

## Click Here for Damage - Week 3

Date: Saturday, May 19 + Sunday, May 20

Teacher: Lily Smith

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### Introduction:

Welcome to Grace Youth, “fam”! We’re continuing with “Click Here for Damage”, and by the end of this you might be sick of hearing about pornography - which would actually be a good thing. Perhaps that was a part of our plan - to get you so annoyed about hearing about porn that you want absolutely nothing to do with it. If that’s the case, then mission accomplished.

But all jokes aside, we’re not done with this topic yet. So far in this series, we have heard about the impacts of pornography on guys versus girls, the ways that pornography is addictive and how it can change the way we think and view one another, the role Jesus plays in all of this, and you also got the opportunity on Wednesday to ask *whatever* questions have been on your mind.

We’ve talked about everything that happens once we turn to pornography - but today I want to back up for a second and talk about *why* we actually turn to porn *in the first place*. But before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let’s pray and ask Jesus to be with us as we talk about this this evening/morning.

*[Pray for guidance as this message is given, for the Holy Spirit to be present, for heart transformation, and for the Word of God to become living and active as we read and understand Jesus more].*

### Message:

So, why do we turn to pornography in the first place? That’s the big question we want to tackle today. We’ve heard about all of the damaging effects porn can have on us. We see all the ways it can change the way you and I think. We see how it impacts our relationships now *and* in the future. We see how it’s addictive. We see how it sabotages - yet we still choose to turn to it. Why? Why do we turn to porn? There is a verse in the bible that actually talks about this very dilemma. Romans tells us, **“For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing” (Romans 7:18-19)**. How many of you relate to this? I can relate. This should be my Instagram bio. Sometimes I feel like this is the story of my life, and perhaps that’s how you feel too. Why do we turn to sin, in general, knowing that in the end it will cause more damage than good?

To answer that question I want to use a less-extreme example, first. Hopefully it’s one we can all relate to. Have you ever eaten an entire package of something? Maybe it

was BBQ chips. Maybe it was Cheez-Itz. Or Flaming Hot Cheetos. Cheese Puffs. Or maybe you pounded an entire box of cereal, like Fruity Pebbles, in one sitting. If I were talking about eating an entire package of some type of snack food, I would immediately think of Double-Stuffed Oreos. That would be my snack of choice. I love Double-Stuffed Oreos. I actually love them so much, that I bought a pack of Double-Stuffed Oreos to take with me to church today. [*Proceed to take out Oreos, open package, and eat some, savoring how amazing they are - cause they really are!*]

Who here has ever eaten an entire package of your favorite food in one sitting? Maybe you were watching your favorite show, and before you know it the whole thing is gone! Or you're at the Big Chill staying up past "lights out", and you eat an entire pack of Twizzlers while talking about all of the super spiritual stuff you guys talk about late at night on the Big Chill, like how to be a better Christian and serve the Lord in a bigger capacity because that's obviously what you guys talk about late at night.

Regardless of how it happened, the entire pack of your favorite food is gone. You've eaten it all. Why? Who can tell me *why* you ate the entire package? Chances are you didn't say to yourself: "I feel like eating an entire package of Double Stuffed Oreos today". So why did you eat the entire pack of Oreos, which we know isn't good for our health to do, and will leave us with an upset stomach and pants that are a little too tight?

Because they taste good! You ate - or, I ate - the entire pack of Oreos because Oreos taste dang good. You wouldn't have eaten them all if they were nasty. No one "accidentally" eats an entire bag of spinach or broccoli - even though that *is* the better thing for you to eat a big bag. No one accidentally does that, because vegetables don't taste anywhere near as good as Oreos, or Cheetos, or BBQ Chips do. That stuff tastes good, so you easily can eat it all.

And sin tastes good, too. (*Gasp! Did she just say that?!*) Of course sin tastes and feels good in the moment. No one would sin if it didn't. Can you imagine if the things we do that we know we shouldn't do *weren't* pleasing and *didn't* feel good? You wouldn't do them, then! You wouldn't struggle with sin! We could all pack up and go home! No one has to force themselves to sin like they have to force themselves to eat the whole bag of spinach, because sin is not like spinach; sin tastes good. In the bible, this is called the "**fleeting pleasures of sin**" (Hebrews 11:25).

