

Adultery and Sexual Addiction

A Plan for Healing the Soul and the Marriage

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When people hear the term "sexual addiction," many assume it is rare or it doesn't have anything to do with them. Yet the increasing frequency of couples requesting help with both adultery and sexual addiction indicates sexual sin will be the number-one marriage problem facing twenty-first-century Christians, both in their own lives and in the lives of people they try to teach.

One purpose of this essay is to shake awake people who don't realize adultery and sexual addiction are increasing at an alarming rate. Indeed, many unsuspecting Christians are members of churches that contain these same extreme sexual sins and addictions. Even in the Bible belt, Christians and churches are realizing they must fight this problem.

This booklet also provides God's tested and tried three-part formula for overcoming adultery and sexual addiction. Unfortunately, as one preacher says, "Most Christians, regardless of how long they've been Christians, don't begin to know how to use the Bible to solve personal problems or how to help others." Christians, whether young or old, preachers, elders, or saints, need to know how to deal with these problems. *Invariably, if Christians don't know how to deal with these modern sexual problems, they do great harm.* Many men and women lament over the damage done to them and to their mates by the ignorance of local preachers, elders, and Christians.

Finally, this booklet gives a specific plan for healing the souls and marriages of adulterers and sexual addicts and their families. While mankind's methods of dealing with these devastating sins grind slowly with mixed results, God's formula liberates his followers to be whole and to enjoy all of the great marital blessings God reserves for his people.

Why Adultery and Sexual Addiction Are on the Rise

The mid 1800s to the mid 1900s saw mankind steadily becoming more involved in Victorian morals, which attempted to totally deny any sexual pleasure for either men or women. Then in 1948 Dr. Alfred Kinsey, a biologist, rebelled against this trend by writing *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* after interviewing 1,400 convicted sex offenders. Later, turning his attention to questioning prostitutes, he wrote *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* in 1953. Not knowing the source of Kinsey's data, society gleefully accepted his assertions that nearly everyone had succumbed to an affair and that many people had actually engaged in perverted sex including homosexuality and bestiality. The resulting sexual revolution took over the last half of the twentieth century.

In 1954, the first *Playboy* magazine hit the newsstands and took up the mission of popularizing Kinsey's conclusions that all sexual perversions were actually normal and beneficial. At that time, pornography magazines weren't readily available and a person had to go to a sleazy part of town to get a copy. Everyone still called them "dirty" pictures and didn't try to justify them. Even so, many Baby Boomers grew up with friends whose dads were subscribers. They saw it as "part of being a man" since the long-range effect of using pornography was unknown at that time.

Since then, *Playboy* has evolved from trying to give the impression that the selected bunny was just like the girl next door to today's readily available copies that contain seemingly legitimate business and literary articles to encourage buying them. In an interview, Hugh Hefner, founder of *Playboy*, portrayed himself as a great sex educator. He compared himself to Jesus Christ—as a missionary—who was "liberating people from sexual hang-ups. (Alan Combs Show, "Interview with Hugh Hefner," Oct. 2, 1994 as quoted by Laurie Hall, *An Affair of the Mind* [Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996], 64, 85.)

Then in the 1970s the modern-day feminist movement began its rise in power and influence. While the feminists openly ridiculed and despised men, they also went after what they thought were the advantages of being born male—corporate jobs and equal sexual opportunities. To them, equal sexual opportunities didn't mean throwing off Victorian hang-ups and enjoying wonderful orgasms in the arms of a cherished husband. Equal sexual opportunities meant the right to frequent casual sexual relationships without penalty—without marriage or disgrace. They delighted in starting their own magazines with male centerfolds. Being an unwed mother lost its shame, as it became a badge of glory for the feminists. As the sexual revolution continued, women gladly became more available than ever as casual sexual partners outside marriage.

George Gilder explains in *Men and Marriage* how this changing attitude of women toward sexual encounters, not only harmed the women, but also did tremendous damage to men:

In a world where women do not say no, the man is never forced to settle down and make serious choices. His sex drive—the most powerful compulsion in his life—is never used to make him part of civilization as the supporter of a family. If a woman does not force him to make a long-term commitment—to marry—in general, he doesn't. Maternity requires commitment. His sex drive only demands conquest, driving him from body to body in an unsettling hunt for variety and excitement in which much of the thrill is in the chase itself. (George Gilder, *Men and Marriage* [Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 1986], 47.)

As all these influences spurred the sexual revolution on, technique books began telling their readers, "It doesn't matter if you are married, single, or homosexual. Our techniques will give you great sexual delights. Just make sure to protect yourself from sexually transmitted diseases."

The scare over sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS, instead of checking mankind's advancement toward even more frequent and casual sexual conduct, in effect, produced the exact opposite result. The scare lifted promiscuity out of the gutter and placed it prominently into the classrooms to shape and mold children. Originally, sex education in the schools was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century to combat prostitution, venereal diseases, masturbation, and sexual conduct outside of marriage. However, in the late 1980s, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop completely changed the direction of the sex-education programs with a single statement:

"There is no doubt," said Surgeon General C. Everett Koop in a grim report on AIDS last October, "that we need sex education in schools and that it must include information on heterosexual and homosexual relationships." Koop was talking about graphic instruction starting "at the lowest grade possible." Because of the "deadly health hazard," he said later, "we have to be as explicit as necessary to get the message across." (John Leo, "Should Schools Offer Sex Education?" *Readers' Digest* [March 1987], 138.)

The resulting sex-education materials of the 1990s relied heavily on Kinsey's original research regarding the sexual nature of children. Kinsey's chapters on children in both his *Male* and *Female* books result from interviews with homosexuals who had relations with young boys and pedophiles who molested children, including infants. The Kinsey team refused to cooperate with police on apprehending a pedophile who was being sought in regard to a sex murder. Experts today suspect Kinsey's child sexuality tables in his books contain information from that child murderer. (Dr. Judith A. Reisman and Edward W. Eichel, *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud: The Indoctrination of a People* [Lafayette, LA: Huntington House Publishers, 1990], 53.)

Since child abuse and sexual molestation and experimentation are against the law, no other sex researchers have dared to follow Kinsey's example and do actual research on children. As a result, Kinsey's research on children still stands and is widely used today by the Federal Government and other agencies in designing homosexual-oriented sex education for children in the schools.

As a method for "safe sex," many of the sex-education programs teach self-masturbation and some even promote teaching effective ways of doing it. Since Kinsey's research revolved around sex offenders, his books heavily promote self-masturbation. Self-masturbation plays a key role in the development of compulsive sexual behavior and in all perversions, including homosexuality.

Self-masturbation is different from wet dreams, a method God provides for release of a build-up of sexual tension and semen. Dr. Archibald Hart's survey on sexuality in men and boys indicates that older men have more wet dreams than teenage boys do. The reason for the shift from harmless wet dreams to risky self-masturbation in young males probably stems directly from the schools using Kinsey's research on children in their sex-education programs. (Archibald Hart, Ph.D., *The Sexual Man: Masculinity Without Guilt* [Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1994], 107-108.)

About the same time as major changes in sex-education in the schools were occurring, rapidly advancing technology began bringing online sex right into homes. In 1990, access was limited to electronic bulletin boards and people with expensive sophisticated computer equipment to display the sexual graphics. Then around 1993 CD-ROM drives became more affordable and the online sex industry experienced new growth. With the introduction of Web browsers in the mid 1990s, silicon pornography was just an easy click away from stripping and slithering to the keystrokes of children, men, women, and even the barely computer literate. While these sites contain plenty of homosexual material, the main candidates for them are heterosexual males who have "money, the right computers and Internet connections, and who are often lonely and alienated." Nearly overnight, online sex exploded into a major influence in the lives of many men, women, and children. (James Warren, "Upside Tackles Steamy Subject of Online Sex," *The Tacoma News Tribune* [March 29, 1998].)

After half a century of unbridled lust on the part of both men and women as they celebrated the sexual revolution's war against the inhibitions of the Victorians, the mid 1990s saw a new kind of sex manual appear. Psychiatrists became alarmed that unrestrained sexual activity does not liberate as Kinsey promised. Instead, sex (real or fantasized) with anybody, whenever, and however eventually so enslaves the person's mind and body that sexologists coined a new name for its devastation—"sexual addiction." Sexual addiction quickly

progresses from having "a little harmless fun" to inordinately compulsive thoughts and actions that turn into perversions. The sexual addict, whether male or female, loses the ability to relate to real people on a personal level. The addict eventually becomes consumed by self-gratifying compulsions that harm his self-image, job, health, marriage, children, friendships, and view of reality. The addict may not even be able to drive down the freeway without masturbating and fantasizing.

Then in 1998, "60 Minutes" broadcast a segment about how all the mainstream universities were starting to teach classes on sexuality that were nothing more than porn shows paid for by tax dollars. Most of these classes are openly taught by homosexuals trying to teach others how to be homosexuals and to dignify their lifestyle. Unfortunately, the trend set by the sexual revolution is going to get a lot worse before it gets better, if it gets better.

Thus, the twenty-first century begins with people suffering from more severe sexual inhibitions and limitations than they did during the two previous centuries when Queen Victoria refused to see any divorced person in her court and demanded that the legs of tables be covered; and when Sylvanus Stall recommended in his world-renowned *Self and Sex Series* that husbands and wives sleep in separate bedrooms to control their sexual urges. Not only are sexual problems already frighteningly severe, but because of the current direction of sex-education in the schools and universities and the widespread availability of soft-core pornography on television and hardcore pornography on both the Internet and cable television, sexual immorality of the grossest kind is appearing among Christians. The desperate pleas of many Christians for help with adultery and sexual addiction indicate that sexual sin will be the number-one marriage problem facing twenty-first century Christians.

God's Sex Education

While the expression "sexual addiction" was coined by modern psychiatrists and is not a Bible word, the concept is found in the Bible. Way ahead of modern times, God was the first to promote sex education for the world. But God left the mechanics of birth control up to mankind's ingenuity while he focused on the most important part in the eyes of most men and women—sexual pleasure. God's great love and concern for the sexual happiness of both men and women show in his provisions for sex education. For at each stage of mankind's sexual development, from puberty through the golden years, God provides the necessary information to liberate men and women for total sexual enjoyment.

God Uses Solomon to Teach Sexual Truths

God gave this knowledge about the sexual relationship to the whole world over three thousand years ago through Solomon. In Solomon's youth, God said, "Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you" (1 Kings 3:12). Solomon's wisdom was "like the sand that is on the seashore" and "surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt" and "his fame was known in all the surrounding nations" (1 Kings 4:29-30). Then "men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom," including the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 4:34; 10:1). In this way, God's great practical wisdom, including his sexual truths, spread over the known world.

Some of those sexual truths came from Solomon's proverbs. For example, in Proverbs 7, Solomon addressed the special problems a man faces in his youth at the height of his sexual urges when he begins to notice the female body. In like manner, in Proverbs 5 Solomon cautioned a man about the different, yet equally strong, temptations a man faces as his body slows down through age—a time that mankind calls "the midlife crisis." Solomon revealed how an older wife ravishes her husband in a way that a much younger woman can't compete. At each stage of mankind's sexual development—from puberty through the temptation to midlife affairs, God provides the keys for a long life filled with sexual enjoyment.

However, God does not force anyone to reap his great sexual benefits—not even King Solomon. In his later years, Solomon turned his back on God's wisdom and allowed a lack of sexual control to ruin his own life. Solomon's ruin began as he ignored God's warning not to marry foreign women. Eventually, Solomon "held fast" to seven hundred wives (free women) and princesses (royalty) and three hundred concubines (slaves) "in love" (1 Kings 11:1-8). "Held fast" is the same word translated as "cleave" in Gen. 2:24 where God says, "A man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife." It means "to stick like glue." "Love" is a common word found throughout Proverbs and means "to love sexually or otherwise."

With access to the most desirable women in the known world from peasants to royalty to slaves, Solomon's sexual urges raged out of control. As God had forewarned, these foreign women turned Solomon's heart away from serving God fully as he built temples of idolatry for his wives. This included a temple for the practice of prostitution in the name of the goddess Ashtoreth where bands of men and women served her with immoral rites. By the time he was old, Solomon presented a picture of sexual, moral, and spiritual depravity. And God was so angry with Solomon that he told him, "I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant."

God Exposes Solomon's Sexual Addiction

Interestingly, God uses both Solomon's words of wisdom in his youth and his life of depravity in his middle and later years to teach great sexual truths to benefit mankind. During Solomon's early years of sexual decline, God inspired the beautiful and emotionally captivating Song of Solomon to expose Solomon's sexual folly as a means of teaching his people how to choose a lifelong sexual partner and how to enjoy thrilling sexual lives even into old age. At the time of the Song of Solomon, Solomon had only one hundred and forty of the one thousand wives he would eventually marry (Song of Sol. 6:8-9). The true story reveals that Solomon was already developing warped attitudes toward women and the sexual relationship. Indeed, listening to sexual addicts talk about their attitudes toward women, sex, and marriage that they are struggling to overcome is like listening to Solomon in the Song of Solomon.

The thrilling account takes place over three days as Solomon woos and attempts to marry a young Shulammite maiden he unexpectedly met on an inspection of his vineyards. The drama reveals the inner struggles of the young woman as she agonizes over who to marry—rich, powerful King Solomon who heaps sensuous flattery upon her, or the poor Shepherd whom she loves and who loves her, but who can offer her only a life of poverty. Solomon proposes to the young maiden four times and each time he speaks, he eloquently praises her sexual charms. He never sees her as a person with a brain and a personality, or as a person with needs and desires of her own. She is only the most ravishing female body he's ever seen and the sight of her beautiful body stirs up wild and overwhelming sexual urges that cry for release with her.

