

Set Free Summit: Day1 ARISE

Session 1: The Porn Phenomenon

Dave Kinneman, President of Barna Group, shared the results of the 2016 Porn Phenomenon research study commissioned by Josh McDowell Ministry and Covenant Eyes. The research shows that the porn problem runs deep and significantly affects the Church and our youth. Here are a few of his main points:

Porn use is fueled by a new moral code embraced by society that says (1) people should not criticize someone else's life choices, (2) people can believe whatever they want as long as their beliefs don't impact society, and (3) any kind of sexual expression between two consenting adults is acceptable.

A new type of pornography has emerged. Porn 2.0, as Barna labeled it, is often self-created, shared with friends or significant others, includes sexting and is encouraged and rewarded by celebrities like Kim Kardashian. Porn 2.0 offers the same trauma and harms as traditional porn.

There are signs of hope in spite of the growing problem. The Christian community is becoming aware of the problem and the need for holistic solutions. Porn is no longer socially taboo to discuss, and millions are expressing guilt about using it. Christians do not struggle with it to the same degree as other groups.

Session 2: Pornography in the Church

Steve Arterburn, founder of New Life Ministries, believes porn is the greatest threat facing Christians today. Here are four reasons why:

Porn always gets worse. When a person gets involved in pornography, the more likely they are to move into a genre they used to think was detestable or perverse.

Porn prevents sanctification. When a person is addicted to pornography, they have lost the desire to be sanctified.

Porn kills intimacy. Pornography destroys intimacy with God, a spouse and others.

Porn causes impotency. ED drugs are flourishing because of porn.

Steve called the Church to action. Those in the Church must live with integrity — reaching out when we struggle, understanding and addressing the complexities of a porn addiction, and sharing the message with others. We must challenge our leadership to act and offer compassion and groups to those looking to find freedom

Session 3: From Recovery to Redemption

“There was something about porn that grabbed hold of me,” said Michael Leahy. Although he felt loved as a child, Leahy found his way to pornography at age 11. It became part of his identity. Despite his picture-perfect life, he continued to return to porn, especially once the Internet made it more available.

“What you feed grows, and what you starve dies,” said Leahy. For 30 years he fed his relationship with pornography and sexual fantasy. Eventually he got into what could be described as a death spiral with a fellow sex addict. His wife was blamed and became suicidal, and his kids got in trouble. Leahy finally hit rock bottom about a year after his divorce, and even contemplated suicide.

His true recovery began at this record low, and it was the first time he truly wanted it. Mark Laaser's book and counseling played an influential role in his recovery. Eventually Leahy felt called to help others and founded a ministry called BraveHearts. He came to hold the philosophy, “One, not everyone,” which encourages doing for one person what you wish you could do for everyone. As he mentored individual men, he realized he needed to develop a process, not just a series of one-offs. When he realized his own story matched up the stories of many others, he found he could help many, not just a few, find true success and freedom.

“I have the best job in the universe,” said Leahy, “because I have a front-row seat in life change.”

Set Free Summit: Day2 PREPARE

Session 4: Brain Science and Porn

Donald L. Hilton, Dr. William Struthers, and Dr. Ted Roberts, three of the world's leading experts on brain science and pornography, shared how porn affects a person's nervous system. Here are three of their main points:

Pornography can change your brain. Viewing it releases dopamine and causes a similar reaction to your brain as drug use.

Chemicals in the brain, such as oxytocin, can cause one to bond with fantasy and reject reality.

We should try to love those struggling with pornography as much as God loves them. We should replace self-esteem with God-esteem.

Question: How long do you have to be away from pornography in order for your brain to recover from it?

Answer: An educated guess would be one or two years — similar to someone who ended drug use. It depends on where you are at in your development, your age, and other factors. It also depends on what the reason for porn use was and whether the person has other addictions.

Session 5: The Effects of Porn Use

Dr. Mary Anne Layden defined the term “Pornified,” and depicted the seamless interconnected continuum from prostitution to sex trafficking. Internet pornography makes a perfect learning environment for the pornification of culture, and here are a few reasons why:

It starts with permission-giving beliefs: “What I’m doing is normal, and everybody is doing it.”