I'm going to shoot it straight with you guys for a second. Is that okay? In church, we often like to put on a face and a front and act like sin isn't enjoyable. "*Pshh, gossip? I would never gossip because gossip isn't fun*" said no one ever. It feels good to gossip about people. It feels good to hear some dirt about other people, instead of it being you! If it wasn't enjoyable to do, no one would do it and we wouldn't have to tell you guys not to gossip. It feels good and fun to go to a party and get drunk - I'm just keeping it real with you guys. If it weren't fun, no one would do it. There is something in us that enjoys that. You don't really have to force someone to party and get "lit". Why are so many people smoking weed? Because it feels good to smoke weed. Why do people look at pornography? Because it feels good to look at pornography. We've talked about how it

triggers the reward center in your brain. It releases certain pleasure-inducing chemicals in our bodies. It feels good to look at porn.

Sin feels good. Sin is enjoyable. The bible tells us, **“Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant”** (Proverbs 9:17). Even the bible points out that sin tastes good. Sin is like eating an entire bag of Double Stuffed Oreos, or Cheez-Its, or Fruity Pebbles.

And you want to know why sin is so enjoyable? I think because that's the only way the enemy can lure you into it. The devil doesn't have a pamphlet with the “Top 10 Reasons Why Looking At Porn is Good For You”. He doesn't have a sales pitch on how sin can improve your life. He doesn't have statistics showing the positive impacts of sinning. All the devil has got to go with is that it feels good. That's all he can work with. That's all he's got. Which, in reality, isn't much.

And that's why he's got to lie about it.

I want to quickly look at the first time in human history that people turned to sin. Who knows where I am going to ask you guys to turn to in the bible? Adam and Eve! We're going back to the very beginning. Turn to Genesis 3 with me.

In Genesis, God has just created the heavens and the earth, He's spoken life into being, He's created plants and animals - all of that good stuff - and He's created man and woman. And Adam and Eve, the first man and woman out here representin', have been given this beautiful land and all that is in it to take care of, and to grow, and to build up. They have been given more than they could have dreamed of themselves, except for one tree in the middle of the garden that they're in. God said to them, **“You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden - except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die”**. That's a direct command from God on what *not* to do. They have free range of everything else, except one tree. And what do they do? I think you already know, but let's read Chapter 3 to see.

### **Read Genesis 3:1-13**

So this is sin's first-ever sales pitch to human hearts right here. We have the devil, disguised as a serpent, talking to Eve in the garden. And what does the devil do? He lies. The Bible tells us that the fruit looks good. Verse 6 says, **“the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a *delight to the eyes*, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise”**. It looked good. We already know that all the devil has got to work with to lure Eve into sin is that the fruit looks good.

But he needs more than just that, so he lies to her about what sin has to offer, just like he lies to us about what sin has to offer. He tells her, “You won't die if you eat that.” Flat out lie, right there. The moment they ate the fruit of sin, they were spiritually dead. All that good stuff they had going for them was dead and gone. The devil left that part out, didn't he?

And there's a lot that the devil leaves out about pornography, too. He has to lie about it, in order to keep you. We know that while pornography may look good and it may feel good, the enemy leaves out the part about it causing us to become addicted, where we can't stop watching it even if we wanted to, even when it *doesn't* look good or feel good anymore. The part about how it twists and distorts how you view people of the opposite sex gets left out too. The part about how it will change the way you might view your kids one day gets left out.

We are like Adam and Eve in the garden. God gave us sex, just like God gave them more trees and food and fruit than they could have asked for! God gave us sex, and declared, "Here you go! I've come up with something pretty good. It's called sex. You'll figure it out, trust me. It's great! It's good! But hey, one rule please? Just have sex with ONE person, the person you marry. That's how this whole thing is going to work best. That's how I've wired you. I'm giving you all the sex you could ever want, when you want - but just do it with the one person I created for you. Ok?"

