

Protecting against Porn

Detailed Outline

Part 2 of 4

IV. Role of Church Leaders

When we talk about roles it is important to remember that, “Proactivity is the mark of a leader.”

Good leadership is rarely blindsided nor is it constantly firefighting; and it is no different for Church leaders. In their dependence on God for wisdom they recognize the actions they need to take before matters become major issues.

A. Three Ways for Church Leaders to Be Proactive

1. Acknowledge the Problem.

Denial is probably the most common trait of an absconding leader. Leadership must quickly acknowledge the “elephant in the room”. They know that the problem exists but almost subconsciously they try to avoid confronting the issue.

In fact, it is time for us to acknowledge that:

- a) The silent killer may be lurking in the pews of our churches.
- b) No one is immune to this issue - men, women, children, and even us as church leaders.
- c) People rarely come forward on their own to confess or to ask for help.

2. Arm Yourself with Grace and Facts.

- a) First, we must be gentle just like Christ would and not condemning. Guilt and condemnation will only make it worse.
- b) Second, know the facts and resources that will help in handling this matter with care, confidence and competence.
- c) There are many resources available for use:
 - *Websites:* Covenant Eyes; Net Safe Kids.
 - *Books:* Wired for intimacy. How pornography hijacks the male brain. By William M. Struthers.
 - *Videos:* Somebody’s Daughter: A Journey to Freedom from Pornography. www.somebodysdaughter.org/
 - *YouTube videos:* “Asking David.”
 - *Technology* that parents can use to set up controls.

3. Act by Teaching.

Leadership must ensure that they are teaching not what is palatable but what is right.

Teaching “the whole counsel of God”, as we saw from the example of Paul.

- a) Teach against pornography from the pulpit. What must be evident is the care for the flock, not the embarrassment of having to be explicit.
- b) Teach to have a low tolerance of sin and to keep a short account with God.
 - 1) Show them that even a little amount of sin is too much.
 - 2) Show them that the God of Grace and Strength, is also a Holy God.
 - 3) Show them that when they sin, instead of running away that they would come running back to God.

"But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints." (Eph. 5:3 ESV)

- c) Sexual purity is the fruit of teaching and equipping the flock against sexual immorality.

B. Lead Them to Forgiveness in Jesus.

In discussing the role of the leadership, we must remember that it is important to lead them to find forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Pornography can scar people with guilt and therefore it is important to encourage them to turn to Jesus and find healing.

1. Encourage them that no one is beyond forgiveness.

Remind them that the gospel shows that our God is bigger than our sin.

"He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust." (Ps. 103:10-14)

2. Exhort to take steps to prevent recurrence.

- a) To be watchful.

Temptations are constant. We read in Luke 4:13, referring to the temptations of Jesus that, *"the Devil departed from him until an opportune time"*.

Thankfully, the Devil has got nothing on Jesus. But unless we are watchful it can be different story for us.

- b) To be disciplined and self-controlled.

"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." (Rom. 13:14)

- c) To be in intentional battle.

- 1) The battle against lust, sexual immorality and porn is active and intentional.

- 2) We are soldiers; and soldiers fight. There is no passive Christianity.

"... that by them you may wage the good warfare." (1 Tim. 1:18)

3. Lead them to victory in Jesus.

As we lead members to Jesus for forgiveness we must also remind them of the victory in Jesus.

Jesus is both the eraser of the past guilt and the enabler of the future hope. He alone can lead us into victory and into holiness.

a) Victory is through transformation not self-reform.

1) There is no hope in self-reform or self-efforts, for the Bible says:

“For from within, out of the heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, . . . adultery.” (Mark 7:21)

2) We are weak and have no strength of our own to act against our sinful desires. Bible says we were:

“... passions of their flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and mind.” (Eph. 2:3)

3) Victory in Jesus is because of what he does in you and because of His Spirit that dwells in you.

(a) As Warren Wiersbe puts it, “through incarnation not imitation.”

(b) Jesus is not saying watch me and live, but his Spirit enables you from within as you seek to live for Him.

b) Victory is 100% guaranteed.

1) God has given the power of God in Christ Jesus to be a daily overcomer.

2) We know Jesus is the victor over death and he offers us the same victory over pornography as we live dependent on him.

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 15:57)