

## **Shocking Stats about pornography**

### **How much pornography is there?**

- There are millions of pornographic websites worldwide, with estimates ranging from several million to well over 10 million domains
- The world's largest pornography website alone reported approximately 42 billion visits in 2023, averaging about 115 million visits every day.
- On that same site:
  - Users perform about 6.4 billion searches per year.
  - More than 13 million new videos were uploaded during the year.
  - The average visit lasts about 10–11 minutes.
- One of the largest pornography sites consistently ranks among the 10–20 most-visited websites in the world, despite age restrictions in many countries. (right behind Google, YouTube, social media sites & the like)

### **How often is pornography viewed?**

Research indicates pornography is viewed continuously around the world.

- One major site receives approximately:
  - 115–130 million visits every day
  - 4.8–5.4 million visits every hour
  - 80,000–90,000 visits every minute
  - Roughly 1,300–1,500 visits every second

### **How much money is involved in the porn industry?**

The best current estimates place the global adult entertainment industry somewhere between \$60 to \$100+ billion annually, with some broader estimates reaching \$190–290 billion depending on what is included

### **Latest Study on Porn by the Barna Group & Pure Desire Ministries Pornography in the United States**

- 61% of Americans (ages 13+) report consuming pornography. This is up from 55% in Barna's 2015 study.
- 78 % of men report viewing pornography compared to 71% in 2015.
- 44% of women report viewing pornography compared to 39% in 2015.

- Pornography is now consumed across virtually every age group and demographic, though younger adults remain the highest users.
- 73% stumble upon pornographic material without seeking it out.  
(That is a decrease from 86% since a 2015 similar Barna study)

### **Outside the Church**

68% report viewing pornography

- 31% report viewing pornography at least weekly
- 66% agree a person can regularly view pornography & live a sexually health life. **2 additional slides – porn viewing by generations**
- 60% agree it will improve a person's sex life
- 88% of self-identified porn users say no one is actively helping them avoid pornography.

### **Inside the Church**

Among **practicing Christians** (defined by Barna as people who identify as Christian, attend church regularly, and say their faith is important):

#### **The stats are not too far apart from those outside the church**

- 54% of practicing Christians report consuming pornography.
- 75% of Christian men report viewing pornography. (3% less)
- 40% of Christian women report viewing pornography. (4% less)
- 22% of practicing Christians say they view pornography at least weekly
- 55% agree a person can regularly view pornography and live a sexually health life.
- 48% agree it will improve a person's sex life
- 78% of practicing Christians who use pornography say no one knows about their struggle & no one is helping them avoid it
- Only 10% of Christians and church attenders say their church offers any programming or ministry specifically addressing pornography or sexual integrity while 58% says it's important to them that their church address topics of pornography & compulsive sexual behavior.

### **Some things we need to clearly understand**

#### **We need to know what sexual sin does**

#### **Sexual Brokenness:**

*Our own choices:* promiscuity, pornography, homosexuality, addictions, emotional/physical affairs, abortion.

*Sin committed against us*—sexual abuse, rape, introduction to sex in any way by someone older when we're a child/teen.

### **Sexual sin:**

1. ***It isolates us***—in pain, secrecy and shame
2. ***It stagnates us*** spiritually, emotionally & relationally – we get stuck burdened with sin that holds us back from growing & being transformed
3. ***It deceives us*** that we're alright – so long as we just keep stuffing it down, ignoring it, pretending it's not a big deal, not that bad, we'll stop some day
4. ***It blinds us*** to the truth – of ourselves: of what happened to us, what we've done, how it's affected us, how we see/value ourselves, how God sees/values us.
5. ***It quiets our voice*** – the shame takes our voice away – we can't speak truth into other people's lives or even into our lives
6. ***It affects our relationships*** – It causes fractures & distance between people.

### **How the brain & Sex are deeply connected – **our brains are amazing****

The brain is designed so that **sexual intimacy is one of the most neurologically powerful human experiences**. God created sex within marriage to strengthen bonding, intimacy, pleasure, and the possibility of creating new life. Pornography, however, activates many of the same brain systems **while bypassing** the relational, emotional, and covenantal aspects of sex. That is why many neuroscientists describe pornography as capable of "hijacking" the brain's normal reward pathways.