This same characteristic of Solomon, of a purely physical relationship without a proper emotional foundation, is the common thread that runs through all sexual addiction. Dr. Patrick J. Carnes pioneered the modern study of sexual addiction and wrote the groundbreaking book *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*. He uses such words as "isolation," "abandonment," "loneliness," "cut off from reality," "self-preoccupation," "pain," "anxiety," "lack of emotional balance," "alienation," "anger," "distrust," and "despair" to describe both male and female sexual addicts. The almost total lack of a proper emotional relationship with the spouse is at the core of the sexual addiction. (Patrick J. Carnes, Ph.D., *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction* [Center City, MN: Hazelden Educational Materials, 1992].)

The most important characteristic that God emphasizes about the sexual relationship is the emotional union between the husband and wife. That mental union is paramount for each to experience supreme sexual pleasure. And as psychiatrists are now discovering, properly cultivating and preserving that mental union helps protect both men and women from degenerating into sexual compulsions, addictions, and perversions. *Men and women can protect themselves from sexual addiction by rejecting the Victorian concept that sex is a purely physical act and by understanding the emotional nature of lovemaking for both men and women.*

If men and women can learn the difference between sensuous love and true love in their youth as their sexuality is budding, they can avoid a lifetime of sexual misery. However, if they started the road to sexual addiction by the choices they made in their youth, as most sexual addicts do, they can study Solomon's example as adults and find insight and motivation to work free of their compulsions.

Solomon is the perfect man for studying sexual addiction. He enjoyed access to it all! If sexual addiction's promise of supreme pleasure and fulfillment were true, Solomon would have found it with all of his wealth to spend on his addiction. No pornographic movies or magazines or Internet connections for him—Solomon heaped his lusts upon the real bodies of the most desirable women of his time from peasants to royalty to slaves. He had for his amusement all the known sexual techniques of his time that his foreign wives brought with them as part of their idolatrous worship. If ever a man could have found true sexual happiness and fulfillment in variety, techniques, and glorification of the body, Solomon was that man.

A study of the Song of Solomon shows a poignant contrast between true love that builds an emotional bond with the lover and liberates both their bodies for a truly rapturous sexual union; and sensuous love that looks only at the physical body and traps its participants in a lifelong compelling search for the perfect combination of bodies. At whatever age a person studies the Song of Solomon, it powerfully teaches how to lay the foundation for true love and sexual satisfaction that lasts a lifetime. Ideally, that foundation should be laid in one's youth. But regardless of a person's age and past sexual history, no one is too old to learn the secret of true love and find supreme sexual pleasure.

God's Definition of Sexual Addiction

While the frequency and destructiveness of overwhelming sexual addiction caught modern psychiatrists by surprise, the New Testament deals with the subject. Over two thousand years ago, God's word for addictive sexual sin was "enslaved." Following is just one example of how the expression "enslaved" is often used with sexual sins:

Titus 3:3: "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another."

This verse teaches three important principles about the sexual addict:

The Sexual Addict Deceives Himself

Titus 3:3: "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, . . ."

"Foolish" means "1. not understood, unintelligible; 2. generally active, not understanding, unwise, foolish" (Thayer, 48). "Foolish" is opposed to "wise" which means "forming the best plans and using the best means for their execution" (Thayer, 582).

"Disobedient" means "impersuasive [not capable of being persuaded—Webster], uncompliant [unwilling to conform to the rules—Webster], contumacious [stubbornly disobedient, rebellious—Webster]" (Thayer, 55).

"Deceived" means "to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way; metaphorically, to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to deceive" (Thayer, 514).

Notice the definition of the first characteristic of the sexual addict: "disobedient"—"impersuasive, uncompliant, and contumacious." Convincing someone caught up in sexual sins of the foolishness of their actions is almost impossible. I knew a woman who had been raised as a Christian, fallen away to live a promiscuous life where many men had her at the same time, and then had been restored and married. I asked her, "What could someone have said to you when you were in the midst of your affairs to have gotten your attention?"

She thought for a while and finally replied, "Nothing anyone could have said to me would have made me give up my relationships. I knew deep down that the men I was living with only told me they loved me and that I was beautiful to get me to do the things they wanted, but I wanted their attention so badly, I made myself believe their lies." She was impersuasive.

In the Garden of Eden, Satan promised Eve that eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would make her equal to God. In this way, he slandered God's motives while Eve listened. How difficult would Eve's choice have been if Satan had told her the truth—that disobeying God would cause the death of every baby ever born, would get them kicked out of the garden, would force them to work extremely hard for a living, and would bring about great pain in childbirth for all women? But sin seldom reveals its consequences until it's too late. Promising happiness and liberation, sin traps its luckless victims.

Satan craftily made Eve choose between obeying God or him in an unfamiliar area since she didn't know firsthand the results of eating the forbidden fruit. The question to Eve seemed to be, "Should I listen to the serpent or should I obey my Creator who the serpent says is holding me back and mentally oppressing me?" The whole world knows the outcome of Eve's choice.

Yet the same trickery of sexual addiction clouds the thinking of addicts and makes it easy for them to be disobedient—impersuasive. Satan doesn't tell them that eating the forbidden sexual fruit will make them like God. Instead, Satan's favorite expression is, "It's victimless. No one gets hurt. God has all these sexual taboos because God just doesn't want you to have real fun!" But notice the second characteristic of the addict—he is deceived!

While Hugh Hefner claims to be a missionary who is just liberating people sexually, Laurie Hall, whose husband was an active worker and teacher in their congregation who became sexually addicted, calls Hefner "a missionary from hell." Some of the headings in her chapter "Can't Get No Satisfaction" reveal some of the truths pornography doesn't tell its real victims of deceit: "Learning About the Birds and Bees from the Bunny," "Pornography Promotes Promiscuity, the Death Knell of Great Sex," "Porn Makes Him Think He's a Lady's Man," "Porn Shortens Foreplay and Contributes to Premature Ejaculation," "Porn Creates Sexual Isolation," "Porn Stimulates Interest in Perversions," "Porn Encourages Sexual Practices That Destroy the Dignity and Worth of Participants," "Porn Encourages Rape," "Porn Encourages Marital Violence," and "Soft-Core Porn Packs a Hard Wallop." (Laurie Hall, *An Affair of the Mind* [Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996], 77-86.)

Laurie Hall's husband Jack told in his own words what the false call to sexual liberation and "real fun" through pornography cost him:

If you have casual interest or a compulsion for any kind of pornography, please find help. Casual interest in "soft" porn can, and most often will, pull you under before you realize what's happened. It occurs slowly enough, making you unaware of the damage. You lose your self-respect, ability to reason well, ability to tell the truth, ability to give, ability to love, and ability to live a godly life.

I don't want you and your family to experience our nightmare. My casual interest in porn led to neglect, unfaithfulness, broken promises, stealing, manipulation, fear, emotional abuse, broken dreams, humiliation, embarrassment, and broken trust. It ripped our family apart. Yes, God has begun to heal us, but he never intended my wife and children to go through the pain caused by my addiction. (Hall, *An Affair of the Mind*, 241.)

Just like Satan didn't tell Eve what disobeying God would cost her and all of mankind, Hefner and his followers don't tell their victims what the choice they are about to make will cost them and their families.

Even if a person doesn't believe in God and doesn't care about serving God, God's sexual truths still liberate that person to enjoy a happier, better love life than if he ignored God's laws of purity. *Sexual immorality causes enormous personal problems for people who become caught up in it aside from the sin factor.* The Bible offers a tremendous amount of protection from horrible sexual problems for people who follow God's laws. But just as Eve couldn't foresee the outcome of her decision to eat the forbidden fruit, human limitations often prevent mankind from foreseeing the hideous outcome of turning their backs on God's sexual truths. Thus, God's love becomes evident as he warns men and women of the dangers awaiting them for abuse of his wonderful creation—sexual love.

The Sexual Addict Mistreats Himself

Titus 3:3: " . . . enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, . . . "

"Enslaved" means "1. properly, to be a slave, serve, do service; 2. metaphorically, to obey, submit to; b. in a bad sense, of those who become slaves to some base power, to yield to, give one's self up to" (Thayer, 157).

"Various" means "various, i.e. a. of divers colors, variegated; b. i.q. of divers sorts" (Thayer, 527).

"Lusts" is the same word as used in Matt. 5:28 where Jesus warns about mental adultery. It means "to set one's heart upon, to have a desire for, long for; to lust after, covet" (Thayer, 238).

"Pleasures" means "pleasure, desires for pleasure" (Thayer, 276).

That first look at a pornographic magazine or that first time to masturbate with the pictures may seem like a harmless, victimless activity. Yet God warns that the person who becomes enslaved to various lusts and pleasures is deceived! That self-deceit takes place gradually over a period of time until the real victim becomes engulfed and enslaved in the sin.

In *Male Sexuality*, Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld shows that the harm of pornographic materials such as sensual television shows, movies, and magazines on the man's sexual responses equals the damage Victorian morals do to the sexual natures of both men and women. He claims that soft-core pornographic influence abounds everywhere in unsuspecting places. Just exposure to sexual immorality through the boasting of friends and literature easily inhibits otherwise pure men as much as subtle Victorian concepts inhibit women. (Bernie Zilbergeld, Ph.D., *Male Sexuality* [New York, NY: Bantam, 1978].)

Dr. Archibald Hart's book on sexual addiction, *The Sexual Man*, explains how every perversion he discusses has its roots in masturbation or self-stimulation that eventually becomes compulsive or addictive. *Masturbating to orgasm releases and utilizes sexual hormones in such a way that it greatly increases the imprint on the brain of the accompanying activity and defines how the person experiences sexual pleasure.*

For example, a casual attitude toward *rape* often develops when a young man masturbates to pornography and stereotypes women as sex objects instead of real people. A man can even become a *stalker* because when he masturbates and visualizes the woman of his choice, she never says, "No," and always welcomes his advances. Then when she tells him in real life, "No! Leave me alone!" he doesn't believe her. His masturbation made him lose touch with reality.

Fetishes develop through masturbation. As a man fondles women's clothing while masturbating, his mind makes a strong connection between the article and sexual pleasure. Dr. Hart describes one man who could not function with his wife unless she wore black panties—the article he masturbated with in his youth. Thus, he made love to the black panties—not his wife! *Pedophiles* masturbate to pictures of children. This prepares their minds for moving on to live children. *Adultery* often begins with visualizing another woman while masturbating.

Eventually, some men act out those fantasies after they've programmed their minds through self-masturbation. That first incident of adultery may easily progress into *serial adultery*. Masturbating to pornography allows husbands to withdraw emotionally from their

wives and, eventually, many of them reach a point where they no longer make love to their wives, but must visualize pornographic images to make sexual contact with their wives. Such husbands often prefer this *solo sex* and essentially have solo sex even if they perform it on their wives. Likewise, masturbating with members of the same sex can easily develop into full-blown *homosexuality*. (Hart, *The Sexual Man*, 109-114.)

All these perversions (with the possible exception of some cases of adultery) share the common characteristic of "abandoning the *natural function* of the opposite sex." While this expression is used to describe homosexual conduct of both men and women in Rom. 1:26-27, it is the common outcome of all these perversions. Basically, homosexuals lose the ability to function in a natural way with members of the opposite sex. Heterosexual sexual addicts also lose the ability to function in a natural way with members of the opposite sex. *The only difference between the homosexual and the heterosexual sexual addict is the focus of their lusts—members of the same sex versus children, panties, pornographic pictures, women as sex objects, etc.* It is all "abandoning the *natural function* of the opposite sex."

Amazingly, some male college students figured this out for themselves—that masturbating to images in their minds was robbing their bodies of sexual delight with real women. Lynn Sherr of ABC News "20/20" interviewed these students for a program called "Sex With the Unreal Woman." Some of these young men became involved in pornography as early as the second, third, and fourth grades. In a closet they found *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines. They cut out the pictures and started trading them like trading cards. One student said, "My first sexual experience was, you know, dividing up women."

By junior high, these boys were passing around the magazines at school and using pornography to masturbate by. They experienced their first orgasms this way. One student explained, "When you're about to masturbate, or you're thinking about everything in a sexual context, it takes on a power."

Sherr said, "By using pornography to experience their first sexual pleasure, their bodies are physically conditioned to respond to such images."

Catherine MacKinnon, an anti-pornography activist on the program stated, "The way it works is it gives the man who is consuming it the experience of using a woman. First of all, she is flat, she is inert, she does not talk back to him. She is not real." The women in pornography never say no. MacKinnon continued, "It absolutely does condition him in his body. That is what he experiences as sexually exciting and through orgasm—which is a powerful reinforcer—is that which is experienced as ultimately sexually pleasurable."

One student in talking about this effect on him said, "When you're finished in pornography, it goes back up on the shelf, and in real life, there's a person there, even after you ejaculate."

Another student explained how they could not respond sexually to real women, but had to transform them into pornographic images:

"I've had to close my eyes (during sex with a real woman) and imagine the woman I'm with. I had to see an image within myself of the person I was with, not actually opening my eyes and looking at that person to finally climax."

The last student summarized the terrible effect of pornography, "A friend has the expression of 'masturbating into a woman.' That is sort of like a logical conclusion of pornography or masturbating to pornography. When you're finally with a real person, you're not really with them." (Lynn Sherr, "Sex With the Unreal Woman," ABC News "20/20" Transcript #1305 Jan. 29, 1993, [The American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., 1993], 4-6.)

A subtle form of pornography that enslaves young men, making them lose touch with real women, traps its victims through Saturday-morning cartoons, animated Disney movies, and video games. These cartoon babes of pornography were exposed when a young man told a woman he liked her hair longer and straighter. "You look like Jessica Rabbit," he said approvingly. When she wheeled on him, he confessed he loved cartoon babes, starting as a teen crush on Ms. Pac-man. He liked her really big lips and great makeup. Other men admit to being drawn to the almond-shaped eyes, curves that real women don't have, and come-hither personality. As one man stated, "Animated girls never make ugly faces the way people do in real life. You never catch a cartoon figure at a bad moment."