It miseducates about sex: it says it's not about intimacy, caring, child-creation, etc. Instead, Internet pornography is about designer sex — the “perfect” and always-available bodies.

Porn-trained men are more likely to believe rape myths. They stop thinking it's a bad crime and become sexually calloused. Porn-trained men become less sexually satisfied with their own partner and more open to infidelity. They sometimes use sexual violence to arouse themselves, and are more likely to sexually harass women.

Meanwhile, women exposed to porn are also trained that rape isn't such a bad crime, and are more likely to accept rape myths. They reduce support for the women's liberation movement. They're more critical about their bodies and more likely to be victims of rape.

Pornified kids are more likely to get STDs, get pregnant, use alcohol or other substances, engage in sexual harassment, and engage in sexual violence against other kids.

Porn performers and other victims of the sexual exploitation industry are verbally abused, physically groped, and stalked.

Porn is not victimless. Many of those in the industry abuse drugs and prostitute themselves.

Porn use makes its users less sensitive to crimes like rape, violence, and abuse.

Laws against obscenity are rarely enforced. Statistics show an increase in certain countries where prostitution has been legalized.

Question: What causes the callousness to sex when people porn use?

Answer: It's a focus on pleasing yourself and on body parts, not a focus on a relationship with someone else. Porn is sex education for many people, and they're not learning the beauty of the way God designed it.

Session 6: Policy Victories

Patrick Trueman and Dawn Hawkins, from The National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE), have a strong desire to see culture changed. NCOSE produced a “Dirty Dozen” list of companies and organizations that profit from sexual exploitation. The list names and shames these groups that normalize sex for sale and exploiting those involved in it.

Through the list, several of these companies have changed their practices and no longer promote sexual exploitation the way they once did. For example, Starwood Hotels no longer offer pornography in its hotel rooms. Google now prohibits pornographic ads on its website.

These and several other groups have responded positively to the pressure put on them by people who protest them because of their decision to promote sexual exploitation. But there's a long way to go to stop companies from profiting from porn. Visit the "Dirty Dozen" list or the National Center on Exploitation for more information.

Session 7: Porn – A Social Contagion That Fuses Fear, Shame, and Lust

Dr. Judith Reisman explained how Alfred Kinsey, Hugh Hefner, and others have negatively impacted culture by redefining sexuality. Pornography became the name of the game, and people have been exposed to porn at earlier ages ever since.

Kinsey said people are sexual from birth. Most of his claims are based on this idea.

Much of sex education is based on Kinsey, who was a pedophile.

This approach has led to increased teen pregnancy, STIs and STDs, sexual addiction, psychological trauma, gender confusion, and permanent physiological damage.

Laws have been changed because of this influence. Sexual exhibition is often allowed, so is adultery, and obscenity.

Things that would be illegal to show children outside of school are allowed in a classroom. An obscenity exception permits exposing children to pornography while in an educational setting, and children who see these things are traumatized.

"Men lose their power by looking at pornography," said Reisman. "Everyone is at risk when men lose their power. If they have to look at a picture to be aroused, they have lost their power."

She said shame and guilt lower with exposure to pornography. It's like hearing there's a fire in the building and believing it less as time goes on.

Reisman said it is important to label pornography and other sexual sins correctly. She said, "It's not elevated arousal. It's elevated shame and guilt."

"It is important to remember that we are spiritual beings at birth, not sexual."

Session 8: Theology of the Body

Fr. Sean Kilcawley discussed how we can't understand what's wrong with porn until we understand what it means to be human and what it means to love. We learn what it means to be human by looking at the love of the Trinity. The Father loves sacrificially, giving himself in love to the Son. The Son receives the love of the Father and in turn entrusts Himself to the Father wholly and completely. And the Holy Spirit is the personification of the bond of love that they share.

The human family mirrors this love in the love of Mother, Father, and Child. Our identity as human beings is rooted in our sonship in relationship to God the Father. We first learn to trust in the context of a family.

