

CRAFTING AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING PROGRAM FOR PASTORS STRUGGLING
WITH INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY IN VIEW OF PSYCHOLOGY AND SCRIPTURE

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Abstract

This study lays the framework for a restoration program for WELS pastors who struggle with internet pornography use. Statistics demonstrate an annual rise in pornography usage among clergy. Because of the personal shame involved, one-third of clergy never mention their struggles to another. Recent studies have noted sexual addiction is arguably the most difficult addiction to break, leaving many sex addicts feeling hopelessly snared in pornography's trap. Recognizing the signs of an addictive person, together with understanding ritualization and rationalization patterns, lays the foundation for counseling on a personal basis. Coupling this knowledge with Scripture aids the mentor in determining the fallen pastor's eligibility for the pastoral ministry. Understanding these various components affirms that restoration will not come easy. Personal beliefs must be realigned. Intimate, direct contact with a mentor fosters an open environment for confessing struggles and failures. Recognition of personal sin permits effective counseling to occur. A mentor enforces personal accountability in the form of personal devotions, assignments, and lifestyle changes. Mentorship stands as a personalized restoration program which specifically caters to a pastor's personal struggles. Such an approach will not only help eradicate the addiction, but will restore the pastor to live a godly and upright life.

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Introduction

Imagine keeping a very dark, very personal secret deep within yourself. Your mind is tormented with countless images which drive you into shameful actions. Your spouse does not suspect you have a problem; your children do not know anything is wrong. Yet, you cannot shake the nagging notion that you have somehow failed the family who loves you, and you sink deeper into despair.

You know that you have sinned against God by doing something you thought that you would never do. So, you promise that you will never go down that dark road again, only to fail a few hours later. Now the despair is overwhelming. Your conscience piles on more shame as it accuses you for doing something that no honorable pastor would do. In fact, the mere thought of being around other pastors leaves you wondering if you are the only pastor who has done the things you have done. Yet, you are certain that no one understands the problem you battle. You feel guilty and ashamed, and wonder if your problem means you have disqualified yourself from the privilege of serving in the public ministry and if it should result in your resignation.

So, you isolate yourself, hoping that no one ever discovers your problem. This feels like the best choice to keep the various dimensions of your family life intact and guard your reputation. Now, you are convinced that you can overcome this struggle on your own. After all, you are a pastor. You have helped others; you can help yourself. Tomorrow is the day when you will finally end your addiction.

Entering your workspace, you turn on your computer and prepare yourself for the day's tasks. Moments later, you find yourself browsing websites that you know are wrong. Nevertheless, you just cannot move yourself to close the browser. Your mind quickly moves you to act. You feel a rush of euphoria. Soon, the happiness subsides, plunging you deeper into despair. Here, at this junction in life, you desperately wonder if you will ever break free from using internet pornography.

This account of the pastor struggling with internet pornography is fictional, but other real-life accounts exist.¹ However, this illustration reveals a real dilemma weighing heavily on the minds and hearts of many pastors. A survey conducted in 2000 by Christianity Today reports

¹ See, for example, The Sex Addiction Treatment Guide, "Confessions of a Sex Addict," <http://www.sexaddictiontreatment.org/sexual-addiction/confessions-of-a-sex-addict/> (accessed February 11, 2013); Fireproof Ministries, "Men—Confessions," <http://www.x3confessions.com/men/confessions/archive/> (accessed 11 February 2013). For specific examples of clergy struggling with pornography, see, User-submitted [pseud.],

33% of clergy say they have visited a sexually explicit website; of those who have visited such websites, 53% say they have visited the sites a few times in the past year, 18% of clergy said they have visited explicit websites between a couple times a month and more than once a week.²

While this survey did not poll the pastors in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), a recent interview with a district president revealed that 30% of all resignations within his district during his ministry were cited as “for cause.”³ Ten percent of those resignations have been directly related to the use of internet pornography. The same district president noted a growing trend of internet pornography usage among WELS clergy.⁴ Other interviews have expressed similar concerns.⁵

The statistics highlight that internet pornography is a problem among pastors. In addition, the grim fact that “among the clergy who use internet pornography, 30% do not talk to anyone about their behavior”⁶ is extremely troubling. Again, this statistic does not specifically account

comment on “Men—Confessions: Pastors... and porn,” The Confessions Blog, comment posted February 18, 2013, <http://www.x3confessions.com/men/confessions/pastors-and-porn.html> (accessed February 18, 2013); User-submitted [pseud.], comment on “Men—Confessions: Scared to Death,” The Confessions Blog, comment posted February 18, 2013, <http://www.x3confessions.com/men/confessions/scared-to-death.html> (accessed February 18, 2013).

² Leadershipjournal.net, “The Leadership Survey on Pastors and Internet Pornography,” quoted in Covenant Eyes Internet Accountability and Filtering, “Covenant Eyes Pornography Statistics,” Covenant Eyes, <http://www.covenanteyes.com/2010/01/06/updated-pornography-statistics/> (accessed January 20, 2013).

³ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012. Caution must be taken when considering this statistic. Each resignation is handled directly within each respective district and personal reasons for resignation are not shared with the other districts. The Eighth Commandment protects the reputation of all people—including those who have resigned from the pastoral ministry. Therefore, no specific data involving the definite number of synod-wide resignations due to internet pornography usage exists, nor is it possible to obtain.

In WELS, six types of resignation are noted: (1) personal reasons—not in the area of Table of Duties, (2) physical, mental, and emotional health reasons which hinder faithful ministerial work, (3) cause: persistent adherence to false doctrine, not living above reproach, or willful neglect of duty, (4) inability to serve (demonstrated by inability to perform the duties of the office), (5) position is eliminated, or (6) for the good of the ministry (something may have taken place which does not disqualify from service, but it has so shaken the confidence of God’s people that continued service there would not be good for the ministry of the gospel).