"Disney heroines are often ridiculously nubile [sexually attractive—Webster], and the male-dominated animation industry has put a lot of subliminal effort into titillating the male audience. . . . The lithe Indian princess, Pocahontas, was described by *The Times* as 'an animated Playboy Playmate.' " Many Web sites feature the cartoon babes. "For most guys, the more cartoonish the better. Perfect features, perfect bodies, no demands." (Maureen Dowd, "Men's Cartoon Fantasies Aren't Drawn from Life," *The Tacoma News Tribune* [January 12, 1998], A10.)

While Christians might assume looking at pornography and masturbating to it is rare among Christians, many Christians know it is commonplace—especially using soft-core pornography. One Christian woman said her husband, who claimed to be a Christian, had neglected her sexually all their marriage because he preferred pornography. For years, she fought the physical and mental pain of unsatisfied sexual desires because of her husband's mental adultery. She became very alarmed when her sons grew into teenagers and her husband began introducing them to pornography as a means of draining off their sexual energies. The thought that her sons might imitate her husband's sins and perpetuate the misery she suffered devastated her. This wife finally developed complicated medical problems that totally drained all her energy and she no longer had the emotional or physical strength to care what her husband did. To say that this is not God's plan for sexual love in marriage is an understatement! The husband's actions were an outrageous sinful violation of 1 Cor. 7:3-5 where God commands the husband to satisfy his wife's God-given sexual desires and of Matt. 5:27-28 where Jesus warns about mental adultery.

As affirmed by the college students, a *real flesh and blood wife cannot begin to compete with pornographic images*. Masturbating to pornographic material or even visualizing personal fantasies causes a husband to stay locked into immaturity. He fails to grow up mentally because he does not have to learn how to deal with a real person whose opinions may differ from his or who has legitimate needs and desires. Enjoying a wonderful sex life with a real person requires personal growth on the part of both the husband and the wife as they learn how to relate one on one. They must examine and change their attitudes in many realms of their life together; because ultimately, glorious rapture in the arms of a *real* person requires the joining of both *real* minds and *real* bodies.

Pornography and fantasy do not require mental intimacy with a real person—they focus totally on the physical—and *artificial* physical at that. Thus, the person who uses these artificial techniques may grow up physically and be able to masturbate and ejaculate to sensual images, but he *totally sidesteps the real world of learning how to solve problems and live with a real person*. He uses these sexual activities as an escape rather than learning how to face and deal with his feelings in a healthy way. As long as he relies on pornography or fantasy, a man stays mentally immature, even if he lives to be ninety-nine years old. His relationship with his wife suffers unspeakable harm as a result.

While masturbating to pornography is generally thought of as a problem for men, feminists promote pornographic magazines aimed at women. Also, many technique books encourage women to masturbate. Women who use pornography or fantasy suffer the same mental immaturity as men and the inability to relate to real flesh and blood men. While sexual love is a blessing from God, *it requires both the joining of the minds and the bodies for supreme pleasure for both men and women*. True sexual love requires both husbands and wives to grow up mentally. Pornography and fantasy enable both men and women to stay forever immature.

In addition, masturbating to pornography (soft or hardcore) or to fantasies (real or imagined) is adultery of the heart that Jesus warned about:

Matt. 5:27-28: " `You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery;" but I say to you, that every one who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.' "

Not only is mental adultery forbidden by Jesus, but it also destroys the emotional bond between a husband and a wife and robs them of true sexual pleasure with each other. Sexually mature women whose husbands use pornographic or fantasized women to get their sexual thrills *feel as sexually violated by an unfaithful husband* as do wives whose husbands commit adultery with a flesh and blood woman. A wife usually sees little difference whether the other woman is a paper or mental image or flesh and blood. The husband who commits mental adultery may lack the nerve to actually do what he imagines with real women, but he still has the heart of an adulterer. Without fail, many sexually loving wives feel that pain and rejection.

One husband who worked hard to overcome compulsive involvement in pornography said, "It took me years to understand how sexually violated my actions made my wife feel. I used to think I wasn't hurting my wife or anyone else. Now I see I hurt my wife, my children, and myself."

Laurie Hall tells in *An Affair of the Mind* how it took her husband Jack years after his addiction came to light to acknowledge how his activities had hurt her and their children. The deceit of the addiction that "No one gets hurt. It's a victimless activity." is so strong, that many addicts remain in denial for years regarding the pain they've inflicted on their mates. It was only after the first-mentioned husband and Laurie Hall's husband finally acknowledged the pain they had given to their families that they began to make great strides in loosening the bonds of their enslavement. Perhaps if both of these husbands had contemplated their wives doing the same activities as they engaged in, it might not have taken years for them to recognize the pain they had caused.

The Sexual Addict Mistreats His Family

Titus 3:3: " . . . spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another."

"Spending" means "1. to lead through, lead across, send across. 2. to pass, to live" (Thayer, 135-136).

"Malice" means "malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure; 2. wickedness, depravity. The word denotes the vicious disposition rather than the active exercise of the same" (Thayer, 320).

"Envy" means "for envy, i.e. prompted by envy" (Thayer, 652). The synonym of *phthonos* is *zelos* which means "excitement of mind, ardor, fervor of spirit; 1. zeal, ardor in embracing, pursuing, defending anything, zeal in behalf of, for a person or thing. 2. an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy." *Phthonos* is used only in a bad sense while *zelos* may be used in a good sense (Thayer, 271).

"Hateful" means "hateful, odious, detested" (*Wigram Analytical Greek Lexicon*, 378). It is used as "detestable, of adultery" (Thayer, 591).

"Hating" means "to hate, pursue with hatred, detest, the signification to love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight" (Thayer, 415).

As the sexual addict becomes "enslaved" to his compulsive sexual drive, the verse warns that the addict "spends his life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." Throughout the Bible, verses warning about sexual compulsions and sins often list it in a group of other sins that involve mistreatment of others. Sexual addiction is nearly always a part of a cluster of sins that grow in number and intensity as the sin progresses. That is why it is so important to take care of the sin when it is discovered instead of trying to just tolerate it or look the other way. Left to itself, sexual addiction always gets worse, not better. It is not uncommon to also find these sins against others either starting to develop or already full-blown along with the sexual addiction:

Lying and Sneaking Around

Adulterers and sexual addicts are masters at using "weasel words" for legalistic evasion of being caught in a lie—telling just a little bit of technical truth to create a completely false impression. Then if they are caught, they harp on the little bit of technical truth to accuse their mate of not remembering correctly or misunderstanding. They also keep at their disposal a ready supply of accusations to hurl at a mate who gets too close to uncovering their secrets, i.e. "You're just jealous." "You're overreacting." "Everyone will think you're crazy if they hear you say that." "You just don't trust me." Etc. Etc.

Innocent mates, who were formerly intelligent and strong Christians, have been reduced to shaking bowls of Jell-O by the skillful verbal manipulation of an adulterous spouse. The adulterer and sexual addict must master this skill to be able to continue in the sin long enough for it to become a compulsive addiction. *Anyone who counsels with adulterers or sexual addicts needs to always be mindful of the fact that what he is hearing, may or may not be true.*

Compulsive Self-masturbation

Nearly all sexual perversions include self-masturbation and begin with it. However, all self-masturbation is not necessarily a sin. Two things make self-masturbation a sin: (1) When self-masturbation is used to drain off one's sexual energies and, thus, deprive the mate of satisfaction of God-given sexual desires (1 Cor. 7:2-5). (2) When self-masturbation is used with or without fantasies to commit mental adultery (Matt. 5:27-28). See the index in *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* for discussions of when masturbation becomes a sin and the powerful role it plays in adultery, sexual addiction, and sexual perversions including homosexuality.

Mental Adultery

The mental adultery of sexual addicts easily reaches the point where they cannot go anywhere or see any member of the opposite sex without immediately analyzing if that person might be available sexually or what they would like to do if that person was available. Even the sexual addicts' spiritual brothers and sisters are not exempt from their lustful thoughts—even in worship services. Sex and cruising for a likely target of their lust is *always* on the minds of sexual addicts—nearly every minute of the day. Sexual addicts even sexualize the most innocent and average things. Mental adulterers may deceive themselves by thinking, "I'm not so bad because I don't engage in actual sexual intercourse." They may be content to just have an "affair of the mind" through sharing their woes and problems with members of the opposite sex, whom they're not married to, to get their attention and sympathy.

This takeover of the mind makes sexual addiction and numerous adulteries hard to overcome. Indeed, this is where the real war exists. If the sexual sinner just concentrates on quitting the physical behavior of being involved with pornography or committing adultery, but doesn't focus on changing the mind, he or she will never be free of mental adultery. See the indexes in *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. I* and *Vol. II* for discussions on identifying and recognizing the harm of mental adultery.

Actual Adultery

Pornography and mental adultery prepare the mind, heart, and conscience for actual episodes of adultery long before the event takes place. At that point, the adulterer, who perhaps years earlier would have thought he or she would never actually commit adultery, may even feel justified and righteous in committing adultery.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Alcohol and drugs are often deliberately used to numb the thinking and as an excuse for doing activities a person wouldn't do when sober. In other words, the adulterer and addict might consciously recognize the danger of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases if they picked up a prostitute, but if they have a few drinks in a bar and then pick up a stranger, they fulfill their wish for illicit sexual contact. However, their consciences don't hold them responsible for the consequences because they were drinking or using drugs. Alcohol and drugs are often sought on an unconscious level as an opportunity to move into deeper sin without accepting personal responsibility.

Verbal Abuse

Adulterers and addicts often blame their mates as a way of dealing with a guilty conscience. Both male and female sexual sinners are often experts at making their mates feel stupid and guilty when their mates question their conduct. Some husbands and wives are so intimidated by the sinful spouse's outbursts of anger and blame, that they cower and drop the subject rather than risk further exposure to the tirades. As a result, the abuser, as a master manipulator, successfully buries the sin with verbal attacks on the mate.

Physical Abuse

If verbal abuse is allowed to continue long enough, it is usually only a matter of time before physical abuse takes place. In two cases, the physical abuse stopped with the first incident because the wife slapped the husband back and didn't just take it. Yet the verbal abuse in both of these cases grew worse and became a daily assault in one of the marriages. Women's shelters report that physical abuse is often more severe among men who claim to be Christians than among non-Christians. This comes mainly from the husbands' false assumptions about the Bible's teaching on the subjection of women.

Emotional Abuse

Sometimes the abuse literally takes a more silent form than either verbal or physical abuse—emotional withdrawal from the wife and the children. Adulterers and sexual addicts often master some type of abuse to manipulate their families into being codependent with their sin (enabling their sin rather than exposing it and expecting reform). Mentally withdrawing to punish the family often goes unrecognized as a form of manipulative abuse simply because of its silent nature. It can take many forms such as pouting, watching hours of TV, not speaking for days, giving "the look" when interaction takes place, and refusing to talk about problems. Emotional abuse follows the same cycle as other forms of abuse: (1) build up of tension, (2) release of tension in the abusive action, and (3) loving respite where everything is wonderfully ok.

Just as the other forms of abuse blame the victim, the emotional abuser blames the spouse and the children for the outpouring of vile behavior. Innocent mates and children live in constant fear of when the next reprisal will hit for some insignificant mistake on their part which will be blown all out of proportion by their abuser who refuses to have anything to do with them.

Sexual Abuse

Pornography, X-rated movies, and even R-rated movies, along with self-masturbation teach the sexual addict to *use* his wife sexually and cause him to lose the ability to *join* with her sexually. Instead of making the husband a better lover as pornography tricks him into believing, he becomes totally self-centered and self-gratifying at the expense of his wife. Incapable of giving real pleasure to his wife, or to any woman, anymore; he may even develop a problem with pre-mature ejaculation because of the episodes of self-masturbation and fear of being caught. His wife will be lucky if the sexual abuse stops here. However, the sexual addict may progress to inflicting actual sadistic pain on her for his pleasure. Some addicts even force their wives to engage in sex with others while they watch and may bring other women into their beds, etc.

Incest

This is a frequent part of sexual addiction, especially in the later stages of development. Amazingly, a father, who looks proudly and lovingly at his newborn child and who would gladly sacrifice his own life for that child, can one day degenerate into a man who, not only

fantasies sexual indecencies with that same child, but actually does them. Both boys and girls bear the emotional scars of a father who deceived himself into believing he was just expressing love and teaching his child how to be loving through sexual molestation.

Bitterness and Anger

These sins are nearly always present in adultery and sexual addiction. Sometimes bitterness and anger over disappointment in the marriage makes a person receptive to adultery, pornography, and self-masturbation. Other times, a loving man, who turns to pornography, begins to believe the degradation of women portrayed in pornography. This leaves lots of room in his heart for bitterness and anger to flourish. Whichever comes first, the bitterness or the pornography, these men always have a profound ignorance of the differences between the husband's and the wife's roles and their emotional and sexual natures. Over a period of time, bitterness so warps a person's thinking that he loses all touch with reality.

Unreasonable Perfectionism

This amounts to dominion of another person and is an attempt to take over the wife's personality. When the wife masters one area of criticism in an attempt to please her husband, instead of being pleased, the abuser simply moves on to another area in which to reform her. The addict has no acceptance or concept of what it means when God tells him to love his "own" wife as "himself." Since many women unjustly falsely blame themselves *foreverything* that is wrong in the marriage, unreasonable perfectionism often becomes quite severe before the wife recognizes what is happening and refuses to accept undeserved blame. However, by that time her self-image is probably totally destroyed and she is fighting for emotional survival.

Judging Motives

This sin is nearly always present and greatly magnifies all other problems. Many times, if one mate judges motives, the other does also. A lot of verbal, physical, and emotional abuse results from assigning evil motives to the mate. However, it is just as wrong to judge a mate's motives for good as it is to judge the motives for evil. Falsely judging the mate's motives for good results in denial and minimizing of the sin, which allows the sin to grow and become even more compulsive.

The apostle Paul says that no one knows the thoughts of another person unless that person tells him his or her thoughts (1 Cor. 2:11). God reserves the right to judge a person's motives either for evil *or for good* (1 Cor. 4:5). However, God does give humans the right to make judgments based on *the deeds or fruits* of other humans (Matt. 7:20; Acts 26:20).

