**An Assault on Purity**

*by Joe Price*

Jesus Christ said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). The pure heart is blessed with clear vision of God and of His will. In this dark world of sin, a pure heart helps us see what pleases God and to know what is designed to destroy our souls.

Pornography is one of the leading threats to moral purity and righteous living in our country today. A pornographic tsunami has engulfed America (and indeed, the world). The proliferation of pornography on the internet provides extremely easy access via computers, smartphones and tablets. One can literally take their porn with them to school, to work and to play (not to mention into their homes).

Judge Robert Bork said pornography is “propaganda for fornication.” Bible words that describe pornography include “uncleanness,” “lewdness” (lasciviousness), “passion of lust” and “evil desire” (Gal. 5:19; 2 Cor. 12:21; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:5). Although pornography itself is not fornication, it often leads to it as it voyeuristically depicts this sin of the flesh.

No one is immune from being tempted by sexual sins. That does not mean one must yield to such temptations; we have a choice in the matter (1 Pet. 2:11-12). But, as Bill Perkins said, “If you think you can’t fall into sexual sin, then you’re godlier than David, stronger than Samson, and wiser than Solomon.” It is foolish to take the fire of pornography into one’s bosom, for it is an inferno set on fire by hell (cf. Prov. 6:25-27).

The statistics are staggering. $3,075.64 per second is spent on pornography (that’s $103 billion per year). About two million people watch porn every minute. Watching porn has, quite literally, become the norm for adolescents. About 90% of boys and 70% of girls, ages 13 to 14, have reported accessing porn at least once. In the workplace, a Barna Group survey in 2014 found 63% of adult men and 36% of adult women have looked at porn at least one time at work in the past three months (38% of men more than once, and 13% of women more than once). The same report said, “64% of self-identified Christian men and 15% of self-identified Christian women view pornography at least once a month (compared to 65% of non-Christian men and 30% of non-Christian women)” (“Pornography Statistics,” *Covenant Eyes*, 20).

We know the problem of pornography is real. So, what do we do to overcome it? Here are a few Biblical answers to help anyone struggling with this sin.

*1) Repent.* God forgives (cf. Isa. 1:16-19). And, we must also forgive when others disrupt their lives and our with this sin (Matt. 18:33-35).

*2) Turn your heart back to God and crucify the flesh* (Gal. 5:24; Rom. 13:12-14). You must eliminate the source as well as your attraction to it (Matt. 5:28-30). Monitor the computer, TV, movies and every media that delivers pornography. Turn them off, and if necessary, get rid of them. Make concrete steps to flee lust and pursue righteousness (2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Tim. 6:12).

*3) Be open, transparent and accountable.* The appeal of secrecy and anonymity is part of pornography’s lure. Parents, a spouse or a responsible friend must have full, unfettered access to every delivery system to help you overcome this sinful addiction (watching porn has similar effects on the brain as heroin).

*4) Make a covenant with your eyes* (Job 31:1). Evil can seduce us, allure us. Make a decision of faith not to start down this highway to hell.

Victory over pornography is possible in Christ (1 Cor. 15:57). Put on His armor (Eph. 6:10-17).

**Accountability**

*by Kyle Campbell*

**“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord …” (2 Samuel 12:13)**

Of all the scorned words in America’s mind, accountability must be near the front. Accountability has become a by-word in a nation that seeks to blame other people or events for their own misdeeds. Since the Bible never uses the word accountability, we must turn to other sources for its definition. According to Webster’s, accountability is “the quality or state of being accountable; answerable or bound to give an explanation.” With so many Americans seeing a therapist or mental health professional, the tendency has become to find events in someone’s past and blame the current problem on the past event. In the final analysis, accountability is lost because personal choices can no longer be controlled.

How many have witnessed people blame their sin-filled lives on abuse or a childhood trauma? I do not intend to seem cold-hearted because I know people who have legitimate problems because of past events. However, the problem with this widespread diagnosis is that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. More and more find it easier to shirk responsibility because they do not feel responsible.

Simply put, a loss of accountability translates into a loss of guilt or remorse for sin. When there is no remorse or guilt, sin is unrestrained. Ezekiel 18:20 makes it clear that the responsibility lies squarely on our shoulders. We are accountable for what we do because we ultimately make the decision to act in a certain way. If someone in our past sinned against us by treating us a certain way, they will answer to God for their sins.

In contrast to the “spirit of the age,” accountability is prominent in the Bible. We will be accountable to God for our own individual actions (Romans 14:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Luke 16:2; Revelation 20:11-15), our words (Matthew 12:36), our sins (Romans 3:19), and our faithfulness (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Matthew 25:21). We are accountable to Christ because of His authority in the judgment (John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16), His judgment of human works (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 4:4-5; 2 Corinthians 5:10), and His judgment of local churches (Revelations 2:1-3:21; 1 Peter 4:17). We also cannot forget our accountability to the elders of the church (Hebrews 13:17) and our accountability to governmental officials (Daniel 6:2; Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14). As you can see, mankind is very accountable.

In order for people to turn from their sins, the “spirit of this age” must be vanquished. Responsibility for sins is a reality each of us face regardless of popular psychology. Do not be worn down by subtle semantics or the shifting of blame to escape accountability. The drunkard is an alcoholic because he decided to take the first drink. A smoker is addicted to nicotine because he decided to smoke the first cigarette. An unwed mother must care for her children the best she can because she decided to commit fornication. As painful as the consequences are, the truth still stands that we make those decisions.