⁴ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012.

⁵ Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012. The name of interviewee is withheld by mutual consent, interview by author, Brown Deer, WI, October 27, 2012. The name of interviewee is withheld by mutual consent, interview by author, Mequon, WI, November 13, 2012.

⁶ Leadershipjournal.net, “The Leadership Survey on Pastors and Internet Pornography,” quoted in Covenant Eyes Internet Accountability and Filtering, “Covenant Eyes Pornography Statistics,” Covenant Eyes, <http://www.covenanteyes.com/2010/01/06/updated-pornography-statistics/> (accessed January 20, 2013).

for WELS pastors. Therefore, some might argue that WELS pastors who use pornography⁷ keep their sin secret. Others might contend that if pastors keep the Eighth Commandment, then any knowledge about successful correction would not be shared. Therefore, no one truly knows how extensive the problem is or how many actually reach out for help.

These arguments hold some merit; however, they still ignore the knowledge of rising pornography use. The very existence of these statistics demonstrates that a resource must exist to restore the fallen individual. If such sexual sinning continues unhindered in WELS, the synod may be placing itself at risk by not monitoring a potential threat. Not only can the pastor cripple the ministry of the church and damage the faith of his parishioners if he is caught, but he also allows sin to wage war against his own soul. Silence on the issue offers no assistance to the pastor who is snared in pornography, but remains troubled over his sin and truly desires help.

Pastors may use pornography and recognize their sin. Some might even identify the need for outside help because pornography proves to be a habitual sin. Oftentimes, they do not know where to confess their sin and receive assistance in breaking free from pornography's bonds. They must understand a haven for help exists. Therefore, framework for a restoration program must be developed in which a repentant pastor accepts the invitation to pair with a qualified, pastoral mentor and confess his sin without the fear of immediate resignation.

The mentor⁸ serves as a therapist to treat the addiction. By researching and arriving at the proper understanding of what constitutes sexual addiction, the mentor can identify the issues that drive the client⁹ into pornography use. He will then know how to best address his client's ritualization process and indicate what triggers the client to search for pornography.

Diagnosing these mental problems is only one part of the equation; the mentor must also understand what Scripture says on the matter at hand. Both 1 Timothy and Titus give a list of qualifications for the called pastor to follow. After analyzing the extent and habitual use of his

⁷ For the sake of brevity, the rest of this essay will use the term "pornography" to refer to "internet pornography."

⁸ From this point on, the term "mentor" will refer to the WELS pastor who does not struggle with internet pornography and desires to help the fallen. Note that the term "counselor" does appear at certain points. This essay understands a counselor as someone who has received formalized training or certification in a specific field of psychological study; whereas the mentor has not.

⁹ The pastor who struggles with internet pornography and receives counseling will be referred as "client" throughout this essay. This properly reflects a mentor-client relationship. Note that the term "pastor" will be used at various places throughout the essay. This term refers to the called and qualified individual in the pastoral office who may or may not struggle with pornography.

client's sexual misconduct, the mentor is better suited to deliberate his client's eligibility for the pastoral ministry.¹⁰

Coupling Scripture with the understanding of psychological factors allows a mentor to probe the client's personal beliefs so that effective counseling might occur. This method enables the mentor to apply specific portions of Scripture to assist his client battle temptation, as well as help him make lifestyle changes in order to remain sexually chaste. Mentorship counseling can restore the client to a God-pleasing life and to a guilt-free ministry.

Following the literature review, this thesis will propose a framework for establishing the mentor-client relationship. Understanding what has already been written and what sexual addiction involves permits an accurate application of Scripture to the realm of addiction.

Literature review

In 1983, Patrick Carnes broke new ground by introducing the study of sexual addiction.¹¹ Up to that time, very little was written about the topic. Because this is still a relatively new area of research, few written resources exist. Only a handful of authors stand as credible, certified sexual addiction therapists. Many other psychologists are familiar with sexual addiction, but will ultimately defer to the knowledge of the experts.

Even less literature has attempted to harmonize Scripture's qualifications for the pastor with the psychological study of sexual addiction. As a result, two different approaches have been taken: one side presents an exegesis on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 only to pass over specific Sixth Commandment issues, while the other side lays out an extensive study on sexual addiction only to omit Scripture's principles concerning the pastoral ministry.

¹⁰ While the mentor does not determine his client's eligibility for the ministry unilaterally, he might recognize (after several counseling sessions) and ask his client to prayerfully reconsider his present call in the pastoral ministry (with the input of other synodical leaders [e.g., the circuit pastor of his respective circuit and/or the district president of his respective district]). If it proves that pornography is a sin which has mastered him, the client may have to resign in order to receive counseling by a licensed sexual addiction therapist. When this kind of situation occurs, the circuit pastor and district president will be involved in determining the eligibility of the client. (This truth is more fully expounded upon later in the essay).

Interview with my home district president, interview by author, February 22, 2013: "[Understand that] the authority for addressing (and even bringing about) an end to one's service in the public ministry rests with the Praesidium of a given District. Often the circuit pastor will also be involved. The use of a mentor (outside of the circuit pastor and/or Praesidium) to address such an important issue becomes problematic if the matter is of such nature that one has disqualified himself from serving in the public ministry."

¹¹ Clifford L. Penner, and Joyce J. Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, vol. 26 of *Resources for Christian Counseling*, edited. by Gary R. Collins (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1990), 276.