Financial Irresponsibility

This sin often occurs as the sexual addiction progresses. The sexual sin becomes so compulsive and consuming that most of the man's income is spent on his addiction to the neglect of providing the basic necessities for his family. The addict may insist on the best clothes, the best meals, the best entertainment, the best everything for him while his family makes do with what they have or what is given to them by others.

For an addict to rack up debts of thousands of dollars to satisfy his addiction is not unusual. One reformed sexual addict, who was a Christian, confessed that he spent \$70,000 on his addiction during the last three years before his wife left him. Many times these debts are hidden from the wife along with the addiction. As the addiction becomes more compulsive, the addict loses his ability to concentrate on his work and may engage in risky behavior that can compromise his job, i.e. telephone sex, leaving work to go to porn movies, etc.

Abuse of Authority

Many men involved in sinful activity take great pride in being the head of the wife, which translates to, "I'm the leader and I get to do whatever I want." However, God did not give the husband *any* personal rights with his position of leadership. *Instead of rights, God assigned the husband responsibilities. Primarily, the husband is to love his wife as himself, denying his personal rights to the point of death, to do what is best for his wife and children.*

In contrast to this selflessness, the selfishness of the sexual addict can become so extreme that claiming to be the head of the wife and children would be laughable, if it weren't for the intense pain heaped upon his family. The addict often expects his family to take care of all home duties such as paying bills, yard work, and house and car maintenance with his only contribution being to complain. It is not unusual to find the sexual addict even neglecting *planned* family times such as special meals, school functions, sports events, holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries because he was busy pleasuring himself in some secret activity. When questioned, the addict easily falls back on his *assumed* authority with: "You're not submissive." "You don't have a quiet spirit." "You just want to be the boss."

Godly subjection and leadership is a major study with many fine points that require discernment and accountability on the part of *both husbands and wives*. *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* devotes four chapters to discussing the mechanics of both the husband's and the wife's parts and shows how they balance and support each other. In addition, *Challenges in Marriage* spends one whole class dealing with false Bible arguments that keep the wife codependent and submissive to sin. God expects wives to say, "No," to ungodly usurped authority.

Women whose husbands claim to be Christians and are sexual addicts have looked at this list of sins and said, "Yes." "Yes." "Yes." "Could easily be." "In the past." Yes." Etc. Etc.

Psychiatrists recognize that once sexual sins become addictive, men and women have a hard time overcoming them. However, Paul begins this warning to Titus about enslavement to sin with, "For we also *once were foolish ourselves*"—now they weren't foolish and enslaved. First-century Christians faced these problems and successfully overcame them.

God's Formula for Overcoming Sexual Sins

While the pagans of the New Testament did not produce pornography in magazines or in movies or on the Internet, they promoted effective forerunners of modern pornography. "It was the Romans who invented the word 'sex.' . . . The Romans made no concealment of their sex-instinct, and representational art and poetry were called in to serve its needs."

For example, "free-thinking" poets sang sensual songs extolling free love at parties and on the streets. The popular Roman poet Propertius sang, "How I love this quite uninhibited She, who walks with gown thrown half back, unabashed by curious and desirous looks, who loiters in her dusty shoes on the pavement of the Via Sacra and does not hang back when you beckon to her. She will never refuse you, nor clean you out of all your fortune." Propertius' song sounds very similar to Hugh Hefner's tunes that he deceives his disciples today with—about how available women are and how much they love the pornographically-created studs.

In addition, the private villas of rich Roman merchants were adorned with sexual paintings and sculptures, which provided "a pleasant seasoning to a jovial banquet." The artists knew the rules: "everything can be shown inside the house, but discretion outside it!" (Richard Lewinsohn, *A History of Sexual Customs* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958], 62, 72-73. Used by permission.) An ancient house of prostitution preserved under the mountain of volcanic ash in the ruins of Pompeii presents a vivid example of the graphic pornography available to the people of New Testament times:

Its walls are decorated with frescoes of sensual delight, with pictures of the limitless possibilities of sexual positions and postures. Such surroundings swiftly titillated the customer and put him in the mood to take full advantage of his opportunities. The genre of pornography also found its way into private villas in Pompeii, where wealthy Romans passed the hot summer months. Some viewers of these frescoes have seen in them evidences of flagellation [whippings—PRD] as a popular theme. (William Graham Cole, *Sex and Love in the Bible* [New York: Association Press, 1959], 211-212. Used by permission.)

The Romans also used the written word to instruct the masses about various sexual techniques:

Poetry as well as the depictive arts was called into the service of the sensuality of the wealthy. Propertius and Horace wrote many an ode to the joys of love and were much in demand at fashionable parties. Of the large number of writers competing in this lucrative market, none was more skilled than the young Ovid. Married twice and twice divorced, he found ample room for his appetites in the lax atmosphere of the Eternal City. . . . His first series of verses, called *Amores*, sang of the beauty of his beloved, Corinna, the wife of another man. He instructed her in the art of deceiving her husband so that she might be with him. (Cole, *Sex and Love in the Bible*, 211-212.)

Not surprisingly, the Romans devoted much of their literary and artistic talents to glorifying their sexuality. Nonetheless, the Corinthians of the New Testament had a special problem with healthy sexual conduct unique to their time. They lived in a seaport city of about four hundred thousand people consisting of Romans, Greeks, Jews, Syrians, Egyptians, sailors, traders, and slaves. Their city boasted a temple of Venus where a thousand consecrated priestesses doubled as prostitutes. Kept at public expense, they were always ready to serve their goddess in immoral indulgences. And this was their religion! Sexual morals mattered very little to any of the heathens, but the Corinthians' reputation was so bad that the expression "to Corinthianize" became a synonym for "vice *par excellence* in the Roman world." (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, II* [Grand Rapids: MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939], 710; Henry H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook* [Minneapolis, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962], 490.)

Yet Paul preached the gospel in Corinth, and many of the wicked people became Christians. Consequently, the Corinthian Christians not only lived among some of the most sexually immoral people in the world, some of them had actually been fornicators, idolaters (worshippers of the goddess of harlotry), adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, thieves, drunkards, revilers (verbal abusers), and swindlers (1 Cor. 6:9-10). They had tasted of the fruits of sexual perversion and the accompanying crime firsthand.

However, having their sins washed away in baptism didn't automatically take away all the sinful inclinations and thoughts of these Christians. To these first-century Christians, Paul wrote some of the most detailed information in the whole Bible about overcoming the effects of sexual immorality in a person's life. By studying how Paul dealt with their problems of extreme sexual immorality and the resulting lack of an ability to truly love others, modern-day Christians can learn how to solve even the grossest of sexual difficulties:

1 Cor. 6:9-11: " . . . Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; . . . "

"Fornicators" means "a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire, a male prostitute; a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator" (Thayer, 532).

"Effeminate" means "soft, soft to the touch, effeminate (of a catamite, a male who submits his body to unnatural lewdness)" (Thayer, 387).

"Homosexuals" means "one who lies with a male as with a female, a sodomite" (Thayer, 75).

When "fornicators" is used with "adulterers," the basic difference is that fornication refers to *unmarried people* while adultery involves a *married person*. Both words include all types of illicit sexual activity such as homosexuality, bestiality, and incest.

After listing a group of sexually immoral people who had some of the worst problems imaginable with knowing how to love, Paul added that none of these sinners would inherit the kingdom of God. Then Paul reminded the Corinthians, "*And such were some of you.*" What a comforting statement full of great hope! The gospel possesses the power to change fornicators, adulterers, idolatrous temple prostitutes, effeminate men, and homosexuals into loving sincere people who reflect God's own love for mankind.

If the gospel contains the power to solve the most hideous sexual problems of the Corinthians, then the average couple's marriage problems and deficiencies for loving others seem small in comparison. No matter how evil the home a person may have grown up in, the influence of that home can be replaced with the truth. No matter how cold and unloving a person might be before becoming a Christian, that person can learn to be warm and affectionate. No matter how compulsive sexual sins may have become, a person can learn to respond in a healthy and loving manner.

The world should be able to recognize Christians by their ability to love. If the Corinthians could learn to love in spite of the environment they grew up in and continued to live in, along with the personal problems it produced, then anyone can learn to love and solve sexual abnormalities. If a person does not learn how to love—the fault lies with that person—not God. After telling them of their past lives, Paul then reminded the Corinthians of God's three-part formula they used to solve their sexual problems. By following their example, God's people today can overcome even the grossest of sexual inhibitions and addictions:

The Corinthians Were Washed

1 Cor. 6:11: " . . . but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

"Washed" means "washed off or away" (Thayer, 65).

First, the Corinthians were washed in the name of the Lord Jesus. In Acts 2:38 when Peter preached the first gospel sermon after Jesus died and ascended back to heaven, he said, "Repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." Before a person can be baptized and have his sins "washed" away, he must repent. Unfortunately, many Christians emphasize the washing or baptism to the point of glossing over the importance of repentance and truly trusting their lives to Jesus' leadership. Consequently, many people, who claim to be Christians, argue with Jesus about his laws that conflict with their opinions. When Jesus says

do something, instead of saying, "Yes, Lord," they ask, "Why, Lord?" Instead of showing faith in God's word and wisdom, they demand, "Show me the logic, Lord, before I will obey."

When a person truly repents, he examines his sins and changes his mind about doing them. Thus, he repudiates his former way of life and determines to obey God regardless of the consequences he might suffer on earth from other people. Only then is he ready for baptism. Then baptism washes away those sins—even the sins of the fornicator, the adulterer, the prostitute, the effeminate, and the homosexual. As the person starts life as a Christian, he begins with a clean slate and a clear conscience to correct the mistakes of the past, and to live a life of purity.

However, baptism is just the beginning, the entrance into God's kingdom of love. While a person learns that he is a sinner and needs forgiveness through the cleansing of the blood of Christ before he's baptized, *he doesn't know everything he needs to do to live as a Christian*. Many subjects take a lifetime of Bible study to fully understand; nonetheless, God expects a new Christian to begin his journey of sanctification to make lasting changes in his thinking and behavior:

The Corinthians Were Sanctified

1 Cor. 6:11: " . . . but you were washed, but you were sanctified, . . . "

"Sanctified" means "1. rendered or acknowledged to be venerable, hallowed; 2. separated from things profane and dedicated to God, consecrated; 3. purified" (Thayer, 6).

Sanctification is a very important concept in marriage and for overcoming problems of all kinds including sexual addiction. Sanctification takes the thing sanctified and separates it from the common use of the world. As a result, when used in marriage and for problem solving, sanctification always makes the thing sanctified better than what the common people experience.

Sanctification is used in 1 Thess. 4:4 to admonish Christians to *sanctify their sexual lives*. God commands his people not only to avoid sexual immorality, but to also possess their own vessels unto sanctification and honor. This verse is discussed fully in *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers*, chapter 1 "Sexual Happiness for God's People." Basically, it means Christians are to know how to delight in a better love-life than the Gentiles who know not God. In this case, God's people thrill to better sexual love than the average person enjoys.

Likewise, in 1 Tim. 4:1-5 Paul says Christians are to *sanctify their marriages* by the word of God and prayer. Rather than forbidding to marry as doctrines of demons promoted, Christians are to go on to have wonderful marriages. This is possible by (1) going to the word of God to learn the truth about marriage and (2) praying to God in an interview-type prayer (which reveals a person before God as he really is) for help in implementing that truth. All sins that invade the home and destroy the harmony between husbands and wives can be overcome with sanctification by following this formula. *God doesn't want his people to just tolerate their marriages—he wants them to partake of truly blissful unions. Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* devotes all of chapter 2 to studying the mechanics of sanctifying marriages through this problem-solving formula.

When Paul told the Corinthians they had overcome fornication, adultery, prostitution, effeminacy, homosexuality, drunkenness, and reviling by sanctification, he referred them to a powerful tool for conquering perversions, addictions, and Victorian ignorance. *Sanctification holds the key for making lasting changes in a person's life*.

A parallel passage to 1 Cor. 6:11 is Titus 3:5-7 which follows God's definition of sexual addiction in Titus 3:3 and shows that those Christians overcame their enslavement to "various lusts and pleasures" the same way as the Corinthians. The passage also sheds further light on the process of sanctification as Paul says, "He saved us . . . by the *washing* of regeneration and *renewing by the Holy Spirit*, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being *justified* by his grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." "Renewing by the Holy Spirit" parallels "you were sanctified." "Renewing" means "a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better" (Thayer, 38).

After a person has been baptized to wash away his sins, that person is renewed or changed into a better person by putting the words of the Holy Spirit (found in the Bible) into his mind and acting on them. Christians are sanctified (or set apart from the world to live a better life) because their thoughts and actions reflect the wisdom of God as revealed in the Bible by the inspired words of the apostles. *The changes become permanent because they take place in the brain—from the inside out*.

Another parallel passage, Rom. 12:2, also shows how Christians are sanctified. Christians are not to be conformed to this world, but are to be *transformed by the renewing of their minds*. "Transformed" is an interesting word that means "to change into another form, to transfigure, transform" (Thayer, 405). This same word was used when Jesus was transfigured on the Mt. of Olives.

The modern word "metamorphosis" comes from the same Greek word. In the English language, the word refers to the process whereby the insect larva spins a cocoon around itself and undergoes drastic change and maturation. After a certain period, the ugly caterpillar emerges as a beautiful butterfly—a completely transformed insect. Not only does the insect's outer appearance change, but also its function changes. The butterfly has left behind the caterpillar's compulsion to eat plants and destroy foliage. Instead, the butterfly pollinates flowers and makes the world lovelier.

A similar "metamorphosis" happens to the Christian. He is buried in the baptismal waters as a repulsive sinner. Then he rises from the waters pure and clean, though not yet mature and adorned with all the beauty of Christ. As the Christian *deliberately studies the word of God and renews or changes his mind*, he is set apart from the conduct of the world and is gradually transformed into a beautiful person who glorifies God in his daily life. Even homosexuals, adulterers, fornicators, prostitutes, thieves, murderers, revilers, drunkards, etc. can be transformed into pure and holy individuals through baptism and the power of God's word in their lives.

