

Somebody's Daughter:

60 An Interview with Steve Siler



Pornography . . . demeans you and the people you look at, and it grieves God.

Why are you writing songs to confront the lies of pornography?

Seven years ago, I got a call from a friend of mine, a committed believer who was married to a beautiful young woman and the father of two precious little girls. He was struggling with pornography. I prayed with him, offered to be an accountability partner, and attended sex addiction meetings with him. In the midst of this struggle, we wrote the song "Somebody's Daughter" together.

Through research, I found that pornography is a growing problem in the church and in our culture. And I soon discovered that several more friends were wrestling with this issue. Though I had never thought of pornography as a personal struggle, I began to examine my past behavior; and I did not like what I found. It was time to set a godly standard for my thoughts and my eyes.

Is it possible for a teenager to avoid pornography in our society?

Teenagers in our culture are dealing with an unprecedented flow of sexual material. The Internet, cable TV, commercials, movies, billboards, magazine ads—it's everywhere. What's a hot-blooded teenager to do? Here's my advice:

- Make a commitment to God about the way you live.
- Realize that all people—male and female—are precious creations of a Holy God, to be cherished and honored for who they are on the inside.
- Decide how you will deal with inappropriate sexual images *before* you see them.
- Surround yourself with friends and mentors who will reinforce good decisions and hold you accountable.
- Get Internet protection for your computer; and keep your computer and TV in a pass-through room in the house, not in a private bedroom.
- Don't do anything you wouldn't do if Jesus were sitting next to you—because he is.
- If you slip up, remember that God is forgiving and redemptive. You are a human being, and human beings make mistakes. Come clean with God and move on. Don't let guilt win out.

What can you tell teenagers who think pornography is harmless?

- Pornography is not entertainment. It demeans you and the people you look at, and it grieves God.
- Pornography is not a victimless crime. Ask yourself, *How would I feel if other teens were looking at my mother, my sister, or my girlfriend in this way?*
- Pornography is addictive. It is also progressive: The more you see, the more you need to see. The images are difficult to forget, and repeated exposure can lead you to act in violent ways.
- Pornography will affect your behavior, attitudes, and relationships. After being intimate with a non-responsive one-dimensional figure, people often lose their ability to function in a sexually healthy way with a real human being.
- Pornography creates separation from God. Can you look at pornography on Saturday night and look God in the eye on Sunday morning?
- Pornography is counterfeit, a false picture of the sexual experience God intends for us to have within a committed, loving marriage.

What can teens expect when they take the risk to seek help?

The process of bringing what's hidden into the light of truth is freeing and can open you to everything God created you to be. Of course, it takes courage for a person to talk about their struggles with pornography. My hope would be that everyone who does will be met with unconditional love, grace, and mercy—for that is Jesus' response to us.

I encourage teens to open up to a trusted adult or counselor in their area. They may also contact the Heart to Heart Counseling Center, which has a telephone counseling service at 719-278-3708, or one of the agencies listed on our website—www.musicforthesoul.org. We will connect them with someone who will show them love, hope, encouragement, and support.

Steve Siler is a Dove Award winning Contemporary Christian songwriter and Executive Director of Music for the Soul.

NEXT DAY Stretch 61

"I have made a covenant with my eyes." —Job 31:1a (NRSV)
What covenant will you make with God regarding your eyes?
Perhaps this song will become your prayer:

I'm drawing a line in the sand
I will look away
Turn my eyes in faith
And redefine what it means to be a man
Trusting what you have for me is so much more
I commit my eyes to you, Lord.

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