WELS has traditionally determined a candidate's eligibility for the pastoral ministry by applying the Biblical qualifications of being "above reproach" and "blameless" (1 Ti. 3:2; Tit. 1:6, 7). Scripture's authority gives WELS confidence in their calling and assigning of a pastor. "Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3—With Practical Application for the Ministry"¹² briefly treats the Greek grammar and syntax, but leaves its readers craving for more direct applications to the pastor already serving in the ministry. "The Pastor Must Be 'Above Reproach': An Examination of *anepilhmptov* (1 Timothy 3:2) and *anegklhtov* (Titus 1:6) with Application to the Public Ministry of the Gospel"¹³ thoroughly defines *ἀνεπίλημπος* ("above reproach") and *ἀνέγκλητος* ("blameless"), and sets forth the criteria in determining how a pastor remains *ἀνεπίλημπος* and *ἀνέγκλητος*. The word study concludes that the pastor's behavior must not violate an "offense factor" and "trust factor" either among his congregation or the secular world. Valleskey's work addresses the sexual sins of adultery and homosexuality, but does not offer specific Biblical application to pornography use.

Some writers have foregone an exegetical study of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and have dealt directly with resignations from the pastoral ministry due to public sin. By taking this approach, the writing often comes off as generalized in application, thus leaving vagueness about determining resignations in more specific situations. "Scriptural Principles Concerning Called Workers Who Commit a Public Sin"¹⁴ and "Proposition: Public Sin Demands a Public Response!"¹⁵ both handle the public response that must be made when a called worker's sin is reported to the secular public, but do not mention the scandal which comes from being caught using pornography. John Brenner's "What is a Minister In the WELS?: Theology, Qualifications,

¹² Paul A Stuebs, "Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3—With Practical Application for the Ministry," (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, delivered to the Dakota-Montana Pastoral Conference, April 1-2, 1975), <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1870> (accessed October 17, 2012).

¹³ David J. Valleskey, "The Pastor Must Be 'Above Reproach': An Examination of *anepilhmptov* (1 Timothy 3:2) and *anegklhtov* (Titus 1:6) with Application to the Public Ministry of the Gospel," (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File), <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1142> (accessed September 12, 2012).

¹⁴ Glenn H. Unke, "Scriptural Principles Concerning Called Workers Who Commit a Public Sin," (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, delivered to the Manitowoc Pastoral Conference, November 16, 1992), <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1478> (accessed October 17, 2012).

¹⁵ David Scherbarth, "Proposition: Public Sin Demands a Public Response!" (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Manitowoc Conference, April 3, 1989), <http://www.wlssays.net/node/2076> (accessed October 17, 2012).

History, and Current Practice”¹⁶ presents a general overview of the doctrine concerning church and ministry, ultimately drawing application to WELS’ system of training, calling, and approving candidates for the pastoral ministry. Mischke’s “The Call to the Public Ministry with Special Reference to Termination and Reentry,”¹⁷ Bivens’ “An Examination of Current Practices Pertaining to the Call and Public Ministry,”¹⁸ and Habeck’s “What Disqualifies a Pastor or Teacher For the Ministry”¹⁹ all advance Brenner’s focus by highlighting the varied reasons for terminating a call in WELS. Each work emphasizes the careful digestion of information and facts before a governing body receives a resignation from its pastor. While the four latter works explain the process of issuing a call, none of them address specific scenarios calling for resignation as does “A Scriptural Study of the Eligibility for the Service in the High Office of the Holy Ministry.”²⁰ This work extensively covers the qualifications and eligibility for the pastoral ministry. While it lightly mentions Sixth Commandment issues, it affirms that only Christ’s church determines the eligibility of the pastor. However, a general treatment of resignations in the parish leaves an unsettling silence on whether a pastor can continue serving after using pornography. (This might be the cause for the unwritten, understood notion of immediate resignation for offenders, a belief which circulates among many in WELS).²¹

Now, to be fair, many of the aforementioned authors do not address the abuses of the internet because it is a relatively new phenomenon in our current society. The internet’s

¹⁶ John M. Brenner, “What is a Minister In the WELS?: Theology, Qualifications, History, and Current Practice,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Nebraska District Convention, June 17-19, 1996), <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/270> (accessed October 17, 2012).

¹⁷ Carl H. Mischke, “The Call to the Public Ministry with Special Reference to Termination and Reentry,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File), <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1471> (accessed October 17, 2012).

¹⁸ Forrest Bivens, “An Examination of Current Practices Pertaining to the Call and Public Ministry,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Metro North Pastoral Conference, November 16, 1998), <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/172> (accessed October 17, 2012).

¹⁹ Irwin J. Habeck, “What Disqualifies a Pastor or Teacher For the Ministry,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Dodge-Washington Pastor-Teacher Conference, January 25, 1980), <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/737> (accessed October 17, 2012).

²⁰ Paul Reede, John Schneidervin, Joel Schroeder, John Strackbein, and Elton Stroh, “A Scriptural Study of the Eligibility for the Service in the High Office of the Holy Ministry,” <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1581> (accessed October 17, 2012).

²¹ The name of interviewee is withheld by mutual consent, interview by author, Mequon, WI, November 13, 2012.

inception date is just under 30 years old.²² Therefore, articles located on the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) essay file written before 1995 do not provide much assistance in this particular field of research. While each essay offers valuable insights on the pastoral qualifications for the ministry, the time has come for special attention to focus on the existence of pornography in the pastoral ministry.

“Resignation From the Parish Ministry: Causes and Remedies”²³ seeks to bridge the gap between Scripture and psychology by recognizing the need for the availability of counseling to every WELS pastor. Lindholm’s extensive treatment regarding the causes of resignation from the ministry provides valuable insight in preventing their occurrence. However, Lindholm is not a sexual addiction counselor, nor does he attempt to be one. Thus, he does not specifically address the prevention or treatment of a pastor using pornography.