Many times after a mate's promiscuity becomes known, the mate promises, "It will never happen again." The mate may even go forward at worship services to confess sin and ask for prayers. No doubt, the mate is genuinely sorry and determined to never commit the sin again. Unfortunately, often the healing stops at this first step of the "washing" by accessing the blood of Jesus for forgiveness. While forgiveness is essential for one's relationship with God, one's self, and the mate, forgiveness is only the first step. Stopping with forgiveness dooms the person to repeat the sin again. Indeed, this cycle of sinning, repenting and determining never to do it again, only to backslide even deeper into the same sin happens repeatedly. Yet the person involved in the sin is probably deeply committed to stopping the behavior when he repents.

The problem is not the person's sincerity. Nor is it a problem with the power of Jesus' blood to cover sins. The problem comes from completing only the first step for changing behavior—the washing. Without the next step of true sanctification, or thorough mental housecleaning that changes and reorganizes the thinking, the sinner stays locked in his former pattern of behavior. The metamorphosis takes place by the *"renewing of their minds," "the renewing by the Holy Spirit."* Sanctification doesn't require just any renewing of the mind, but it requires *renewing by the Holy Spirit through God's words that are preserved in the Bible*.

This is why a lot of congregations' counseling programs fail. They seek their renewing from a source other than the Holy Spirit. For example, many congregations purchase some of the popular videos to use in marriage counseling and assume this sanctifies couples with marriage problems. However, an examination of these videos and the accompanying books shows that although they claim to be Bible based—they are often only lightly Bible based. These materials usually throw out an occasional scripture as a proof text and then proceed to tell story after story supposedly in support of the scripture. Yet they fail miserably to teach word definitions or to focus on the meaning of certain phrases. Likewise, they do not magnify God's wisdom, but use their counseling experiences to validate their own teaching. A person comes away from these study sessions with a lot of new stories floating around in his mind, but very little, if any, increase in Bible knowledge.

Jesus' use of parables shows that anecdotes serve as valuable teaching aids. The harm comes when the stories become the basis of the teaching rather than illustrations of the scriptures. When a person with problems hears a story about how someone solved a similar problem, it may intrigue him. Yet that story is only someone's opinion—it has no authority behind it. So it is very easy for the person to reject the opinion of the story.

On the other hand, if when the person became a Christian, he truly repented and determined to obey God's opinions no matter what—then the scriptures exert powerful influence over his life. The person just needs to conduct his own study or to get someone to teach him. Even if God's will goes against everything the person has believed and practiced all his life, when God says something, that person will work hard at applying God's word to his life. Private sessions and classes have demonstrated that the same person who will reject teaching that comes from a person's experience, will cease arguing and begin to ask questions when confronted with the same principle from the Bible. Renewing by the Holy Spirit renews the mind and brings about *permanent changes*. But renewing because of man's anecdotes brings about only *temporary changes* at best.

Looking at the fruit of congregations who have used these shallow videos for years shows congregations rampant with divorces and fallen-away Christians. The pity is that often the marriage problems were solvable and marriages could have been strengthened to become better than ever. But because these videos did not break the cycle of repentance, determination to never sin again, only to backslide deeper into sin; many marriages deteriorated into total emotional exhaustion and despair.

True sanctification is necessary to make lasting changes in a person's mind that results in permanent changes in his life. A person must focus on God's word and meditate on that word. This is how David overcame his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband. God sent the prophet Nathan to David to convict him of sin. First, Nathan used an anecdote to get David's attention. Then Nathan proceeded to tell David what God said and what God would require of him because of his sin. When confronted, David confessed his sin and Nathan told him God had taken the sin away (2 Sam. 12:1-25).

However, David did not stop with confession of sin, but was sanctified. David spent hours meditating on his sin with Bathsheba. Many of the psalms he wrote reflect his meditation on God's law and the insight he gained (see Psalms 32, 38, and 51). To become truly sanctified, a person must stop and think his way through his past conduct and make plans for his future conduct as David did. A person gets into problems because he followed his sexual impulses rather than examining the situation intelligently. Now he must go back and think his way through his sin and temptations to become sanctified.

Many times when a mate has gone through several cycles of sinning, repenting, pledging not to sin again, only to backslide into deeper sin; the innocent mate loses confidence in the mate's ability to become truly sanctified. The innocent mate often says, "He knows how to say all the right things, but it never lasts." *First, the spouse of a sinful mate needs to have confidence in the power of God's word.* Paul said that the Corinthians had engaged in and, indeed, been addicted to, some of the most horrible sexual compulsions and perversions imaginable. Yet they had totally overcome their sexual immorality by following God's three-part formula. Just as the Corinthians overcame their deepest problems, so can men and women today free their bodies and minds from gross sexual conduct.

God's word possesses the power to change even the most wretched of lives. But God's word must be applied until the transformation takes place. The *degree of enslavement to sin* will determine how long the sanctification process needs to continue before real changes can be seen. God's word can be applied through detailed Bible studies about the problem *and being a Christian in general* along with doing homework that helps the mind focus and meditate on God's will.

Second, the mate can look for "deeds appropriate to repentance" in both the life and the words of the sinner as Paul commanded of the Gentiles who repented in Acts 26:20. This means that not only is the sinful activity given up, but *new positive actions* replace the sinful conduct. Trying harder to *just stop* doesn't work in overcoming the problem. The person has to also *do differently*. For example, 1 Thess. 4:3-5 says a sanctified person not only ceases from sexual immorality, but goes on to use the sexual relationship in a righteous way. It's not enough to say, "I don't commit adultery anymore." A person must also be able to say, "And I find my sexual fulfillment with my mate."

Thus, the sinner needs to correct the physical problems in the marriage. For example, if a mate is not responding sexually to the other because of bitterness, not only is the bitterness given up, but new loving actions replace it. Not only is pornography given up, but those activities are replaced with loving times with the mate. A sexually neglectful wife not only repents of her coldness toward her husband, but she also replaces the old behavior with initiating lovemaking on occasion. Essentially, the person being sanctified repairs the physical breach with the spouse.

One husband had engaged in a long-term affair that resulted in a child. The wife learned about the affair after it had gone on for over ten years. The husband, who claimed to be a Christian, went forward and confessed sin. After learning of the affair, the wife realized why their marriage had not grown emotionally although she had worked hard to make it a success. Since her husband was mentally attached to another woman, it was impossible for the wife to create a true emotional bond with him. She told him now they needed to repair the emotional void between them and make their marriage be what it should be. Her husband said he had done everything he needed to do by asking for forgiveness and if problems still existed—they were her problems—not his. He concluded, "You just need to learn how to forgive better."

To the contrary, repentance is much more than asking for forgiveness. *It is both repudiating the past conduct and then moving forward to embrace righteous behavior.* Because that husband was unwilling to repair the damage done to his marriage, that marriage continued to deteriorate. Because the wife fought feelings that came from sin in the home that had not been properly covered by the blood of Jesus, while having all the blame unjustly cast onto her, she wrestled with thoughts of suicide.

God gives the mate the right to insist on full repentance taking place after sexual sin because that sinner is not pleasing to God until he can truthfully say, "I don't commit adultery anymore and I use the sexual relationship to God's glory" (1 Thess. 4:3-4). Anything less does not please God and leaves the marriage in a state of decay. In fact, Paul concludes this discussion about the sanctification of the sexual relationship with "Consequently, he who rejects this *is not rejecting man* but the God who gives his Holy Spirit to you" (1 Thess. 4:8). Thus, a person who is not willing to both (1) repudiate the sin and (2) embrace righteous living is not rejecting the mate (man) when he refuses to treat the mate right, but *a person is rejecting both God and the words God has preserved in the Bible through the Holy Spirit.* That person is not sanctified and is not overcoming his or her sin as the Corinthians overcame theirs.

Another husband who committed adultery with several young women repented of his adultery and promised never to do it again. But when his wife told him, "Now I want us to work on our marriage to make our relationship right so you won't be tempted again," he refused. This husband had the Victorian Madonna-prostitute view of a woman and had a problem feeling sexual desires for his wife. Because he was not satisfying his legitimate desires at home, he was very susceptible to affairs. In addition, his wife fought continual sexual frustration because he neglected to satisfy her God-given desires. Because he was unwilling to go all the way in making his adultery right by correcting the problem with his wife that led to his sin in the first place, his wife eventually divorced him for "impenitent" adultery. Although he claimed he had repented, his actions proved otherwise. Repentance involves not only turning one's back on the sinful behavior, but also going forward to embrace righteous behavior. To please God, it's not enough to say, "I don't commit adultery anymore." A person must be able to also say, "And I find my sexual fulfillment with my mate" (1 Thess. 4:3-4).

In addition to a change in behavior, another work appropriate to repentance is *fresh insights* that show the person is not just parroting what his exhorters say to him, but that the person is drawing his own conclusions based on his own particular conduct. For example, when two different husbands proofread a paragraph used earlier in this booklet, it provoked opposite responses from them. The paragraph was written because of working with several wives whose husbands used pornographic material to get their sexual thrills. It accurately described the pain these wives felt from their husbands' mental adultery. Following is the controversial paragraph and the two different responses:

[Sexually mature—added later] women whose husbands use pornographic or fantasized women to get their sexual thrills *feel as sexually violated by an unfaithful husband* as do wives whose husbands commit adultery with a flesh and blood woman. A wife usually sees little difference whether the other woman is a paper or mental image or flesh and blood. The husband who commits mental adultery may lack the nerve to actually do what he imagines with real women, but he still has the heart of an adulterer. And without fail, many [sexually loving—added later] wives feel that pain and rejection.

The first proofreader was a mature Christian who was a capable and independent Bible student. He had worked with several couples over the years and had gained some insights into common sexual problems. He was concerned primarily about husbands who fight the temptation to commit adultery because their wives are not available either physically or emotionally. He wrote:

Your last sentence is "And *without fail* [emphasis his] many wives feel that pain and rejection." This is perhaps the only sentence in your writing that I flat disagree with as it is stated. I have heard some wives wish their husbands would just go and take care of themselves (masturbate), and leave them alone. It was NOT because he used porno, was a mental or physical adulterer, smelled bad, beat her, or wasn't a Christian. It was because she wasn't interested in sex or in caring for him like she even cared for the family dog, who at least was fed once a day with weekly baths. I know of a woman (not Christian) who told her Christian husband to go *get* a lover, that she wouldn't care and just didn't want to be hassled with his advances.

As a result of this proofreader's comments, two phrases were added to clarify that the wives were sexually loving. However, the second proofreader read the same original paragraph as the first reader. The second proofreader had participated in several affairs and used pornography during his marriage. He was in the process of becoming sanctified for his sexual addiction. He was studying with different Christians who were knowledgeable and doing the assignments they gave him. He was also getting professional counseling and going to sexual addiction meetings. He had become involved with a congregation where serious Bible study took place and his whole attitude toward all of God's word was changing. In contrast to the first proofreader, he wrote:

It took me years to understand this point. I used to think I wasn't hurting my wife or anyone else [with his pornography]—now I see I hurt my wife, children *and* myself.

The second proofreader also said:

Being without a television after my wife asked me to move out was probably the *single greatest contributor* to my progress. I *link* my addiction to a lot of television shows and movies which "feed" on sexuality and affairs—every woman is easy. The programs also take time away from Bible study and family! Being without a television allowed focused time for reflection and to feel the pain of loneliness."

In addition, this second husband objected to the statement, "Without honest feminine praise, many men suffer from poor self-images." He wrote, "This doesn't justify a poor self-image!" Of course, he was right. As a result of his insight into the way men with sexual addiction think and use excuses, the statement was removed. He was not parroting back what someone told him, but was moving forward and sharing his new insights with one of his counselors. Working with others gives God's people insights they would never have

on their own because they haven't experienced all of life, both the good and the bad. Sinners have great insights to share when they begin to grow and go through the metamorphosis process, just as David did in writing his psalms.

Thus, a mate can look for fresh insights in the words of the one being sanctified to verify that a real change is taking place. Talking with each other and sharing the changes that are taking place in the mind can help both the husband and the wife. This talking together helps clarify the thinking even more and helps reinforce the newly learned principles on the mind. Likewise, this communication helps repair the damage done to the emotional bond in the marriage. *For a truly sanctified marriage and sexual life, the emotional bond must be rebuilt.* The innocent mate's listening and talking willingly with the one being sanctified is the best help he or she can give the mate in going through metamorphosis. Likewise, the quiet listening of the one who committed sin is of great help in healing the innocent mate's pain.

Many couples find it beneficial to study individually the lessons in both volumes of *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven*. Then they discuss the questions together. However, the discussion periods are not to rehash past wrongs or to find fault with the mate. The primary purpose of the joint sessions is to focus on God's word and his will for their future life. By discussing the scriptures together they gain new insights, reinforce God's word on their individual minds, and hear firsthand how the mate is truly changing from the inside out.

One wife was very angry at her husband because of the way he treated her sexually. While she was not a prude, his daily demands for sexual contact offended her because of the way he treated her. He was often verbally abusive to both her and their children. Not only did he alienate her mentally from him during the day, but when he tried to make love, his use of crude and offensive language only intensified her hostility.

After much encouragement, she read *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers*. She began to understand that the absence of a true mental union was causing her lack of interest in sexual contact with him and she began to work at resolving their daytime problems. As she began to deal openly with many of the problems that caused her to seethe on the inside, their marriage began to take on a more loving nature. At this point only she was making changes. Then she started leaving the *Vol. II* laying on a table in their living room. She said, "When I would come home from work, my husband would treat me so nice, I would know he had been reading the book. After several weeks of this, one day I came home from work and he started apologizing to me for everything he'd ever done in our whole marriage. The next day he did the same thing. This went on for a whole week until finally I said, 'We can't go back and change the past, but we can change the future. You don't have to apologize to me anymore because I forgive you. Let's just make the future be the best ever.' After that our love life really changed. In fact, it was better than it was on our honeymoon. I never thought it was possible to be this happy!"

