

*“Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.”*  
- Ps. 119:35-37



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## Paths of Justice

### A Just Life

Not many years ago there were behaviors that were discouraged and considered to be sinful. As society changed in the '60s and after, some of these behaviors were still not encouraged but were labeled as victimless. The range of behaviors in this category changed based upon who drew up the list, but none of the behaviors were new or different. Drugs (LSD, heroin, cocaine), cannabis, sex before marriage, adultery, pornography, and divorce were no longer considered “shameful” by many. While some drugs in certain forms do have a medical use and divorce in the case of abandonment sometimes happens, these cases are the exceptions. All of these behaviors had taken place since Biblical times but society had come to reject them.

Why were these behaviors discouraged in the first place? God gave us instructions about how to live. Solomon in Proverbs has many instructions for life, Moses recorded the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20) and Jesus gave us the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). Most of the teachings are about how we relate to one another. Justice is also about relationships. When we care more about ourselves than others, we act to satisfy our lusts. In doing that we ignore how that affects those around us. As an example, we wouldn't need to have an Angel Tree program if incarcerated parents had thought more about what their lawless behavior could do to their children and made different choices.

Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil (Eccl. 12:13-14). – Tom

### A Public Health Crisis

It is beyond time to wake up to a threat that has grown all around us and is leading to many injustices. It has become so bad that just in the last couple of years, nine states so far have declared it, across party lines, to be a public health crisis. In three states, the vote was *unanimous*. Given the compelling evidence, even major media outlets and secular therapists and scholars have recognized the serious problems with it. What is it? Pornography.

What's changed? The development of technology in the last several decades has made such materials much more widely, cheaply or freely, and discretely available than ever before. Furthermore, (the late) Hugh Hefner took pornography from the back street to Wall Street to where it has now become a multibillion dollar per year industry. Hefner revealed the “logic” behind pornography in 2010

when he said, “The notion that Playboy turns women into sex objects is ridiculous. Women are sex objects... That's why women wear lipstick and short skirts.”

The truth, however, is that every woman, like every man, is a human being who is wonderfully made in the image of God. God made each of us to be loved by Him and to love Him and one another, not to be used or to exploit anyone for our own gain. He also created us with a sexual capacity, which is so good and intimate that it can only be safely enjoyed within the boundaries of marriage both visually, emotionally, mentally, and physically.

The distortions of sexual immorality are so grievous that the Bible contains some of the most severe warnings about it, not only in the commands we are given but also through the narratives of the

Definition of injustice: Injustice occurs when someone with greater power deprives someone with lesser power of freedom, dignity, treasure, or livelihood.

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” - Jam. 1:13-15

## A Public Health Crisis - Continued

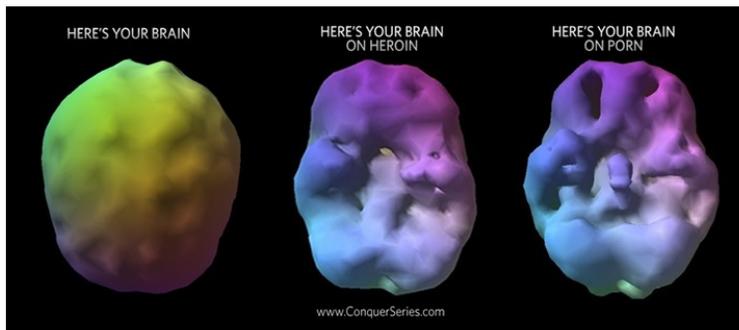
lives of significant characters in history. Whether they realize it or not, those researching pornography today have been coming to recognize this truth from Scripture, not to mention the countless victims of all kinds of sexual abuse.

The websites that spread the pollution of pornography get more visitors each month than Amazon, Netflix, and Twitter combined. They include extreme forms of sexuality and are interconnected with the dark world of sex slavery/trafficking, domestic violence, prostitution, child abuse, and abortion. Over 40 years of peer-reviewed research has revealed that pornography is a massive, paradigm-shifting social harm. It teaches that women enjoy violence and leads to an increase of sexual violence as well as adolescent delinquency and criminal behavior. It hijacks the brain's reward systems the same way that cocaine does and it is linked to decreased brain matter in the areas of motivation and decision-making, impaired impulse control, and desensitization to sexual reward. It leads to a negative body image for both males and females, dissatisfaction with partners, affairs, sexual dysfunction, and an increase in marital rape as well as behaviors that increase the risk of sexually

transmitted infections.

What's the answer? Much needs to be done on different levels, but it starts with each of us understanding how destructive pornography is and turning away from this false form of intimacy. God has given us the resources we need to not give in to temptation and to live godly lives that are pleasing to Him and honor others. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we must never give up the good fight; as God told Cain of old, though sin desires to have you, you must rule over it. We need to graciously help one

another go in the right direction, starting with our children; given the brain's development, they are at the most risk of forming addictions. For those already into it, seek out a good counselor as well. Create as much protection from



*Brain SPECT scans show that a porn addict's brain can be worse than a drug addict's.*

online smut as possible by becoming aware of the deceptive ways that pornography producers try to get people into it and using software and accountability with your devices. Regularly fill your mind with the Scriptures and read further about the devastating consequences of the production and usage of pornography. And consider how Jesus lived in terms of governing His eyes, mind, and body, being free from the sin that so entangles and finding joy and delight in the goodness of God and His creation.

## Opportunities / Activities / Resources

- Learn more about the problems of pornography from these papers: <http://tinyurl.com/PornDisaster1> and <https://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF17K24.pdf>. You can also find a sermon on the subject by going here: <http://fccdublin.com/sermons/listen> and pulling up the one from 08/25/2013 called "Two Paths".
- The first SOAR survivor group for ladies finished on July 30 and we are planning another one to start on Sept. 17. Please let us know if you can help with it.
- On Friday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> from 7 to 9 pm, Tony Ticknor's band is going to be playing at the Long Street Studio to raise money for OneVOICE4freedom, which works against sex slavery/trafficking and abuse. Go here for tickets: <http://paradiseboundband.com/Benefit.aspx>.
- Do you want to get more involved with righting injustice? Come to our Justice Team meetings where prayer happens, plans are made, and investigations continue.
- Check with Tom Castor (tcbus7@att.net) or Doug Dunsmoor (dwdunsmoor@hotmail.com) for more information about these and more opportunities.