### **Here's what happens.**

#### **1. Anticipation: Dopamine**

The 1<sup>st</sup> major chemical released is **dopamine**. It is often called the brain's "reward" or "motivation" neurotransmitter, though it's more accurate to think of it as the chemical of **wanting** rather than simply pleasure. **It creates** anticipation / Increases attention & focus / Motivates a person to pursue a reward / Helps the brain remember behaviors worth repeating

**During both sex & pornography use**, dopamine levels rise significantly.

With pornography, the brain often receives **repeated spikes of dopamine** because of endless novelty ("just one more video"), something the brain did not evolve to handle.

## **2. Pleasure: Endorphins**

**During sexual arousal & orgasm:** Endorphins are released. These are the body's natural painkillers. They create relaxation, pleasure, & feelings of well-being.

## **3. Bonding: Oxytocin**

Oxytocin is often called the **bonding hormone**.

**During healthy marital intimacy it helps:** build trust / deepen emotional attachment / strengthen commitment / reinforce pair bonding  
For women, oxytocin tends to be especially prominent, though both men and women experience it. This is one reason Scripture describes husband and wife becoming "[one flesh](#)" ([Genesis 2:24](#)). The biological design supports that relational bond.

## **4. Attachment: Vasopressin**

**In men especially**, another hormone called **vasopressin helps:** strengthen attachment / encourage protectiveness / reinforce long-term pair bonding

Together, oxytocin and vasopressin help explain why repeated healthy sexual intimacy often strengthens marriages.

## **5. Satisfaction: Serotonin**

**After the intense moment is over** - serotonin increases / anxiety decreases

relaxation follows / many people feel sleepy or content

## **What changes with pornography?**

Pornography stimulates many of these same pathways - but without a real relationship. Instead of bonding with a spouse, the brain can begin bonding to: images / videos / fantasy / novelty

## **The novelty effect**

One of pornography's strongest neurological effects is **novelty**. Every new image or video can produce another dopamine spike. Unlike marital

intimacy: there is endless variety / endless novelty / instant availability  
This can train the brain to crave constant new stimulation.

### **Neuroplasticity**

The brain constantly rewires itself. **Neuroscientists** summarize it this way: "**Neurons that fire together wire together.**" Repeated pornography use strengthens those neural pathways. Over time, the brain can become conditioned to expect: novelty / intensity / unrealistic scenarios / immediate gratification **This doesn't mean the changes are permanent.** The brain is capable of change throughout life, which is why many people can recover through sustained behavioral change, accountability, counseling, & time.

**Tolerance** With repeated exposure, some people develop tolerance.

**This means:** the same material produces less excitement - more time is spent viewing / more novel or extreme material may be sought - stopping becomes more difficult. This is what we often see in other compulsive behaviors & addictions

### **Executive control**

The **prefrontal cortex helps us:** exercise self-control / make wise decisions

resist temptation / consider consequences      When someone repeatedly engages in compulsive behaviors, strong reward signals can make it harder for this part of the brain to regulate impulses in the moment.

**During healthy marital sex**      The brain experiences a combination of all 5 of those chemicals in a person's brain. These work together to strengthen both physical intimacy & relational attachment.

### **During pornography use**

The brain still experiences: *dopamine, endorphins & serotonin*

But instead of reinforcing intimacy with another person, the brain reinforces **a connection to artificial sexual stimuli.** For some individuals, repeated exposure can contribute to unrealistic expectations, relationship dissatisfaction, compulsive & habitual patterns, or even sexual dysfunction,

**So what do we do – we turn to God's Word** and we look and see what the Lord has to say to us to challenge us, encourage us, and bring transformation. This morning is not about beating anyone up, making

someone feel guilty, most of us in the room I would believe know it's wrong, but the real question is what in the world do we do about it? How can we fight this scourge? How can people find freedom and forgiveness, hope & healing in Christ. I want us to look from a 50,000 ft at this text and see some powerful reminders and then close out with some what I hope are very practical next steps.