A couple of years later, this wife said, "We fought bitterly over his verbal abuse and constant demands for sex many times in the past. But once he realized the verbal abuse was making me not enjoy sex with him because the way he treated me during the day affected how I responded to him at night, his changes were truly permanent. I never thought I would ever be this happy. Two years later, it is still better than our honeymoon!"

Putting God's word into their minds and then acting on that word sanctified both this husband and wife. In addition, they talked with each other and let the other know the change in behavior resulted from a change in thinking. As a result, they reaped permanent changes in their marriage and enjoyed the benefits of a glorious love life.

In summary, when "works appropriate to repentance" take place, the mate should be able to recognize changes in the way the spouse (1) relates sexually as the marriage partner becomes the focus of both giving and receiving pleasure and (2) relates mentally as new insights into the problem are gained and shared. *This means that the one being sanctified is overhauling both the physical and the mental unions with the mate.* For a truly wonderful and thrilling one-flesh relationship, a husband and a wife must bond both physically and mentally. When this bonding begins to happen, true sanctification of that marriage is taking place.

A wonderful side benefit of taking care of the attitudes and bonding mentally, is what happens to both the husband's and the wife's physical sensations during lovemaking. For thousands of years God has patiently taught in the Bible what experts only now recognize—that the brain dictates all the responses of the physical body, making it the most important sexual organ of all. *Take care of the mind and the body automatically takes care of its own physical responses.*

For years, most researchers readily agreed that a person's basic underlying attitudes usually cause such sexual problems as frigidity and impotence. However, doctors now attribute to faulty thinking many cases of premature ejaculation and lack of physical sensation during orgasm for both males and females. Certainly, wrong attitudes and emotions inhibit normal physical responses.

This shows why God's people usually achieve a greater degree of success in the love embrace than unbelievers: Godly people devote their whole lives to freeing their minds from bitterness, hatred, jealousy, envy, selfishness, lack of self-worth, lack of self-control,

guilt, etc.—attitudes that hinder true love and block sexual signals and responses. By freeing the mind of these inhibiting factors, men and women inherit from God the ability to love their mates totally—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

A simple test proves this true: The hand, while not thought of as a sexual organ, responds sexually to the attitudes and feelings of the mind. Look at your hand. How did it feel the last time you indulged in anger toward your mate and your mate touched your hand? Did your hand automatically squeeze your mate's hand in return or did you fight the urge to jerk it away?

Now remember the last time you thought loving and adoring thoughts about your mate and he or she touched your hand. Did the electrical charge race up your arm, do a leaping somersault to the pit of your stomach only to dance back up along your spine and sparkle out of your eyes to fondly caress your loved one? Or was that a response you experienced only during courtship when your minds truly enjoyed each other's company?

And all that with a body part not designed primarily for love! The sensitive organs of love respond even more dramatically to a mind filled with God's principles of daily living and loving standards. Learning the sexual truths of the Bible not only liberates the mind from sexual sins, but it also unlocks the power of the mind to provide truly fulfilling lovemaking for God's people.

Unfortunately, many preachers, elders, and Christians do a lot of harm by failing to insist that the sinner become sanctified after confessing sexual immorality. Such neglect helps perpetuate the sinner's cycle of repentance, pledge to not sin again, only to backslide into deeper sin. Eventually, the innocent party in such a cycle becomes emotionally worn out, gives up on the mate ever truly changing, and divorces the mate. *After a person takes the first step of repudiating the sexual sins, the second step of sanctification is absolutely necessary for a true change of conduct to occur.* The Corinthians and the enslaved of Titus 3:3 required that second step to overcome their extreme sexual problems and modern Christians require the same application of God's word for full healing. Once the sanctification process has been accomplished, the Christian is ready for the third step:

The Corinthians Were Justified

1 Cor. 6:11: " . . . but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

"Justified" means "1. rendered righteous or such as he ought to be; 2. shown, exhibited, evinced, one to be righteous, such as he is and wishes himself to be considered; 3. declared, pronounced, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be; a. declared guiltless, acquitted of a charge or reproach; b. judged, declared, pronounced, righteous and therefore acceptable" (Thayer, 150).

When a person is baptized and set apart from the world to live as a Christian, that is *only the beginning*. When a baptized person occasionally slips and sins, as that Christian confesses those sins so that Jesus' blood continues to cleanse him (1 John 1:6-10), that is still *only the beginning*. Likewise, when a Christian confesses his sins before the congregation and asks for forgiveness and their prayers and help, that is still *only the beginning*. Forgiveness is not the same as being "justified" before God as God expects more from the sinner. *God expects the sinner to purge the old way of thinking and acting from his life through sanctification before he can stand justified before God.*

Thus, the three-part formula that the Corinthians used to overcome gross sexual sins becomes obvious. (1) They were washed in the blood of Jesus and received forgiveness of all their past sins. They also received access to the blood of Jesus for forgiveness of future slips. (2) They were sanctified or set apart from the world to live their lives according to the wisdom of God through the renewing of the Holy Spirit. As they studied and worked to put on the new man of a loving, pure person, some of them slipped occasionally. When they slipped, they confessed those sins to Christ and asked his help in ridding their lives of the temptations. As they received forgiveness, the Christian began again. The more they substituted God's truth in their minds for their former prejudices, upbringing, and social customs, the less illicit sexual surroundings tempted them to fall back into their former conduct. (3) Once the metamorphosis was complete, they became justified or were rendered righteous before God.

This same principle of justification taking place *after sanctification* is found in Heb. 12:14. The Hebrew writer emphasizes, "Pursue after peace with all men, and *after the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord* [emphasis mine—PRD]." The active verb "pursue" modifies both peace and sanctification. "Pursue" reveals energy and motivation in seeking the goals of peace and sanctification. It is not a half-hearted endeavor that starts with great intentions and then fizzles out. God warns that failure to pursue the goals will prevent a person from "seeing the Lord." Sanctification is a serious and important responsibility since it affects a person's fellowship with God.

The mate of a sinner needs to set the same requirements for acceptance as God does—washing, sanctification, *and then justification*. Preachers, elders, and other Christians must also follow God's pattern to truly help the sinner overcome sexual

problems. *For the mate and spiritual leaders to require less of the sinner is to turn their backs on God's way and to help the sinner stay separated from God. They also do great harm to the sinner by essentially helping to stop the healing process.*

Spiritual leaders can help adulterers and sexual addicts overcome their sin by deliberately following-up to make sure that the sanctification process takes place before welcoming the person back into full fellowship with the congregation. One way to do this would be to assign one or two deacons or mature Christians to stay in contact with the sinner and hold him or her *accountable* for studying and applying the sanctification process. In addition, since the person is not yet justified before God, to allow that person to perform congregational duties, no matter how minor, would be an outrageous mockery of God and his word. By expecting those who confess sin to follow God's three-part formula before recognizing them as being restored, spiritual leaders can exert powerful peer pressure that will bless sexual sinners and their mates.

Sexual sins and shortcomings are usually very deeply rooted in a person since he or she sins against the whole body (1 Cor. 6:18) and; as a result, are a sensitive subject for most people. Yet through this simple formula for accessing the amazing healing power of God's word, even the most hideous of sexual sins can be overcome.

Many institutions try to rehabilitate drunkards, thieves, murderers, homosexuals, fornicators, prostitutes, etc., and for the most part they fail. In fact, man has so failed in dealing with sexual perversions that society now labels many sins as "normal" or an "illness" or "unfixable." However, God is not limited to the education, experiments, and imagination of mankind. Any person who seeks a solution to sexual inhibitions or compulsions, regardless of how gross a course they may have taken, can find a remedy by turning to God's formula and letting God heal the sin in his or her life.

A young wife, whom my husband taught and baptized, began to come to my classes on marriage. Often she stayed after class and talked about some of her personal problems. She said, "When I went to college this boy told me, 'If you love me you'll prove it.' I loved him so I proved it and went all the way with him. Then he dropped me. That hurt me so bad, that I slept with any boy who came along. I went from bad to worse until I married my husband."

They had been married for three years. Every time this woman's husband made love to her, all she could do was lie there and cry from the pain. She knew nothing was wrong with her physically, and that the pain came from her guilty feelings over her past. She said, "After I was baptized, I knew my sins were forgiven and were all washed away. Our life is better. I enjoy the sexual relationship more now, but I still have some pain and it isn't like it should be."

This wife failed to achieve a wonderful love life because she refused to be sanctified. She came to the classes regularly and listened. She often said, "That makes sense. I agree with that." But when she went home, she wouldn't study her Bible. She wouldn't look at the class notes. She wouldn't do the homework. She made no mental effort to help herself, except to come to class. She wanted sanctification without any effort on her part. It never happened.

A person cannot become sanctified without a lot of diligent mental effort. It takes mental activity and exercises to bring about a permanent change in a person's life. This young wife heard everything she needed to fully enjoy lovemaking. But her whole life consisted of laziness in everything she did, from the way she kept her home to her approach to being a Christian. Sadly, she failed to put in the necessary effort to become sanctified; thus, she never became justified.

A single girl who attended the same classes achieved just the opposite result by following God's formula for justification. One night after studying the Song of Solomon, she stayed after class to talk. She said, "You've really torn me up and upset me."

I asked, "Why would the Song of Solomon upset you?"

She replied, "This boy wants to marry me. I love him and I want to marry him, but I'm scared of the sexual relationship. My father raped my older sister and he tried to rape me. I made up my mind that he'd have to kill me first. But my mother was extremely Victorian, and I was caught in the middle of them. My mother encouraged us to be cold and our father tried to make us be loving through his rapes. Sex just looks like a horrible, nasty relationship—that men are just beasts who think about nothing but sex. I'm scared to death of this relationship. I've told this boy about my feelings and why I feel like I do. He was very understanding and said that he wouldn't push me. He's willing to wait up to three weeks after we get married before we have sex."

I told her my husband was leaving in a few days to preach in a meeting and to come over and eat supper. Then we could sit up and talk all night long if we wanted to. She came over. She had already been through all the classes on Victorian morals and completed the homework. But she had not completed the sanctifying part of changing her attitudes about the sexual relationship. As we talked, she told me all of her preconceived ideas about sexual intercourse and men. Then together we examined the scriptures that applied to each

particular thought, to see if her thinking was accurate. That night, she mentally finished cleaning house and deliberately threw out of her mind many false impressions from her upbringing.

Soon afterwards, she married the young man, and we invited her and her new husband over. She told us, "Marriage is so great! And I'm married to the most wonderful man there ever was!" My husband teased her, "That offends me. My wife says I'm the most wonderful man there ever was, and you think your husband is that man."

This young woman averted the potential for a tragic marriage by making the mental effort to *free her mind totally* of all the inhibiting factors she accumulated while growing up. She was sanctified and she was justified. Best of all, she became a happily married wife who thoroughly enjoyed satisfying her husband's deepest needs.

Christians who counsel with other couples should conduct themselves cautiously around sexually immoral people and even Christians with a background of sexual lewdness. The fact that the Christian *counsels* the person involved in sin *doesn't guarantee protection* from the evil influence of the one being counseled. Even though the counselor lives a pure life, it is dangerous to think, "It couldn't happen to me." When dealing with someone involved in sexual immorality, one may be working with someone who has a very casual attitude toward sexual sin and whose eyes have been full of adultery in the past and may still be. The person being counseled wouldn't be the first one to try to seduce a godly person.

One preacher and his wife tried to help a woman with her problems, only to have to stop her efforts to seduce the husband. When confronted, the woman said, "I just thought he was such a good man that it wouldn't matter with him." God says the impure person can't think properly, and his eyes are full of adultery—*anyone* is a fair target for his or her sensual desires!

Another preacher and his wife were conducting a Bible class for a woman at their dining room table. The wife suddenly noticed a startled and panicky look on her husband's face. At that same moment, her teenage son who was sitting in on the class urgently whispered to his mother, "Look under the table!" The wife looked under the table and saw the woman they were trying to teach about the love of God rubbing her husband's leg with her bare foot. The preacher and his wife immediately escorted the woman out of the house.

Unfortunately, these stories about two women trying to seduce preachers who were trying to help them aren't isolated. Many preachers and their wives can tell about similar incidents. Sadly, many preachers' wives can tell how their husbands became involved in adultery after trying to help someone. Thus, Christians need to conduct themselves carefully around anyone who walks in sexual impurity or who has in the past. They should make sure someone else is present during all conversations. Talking about sexual problems lowers natural barriers between men and women. If the sensual person catches the Christian during a time of job distress or marriage problems, the Christian might be susceptible to temptations that wouldn't faze him at other times. A Christian makes a serious mistake when he assumes, "It could never happen to me." God's wisdom shows in instructing *the older women*, instead of preachers, to teach the young women how to love their husbands for the protection of the men, plus the women who sincerely need help (Titus 2:3-5).

First-century Christians used God's three-part formula of (1) washing, (2) sanctification, and (3) justification to solve all problems of sexual immorality. Twenty-first-century Christians can achieve the same results with the same formula. Indeed, even forty-first-century Christians will be able to use God's simple formula to solve their sexual problems whatever they might be at that time in history and where ever they might live whether on this planet or in a space station. God's truth can withstand the test of time and mankind's inventions of sexual immorality.

The choice belongs to each man and woman whether or not they will accept God's protection of their sexual lives and enjoy all the benefits he reserves just for them. The sexual relationship is a wonderful creation of God, but God's people must follow his instructions to reap maximum benefits. Heeding God's word may well mean the difference between being inhibited in sexual desire and pleasure and being liberated to enjoy glorious orgasms in the arms of the mate. Likewise, putting God's word into the mind can mean the difference between being enslaved to sexual addiction or being free to delight in rapturous lovemaking with the spouse. Each man and woman must choose for himself or herself if they will sin against their own body (1 Cor. 6:18) or if they will delight in God's magnificent creation of sexual love.