Patrick Carnes stands as the giant in the field of the classification and treatment of sexual addiction. In *Don’t Call it Love: Recovery from Sexual Addiction*²⁴ and *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*,²⁵ he theorizes that sexual addiction stems from childhood trauma which results in a sexual acting out during the adolescent or adult years. He attempts to work restoration by identifying an individual’s personal shame and then by correcting its cause. “Four Key Dimensions for Distinguishing Internet Infidelity From Internet and Sex Addiction: Concepts and Clinical Application”²⁶ and “Structural Therapy With a Couple Battling Pornography Addiction”²⁷ address how sexual addiction facilitates internet addictions, but fail to

²² Public Broadcasting Station, “Birth of the Internet,” <http://www.pbs.org/transistor/background1/events/arpanet.html> (accessed January 27, 2013). The website states, “In 1991, National Science Foundation (NSF) first allowed commercial use of the Internet. In 1995, NSF removed its funding completely, leaving the Internet a self-supporting industry.”

²³ Oliver H. Lindholm, “Resignation From the Parish Ministry: Causes and Remedies,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Minnesota District Pastoral Conference, April 16, 1985), <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1407> (accessed September 12, 2012).

²⁴ Patrick J. Carnes, *Don’t Call it Love: Recovery from Sexual Addiction* (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1991).

²⁵ Patrick J. Carnes, *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction* (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2001).

²⁶ Katherine M. Hertlein and Kathryn E. Jones, “Four Key Dimensions for Distinguishing Internet Infidelity From Internet and Sex Addiction: Concepts and Clinical Application,” *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 40 (2012): 115-125.

²⁷ Jared A. Durtschi, Jeffrey J. Ford, and Darrell L. Franklin, “Structural Therapy With a Couple Battling Pornography Addiction.” *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 40 (2012): 336-348.

suggest any method for correcting the sexual addiction. Most alarming about all these works is the secular approach they employ. All three define pornography according to a humanistic classification instead of Biblical prescriptions. In fact, these secular writers consider religious overtones as being a cause for sexual addiction, rather than a solution for restoration.

As a result, Biblical counselors have studied Carnes' research, applied his psychological stances to their counseling methods, but have rejected his claims about religious overtones as being a problem. "Sexual Addiction and the Internet"²⁸ briefly summarizes Carnes' research and interjects Scripture within the counseling process. However, the brevity of the article leaves the reader wondering if more can be said about treating sexual addiction, and more specifically, to those addicted to pornography. "Understanding and Treating Sexual Addictions"²⁹ thoroughly discusses whether sexual misconduct is compulsive or addiction-driven. Penner and Penner's rendering provides clarification on a rather confusing subject. Also, their list of helpful resources provide Christian counselors with additional materials to confer. "Dealing with Addictions through the Twelve Steps with Godly Principles"³⁰ modifies the traditional Alcoholics Anonymous "Twelve-Step Approach" in order to place the emphasis on the Savior's forgiveness. This resource gives the mentor a tool to promote soul-searching conversation and reveals Christ to the client so that meaningful correction occurs. *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*³¹ and *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*³² provide a wealth of insight in book form. Gallagher uses Scripture to reveal the spiritual issues involved in sexual addiction. He acknowledges that sexual addiction stems from emotional deficiency, but believes that Christians must address the spiritual issue of the sin. His greatest weakness lies in his charismatic approach where he urges the client to feel the Holy Spirit working in him to produce a change of heart. As a result, much

²⁸ Sabrina D. Black and LaVern A. Harlin, "Sexual Addiction and the Internet," in *Counseling for Seemingly Impossible Problems: A Biblical Perspective*, ed. Lee N. June and Sabrina D. Black (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2002), 33-52.

²⁹ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 276.

³⁰ Annette V. Hampton, "Dealing with Addictions through the Twelve Steps with Godly Principles," in *Counseling for Seemingly Impossible Problems: A Biblical Perspective*, ed. by Lee N. June and Sabrina D. Black (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2002), 53-66.

³¹ Steve Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry* (Dry Ridge, KY: Pure Life Ministries, 2000).

³² Steve Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict* (Dry Ridge, KY: Pure Life Ministries, 2004).

of his therapy emphasizes a client's personal, experiential change from within instead of being guided by the Word.

While such counselors have much to offer, none deal with counseling the client to the extent that *The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Laypersons Free from Sexual Addiction*³³ does. Laaser and Earle strive to deal with the aftermath of sexual addiction, not with the prevention. It is arguably the greatest non-Biblical resource a pastor can read, serving as an excellent resource on rearranging and correcting an individual's relationship with his spouse and personal life. Unfortunately, like many other authors, it fails to specifically mention and treat the addictive nature of pornography.

Psychological analysis aids the mentor in understanding his client's struggles; whereas Scriptural principles provide effective framework for restoration. Examining 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 with an eye towards the pastor who has used pornography will help determine his eligibility for the pastoral ministry. However, before Scripture is studied, it would be of greater benefit to begin by understanding the world of sexual addiction.

The anatomy of sexual addiction

It has already been noted that studies in sexual addiction are a relatively new undertaking. As a result, no universal consensus exists in defining sex addiction.³⁴ This leaves many counselors divided in classifying sexual misconduct as either compulsion or addiction, or if all misconduct is diagnosed solely as addiction.

Some counselors distinguish between the two terms because they fear overusing the term "addiction."³⁵ Therefore, they define compulsion as "a habit or behavior that an individual finds himself engaged in that can be cured and left behind forever."³⁶ An addiction, then, is "a habit

³³ Ralph H. Earle and Mark. R. Laaser, *The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Laypersons Free from Sexual Addiction* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2002).

³⁴ Hertlein, and Jones, "Four Key Dimensions," 116-117. For examples of how sexual addiction is defined differently by various counselors, consider Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 19. He defines sexual addiction as "a constellation of unbiblical habits of thinking and acting that have become a lifestyle." Carnes, in *Out of the Shadows*, 14-15, links the common characteristics sexual addiction shares with alcoholism. Compare also Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 274: "Simply stated, when a person lacks control of sexual behavior, that person is struggling with a sexual addiction."

