

Secret Sins – Things We (Think We) Hide from God

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“For nothing is hidden...nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light.” (Luke 8: 17 NASB)

When our youngest son was a toddler if he could reach the cookies, left too low on a shelf, he would grab the bag and take off. He had two hiding places—in the curtains or under the comforter on our bed. It was comical to watch the covers shake and hear giggles coming out while he celebrated getting away with something because he “hid” himself from us.

As funny and silly as our son’s thought process sounds to us as adults (thinking he was getting away with something unseen), we do the same kinds of things when we attempt to hide our “secret sins” from others—especially the Lord. But, in our case, the Lord is not standing at the door smiling or trying to keep from laughing. He is not amused. His expectation of men who claim to be biblical Christians-devoted followers- is a continuous striving for perfection. (Jesus’ words in Matthew 5: 48)

Many sins readily fall into the category “secret sin.” As you may expect, and I am about to confirm in ways many may find startling, pornography has *wormed* its way to the top of the heap.

Pornography is the most well-known and popular “secret sin”—Satan’s most effective weapon against Christian men and pastors.

Consider these published sobering statistics that include only Christian men and pastors. If they do not get your undivided attention, check your pulse.

- 54% of pastors said they viewed pornography in the last year; 37% admit it is a current struggle.
- 95% of Christian men admit having looked at porn; 54% do so with some regularity.
- 18% of born-again Christian men admit to being addicted to pornography. (That is > 1 out of 6.)

Consider these stats on millennial men—the first generation raised in a large percentage of single-parent, absentee dad homes. They provide a scary glimpse into the future if we fail to act.

- 77% view pornography at least monthly; 36% do so daily; 32% admit having an addiction.

(FYI, the number of women, especially young ones, viewing and becoming addicted to pornography is increasing rapidly.)

This sexual sin, that leads readily to addiction, glides in low, like a stealth bomber, undetected until the problem is upon us. Such was the case with Pastor Thomas in the book where it snuck in through a misspelled URL during a web search. Most men are very visual—especially when it comes to sexuality. The first glance can be innocent (as it was for this pastor). But not so those second and third looks! They draw us in like a fly into a spider's web. If you recall that poem, the fly went away initially but eventually returned for another look and got a little too close to the web. Once ensnared, getting free becomes a war.

The impact of issues with and addiction to pornography cannot be overstated. The fallout is widespread, affecting many areas of our lives. Closer to home, collateral damage creates casualties by inflicting deep wounds—beginning with our wives and children.

The apostle John listed “the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes” (1 John 2: 16) as two of three primary categories of sins in the world today. Both contribute to incredible

numbers cited above. The third category, *"pride of life,"* keeps men enslaved—we are too proud and ashamed to confess it.

Secret sins are areas of our lives we deliberately hide from others and think we hide from God.

Only God knows the extent of the truth of this statement, but I believe it safe to say all men harbor *secret sins*. Pornography is only one of them. They include *thoughts* and *behaviors* that, if exposed, would create issues, some serious, for the man believing they are hidden.

Before searching the Scripture, I imagined having trouble finding a key verse that would speak directly to *secret sins*. I was shocked. I found specific verses spoken by Moses, David, Isaiah, and Jesus. The fact that these mighty men of God and our Lord Himself addressed it requires no further explanation.

(Moses) *"You have placed our iniquities before You, Our **secret sins** in the light of Your presence."* (Psalm 90: 8 NASB)

(David) *"When I **kept silent about my sin**, my body wasted away...groaning all day long."* (Psalm 32: 3 NASB)

(Isaiah) *"Woe to those who **deeply hide their plans from the LORD**, And whose **deeds are done in a dark place**, And they say, 'Who sees us?' or 'Who knows us?'"* (Isaiah 29: 15)

(Jesus) *"For **nothing is hidden** that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not...come to light."* (Luke 8: 17 NASB)

I chose to end the first part of this lesson here so you can reflect on the Word of God and allow the Holy Spirit to invade the most private areas of your heart regarding your secret sins, especially pornography— perhaps the most challenging sin affecting Christian men and pastors today.

I will follow up soon with the last two parts:

- Part Two: Secret Sins – Finding Forgiveness
- Part Three: The Key to Successfully Staying Out of the Web

From one desperate brother in Christ to another,

Walter

Review of previous lessons:

Thus far we drilled deeper into the lives of three of the five *desperate* men whose stories begin my most recent book, *All Men Are Desperate Whether They Admit It or Not*. One key takeaway from each is this:

All of us have more in common with each man and his issues than we would like to admit.

- The Addict – The Addict and Is the Christian Man
- The Prisoner – “Not all prisons have bars.”
- The Rich Man – Taking Our Turn in the Crucible of Wealth