

## **Sexual Addictions and Pornography**

Although the precise terminology may be disputed, there is growing evidence that behavioural patterns and brain changes in excessive sexual behaviours and practices may be similar to those seen in the mainstream addictions. In this session we will explore some common patterns of sexual ‘addiction’ and different approaches, within a biblical framework, to care and counsel. We will ask how our churches can be more realistic in engaging with the sexual revolution around us, and ask how we can help ordinary Church members, young and old, to better ‘guard their hearts’.

**Glynn Harrison** is Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, University of Bristol, UK, where he was a practising consultant psychiatrist and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry. He preaches locally and speaks widely on issues of faith and psychology, neuroscience and psychiatry. He is especially focused on supporting men’s ministries and fostering the development of Christian leaders and pastors.

**Emőke Tapolyai** is a marriage and family counsellor. She received her M.A. in Clinical Pastoral Counselling from Ashland Theological Seminary, a division of Ashland University (Ashland, Ohio, USA). She is a member of the American Association of Christian Counsellors (AACC) and the Hungarian Association of Sexologists.

### **I. Pornography**

#### A. A cultural revolution

#### B. The drivers of changing attitudes and moral standards

##### 1. The 60’s sexual revolution

##### 2. Queer theory

#### C. Biological and Behavioural Models

D. Biblical models:

1. Lust: sex in the wrong context
2. Idolatry: sex for the wrong purpose

E. Interventions

1. Confession, repentance, acceptance and renovation
2. Capture with a better vision
3. Behavioural controls
4. Re-building intimacy skills

F. Case Study

**II. Escaping into Sex: the concept of sexual addiction**

A. Main characteristics

B. Reasons for help-seeking

C. Common patterns of development

1. First experience

2. Reminded experience

3. Conscious use of relief

4. Habitual use

D. Concept of Dependency as pain relief/escape

E. Core longings:

III. Treatment Approaches

A. Guilt and shame

B. Importance of listening to the story

1. Recurring patterns of false convictions, inner lies/vows etc.

2. Some foundational lies

C. First phase of recovery (healing) process

1. Story

2. Pain killers

3. Uncovering woundedness and unmet needs

4. Grief and loss

5. Self-medication issues

6. Embracing truth

D. Second phase of recovery/healing process

1. Support and 'standing by'

2. Encouragement

3. Staying with the process

4. 'deep anxiety' and the recovery of the 'Image of God'

IV. Case study

***Final Buzz Session: How might social media use lead to patterns of addiction and dependence, similar to those we have observed for substances, alcohol?***

***Suggested Readings (pornography):***

1. Struthers W (2009) *Wired for Intimacy: how pornography hi-jacks the mind* IVP Books
2. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3050060/> [technical piece from US national Institute of Mental Health]
3. Chester T (2012) *Closing the Window* IVP books (good biblical, general resource)
4. <http://www.covenanteyes.com/blog/struggling/resources-for-men/> [lots of good advice on living free of porn]

***Suggested Readings (Sexual addictions)***

1. Wardle, Terry (1994) *Wounded*. Christian Publications, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania
2. McGee, Robert (1990) *The Search for Significance*. Houston, TX: Rapha Publishing
3. Struthers, W (2009) *Wired for Intimacy: How pornography hijacks the male brain*. InterVarsity Press
4. Wilson, Sandra (1991) *Released from Shame: Recovery for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families*. Downer's Grove. IL: InterVarsity