However, the devil wants to attack love at all levels, and he does this by sowing distrust. Our relationship to God was severed and distorted by distrust, the belief that God didn't really want what was truly good for us. Jesus entered into our broken humanity and redeemed it, proving God's unwavering love for us.

Like the woman caught in adultery, Christ doesn't join the throngs of people ready to condemn us. He sees us as a child of His and wants us to be free from this sin.

Helping people with pornography often starts by reminding them that their identity is not found in their addiction, but in being a child of God. God loves them unconditionally. When this realization sinks in, healing can begin to take place.

Fr. Sean emphasized that helping people with porn and proclaiming that they are beloved children of God is simply evangelization in a world that has been pornified.

Session 9: Counseling Towards Recovery

Three experienced counselors — Dr. Steve Arterburn, Jayson Graves and Dr. Ted Roberts — shared practical tips and insights into effectively counseling those who are in pain because of porn use.

Dr. Arterburn discussed how someone's relationship with porn supersedes their relationships with others. Real people often irritate them because they are used to getting everything they want with pornography. Anger, rage, and shame are common traits among both marriage partners when one of them has been involved with pornography. There's often bitterness and resentment.

Counselors have to be open, honest, willing to listen, and experienced. He's found humor creates agreement among groups, and using it helps restore relationships.

Graves introduced the need to get rid of "toxic shame" in your life. Satan will try to persuade you that you don't have value, but that is not true — you are an amazing creation of God. Toxic shame can lead to people feeling suicidal, worthless, and not worth being loved.

One way to help is to stop dwelling on previous sins and areas of imperfection in our life. God separates our sin from us as far as the east is from the west. There is no reason why we should continually think about it.

Addicts lie. Dr. Ted Roberts shared how they're afraid of being found out. It's imperative to get to the truth of the matter in order to address the true issue.

"Rules with no relationship is a prime environment to produce an addict," said Roberts.

Counseling is serious business. Those giving it and receiving it should not take it lightly.

The more you understand yourself, the more you can help others.

Counseling is a two to five year process with a miracle every day.

Question: What are good practices for those who are tempted to view pornography?

Answer: Staying connected with others helps with boredom and complacency, which can lead to temptation. Accountability is the solution.

Session 10: Hearts of Men

To cap the night off, attendees saw the film *Hearts of Men*. It's the largest screening of the movie prior to its release. Through experts, it tells the story of how Christ transforms a life of sexual brokenness to one of victory through Him.

Set Free Summit: Day3 HOPE

Our presenters empowered us with practical tips, tools and approaches to help those affected by pornography. Whether we're working with a woman who struggles, a betrayed wife, a parent trying to talk to their children about sexual temptation, or a mentor trying to reach millennials, everyone needs hope that it's truly possible to be set free.

Session 11: More Than Fantasy—Reaching Female Porn Users

Jessica Harris, founder of *Beggar's Daughter*, shared that 13% of Christian women say they never watch pornography, according to a Barna study. Many church leaders shy away from addressing the issue among women in order to "not cause problems or issues." Harris read a letter from a 14-year-old girl who had been looking at pornography since she was 11. She said this is just one of the many examples of people struggling that we mostly choose to ignore.

Pornography is sneaking up on us while we are fighting other battles. It robs us of our sense of worth. We need to find those who are struggling and stop ignoring the issue's existence among women.

Harris says if a woman confesses she struggles with porn, it will likely be the last time she starts that conversation. If it's ignored or not acted on, she will be crushed. We need to seek people out and start the conversation. It allows people to be themselves and lets them know you truly care and want to help.

Women struggle with more than just romance novels.

Talk to your sons and daughters about pornography.

Invite girls and women to a confidential help session. You may be surprised by how many people attend.

Question: What's the first step to helping someone?

Answer: Freedom is not about breaking free from pornography. It's about finding Jesus. You need to teach others how much Jesus loves them and how much He wants to give them something better. Prepare women to counsel other women.

