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The Fight for Mental Purity in the Digital Age

Why do we compromise that which is honorable, flirt with disaster, and give in to sin?

- Sin offers instant gratification, but real life is far from instant and gratification is often elusive.
- Sin is easy, but relationships are hard.
- Sin is comfortable, but life is stressful.
- Sin is exciting, but life is boring.
- Sin makes men feel powerful, but real life often makes them feel powerless.
- Sin unleashes insatiable craving, but it also kills genuine satisfaction (Gal 5:16-26; Rom 13:11-14; 2 Pet 2:10-16; Prov 30:20)

In *Closing the Window*, Tim Chester describes six core motivations that commonly fuel porn addiction:

1. **Respect** – When our craving for respect becomes an idol, porn offers us a fantasy world where we are worshipped and adored.
2. **Relationship** – When our craving for intimacy becomes an idol, porn offers the illusion of relationship without the risks of rejection or vulnerability.
3. **Refuge** – When life gets tough and our craving for escape becomes an idol, porn gives us a fantasy world where we are never a failure, where there are no expectations.
4. **Reward** – When our desire for reward becomes a sinful sense of entitlement, porn gives us a fantasy world where our underappreciated egos can “get what we deserve.”
5. **Revenge** – When our anger at life or God or our spouse gets out of control, porn can become our tantrum at a world that isn’t catering to our desires.
6. **Redemption** – When self-pity becomes a consuming desire, porn offers us a fantasy where we can feel “normal”—or even a place where we can punish ourselves.

The lies sin tells us to keep us enslaved:

- “That was the last time.”
- “You can stop anytime you want.”
- “Sin isn’t inherently erosive.”
- “Hiding is the best way to deal with it.”

But believing lies will never give you the power to overcome them.

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What does the fight for mental purity look like? How is it waged? What is its goal?

- Recognition that I am accountable to a holy God and not my own (1 Cor 6:15-20)
- Abhorrence for that which is evil, not just the shame evil brings (Rom 12:9)
- An uprooting of all weeds of filthiness and thorns of rampant wickedness (Acts 2:38; James 1:21; Luke 8:14; Psa 51:7)
- A commitment to that which is proper for saints of God (Rom 12:1-2; Eph 5:1-14)
- Construction of walls of wisdom and integrity around my heart (Psa 18:1-3; Eph 5:15-17)
- Focused effort to nurture a hunger for righteousness and sustain satisfaction *in* God with the goal of leading a mature, joy-filled life *for* God (Matt 5:6; Psa 63:1-8; Rom 6:13; 2 Tim 2:19-22)