comment, *"If I were God, I wouldn't love or accept me."* I think there are many men who are thinking that way and nobody else knows.

FOSTER: But the good news is God *does* accept us.

KENT: Yes. Romans 5 verse 8 shows this wonderfully. It says, *"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."*

FOSTER: That's hard to grasp sometimes. *"While we were still sinners"* God sent Jesus Christ to die for us. It seems like we should have to clean ourselves up before God would do that for us.

KENT: Which is one way Christianity is different from every other religion. In every religion, it is what **we** need to do to earn our way to a higher consciousness or to have a wonderful eternal life, for example. It's what we have to do. Christianity basically says...

FOSTER: there's nothing we *can* do.

KENT: Right. But if we're not careful, once we become Christians, we can move toward a works-based salvation.

FOSTER: Please explain what you mean.

KENT: Ephesians 2 verses 8 and 9 say, "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.*" There are three important things to grasp from this verse. First, Salvation is not from ourselves. We can't do it. Second, It is a gift from God. The idea of a gift, is it's free.

FOSTER: For example, we don't give a gift to our kids and then make them pay for it.

KENT: That's right. If they have to do something to earn it, it's not a gift. So when the Bible says, "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—, and it's not by works,*" it means we can't earn salvation. But, **after** we accept Jesus Christ as our only Lord and Savior, we can forget that salvation is an irrevocable free gift. After we've spent half the night lusting over naked women, Satan tells us, "*how can you possibly love God when you're doing what you know is wrong.*"

FOSTER: and we drift into condemnation. We condemn ourselves for not living up to God's standard.

KENT: And we forget the gospel that drew us into God's loving embrace. Let's look at it this way. Foster, when you gave your life to Jesus Christ. Asked for forgiveness for your sins, and repented of them. Accepted His sacrifice on the cross for your sins, and accepted that Jesus Christ died in your place so you wouldn't suffer God's wrath for your sins, what did you have to offer God for all that?

FOSTER: ...well...nothing.

KENT: Ok. And when a man lusts after women, spends hours focused on self-gratifying himself, and when he's done, wants to turn back to God, what does he have to offer God for God's forgiveness?

FOSTER: ...well...nothing. But Kent, isn't it different? When we accept Christ, we know we're sinful and need forgiveness, but after we've walked with the Lord, and studied the Bible, and attended church—maybe for years—doesn't it make sense that we are held to a higher standard?

KENT: In our salvation-by-works oriented minds, yes. Because what we're really saying is, "*I messed up. I used my eyes to lust over a stranger instead of adoring my wife, so I don't deserve God's forgiveness. I need to earn my way back into His grace.*"

FOSTER: Which is the opposite of salvation being a free gift.

KENT: Exactly. That is why we need to preach the gospel to ourselves—in a manner of speaking.

"Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them."

FOSTER: Romans 4, verses 7 and 8.

KENT: That's right. How about,

"I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along."

FOSTER: Ahhh. Psalm 40 verses 1 and 2. I love those verses. "*Lifted me out of the pit of despair.*"

KENT: That's what the man you talked about at the beginning of this program needed. He felt like he was in a pit of pornography and couldn't get out. But, "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

FOSTER: 1 John 1, verse 9. Jesus forgives us and cleanses us from all our sins.

KENT: Yes. So when we sin, we can **always** turn back to God and ask for His forgiveness. Always.

FOSTER: What a wonderful truth for Christians to hold onto. But, how do you respond to the man that says, since I'm forgiven anyway, why can't I continue to lust after women and use pornography?

KENT: I believe that is one of Satan's lies that tempts us to turn from God's desires." *I can self-gratify over this woman because I'll be forgiven.*" But Jesus said in John 14 verse 15, "*If you*

love me, keep my commands.” Paul wrote in Romans 6 verse 1, “Should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of His wonderful grace? Of course not!”

Also in past programs in this series we’ve talked about the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual damage pornography causes in men’s lives.

FOSTER: So we need to preach the gospel to ourselves—constantly reminding us of God’s truth.

KENT: Yes. And that truth says there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.” Romans 6 verse 14 says, *“Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.”* That verse is saying we don’t have to live by works, because God offers us grace through His only Son Jesus Christ. But we need to memorize these scriptures and personalize them.

FOSTER: What do you mean by personalize them?

KENT: For example, Romans 6 verse 17 says, *“Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you.”* You can personalize that by saying, “Thank God. Once I was a slave of lust, pornography, and self-gratification, but now I will wholeheartedly obey God’s teaching.”

FOSTER: I see, but can you give another example, just to be sure?

KENT: Sure. Romans 6 verse 14 says, *“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”* You can personalize that by saying, for lust, pornography, and self-gratification will have no dominion over me, since I am not under law, but under grace.

FOSTER: So preaching the gospel to our self includes memorizing scripture, personalizing it, and anything else?

KENT: Yes. We want to apply it personally to our life. You shared at the beginning of the program about the man who despaired that he wanted to stop using pornography, but kept succumbing to temptation and using it. Applying Galatians 2 verse 20 can be a great help. It says, *“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*

FOSTER: So by trusting in Jesus Christ, we don’t have to follow the desires of the flesh.

KENT: Yes. This is saying, we have the power to quit lusting over women, using pornography, and any sexual sin because the battle has already been won for us on the cross. All the shame, guilt, and condemnation was put on Jesus Christ and died with Him when He was crucified on the cross.

When we continually focus on Jesus and the amazing and totally unique thing He did for us, and remember the escape from temptation God promises in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13, we can live a Christ-focused life that is so sweet, the lure of pornography will fade away.

FOSTER: I'm sure there are some men listening who think that sounds almost impossible.

KENT: By ourselves, in our own strength, it is impossible. But in Jeremiah 29 verse 13 God says, "*You will seek Me and find Me if you search for Me with all your heart.*" Basically, when we diligently seek God and surrender our will and desires to God, we can have a deep fulfilling relationship with God that strengthens our commitment to stay sexually pure.

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. This program is the last of a 12-program series on the impact pornography has on men. We've examined what pornography is, how it alters our thoughts and behaviors toward women, how it traps men, how spiritual warfare works to keep men trapped, and how, with a submission to an accountability person or group, and a reliance on Jesus Christ and the truths found in the Bible, the chains of pornography can be broken. We pray God uses this series to bring victory over lust and pornography in your life and the lives of all men so Jesus can be glorified in the home, the workplace, and everywhere men go. We'll be right back with Champions Arise.

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 the importance of reminding our self of the power the gospel of Jesus Christ offers to overcome pornography use. We hope you'll listen to the other 11 programs in this series on our website championsarise.org. Also, please tell a friend about this series so he can be helped too.

I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. 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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