Session 12: Fantasy Island

Kenny Luck, pastor and author, explained how similar to an oil spill, skimming the surface to clean up the mess is a reaction, not a solution. If we don't get to the source, we don't get to the reality of it. Porn users often consume it to escape reality, but God uses reality to conform us to the image of His Son. Like the boy born blind, Jesus says the boy's blindness is not because of the boy's sin or his parents' sin, but rather a way to show the glory of God.

There's a movement for young men to disengage from reality and binge on video games and porn. Luck challenges them to grow up and realize the person God made them to be.

My reality is God's glory, whether it's good or uncomfortable.

My reality is the way to my maturity.

I must see my reality as a way to solidify my identity.

Question: Is there much difference between a porn addiction and being addicted to something like video games, TV shows, etc.?

Answer: The problem with both is, the person is focusing on themselves. Their behavior shuts other people out. You can't have a successful relationship with anybody by focusing on yourself.

Session 13: Healing a Wife's Wounded Heart

When a husband is addicted to pornography, his wife often bears the fallout of his choices, leaving her shattered, betrayed, and alone. Vicki Tiede exposed a few of the top myths concerning porn's impact on marriages.

Myth 1: Porn is a victimless choice.

Reality: Not only does it hurt the guy, it hurts the wife and children. It also drives the demand for sex trafficking. Acting on porn addiction is betrayal and adultery, a sexual act outside of marriage.

Myth 2: The marriage will be restored automatically.

Reality: It's so much more complicated than that. The wife's healing is critical. She is dealing with the daily fallout of his choices. Giving both partners a study guide does not mean they will figure things out. Silence and burying their feelings only makes the problem worse.

Myth 3: A man won't turn to porn if his wife is fulfilling his needs.

Reality: Her husband's decision to look at porn has nothing to do with her physical appearance or sexual performance. It's not her fault. We bear responsibilities for our own actions.

Myth 4: If a man stops his porn habit, his wife will automatically be over the havoc.

Reality: There are still feelings of hurt and distrust. Forgiving and trusting are not the same thing.

When people are grieving, let them grieve.

There is no such thing as a perfect wife before or after a husband's porn use.

The wife's choices will either help or hurt their relationship.

Question: How much disclosure should a husband give to his wife about his pornographic actions?

Answer: It's best for the man to admit it to her rather than be caught. The wife will likely be traumatized. Give her time to process the information and allow her to control how much she wants to hear at a given time.

Session 14: The Power of Accountability

The best solution for porn addiction, other than Jesus Christ, is accountability. Why is it that Ron DeHaas, founder and CEO of Covenant Eyes, has a passion for proclaiming the name of Jesus Christ and accountability?

After he tragically lost his wife and two children in an auto accident in 1992, Ron remarried and was blessed with a second family. The loss of his first family made him value the protection of family all the more.

"I saw the dangers of the Internet and how available porn was," said Ron, "and I was not about to lose another family to this thing: pornography."

"I thought about getting a filter, but they underblock and overblock. Filters encourage sneaking around and give parents a

false sense of security. Rather than legalistically blocking the sites, I wanted to train them on the disciplined use of the Internet,” he said. “I wanted accountability.”

Accountable families — those who have used Covenant Eyes for at least five years — were included in the recent Barna study, *The Porn Phenomenon*. According to the study, accountable families that take the spiritual formation of their families seriously are successful in passing on their values from one generation to the next. Here are a few other takeaways from the study:

Teens and young adults believe lying, stealing, and not recycling are more immoral than pornography.

Language is important. We need to let people know that pornography is synonymous with sex trafficking.

Covenant Eyes families have a dramatically different view of what qualifies as pornography, what sex acts are immoral, and whether or not porn harms society.

Covenant Eyes families are far less likely to seek out porn than those who use filters.

Accountability is always the best way to deal with sin. Always. Software alone is not the solution. Good parenting and the Church are the solutions. The key ingredient is YOU. You are the ultimate solution.

