

# Lesson 14:

## Church - Facing the Issues

*“Most of our churches fear this area. So many men struggle with it and so many in the pulpit struggle with it. To take it on is to say that it is real. To take it on is to say that it really is that monster. To take it on is to say you just can’t pray your way out of it.”*

*Ted Baldick*

### **Heads In The Sand?**

The growing number of Christian men and women seeking help for pornography addiction is of great concern while at the same time very gratifying. Their willingness to admit they are addicted to pornography, that their lives are out of control and they need help, is the first and extremely important step in regaining control of their lives.

The most alarming phenomenon may be the influence, or should I say, the non-influence of the church in helping sexual addicts. “Pornography problem? Sexual addiction? Not here. Not my church. Not our leaders. Not my family. Not me. No need to talk about it. No need to worry about it.”

**Sexual sin has long been  
the intentionally, unseen, dead elephant  
in the pews of many congregations.**

The advent of the Internet has compounded the problem with hundreds of sexual and pornography addicts being added to the pile weekly.

Intentional avoidance leaves the addict trapped. He simultaneously prays for a “Good Samaritan” to come to his aid, but also for the congregation to leave him alone to suffer his well-deserved consequences in seclusion. Most times the latter prayer gets answered. Another man, another woman, another spouse, another parent, another marriage, another family, slowly disappears. They do so as the church looks on, fearful and frozen in their self-imposed silence.

So, which is the bigger problem in the church? The individual who avoids the hardships of reality by consistently returning to a world of pornographic fantasy, or the congregation which buries its head in the sand, preferring their own fantasy that pornography and sex addiction are not issues? Especially not issues in this congregation.

***You just can’t  
pray your way  
out of it.***

***The church  
looks on,  
fearful and  
frozen in their  
self-imposed  
silence.***



**1. In your opinion, what issues do the members of your congregation struggle with the most?**

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**2. What is your congregation currently doing to address each of those issues?**

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**3. How many members of your congregation would you estimate are involved in pornography?  
Explain answer.**

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**4. Has your congregation conducted any surveys about the prevalence of pornography use by its members? Why or Why not?**

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**5. How often is pornography directly discussed during sermons and classes? Do you believe it should be discussed more or less? Explain.**

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**6. Has your congregation been reluctant to address this issue in the past? Why or why not?**

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**7. What message does silence from the church on this topic, send to those who are struggling?**

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**8. What role does shame play in the discussion, or lack there of, when it comes to sex and pornography?**

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**9. What is the prevalent attitude about sexual addiction amongst the leaders of your congregation?**

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**10. How transparent are the leaders of your congregation with their own struggles in life?**

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**11. What obstacles in your congregation do you believe make it more difficult for those struggling to ask for help?**

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**12. Explain the difference you see between sin and addiction.**

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**13. What role do you believe God plays in the journey of recovery for sexual addicts?**

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**14. How does a sexual addict go about receiving forgiveness from God?**

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**15. In your opinion, does God's forgiveness remove the addiction from the individual? Explain.**

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**16.** How does a sex addict go about receiving healing from the addiction?

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**17.** Do you believe your congregation is ready to face this issue head on? Why or why not?

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**18.** If not, what do you believe must happen for your congregation to become ready and willing to address the issue?

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**19. Homework:** Facilitate a survey being conducted in your congregation to assess the prevalence of pornography use among the members. List important questions below.

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*Notes*

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