³⁵ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 277.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 277.

that has a lifelong hold on the individual and will be a lifelong struggle.”³⁷ However, Carnes admits that a “lifelong struggle” is a vague term which does not accurately determine if an individual can be classified as a sex addict.³⁸ Carnes continues:

The addiction is truly a system where behavior is interdependent. There are constantly shifting patterns that weave together the various levels of sexually compulsive behavior and that may include other addictions and emotional disorders. The driving force for each cycle comes from a faulty belief system translated through delusional thought patterns. In general, systems are self-perpetuating, and the sexual addiction as a system is just that.³⁹

What prevents other counselors from forming two distinct categories in sexual misconduct is the fact that sexual climax releases a very powerful neurotransmitter called dopamine.⁴⁰ This chemical release allows the brain to achieve a euphoria that relaxes both mind and body. It is also noted that periodical release of this hormone cannot continue throughout life. The body will demand an ever-increasing amount of the substance, thus moving the addict to increase sexual release in order to obtain this euphoria.⁴¹ The grim truth quickly surfaces: the craving for dopamine can be attained solely through the body. No outside, illegal drugs are needed; the addict only needs a sexual stimulant to attain this high. One does not need to be a diagnosed compulsive or addicted individual to attain this release. As a result, most scholarly literature does not distinguish between sexual compulsion and sexual addiction. To follow suit, this essay will refer to sexual misconduct as an addiction.

Carnes has observed ten signs which best depict the habitual actions commonly associated with sexual addiction:

1. A pattern of out of control behavior
2. Severe consequences due to sexual behavior

³⁷ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 277. Rebecca Plath, a sexual addiction specialist, says, “A compulsive act is something an individual does without considering its effects and an addiction is a stage when the individual’s brain automatically signals and demands for a release dopamine” (interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012).

³⁸ Carnes, *Don’t Call it Love*, 29.

³⁹ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 74.

⁴⁰ The effects of dopamine on the body are similar to the effects cocaine has on the body. Both substances affect the same part of the brain and are highly addictive. According to Plath, dopamine is the most powerful hormone the brain can release. Carnes *Out of the Shadows*, 88, also agrees in describing the hormones released during the arousal process as “some of the most powerful neurochemicals in the brain.”

⁴¹ Carnes. *Don’t Call it Love: Recovery from Sexual Addiction*, 30. Compare with Durtschi, Ford, and Franklin, “Structural Therapy” 338.

3. Inability to stop despite adverse consequences
4. Persistent pursuit of self-destructive or high-risk behavior
5. Ongoing desire or effort to limit sexual behavior
6. Sexual obsession and fantasy as a primary coping strategy
7. Increasing amounts of sexual experience because the current level of activity is no longer sufficient
8. Severe mood changes around sexual activity
9. Inordinate amounts of time spent in obtaining sex, being sexual, or recovering from sexual experience
10. Neglect of important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of sexual behavior⁴²

The term “sexual addiction” need not be alarming when one understands the fluidity of Carnes’ ten signs to diagnose someone as a sex addict. Be aware that all ten signs do not have to be present in order to classify a sex addict.⁴³ Some signs might be obviously present while others are absent. Some individuals might demonstrate one or two signs and others display all ten. Also, note the leniency involved when classifying someone as an addict. For example, what constitutes “a pattern of out of control behavior”? What one counselor concludes may not be the judgment of another. In short, how closely someone follows the ten steps does not determine if he is a sex addict. Rather, the steps taken towards reaching the goal of sexual fulfillment is a major determining factor.

When a person is driven by sexual lust, he follows an order of progression to attain neurochemical stimulation. The individual might not be cognizant of his actions, but a repetitive pattern (or cycle) is observed:

1. *Preoccupation*—the trance or mood wherein the addicts’ minds are completely engrossed with thoughts of sex. This mental state creates an obsessive search for sexual stimulation.
2. *Ritualization*—the addicts’ own special routines that lead up to the sexual behavior. The ritual intensifies the preoccupation, adding arousal and excitement.
3. *Compulsive sexual behavior*—the actual sexual act, which is the end goal of the preoccupation and ritualization. Sexual addicts are unable to control or stop this behavior.
4. *Despair*—the feeling of utter hopelessness addicts have about their behavior and their powerlessness.⁴⁴

⁴² Carnes, *Don’t Call it Love*, 11-12.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁴ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 19-20.

Simply classifying addicts according to the four-stage cycle is not enough; still another dynamic comes into consideration.⁴⁵ The frequent use of this sexual cycle must be observed. One individual might go through these four steps, but acts out sexually only once a week. Another person might advance through these stages multiple times per day. So, while both addicts' actions correspond to the cycle above, their behaviors suggest different intensities of sexual addiction.

Because of this, Carnes divides the sexual addict's behavior into one of three levels. A level one addict is someone who "experiences episodes in which they simply sexually binge. Then they stop for weeks or even months."⁴⁶ An example would be the addict who dabbles in or spends large amounts of time searching for pornography and then masturbates. A level two addict is someone whose actions victimize others and thus his "addictive behaviors are sufficiently intrusive to warrant stiff legal ramifications."⁴⁷ Such actions include engaging into sex with prostitute, exposing oneself to strangers, or daily searching for consenting sexual partners. Level three addiction defines a behavior that violates significant boundaries.⁴⁸ Rape, incest, and child molestation are evidences of such behavior.