Session 15: Parenting in a Dirty World

Dr. Doug Weiss and Donna Rice Hughes helped prepare attendees for the next time parents come asking for advice about what to do now that their child has seen pornography.

If Satan can seduce you, he can reduce you. He’s after our children’s brains. Sexual sin attaches people to things, making it different from any other sin (1 Cor. 6:18). Weiss explained how shame can paralyze the way you think about things. Satan wants to get involved in our kids’ development to destroy them with shame.

The enemy is a coward. He doesn’t wait until you’re old enough to fight. He attacks young people.

Parents play a huge role in their child’s sexual education, whether good or bad.

The power of God in you scares the enemy. Satan wants to limit your effectiveness any way he can.

Children are much more computer-literate than their parents and can view porn in an instant. Hughes stated those images cannot be unseen or forgotten.

Parents are having to shoulder the entire burden of protecting their children.

Most parents are either in denial of Internet pornography’s impact or they remove the Internet completely from their home.

No one is immune to pornography.

Question: What do you do about Snapchat?

Answer: Any of these apps can be used for good or evil, just like the Internet. Parents should do their homework on apps before allowing their children to use them. Even good-looking apps can have a browser attached that can be used to access pornography.

Session 16: Talking to Students

Children in their teens and early twenties live in a culture that has accepted pornography as a normal part of life, so how do we help these young adults turn toward wholesome sexuality? Clay Olsen, Michael Leahy, and Dr. Sean McDowell share a few main thoughts:

Millennials are motivated by activism and social change more than money, said Olsen. They trust science. Fortunately, science has caught up with truth on pornography. College students across the country are changing people’s perceptions on pornography. They’re spreading the message that #PornKillsLove.

Leahy’s research shows that students on college campuses will stop watching porn if there is accountability, zero-tolerance in the workplace, or if they have to pay for it.

The secret to success is discipleship, not a single conversation. Students want authenticity. McDowell expressed that a mentor’s greatest gift is the love he or she gives to those they are mentoring. It’s authentic love that helps address a person’s deep-rooted relational issues and truly sets us free. If our relational needs aren’t met by our family and friends, we

look for counterfeits, which includes pornography.

Millennials react better to a positive message. Rather than “don’t watch porn,” we should be telling people “fight for love.”

Have consistent conversations with your children about sexual purity.

We are relational beings. We were made to know and love God and people.

Question: Is it okay for a man and a woman to watch pornography with each other?

Answer: Pornography has damaging consequences to a relationship. God intended for sex to be between one man and one woman in a marriage relationship. It does not improve relationships.

Session 17: The Spiritual Aspect of Pornography

Pastor Bernie Anderson shared his story of porn addiction, the devastation it brought to his marriage, and how he found recovery and healing by God’s grace.

He stressed that pornography destroys integrity, causes men to live a double life, and breaks you apart inside. Here are several lessons he learned while recovering from his porn addiction:

Women are wired for intimacy. The betrayal is profound when they find out their husbands have been living a double life.

God’s restoration and healing brings a man and a woman together.

If you struggle with porn, take courage and start to talk about it. Please understand your wife is broken and hurting.

I tell my daughters that they don’t find their dignity in the hands that want to touch them, but from the hands of the Almighty God who created them.

I don’t care what you think of me. There is a God up above who thinks I’m pretty doggone special, and that’s enough for me.

Session 18: A Biblical View of Sexuality

Pastor Jacob Aranza shared why marriage is under attack. If you don’t understand the purpose of something, you abuse it. God instituted marriage and family, and if you want to see what God wants to use, see what the devil tries to redefine and ruin.

Today’s sexual immorality results from a progression through four stages:

Stage 1: Certain things are right and wrong because the Bible says so—Biblical morality.

Stage 2: Certain things are right and wrong because society says so.

Stage 3: Certain things are right and wrong, but I don’t care.

Stage 4: There’s no such thing as right or wrong, and you’re narrow minded and hateful if you think so.

Pastor Aranza also stressed that God made sex good and for us to enjoy, but human beings can never satisfy us like God. God gives us boundaries around sex because He wants to protect and provide for us. The mission of the modern church is to rescue sex.