A Plan for Healing the Soul and the Marriage

As the author of the *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven* series including *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* and teacher of *Challenges in Marriage: How Sin Inhibits Love and What to Do About It*, it was only natural that I would be asked by former students to help them deal with their husbands' sexual addiction. The first wife who contacted me had asked her husband to move out after dealing with several episodes of adultery over many years. Although her husband always promised never to do it again, she knew it would only be a matter of time before he committed adultery again. She had asked her local elders for help several times and the advice she received was, unfortunately, typical in such cases. When she reported that her husband was openly engaging in an affair and involved in pornography,

they told her to just be submissive and be the good wife and he would eventually come to his senses. When this advice made the problem worse, she asked her husband to leave.

This couple had subsequently identified the problem as "sexual addiction," and while still separated, they were working at solving the underlying problems. Even though I had a lot of material available to deal with different aspects of this subject, I bought the books they were reading in their sexual addiction support group to help me make specific application and prepared a plan of study. After learning what I recommended for his wife to study, the husband called to talk to me. I learned later from a teacher of women's classes, who had recommended that the wife contact me, that the husband did not want his wife studying my *Challenges in Marriage* audio album, which teaches about dealing with sin in the home. The husband later explained, "I was afraid that studying the material would make my wife more depressed and angry so that she would divorce me. I was afraid of facing my behaviors in light of 'truth.'" When the women's class teacher told the husband she was giving the tapes to his wife, he asked to listen to them first and she loaned him the set. The husband again said he didn't want his wife listening to the tapes and the women's class teacher advised him that his wife would listen to them.

At that point the husband called to tell me his side. I shared with him God's three-part formula for overcoming gross sins and addictions of any kind and told him that he could conquer this problem. His wife becoming strong and no longer being codependent with his sin had to happen if she was to survive emotionally; and if they were ever to get back together and develop a successful marriage. Then to help him fully understand God's three-part formula for overcoming sin, I recommended that he read certain chapters in my two volumes of the *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven* series.

Seeing that his wife was going to study and learn how to deal with his sin exerted tremendous pressure on this husband (peer pressure that God wants his people to benefit from) to follow through with his own plan of study. Then he actually gave his wife the *Challenges in Marriage* tapes and recommended that she study them.

As this husband began using God's word to become sanctified, I began to see tremendous changes in his thinking as he shared insights he was developing regarding his behavior. At that time, I was in the process of revising *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* in the *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven* series and added material dealing specifically with sexual addiction. This husband proofread several of the key chapters. The insights that he shared helped make those chapters more beneficial to others dealing with the same agony.

Since that time, other wives and husbands have asked for help with dealing with both adultery and sexual addiction. In fact, one wife came to see me one morning to get her study assignments for dealing with her husband's sexual addiction and that afternoon a long-time friend called. He asked what I was working on. I told him I was studying about sexual addiction because I believed it would be the number-one marriage problem facing Christians in the twenty-first century. I told him I was beginning to see a lot of it and preacher friends were also seeing more cases of it. He replied that he and his wife were struggling with the same problem. The next day his wife was sitting in my office getting the same set of assignments as the previous wife. That is one of the purposes of this booklet—to share those assignments that proved helpful to couples working through sexual addiction and adultery.

These assignments have proven beneficial to couples working through both adultery and sexual addiction, not because I'm a sexual addiction expert—I'm not—but I am a witness to the power of God's word to transform lives! Even the lives of adulterers and sexual addicts! God is the undisputed sexual addiction expert! While psychiatrists have only begun in recent years to acknowledge and write about sexual addiction, the Bible's teaching on marriage and the sexual relationship contains powerful principles to liberate and free the adulterer and sexual addict and the innocent mate from bondage. Following are the assignments I've given to those who have sought God's help for transforming their minds and healing their souls and marriages:

Materials List

All materials recommended in this booklet can be purchased at many bookstores or online at PatsyRaeDawson.com.

1. *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven* series: Both *Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* and *Vol. II God's People Make the Best Lovers* by Patsy Rae Dawson.
2. *Challenges in Marriage: What to Do When Sin Inhibits Love* audio album by Patsy Rae Dawson.
3. *The Song of Solomon: God's Sex Education* audio album by Patsy Rae Dawson.
4. *Not Under Bondage: Biblical Divorce for Abuse, Adultery & Desertion* by Barbara Roberts.

General Assignment Instructions: For Healing the Soul and the Marriage

Ideally, these assignments should be done by both the adulterer or sexual addict and the spouse. Doing the assignments together will give the couple some of the best protection they have for not slipping back into sin, not only by sanctifying the mind, but also by helping to repair the emotional bond between the couple and eliminate the emotional isolation of the adulterer or sexual addict.

The chapters should be read and the homework done separately. Then the couple should go over their answers together. This time of discussion is not for rehashing past sins and hurts, but to study God's word together and discuss the fine points of applying God's teaching to their marriage and sexual relationship. One of the main causes of adultery and sexual addiction is a lack of a true emotional bond—being unable to discuss and share private thoughts and vulnerable areas. Studying and discussing God's word together is a first step toward mental bonding. This also gives the adulterer and sexual addict a chance to gain fresh insights into sexual sin and how true sexual pleasure is experienced. As the innocent mate sees these fresh insights develop, it helps heal hurts of past adultery and restore trust.

Sometimes, one of the mates refuses to study. While it requires more work on the part of the adulterer or sexual addict to do these assignments without involvement of the spouse, he or she still needs to do these assignments so that the mind can be sanctified. If the one involved in sexual sin refuses to study, the mate should follow the directions for the "Personal Assignment" and "What If the Mate Refuses to Become Sanctified" discussed at the end of this section.

Introductory Assignments: Fully Understanding Sanctification, Which Leads to Justification

The first step for overcoming adultery and sexual addiction is to fully understand the mechanics of sanctification, which leads to justification. This understanding helps the couple put those principles to work in their marriage to bring about complete and lasting healing of both their souls and their marriage. For that reason, the first three introductory assignments look at three chapters in *Vol. I* and *II*, which teach those mechanics from different verses and perspectives to give a more complete understanding of sanctification. The fourth assignment establishes the personal consequences of adultery and sexual addiction to help motivate the couple to diligently work for the rewards that God reserves for people who follow his wisdom.

1. In *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* read chapter 14 "The Sin Against the Whole Body" and do the homework. This chapter helps instill in the mind the principle of sanctification as it applies to overcoming sexual sins and gives hope by showing that victory can be achieved. One couple said it took them two weeks to do the exercise on 2 Samuel 13 on Amnon and Tamar. The wife was thrilled that they had experienced some of the best discussions of their whole marriage in answering the questions together.

2. In *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* read chapter 16 "Sexual Problems in Perspective" and do the homework. This chapter helps both spouses place their focus on serving God, not each other. It also teaches a Christian how to sanctify an unbelieving mate or a believing mate who refuses to become sanctified.

3. In *Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* read chapter 2 "Solving All Marriage Problems" and do the homework. This chapter teaches the role of sanctification in solving all marriage problems and emphasizes the role of "interview-type" prayer in transforming the mind. Both men and women have expressed that the exercise on prayer was the most beneficial activity they've ever done and totally changed their relationship with God. One husband, who had been involved in adultery, spent nearly a month expanding this exercise and said it completely changed his view of the Bible and its relevance to his life.

4. In *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers*, for a male adulterer or sexual addict read chapter 7 "The Sexually Frustrated Man" and do the homework. For a female adulterer or sexual addict read chapter 5 "The Sexually Frustrated Woman" and do the homework. These chapters give a good overview of adultery and sexual addiction and show why sexual promiscuity does not produce true satisfaction and sexual pleasure. They serve as strong motivators to adulterers and sexual addicts to keep studying by showing that God offers something better for them.

Main Assignments: Sanctifying the Mind and Building an Enduring Emotional Bond

After completing the introductory assignments, the couple is ready to study the rest of the material. While studies usually begin with *Vol. I*, it has proven more valuable to begin with *Vol. II* when sexual sin or frustration is involved. Since continual sexual thoughts play a

significant role in the sin, studying *Vol. II* first helps redirect illicit sexual thoughts toward new healthy sexual thinking. This prepares the mind for a more beneficial study of *Vol. I* later.

5. Read *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* beginning with chapter 1 and reading through chapter 16 and do the homework.

Reread the chapters already studied, as new insights will have come from reading them in order. Check over your homework on the previously completed chapters to see if you want to make changes and discuss those changes. *Vol. II* teaches the key for sexual satisfaction for both the husband and the wife that science discovered only recently, but it has always been present in the Bible. The lessons discuss the Bible's special teaching about the different development stages of sexuality from puberty through the temptation for middle-aged affairs. The qualities that cause sexual frustration for both men and women are explored in-depth. Adultery and sexual addiction are dealt with frankly and the procedure for overcoming sexual problems is given, even for when the spouse is not a Christian. The volume contains many medical and psychological facts to prove beyond any doubt to intelligent students that God's sexual truths promote and increase sexual pleasure for both husbands and wives.

6. Read *Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* beginning with chapter 1 and reading through chapter 16 and do the homework.

Reread chapter 2 and review the homework completed earlier. When doing the homework at the end of chapter 10, review the research exercise in *Vol. II*, chapter 7 and write the summary paper for that assignment. This research exercise is an extremely important assignment that came about from listening to sexual addicts talk and careful attention should be given to completing it fully for maximum healing.

Vol. I gives the Biblical formula for solving all marriage problems. It deals with the creation of men and women and the purpose of marriage. Current medical evidence is given for the physical and mental differences between men and women. These basic foundation principles of the way a husband and a wife balance and support each other aid the couple in building a true and lasting emotional bond. The lessons also promote self-respect along with respect for the opposite sex. *Vol. I* includes a verse-by-verse study of the Song of Solomon which is a critical study for anyone dealing with sexual sin. Four lessons examine both the husband's and the wife's roles in subjection and leadership and show where God tells wives to draw the line.

Overlapping Assignments: Speeding Up the Sanctification and Healing Process

The following assignments can be done in the background as they involve listening to audio albums. This can be done while driving to and from work or while working around the home. The series can be listened to many times. At the same time, the main assignments in *Vol. I* and *Vol. II* should be continued with completing and discussing the homework. The results from listening to these tapes many times on the side has proven beneficial for couples going through this plan and greatly speeds up their recovery time.

7. For the adulterer and sexual addict: listen to *The Song of Solomon: God's Sex Education audio album*. While this series was originally taught to teenagers, their mothers, and grandmothers, it is a valuable study for adulterers and sexual addicts because the attitudes and habits that often led to the sexual sin had their beginning during their teenage years when they started making choices about their developing sexuality. The purpose of this study is not to understand *why* the choices were made, as years can be spent trying to understand why someone did something without accomplishing anything. Just as God asked Adam and Eve *what* they did in the Garden of Eden, not *why* they did it, the goal is to recognize *what* choices were made so harmful choices can be deliberately thrown out. Then the person can remake his or her sexual choices intelligently—not according to teenage sexual ignorance or peer pressure. In this way, mentally going back over those times and deliberately remaking some of those choices helps clean a lot of false thinking out of the mind so full sanctification can take place.

Most sexual addicts readily recognize that King Solomon was also a sexual addict. Comparing Solomon's behavior with the Shepherd's helps them recognize harmful attitudes in themselves. In addition, if the student will read the Song of Solomon from the Bible at least once every week or two without any deliberate effort to memorize the verses, the student will find that when situations come up, his or her mind will automatically think of verses in the Song of Solomon. For example, the student will think, "This is just like when King Solomon said, 'You are like my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh,' or this is like the Shepherd's proposal where he valued the Shulammite's purity. This exercise of listening to the tapes and reading the Bible verses on a regular basis makes the Song of Solomon come to life and become an automatic part of the thinking. When this happens, it is a truly liberating event that helps the sanctification process leap forward to a higher level.

The husband, who didn't want his wife to study the *Challenges in Marriage* tapes, went through the Song of Solomon tapes. When he became fully sanctified and he and his wife got back together, one of the first things he did was to organize studying these tapes as family time with his teenage children. This activity helped heal a lot of pain and hurt in that family as they studied and discussed the Song of Solomon together, which gave the children a chance to learn from both Solomon and their dad. They learned that sex originated within

the mind of God to bless his people. They also learned the difference between healthy sexual thoughts and feelings and perverted ones. In this way, this father helped protect his children from developing addictive behaviors.

The album teaches the Song of Solomon verse-by-verse in a manner designed to capture the emotions of the students. The lessons cover such topics as masturbation, proof Christians make the best lovers, choosing a lifelong sexual partner, differences between men and women, purity—the nicest thing a person can do for him or herself, difference between sex and sexual love, why feminists' marriages often fail, sex appeal, and fornication clarified.

8. For the spouse of the adulterer or sexual addict: listen to the *Challenges in Marriage: What to Do When Sin Inhibits Love audio album*. This study gives instructions for dealing with sin in the home whether or not the mate is a Christian and whether or not the mate cooperates in correcting the sin. It discusses how sin grows from the first slip to eventually enslaving the person. This understanding helps the spouse not deny or minimize the sin in the home. God gives his people tremendous power for overcoming sin whether in their personal lives or in the lives of their mates.

The devastating effect of sin on both the innocent party and the sinner is exposed. God's people learn how not to be codependent and submissive to sin and how to overcome it. If the marriage is ever going to be all that it can be and if the innocent spouse is going to survive emotionally, he or she has to learn how to recognize and deal with sin in the marriage. Emotional and spiritual strength is the best quality an innocent spouse can bring to help heal both their souls and the marriage. The album also teaches how to fight fair and face anger. Learning how to change the course of arguments to really solve problems is necessary for full mental bonding.

9. For the adulterer or sexual addict: also listen to the *Challenges in Marriage: What to Do When Sin Inhibits Love audio album*. Recognizing how sin develops one step at a time until it becomes a full-blown addiction helps motivate adulterers and sexual addicts to deal with their sin. If they don't deal with the sin in their lives, it will only get worse. The series also helps the sexual sinner develop personal strengths for overcoming the sin.