Observing the frequency and type of sexual behavior allows the counselor to understand the motives which drive the addict. However, caution must be exercised when attempting to determine into which level a certain individual falls:

The levels of addictions are arbitrary concepts. They serve, however, to show the wide range of behavior included in sexual addiction. While our discussion did not extend to every possible form of the addiction (e.g., bestiality, sadomasochism, and fetishism were omitted), the levels provide a basic strategy for understanding any sexually compulsive behavior. Most important, the levels make explicit the pattern created by the relationship between behaviors.⁴⁹

The discussion so far has examined physical actions—the act which is summarized as the release of dopamine through repetitive patterns.⁵⁰ There remains a discussion concerning the

⁴⁵ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 37-38.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵⁰ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 277-278.

addict's rationalization of the sexual process. Simply stated, the individual might understand that his actions are wrong, but still continues to act out. His failure to live a chaste life plunges him into despair, only to leave him searching for the pornography that has always uplifted his mood.⁵¹ Notice Satan's spiritual warfare through sexual temptation:

His wayward thinking convinces him that no one is able to help him—including God! Religion is often used by the addict as a co-addict to perpetuate his addictive pattern. In the addict's view, God is a part of the addictive system because it is God—along with his father, mother, and society—who carries the big stick and makes him feel guilt and shame. This is true despite the fact that the great majority of the addicts we deal with in our practice come out of the conservative, evangelical community, and hold to its belief system. When the addict first comes for help, God is not seen as an ally but as an adversary. Prayer is not seen as a resource but a source of guilt. The Scriptures are not seen as a message of solace and hope but rather as one more authority telling him that he is worthless. The Holy Spirit is not experienced as a Comforter but as an accuser who keeps confirming from inside the addict that he does not measure up.⁵²

In the end, every step of the cycle only intensifies the addict's fear for failure. Ignoring such actions does not lend help either. The individual is likely wrestling with the shame of defiling his body. The battle's result leaves the individual submersed in isolation.⁵³

Present-day society fosters an environment which permits numerous triggers to stimulate the individual's craving for sex. Psychologists have noted the prevalent sexuality in mainstream media. Television, music videos, lyrics, and movies increasingly objectify women.⁵⁴ An individual might be oblivious to this fact, but is still subliminally impacted by these sexual messages. Yet, before one sees physicians as the protectors of sexuality, it would do well to note

⁵¹ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 19.

⁵² Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 289.

⁵³ Confer Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 23-25: "The addict is caught up in the task of keeping his secret life from affecting his 'public' life. [...] This unending struggle to manage two lives—'normal' and addictive—continues. The unmanageability takes its toll. [...] One of the worst consequences of the addiction is the addicts' isolation. The intensity of the double life relates directly to the distance of the addicts from their friends and families. That is, the more intensely involved in compulsive sexual life the addicts become, the more alienated they become from their parents, spouses, and children. Without those human connections, the addicts paradoxically lose touch with their own selves."

⁵⁴ American Psychological Association: Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, "Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls: 2010," <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report-full.pdf> (accessed October 16, 2012), 4-12. Compare with Carnes, *Don't Call it Love*, 77: "The glamorization of sex extends far beyond women's magazines in which a female's self-worth is contingent upon her looks and men's magazines in which a male's self-worth is contingent upon his ability to seduce good-looking women. It extends beyond commercials which use sexual turn-ons to sell, soap operas with unending sexual sagas, and gossip oriented media with the latest tales to tell."

that many advocate for frequent masturbation as a coping mechanism for stress.⁵⁵ In an era where culture is shifting towards normalizing any sexual endeavor, the addict who already struggles to control his bodily cravings is left fighting an uphill battle.

The internet proves to be the greatest vehicle for obtaining pornography. Recent statistics reveal that pornography is the fastest growing search word since the internet's inception.⁵⁶ A 2006 review discloses that internet pornography had become the fastest expanding resource in the adult industry.⁵⁷ Plath also echoed these grim statistics which Carnes had shared with her:

Dr. Carnes had just finished a lecture. The class was leaving the room when a group of well-dressed men came to the front of the room and held a private conversation with him. Their appearance demonstrated that they were respected among their peers, but we were leaving and didn't know exactly who they were. Sometime later Dr. Carnes told me that these men were executives either from Google or Yahoo—they didn't specify which company they represented. They explained to him that their statistics demonstrate a booming growth of pornographic searches on their search engines.

People are getting addicted to pornography. In fact, these men told Dr. Carnes that the adult entertainment industry sets up its websites in such a way to hook the individual and drag him into the deeper recesses of pornography. At first, a certain pornographic image appears harmless. The individual figures that he will look at it once and then never access it again, but that's all the companies need. In the end, a seemingly innocent search which took only a few minutes of time has now morphed into a significant portion of time frantically scrounging for just the right pornographic image.⁵⁸

The internet is seldom the cause for sexual addiction; it simply intensifies the already existent problem.⁵⁹ The internet holds limitless data which can be obtained by anyone anywhere and at anytime. The excitement of what the internet contains serves as the gasoline to increase the burning fire of lust.⁶⁰ Carnes notices that the presence of the internet alone can serve as a trigger for receiving the hormonal high that comes from sexual climax. The whirring of the

⁵⁵ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 38-40. In his writings, Carnes sees masturbation as healthy and natural.

⁵⁶ Covenant Eyes Internet Accountability and Filtering, "Covenant Eyes Pornography Statistics," <http://www.covenanteyes.com/2010/01/06/updated-pornography-statistics/> (accessed January 20, 2013). This statistic was also confirmed by Rebecca Plath (interview by author, Milwaukee, WI, November 2, 2012).

⁵⁷ Free Speech Coalition, "A Report on the Adult Entertainment Industry," <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/6117965/Free-Speech-Coalition-WHITE-PAPER-A-Report-on-the-2006> (accessed January 20, 2013).

⁵⁸ Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Milwaukee, WI, November 2, 2012.

⁵⁹ Hertlein and Jones, "Four Key Dimensions," 118. Compare with Durtschi, Ford, and Franklin, "Structural Therapy," 338.