Putting a divine expectation on another man will always disappoint.

God wants to define man, now sex defines man.

Survey after survey reveals that the most satisfying sex is found among religious people.

Children will imitate what they see at home. As Pastor Aranza expressed, the strongest antidote to the lies of pornography is a husband and wife that love each other. “There is no substitute for a mama and a daddy who love Jesus with all their heart.”

Set Free Summit: Day 4 RESTORE

The Set Free Summit concludes today with a focus on restoration.

We have recognized the problem of pornography and how pervasive it is in our culture throughout our world. Today, we discover how we can be restored and help others become restored through God’s Word.

Dr. Ted Roberts: Is Real Revival Possible?

Roberts took the attendees to the book of Hosea, who was the prophet that God told to marry a prostitute because Israel had committed unfaithfulness to God.

We need to focus on pointing to our faults and stop looking at the faults of others. We need to own our sin and stop trying to fix others first. We need to stop pointing out how others need revival and first look at ourselves and admit we need revival too.

Once you go down the road of obedience, you start to understand God's plan.

You can break God's heart, but you can't break His love.

Marriage isn't designed to grow you; it's to heal you.

Question: How do you encourage single people?

Answer: Rambo was an idiot. We can't do it ourselves. We need a team. Surround yourselves with good accountability and support. Learn to make healthy relationships with the opposite sex.

Luke Gilkerson: Accountability in the Church

Accountability can often become a buzzword. The problem with buzzwords is they can lose their meaning over time. We cannot tell people how to be accountable or hold someone accountable until we know what it is and how to do it.

Guilt and shame are often used together, but they are different. Guilt is a violation of conscience. Shame is relational — it's a sense of disgrace among ourselves as we relate to others, which includes God, our spouse, and our community.

In a job setting, if you as an employee disobey, you may be fired. In our relationship with God, when we disobey, we get loved. God disciplines those who He loves. It is for our good that we may share in His holiness.

We need to stay away from two ineffective forms of accountability.

Shameless accountability: This superficial form of accountability ignores the shame involved in sin.

Shame-based: This asks the question, "Are we keeping the rules?" This is legalistic and gives no room for grace.

The gospel solves both ineffective forms of accountability.

Accountability is not calling someone out, but calling someone up to God.

Godly accountability needs to be Godly in focus.

Accountability needs to include confrontation.

Question: What about if someone wants to break free, but the environment in their church is not set up to help facilitate this?

Answer: We should all take the spiritual temperature of our church and whether there is grace provided for those struggling. I wouldn't say to automatically leave a church that doesn't include grace, but we should all consider whether we are at a local assembly where God wants us to be. I'd consider including those outside our local assembly to hold us accountable in addition to those inside.

Dr. Jay Dennis: Protecting Church Leaders

The majority of Christian leaders keep silent about this awful pandemic of pornography. Satan has found his most powerful tool and weapon to hurt us and the cause of Christ. We have to take up the fight. This is a clear and present warning that we need to stop our silence and speak out.

By admitting your own struggles, it gives others permission to admit it as well. It's a great gift to those struggling who don't want to admit it or address it.

Pastors are the gate-keepers for the congregation. What you ignore, your congregation will likely ignore too. What you address, your congregation will likely address.

There are many reasons why the conversation isn't happening. It's awkward, embarrassing, controversial, sensitive,

misunderstood, and pastors could be struggling with it too. But there are so many more reasons why it should be addressed. When it comes to addressing porn, pastors are often monkeys. They often see no evil, speak no evil, and hear no evil. The first step is admitting the problem. It includes men and women together. If you shine light on a secret, it will lose its power.

Question: Do you think a former addict always needs accountability?

Answer: Not only former addicts, but we all need daily accountability. Pastors need to set the example daily and weekly.

Josh McDowell's Call to Arms

There is not one inhabited place on earth where people are not affected by pornography. It's the great elephant in the room and in the church that many people and pastors are ignoring.

The church is the only hope to reverse this trend. Will you do your part?