

# Protecting against Porn

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*Detailed Outline*

*Part 4 of 4*

## VI. Being Accountable

Bob Woodward, the investigative journalist, along with Carl Bernstein responsible for the original news reporting on Watergate Scandal, once said, "It was accountability that Nixon feared." How true that is even today of the many who often end up in deep addiction.

### A. Church and You

First, is the accountability that exists between the church community and you.

1. Be grateful for churches that teach the whole counsel of God, churches that are willing to warn in love, churches that haven't fallen in the trap of mistaking politeness for compassion.
2. Be teachable. It is one thing for the church to be willing to teach, but it is also important that we are not mere hearers of the Word but also doers of the Word.

*"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid."  
(Prov. 12:1 ESV)*

3. Be available. Having benefitted from the church community and from the experience that God allowed in your lives, it is time to be there for the other person.

a) We are reminded of our Lord telling Simon:

*"But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, **strengthen** your brothers." (Luke 22:32)*

b) Our every experience, God can turn into a blessing because of the opportunity he provides to strengthen our brothers and sisters.

4. The interaction in the church is at a group level and Bible commands us not to neglect this responsibility. This is especially so that we can stir up each other in love and encourage each other.

*"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Heb. 10:24-25)*

### B. Community and You

The concept of accountability covers not just you as part of the church group but also you as an individual in the community.

It is important for accountability to become personal. Accountability at its core is about one-on-one relationship.

1. Be grateful for the "one another's" in the Bible.

Bible discourages us from keeping our faith private. That is what the world would have us believe. There are in fact at least 38 "one to another" verses in the Bible. Here is one that speaks to us about accountability in Gospel according to Luke.

*"Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."  
(Luke 17:3)*

2. Find a dependable friend of the same gender.

- a) Make it a matter of prayer and intentionally desiring someone who can be your accountability partner.

- b) The Bible says:

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!" (Ecc. 4:9)*

3. Be transparent.

- a) Transparency and vulnerability with each other is extremely important for effective accountability.

- b) Accountability requires both openness and tough love. We read in Proverbs:

*"Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend."  
(Prov. 27:5-6)*

- c) Honest transparent accountability is an absolute must for every Christian. The injunction in 1 Corinthians is very clear.

*"Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12)*

## **VII. Leaders Beware!**

We cannot end without reminding ourselves to watch out. We as Church leaders are in no way immune to pornography.

Remember the Leadership Survey by Christianity Today, which found 37% of pastors saying cyberporn is a current struggle for them.

So with Paul we must daily say,

*"...I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified." (1 Cor. 9:27)*

So what are some of the steps we must take?

## A. Be Disciplined

Nate Larkin, founder of Samson Society and a former pastor, tells how his addiction with Pornography started when he had to research the topic for a series at church. The images never left him till he succumbed badly. So leaders beware. Why?

1. Leaders are often the most vulnerable and the least suspected.
  - a) These two factors make for a deadly combination that hides terrible problems – problems of risk, compromise and denial.
  - b) Church leaders work closely with people and generally have more opportunities of one-on-one time with the opposite gender. These open unwarranted opportunities for fantasies to be played out.
    - 1) Billy Graham had covenanted early on in his ministry never to be alone with someone of the opposite gender. That’s a good tip for every church leader.
    - 2) We have covered this area in some detail under the topic of “Husband of One Wife” within the elders’ personal life.
2. Paul the Apostle writes in 1 Corinthians:

*“But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.” (1 Cor. 9:27)*

Paul had learned that self-discipline must start with oneself before we can teach it to others.

## B. Be Responsible

1. Be responsible because God is watching.
  - a) Leaders must be responsible because God is watching. We read in Ezekiel about elders of Israel who were practicing “in the dark, each in his room of pictures, saying that the Lord does not see...”

*“Then he said to me, ‘Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of pictures? For they say, “The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.”” (Ezek. 8:12)*
  - b) Leaders must practice Coram Deo – the awareness of God as the Psalmist reminds us in Psalm 73:28.
2. Be responsible and stop rationalizing.
  - a) When leaders sin repeatedly, they often serve themselves a bigger dollop of grace than they would for someone else.
    - 1) This they do by rationalizing it is “okay” because of all the good they are doing.
    - 2) They seek to make it a minor issue so that the ministry is not affected.
  - b) We must remember that no ministry is greater than an unconfessed sin.

- c) It is important like David that the leader realizes that any sin is sin “against the Lord”, and by deliberately sinning that leader has “utterly scorned the Lord” (2 Sam. 12:13-14).

### C. Be Gentle

It is easy for us as leaders to become accusatory and judgmental when we find a member of our congregation in sin. It is at this time we must learn to extend the same grace, the grace that we have received from the Great Shepherd.

So how can a leader show himself as gentle?

1. Be empathetic.
  - a) First, remember that we ourselves are daily recipients of God’s grace and so we must likewise be grace givers.
  - b) Secondly, be aware that we are similarly susceptible. That could have been us.
2. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

Jesus Christ is our High Priest and our Good Shepherd. He should be our motivation and encouragement for gentleness. We read in Hebrews:

*“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:14-16)*

### D. Be an Example

1. Be a leader in every sense.

*“... Being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:1-2)*

*“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.” (Heb. 13:7)*

2. Be available.

Pornography hurts. Let people know you will not condemn but counsel. Direct them to Jesus, who alone can forgive, heal and strengthen.

## VIII. Conclusion

As a quick review, as leaders we have the responsibility to:

- Teach against porn
- Lead them to forgiveness and restoration in Christ, and
- Keep ourselves above reproach through discipline and reliance on God.