

My Journey Into Darkness and Secrecy

By John Cozart

My journey actually began when I was a young boy. While visiting over at a friend's house in my neighborhood I was exposed to pornographic magazines belonging to my friend's father. The magazines were laying on the end table in plain view for all to see. It has been nearly forty years since my first exposure and those images have never left me. Throughout my teen years and into adulthood I would find many more opportunities to view pornography.

For me, viewing Internet pornography started with a curious search, *Playboy*, *Penthouse* etc... I recall clicking on links to find out where they would lead my wondering eyes. It seemed that with every click of the mouse the material would become more sexually explicit. It was though I was on a journey to the center of the earth going deeper and deeper except in my case the center would not be the core; I would later discover that it was hell.

When I first started to view Internet pornography, I must admit that I was shocked at how sexually graphic the images were. I had never seen or even imagined that this even existed and yet here it was, before my eyes, on my computer screen and far more graphic than I had been exposed to in magazines.

At first my visits were brief, I didn't want my wife to catch me looking at this stuff.

Late at night I would return to my computer in my secluded little office located in my home. My visits to porn sites became longer and my search for hardcore sex became more intense. I really didn't see the harm in viewing a little porn now and then. "I'm not hurting anyone", I thought to myself.

It's difficult to put into words the intense high that I felt while viewing porn. Well, this behavior became very addictive and went on for several years. During my secret journey, I maintained my status as loving husband, father and committed church leader.

I was so caught up in porn that I was blind to the fact that the intimacy that I once had with Christ had been snuffed out. I had also failed to notice the toll that my addictive behavior had taken on my relationship with my wife, my children and my friends. I had become disconnected from everyone who mattered in my life.

Finding My Way Back

I remember the overwhelming guilt that would come over me after viewing porn. I was a liar and a hypocrite. How could I continue living a double life? Was I truly a Christian? Was my love for my wife and children real or a lie? I hated the man that I had become.

I would pray, I mean really pray asking God to forgive me and take this desire from me. I recall being sexually pure for several days perhaps even weeks at a time. I remember thinking, could this be it, have I turned the corner and finally put this behind me?

Then something would happen either with work or at home that would leave me feeling somewhat depressed. It never failed that during these low points I would always find myself alone in my home. I was lured to the computer like a lamb to the slaughter. It became a vicious cycle.

Looking back, one of the biggest mistakes that I made when I started my own business in 1992, was setting up my office in my home. As it turned out, I was home more during the day than my wife who was a stay at home mom. My situation played right into Satan's hands.

I was so sick and tired of my double life. I desperately wanted to get back the intimacy that I once had with Christ. I had been taken captive and I wanted to be set free.

In the fall of 2005, a good friend of mine from church gave me a CD titled *Somebody's Daughter, Confronting the lies of pornography*. I listened to that CD over and over. The spoken testimonies, the songs and the thought of being sexually pure, oh how it spoke to me. That is when I decided enough is enough. Make no mistake about it; God orchestrated the placement of *Somebody's Daughter* into my hands. God is the one who has brought me up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay (Psalm 40:2).

Somebody's Daughter introduced me to what I believe is one of the keys to sexual purity, for me to make a covenant with my eyes (Job 31:1). In other words, I was to look away from the sensual and not allow my mind to draw any sexual gratification from anything other than my wife. Another verse mentioned on the CD that has meant so much to me in my battle for sexual purity is Eph. 5:3 from the NIV translation, "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people"

For the first time in my life I have had to define sexual immorality. I have had to take a close look at my life and in doing so; I have come to realize that in many areas there has been more than a hint of sexual immorality.

I will always have to guard against my eyes honing in on the sensual in my surroundings. For I know that my eyes are the portals through which sexual images enter my mind.

October of 2006 marked my one-year anniversary of being set free from the bondage of Internet porn. My passion for sexual purity has lead me to start a new ministry with the mission of helping churches and families combat the harmful effects of pornography. My prayer is to raise awareness about pornography in the local churches across America and in doing so I hope to help restore the intimacy between God and those who are held captive by sexual sin.

If you are serious about sexual purity, isn't it time that you put your foot down and say enough is enough. I would encourage you to get a copy of the CD *Somebody's Daughter*. What a great resource to have. I believe that every man should have a copy of *Somebody's Daughter*. You can purchase this powerful CD at www.musicforthesoul.org God has given us all that we need to win this battle over sexual sin. I believe that you too can win this battle, one day and one victory at a time.

May you find strength in HIM,
John Cozart