Optional Assignment: Experiencing God's Love for the Innocent Mate

10. For the spouse of the adulterer or sexual addict: read Barbara Roberts' book *Not Under Bondage: Biblical Divorce for Abuse, Adultery & Desertion*. The innocent mate often feels trapped in an adulterous marriage with a spouse he or she thinks will never really change even though countless promises are made. Understanding God's laws and how God does not trap a person in marriage to an impenitent adulterer frees the innocent mate to look more objectively at the spouse and recognize both genuine changes the adulterer has made to become sanctified or to have their eyes opened to game playing by the adulterous spouse.

In addition, the innocent mate studying about abusive and adulterous marriages puts tremendous peer pressure on the sinful mate in a healthy way by making him or her realize the mate is serious about dealing with the sexual sin. In several cases, the sinner did not get serious about becoming sanctified until the mate started studying God's laws regarding divorce. The sinner realized the time had come to overcome the sin—to complete the sanctification process rather than continuing to offer empty promises.

Personal Assignment: Sanctifying the Mind Apart From Studying About Marriage

I wish I could say that all cases of adultery and sexual addiction I've known about were successfully resolved. But I can't and God does not make that guarantee in 1 Cor. 7:16 when He says through Paul, "For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?" However, I have observed one common characteristic in all cases where adultery and sexual addiction were overcome and in all cases where the innocent mate survived the emotional exhaustion of dealing with the sin without losing faith in God regardless of the outcome. In each case, the people involved had developed a strong personal relationship with God apart from studying about their marriages by *diligently studying* other Bible subjects. In other words, the person engaged in a sanctifying-type study that did not involve marriage and sexual problems. Sanctification is not just for adulterers and sexual addicts—it is for all Christians in their relationship with God—using the words of the Holy Spirit in the Bible to change their thinking in all areas of their lives. This balanced application of sanctification—sanctification of the sexual relationship *plus sanctification of their daily lives* seems to be the best way to promote full healing of the soul and the marriage.

For example, the first wife who came to me with the problem was actively involved in a ladies' Bible class that had been using the book of Acts for over a year to teach the students how to study the Bible for themselves. This class involved homework and lots of out-of-class study. The second wife who came to me was an active participant in that same class. Both women were experiencing love for God and delight in his word from their personal studies that had nothing to do with their marriages. The third wife who asked for help had realized

that she was losing her way spiritually since the sexual addiction problem had appeared and had taken a break from working on her marriage problems to devote herself to a diligent personal study about God. Once her spiritual strength and love for God was renewed, she was able to deal with her husband's sexual addiction in a more healthy way.

A husband, whose wife was involved in adultery, taught an adult class which built up his love for God apart from studying all the time about his marriage. Even though he finally divorced his wife for impenitent adultery, he survived with his faith in God stronger than ever.

Another man, who was involved in adultery, found that one major factor that helped him work his way free of the enticements of the other woman was his personal vigorous in-depth study of a special Bible subject that he'd had going for years. He was unable to leave behind the love he'd developed for God in order to love the other woman. That husband then turned his energies to sanctifying his mind in regard to the sexual relationship.

The husband of the first wife mentioned, while very sincere in his desire to overcome his sexual addiction, began to show rapid progress when he left the congregation he had been attending where he heard mainly warm, fuzzy, feel-good lessons. He began attending where he was challenged mentally and expected to learn, think, and study for himself on a variety of subjects. Although he had been a Christian for many years, he began growing spiritually in many areas and the sanctification of his sexual nature took on a new depth.

Likewise, a husband, who was not a Christian, was caught in a questionable act that authorities claim was a preparatory act for later incest with his daughter. When his wife, who was a Christian, called the police, the husband was removed from the home and required to go through a series of counseling sessions on various subjects. This husband, who had previously rejected attempts to teach him the gospel, finally wanted to study. He was baptized, but not left to find his own way as many new converts are. A special program was begun to sanctify him and to build his love for God in all areas. His growth as a Christian has been tremendous, although the authorities have not yet allowed him back in the home. He was quickly able to recognize that he had a sexual addiction and gave up a stolen cable-television box that enabled him to watch X-rated movies. He continues to grow as a Christian, a husband, and a father as he makes other changes in his behavior and thinking.

Developing a personal relationship of love and respect for God through sanctification in addition to studying about marriage and sexual problems appears to be a crucial part of the healing process for both the innocent party and the adulterer and sexual addict. While many good studies are available on a variety of subjects, the following lessons have helped students focus their minds on God's great love for them personally. The key is not just listening or reading these or other materials, but actually getting involved in an in-depth study that brings about sanctification and personal growth as a Christian.

When the Sexual Sinner Refuses Sanctification

Sometimes the adulterer or sexual addict promises to study and follow the plan to become sanctified, and may actually start the process. However, once the pressure is off, the sinner may cease to continue to study, or study only when it is convenient. Such actions doom the sinner to stay enslaved to sin or greatly increase the time required for healing. Other times, the sexual sinner may outright refuse to study and do the homework necessary to become sanctified so that the soul and marriage can be healed. What can the spouse do in these cases?

Follow God's Example for Reconciliation

God, through Paul, in 1 Cor. 7:11 says to work for "reconciliation" with the mate. Only in this passage and Matt. 5:24 is the Greek word *katallassw* used of one human being reconciled to another human. All the other times, the word is used of a human being reconciled to God or Jesus. Thus, if the husband or wife of an adulterer or sexual addict imitates God in the area of reconciliation, he or she is on safe ground. God said that for a sinner to be justified before him, the sinner must follow a three-part formula (1) be washed, (2) be sanctified, (3) and then be justified. Expecting a sinful mate to follow that same three-part formula before being restored into full fellowship in the marriage is following the example of God and obeying the concept of the command "be reconciled."

The spouse has the right to *insist* on the sanctification process taking place before restoring full fellowship with the adulterer or sexual addict, whether it is through this plan of study or some other. *Just as sinners don't get to set their own conditions of fellowship with God, adulterous mates have lost the right to negotiate their own terms for fellowship with the mate. The right of setting conditions belongs to the one being reconciled to—the one innocent of adultery or sexual addiction—not the sinner, not the preacher, not the elders, and not other Christians.*

This loss of control is hard for many men to accept. Some husbands tell their wives, "I'm trying the best I can. Just accept me as I am and where I am." Or, "If there is still a problem, it is your problem, not mine." Not only does God refuse to accept these attempts to control

his fellowship with sinners, these methods of burying sin don't work. *As long as the innocent mate imitates God's three requirements for reconciliation, no one can justly criticize those conditions.* (For guidelines, review the section on God's three-part formula for how the Corinthians overcame gross sexual sins and how to recognize "deeds appropriate to repentance.")

Likewise, the preacher, elders, and other Christians should set the same three conditions as God of being (1) washed, (2) sanctified, (3) and then justified before restoring the sinner to full fellowship in the congregation. For them to just hug and kiss the sinner and pray and "shake" him back into the congregation and then expect everything to be okay, is to do extreme harm to both the sinner and the mate. Invariably, this takes the pressure off the sinner to correct his actions and may discourage him or her from continuing with the sanctification process. And to reinstate such a person to his or her congregational duties insults and mocks God! Just as the sinner is not justified before God, the sinner also needs to know his *fellow Christians hold him accountable* for following through on the sanctification process before he can enjoy full fellowship with them.

Refusing to be sanctified indicates a rebellious attitude as discussed earlier and should be treated as "impenitent adultery" or "impenitent mental adultery." As long as a person refuses to become sanctified or delays the process, that person is not justified before God; regardless of how many public confessions of sin that person has made and continues to make; regardless of how many prayers the preacher, elders, and other Christians have offered and continue to offer in that person's behalf; and regardless of how many times that person is asked and continues to be asked to lead public prayer, wait on the Lord's table, prepare the Lord's supper, or teach a Bible class.

In 2 Cor. 7:9-11 Paul praised the Corinthians for the repentance they demonstrated after he had convicted them of the sin of condoning incest. He used such words as "what earnestness," "what vindication of yourselves," "what indignation," "what fear," "what longing," "what zeal," and "what avenging of wrong"! It doesn't sound like the Corinthians refused to be sanctified or that they took their time in studying or that they gave up on following through on the sanctification process when the pressure was off. Perhaps that is why Paul could say, "And such *were* some of you."

Some Battles Are Worth Fighting

The greatest spiritual challenges often occur when sin enters the home—they don't come from the ungodly outside Christ. Many sins take place in the home—bitterness, judging motives, drunkenness, adultery, deceit, reviling, physical abuse, sexual neglect, incest, homosexuality, etc. Covering up the mate's sins makes a person a partaker with those sins and the resulting secrecy allows the sins to flourish.

Thus, when sin invades the home, a spiritual battle must be fought—2 Cor. 10:3-6; Matt. 10:34-39. The best advice I can give is, "Get it out into the open and deal with it—don't hide it." However, sometimes the sinful spouse objects to the mate seeking outside help as Paul advised in Gal. 6:1-2 with "bear one another's burdens." Often the resistance comes because the husband or wife doesn't want anyone to know about his or her behavior. Jesus said, "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed" (John 3:20).

One wife said that every time she threatened to talk to the preacher, her husband, who verbally abused her every day, acted better for several weeks. Then he always went back to his old behavior; and they never really solved the problem because she never followed through on getting help. Another wife, who flaunted her mental adultery before her husband, quickly left the congregation where they attended when she learned that her husband was getting ready to ask witnesses to talk to her. Unfortunately, that husband didn't realize that was a common trick of sinners to avoid exposure and thought he couldn't ask fellow Christians for help after she left.

Sometimes, the innocent mate resists getting help because he or she is ashamed of what is happening in the marriage—the innocent mate is also afraid of the light. By the innocent mate taking the shame upon him or herself rather than bringing the problem out into the "light," the innocent mate buys into the sinner's need for secrecy. *Sin thrives on secrecy. Secrecy in the home that covers up sin ultimately destroys the marriage.*

Getting the sinful behavior out into the open may be hard and embarrassing, but it can also be a big relief to be able to talk about it to others and get their help. If the sinner won't do his or her part to be sanctified—don't hide it or make excuses. Get it out into the open and deal with it as sin because the mate is not justified before God yet. You will be the best friend your mate has by insisting that he or she deal with the sin. Treat it as grievous impenitent sin.

Part of getting the sin out into the open should be the innocent mate insisting that the unsanctified person be removed from all congregational duties because that person is not justified before God. When wives watch their husbands assume positions of leadership in the churches, whether preaching, serving as elders or deacons, or simply offering prayers, leading singing, etc., and the wives cover up the sins in the home, they partake of their husbands' sins. In the Old Testament, in Isa. 1:11-17, God didn't accept the worship of people who failed to seek justice or didn't reprove the ruthless. Likewise, in 1 Pet. 3:7-8, Peter told husbands that God doesn't hear their prayers,

no matter how long or beautifully prayed, when they mistreat their wives. The example of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 shows God's attitude toward wives who cover up their husbands' sins. Husbands also bear responsibility when they cover up for their wives' sins and do not object to their congregation duties, no matter how significant or minor they might be. The great mockery against God that takes place in many congregations during Bible classes and public worship could not exist without the silent cooperation of husbands and wives.

Many husbands and wives go to great lengths to put on faces of piety when attending public worship when their homes are full of all kinds of evil. How much better for the unsanctified person to remove his or her name from the duty roster, or the innocent mate to tell the spiritual leaders about the problem so they can remove the name, while the couple works on becoming sanctified and then justified.

Regardless of what the sexual sinner chooses to do, the spouse needs to go ahead and study so he or she can deal properly with the mate's sin. Studying helps the innocent spouse identify areas where he or she may be codependent and submissive to sin which actually enables the sinner to continue in sin. Also, learning about one's personal responsibility in dealing with a mate's sins and how to use the peer pressure of the church helps the spouse recognize and avoid harmful advice from spiritual leaders and other Christians. When the mate won't study to become sanctified, the spouse needs to begin his or her study with *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. I*, chapter 2, *Vol. II*, chapters 14 and 16, and the audio album *Challenges in Marriage: What to Do When Sin Inhibits Love*. In addition, to survive emotionally, the spouse needs to develop and enjoy a personal sanctified relationship with God apart from the marriage as discussed in the previous "Personal Assignment."

The Twenty-first Century

When the pendulum of society's morality rested on excessive prudery, countless souls suffered unspeakable harm. Now that the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme of inordinate sexual immorality, again unsuspecting people are being destroyed by its appalling deception. Overcoming the timid restraints of Victorian teaching is much simpler than helping an adulterer or sexual addict restore his or her body and mind to a normal loving state.

Thus, after half a century of the sexual revolution, the future of marriages and the sexual happiness of husbands and wives looks bleak. Mankind desperately needs God's wisdom to survive in the twenty-first century with so much contradictory information about so vital a subject—sexual happiness. While mankind gropes about trying to find his own way, God has patiently provided the answers in the Bible for over three thousand years. Men and women need only to read and study it for themselves, to believe, to obey, and to enjoy the resulting happiness.

In his merciful love, just as God did not force happiness upon King Solomon, God does not force happiness on anyone today. While God leaves the choice up to each individual, he stands ready as a wonderful friend to take the hand of anyone who reaches for his. He'll lead them out of the darkness, the pain, and the misery into the marvelous light of his love and reward them with ecstatic delights in the arms of the cherished mate. After all, the embrace of love originated within the mind of God and he reserves its greatest pleasures for his chosen people. God's people who seek to apply all of God's truths to their lives, do indeed, make the best lovers and escape the misery that enslaves the world.



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This booklet is composed of excerpts from *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* by Patsy Rae Dawson. It provides a small sample of the wealth of exciting information found in the Bible about the sexual relationship and God's love for his people and desire for their happiness. *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* examines how the husband's and wife's minds and bodies join perfectly together to speak a beautiful language of love in each other's arms that transcends spoken language. Your marriage will never be the same after you read these stimulating volumes.