⁶⁰ Carnes, *Out of the Shadow*, 86.

router, the click of the mouse and keyboard, the flicker of the computer screen all serve as objects that signal sexual gratification is coming.⁶¹

Furthermore, any sexual conversations or pictures shared between two parties help nurture the addict's prideful ego.⁶² "The internet provides an equal playing field where both men and women have control and power in their sexual activity, which may not be true offline."⁶³

Sexual addiction demands increasing amounts of time, energy, and resources.⁶⁴ So, it is not uncommon for sexual addiction to spring forth new addictions.⁶⁵ Counselors discovered throughout the years that sexual addiction is covered up or fed through indulgence in other areas of living:

I have found that most people who are addicted to one particular thing also fail to exercise control in other areas of their lives. For instance, overeating is very common among sexual addicts. Others run up credit card bills with complete disregard to the inevitable consequences. Still others may indulge in sports, entertainment, or any number of frivolous pursuits. Often this occurs because the underlying problem is not sexual addiction, but rather the lack of control, restraint, and discipline that comes from a life of self-gratification.⁶⁶

Pastors work in environments loaded with triggers to press them into sexual actions. Many often work in the office alone for long hours at a time, completing high-stress tasks.

⁶¹ Carnes, *Out of the Shadow*, 86-87: "The keyboard, specific Web sites, and even the sound of the modem become eroticized. This becomes a problem for those who must use a computer in their lives. For example, one man became aroused just viewing the Yahoo Web site, knowing the sexually explicit Web sites it could access for him. Anything can become a turn-on, even images and sounds that would not typically be considered arousing. Even the sound of someone typing on a computer keyboard could be considered arousing to some."

⁶² Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 46-47. Compare with A. Cooper, E. Griffin-Shelley, D. Delmonico, and R. Mathy, "Online Sexual Problems: Assessment and Predictive Variables," *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: Journal of Treatment and Prevention* 8 (2001): 267-285, quoted in Durtschi, Ford, and Franklin, "Structural Therapy," 337-338: The cause for pornography use stems from "cop[ing] with stress, participating in activities that would not otherwise engaged in[...] and spending more than 11 hours per week viewing pornographic material."

⁶³ Hertlein and Jones, "Four Key Dimensions," 118.

⁶⁴ Carnes, *Don't Call it Love*, 23-24.

⁶⁵ Hertlein and Jones, "Four Key Dimensions," 117: "In some of these cases, the individual uses the Internet as a medium to fuel other addictions and in only two of the categories is there a reference to a sexually based addiction." Consider also Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 29-30. He discusses that the addiction of overeating or under-eating may come due to the fact that sexuality is closely associated with external physique and appearance. Alcoholism and drug-addiction also preexist or come after sexual addiction because of the addict's desire to overindulge in euphoric hormones.

⁶⁶ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 110-111.

Simply finishing these difficult assignments might not grant the euphoria the body craves. Therefore, masturbation becomes a very real temptation because it promises to relax the mind and body.⁶⁷ For others, the internet presents an opportunity to test their personality in the cyber-world.

However, perhaps God's Word is the greatest trigger. The Sixth Commandment prohibits sexual immorality. Yet, the pastor does not see the commandment as a deterrent, but rather as a dare to defy it. Simply put, a pastor may use pornography for no other reason than that it satisfies his cravings (cf. Ro. 7:7-8). Gallagher explains:

Seemingly, the more forbidden it is, the more alluring it tends to be. [...] Thus, for the Christian who feels pressured to live a righteous life and is constantly struggling to resist the demands of his flesh, it can be overwhelmingly irresistible because of this. Desiring that which is forbidden is part of man's fallen nature.⁶⁸

A Scriptural treatment of pornography in the pastoral ministry

While a psychological overview of sexual addiction helps facilitate an empathetic attitude in seeking to help the addict, the mentor understands that Scripture has much to say about the issue of sex and the divinely called pastor. Here Scripture and psychology intersect. The mentor applies what knowledge he has about sexual addiction and subjugates it to Scripture. Any divergence from God's Word will create a subjective mindset which sets forth a biased standard for determining the worthiness of the pastor.

A word study of ἀνεπίλημτος in 1 Timothy 3:1-2

God has prescribed certain qualifications which determine the eligibility of pastoral candidates and called workers. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, addresses the man who desires to be a ἐπίσκοπος, or overseer, in the church of God. An overseer is a man who supervises the activities in the congregation and is recognized as the leader of a Christian community.⁶⁹ We may equate the position of overseer to our present-day designation of pastor.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 49.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁶⁹ Stuebs, "Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3," 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1-2. Stuebs states that both Lenski and Kretzmann alert the reader to the fact that ἐπίσκοπος ("overseer") is a different office than that of διάκονος ("deacon"). This emphasizes that Paul is addressing pastors here. Confer also Brenner, "What is a Minister In the WELS?" 11: "The terms elder and overseer seem to be used

The pastoral office demands responsibility and accountability. It demands a God-pleasing personal conduct that is beneficial to building up the church of God. Paul clearly establishes this point at the beginning of chapter three by saying: “Ἐἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ” (Author’s translation: “If someone strives [to be] an overseer, he desires a noble work”). The office of the pastoral office is equated as being a noble work. It is noble for a certain individual to dedicate his life to carrying out the responsibilities in this office, including the proclamation of God’s Word to believers and non-believers alike. Stuebs adds deeper insight to this command:

The office of the ministry is indeed a work, a labor, an occupation which is good, excellent, and praiseworthy, not on account of the individuals engaged in it but on account of its goal and purpose, the salvation of souls through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Since the office of the ministry has as its sole objective the salvation of the soul, it goes without saying that the office of the ministry carries with it great responsibilities. Responsibilities which will indeed make it an ‘ergon’, a work, a labor, and a service. Paul therefore highly commends such men [who] aspire to the office of the ministry and who are willing to take upon themselves this labor which God's grace imposes upon them.⁷¹

The office of the pastoral ministry holds a high standard of requirements due to its close association of proclaiming the gospel message.⁷² Yet, before hoards of men line up for the ministry, the apostle Paul lists the necessary qualifications God demands of these overseers. He begins with a command from which qualifications will later follow: δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημpton εἶναι (Author’s translation: “It is necessary for the overseer to be irreproachable”). Paul heads this sentence with οὖν to infer that since something mentioned beforehand is true, certain results must follow.⁷³ The οὖν concludes that since the office of the pastoral ministry is a noble work (as Paul says in 3:1), then some sort of result must follow.

interchangeably in the New Testament [...] The office of overseer or elder would therefore be roughly equivalent to the office of pastor today.”