And what do we do? We listen to the lie of the devil, whispering in our ear: "God didn't *really* say only have sex with your spouse, did he? But you love your girlfriend. You love your boyfriend. God didn't *really* say you couldn't look at pictures or videos of people having sex, did he? God didn't really mean that. *You won't get hurt. It will be fine*".

And it didn't take long for Adam and Eve to experience the aftermath of their sin. The bible tells us the immediately, they felt shame.

It's interesting that the first thing they realized and felt shame about was their nakedness before one another. The Bible says, "At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness" (Genesis 3:7) They were ashamed of their bodies, because of their sin. They suddenly viewed each other differently. They immediately went from a person that the other loved, to just a body that the other person could use. There was shame.

We fall for the scheme of how sin looks and for how sin feels, forgetting that sin has a whole other side to it that the enemy never mentions in his sales pitch. Yes, gossip feels good in the moment - but it can destroy friendships and relationships. Yes, smoking weed feels good in the moment - but it can definitely open the door to harder drugs and situations you can't get out of yourself. Yes, watching pornography feels good in the moment - but there is a *wave* of negative affects mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically, that can impact your life, many of which we've already covered. There is shame.

So how do we guard our hearts, then? Sin looks good and feels good and the enemy likes to lie to us - how the heck are we supposed to not fall for it?! It can almost feel like were always on an episode of Punk'd, but instead of Ashton Kutcher popping out, it's the devil!

## Group Activity:

I want us to take some time today, together, to come up with ways we can guard our hearts. Clearly, we know that this is something we can't do alone. I can eat a whole package of Double Stuffed Oreos all by myself, but *this* is something I can't do alone! Strengthening our hearts and minds to protect ourselves against the devil's lies is something we *shouldn't* do alone. We're better when we're learning from one another, and so I want us to take some time to learn from each other, today.

I have a couple passages of scripture, because every action plan we come up with should be based out of the Word of God. I'm going to give you a scripture, a piece of paper and something to write with, and a package of Double Stuffed Oreos to eat with you group while we talk (it wouldn't be a true brainstorming session without some food, am I right?). You're going to have 5-10 minutes to read the passage and discuss how it applies to guarding our hearts against pornography. Then, choose one representative whose going to share with us what your group came up with. Are you ready? Let's do this!

### Scriptures for Groups:

- 1. Matthew 5:27-30** - "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."
- 2. Philippians 4:8** - "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."
- 3. Proverbs 4:20-22** - "My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh."
- 4. John 5:5** - "Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"
- 5. James 5:16** - "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."
- 6. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** - "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But

pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

7. **Romans 8:26** – “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

## **Conclusion:**

We’ve talked about the damage pornography can unleash in our lives, and together we’ve talked about ways to protect ourselves from falling for the “pretty packaging” of pornography and the lie the world tells us about it – but I want to end with an encouragement for you.

We know the story of Adam & Eve. They messed up. They believed the lie, and experienced the consequences. Perhaps you have your own “Adam & Eve” experiences. In fact, I know you have your own experiences like that, of falling for the trick, biting into the fruit, and experiencing the shame.

But I want to end by reminding you of Jesus. We know that, although there was sin and shame, there is also forgiveness and redemption. For every time we sabotage the picture with our sin, Jesus is able to repaint it with his grace.

I want to share with you a verse from the Book of Joel. It’s a prophetic message from the Lord, and what this means is that, in this verse, God is speaking through a man to bring an important message to his people. It’s a message that still has significance for us today. The verse says, “I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord our God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame.” (Joel 2:25-26)

God is essentially saying that he will restore all that has been destroyed, and he will do this through Jesus. We’ve spent this month – and we are almost done, but still have a few more things to touch on – talking about the damages of porn and the ways that it destroys. But Jesus can restore what sin and pornography have destroyed in our world and in your life. Jesus can bring healing to broken relationships, freedom from addiction, restoration to our minds, and grace that covers shame.

Let’s pray.