⁷¹ Stuebs, “Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3,” 1-2.

⁷² Reede, Schneidervin, Schroeder, Strackbein, and Stroh, “A Scriptural Study,” 5: “Discredit upon the office of the ministry prevents effective ministration to precious souls in and outside of the church.”

⁷³ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 673.

Paul continues his writing with δεῖ... εἶναι. The grammar is simple: εἶναι is an active infinitive and functions as a subject infinitive when coupled with δεῖ.⁷⁴ The present tense emphasizes that the action is to be continuous. The overseer must do something; he must continue remaining in a state of ἀνεπίλημpton.

ἀνεπίλημτος is a verbal adjective derived from the root ἐπιλαμβάνω, which means “to take hold of.”⁷⁵ The negative particle ἀ is added to ἐπιλαμβάνω and negativises it.⁷⁶ Thus, ἀνεπίλημτος, when translated into English, means “not apprehended, cannot be laid hold of, cannot be reprehended, not open to censure, irreproachable.”⁷⁷ For the sake of clear English, “irreproachable” is the most accurate translation of ἀνεπίλημτος.⁷⁸

ἀνεπίλημτος is seldom used in non-Biblical literature. “According to Trench, ἀνεπίλημpton, of somewhat rare use in classical Greek,... [is] never [found] in the Septuagint or the Apocrypha.”⁷⁹ In secular Greek Literature ἀνεπίλημτος is used only once. Philo uses ἀνεπίλημτος to describe the way one lives in a public setting.⁸⁰

Scripture employs ἀνεπίλημτος only three times, and each use occurs in 1 Timothy. In 1 Timothy 5:7, Paul instructs Timothy to tell the congregation to aid widows and their own parents. If they do not, they are “open to blame,” or not “above reproach.” ἀνεπίλημτος also appears in 1 Timothy 6:14 where Paul encourages Timothy to stay away from sinful lifestyles and to keep the true faith so that he might be found “without blame” as a public minister of the gospel. Finally, ἀνεπίλημτος appears here in 1 Timothy 3:2. Paul demands that the pastor’s life is free from public shame and disgrace.

⁷⁴ Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, 600-601.

⁷⁵ W. Arndt, W. Bauer, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 373. Confer also Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 1.

⁷⁶ Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 1.

⁷⁷ Arndt, Bauer, Gingrich, and Danker, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 77.

⁷⁸ Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House), 190.

⁷⁹ Richard C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963): 381, quoted in David J. Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach’: An Examination of anepilhmtov (1 Timothy 3:2) and anegklhtov (Titus 1:6) with Application to the Public Ministry of the Gospel,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, accessed 12 September 2012); available from <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1142>.

⁸⁰ Philo *Specific Laws* 3.24.

Paul later lists several qualifications which all fall under the command of remaining ἀνεπίλημπος. For the time being, it is evident from this word study that ἀνεπίλημπος refers to a manner of living of which the public is aware.⁸¹ Neither Scripture nor the early church fathers speak of remaining irreproachable in a private setting. Therefore, it is assumed that the pastor must be “above reproach” in the eyes of his congregation and in the public arena.⁸²

A word study on ἀνέγκλητος in Titus 1:6, 7

In Titus 1:6-7, Paul repeats his instructions to the overseer. These closely resemble the same admonitions listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The repetition stresses the need for the present-day pastor to understand the importance of living a pure life in order to maintain a respectable ministry.

Paul immediately jumps into the qualifications which are sought for in a minister of the gospel. In verse 6 he writes: εἴ τις ἐστὶν ἀνέγκλητος (Author’s translation: “If someone is blameless”). The present tense verb ἐστὶν demands that the state of the overseer remain continuous. In verse 7 Paul writes: δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι (Author’s translation: “For it is necessary for the overseer to be blameless”). The γὰρ serves as explaining something that is to come.⁸³ The δεῖ... εἶναι construction mirrors the construction of 1 Timothy 3:2. The active infinitive, εἶναι, is coupled with δεῖ to act as a subject infinitive.⁸⁴ The present tense emphasizes that the overseer continue to remain in a state of blamelessness “for a specific

⁸¹ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1979), 4:9.

⁸² John Calvin, *Commentaries on The Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, William Pringle, trans. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), 76: “There will be no one found among men that is free from every vice; but it is one thing to be blemished with ordinary vices, which do not hurt the reputation, because they are found in men of the highest excellence, and another thing to have a disgraceful name, or to be stained with any baseness. [...] In order, therefore, that a bishop may not be without authority, he enjoins that there shall be made a selection of one who has a good and honorable reputation, and not chargeable with any vice.”

⁸³ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 673. Confer also Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 684.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 600-601.

reason: He acts as God’s steward.”⁸⁵ He is not to lapse in any of the commands which God instructed Paul to write down.⁸⁶

The overseer is mandated to be ἀνέγκλητος. ἀνέγκλητος is a verbal adjective.⁸⁷ It is derived from ἐγκαλοῦμαι (ἐν + καλέω) which means “to bring charges against, accuse.”⁸⁸ The noun form, which is closely related to the verb, is ἔγκλημα, which expresses the idea of “an indictment or charge brought against someone through judicial proceedings, or the act or action of expressing disapproval.”⁸⁹ Classical Greek usage defines ἀνέγκλητος as “a person or thing against which no accusation can be made, being free of guilt.”⁹⁰ Just like the formation of ἀνεπίλημπος, the negative article ἀ is added to ἔγκλημα negativises it.⁹¹ Thus, ἀνέγκλητος can properly be translated as “blameless, irreproachable.”⁹²

Similar to ἀνεπίλημπος, ἀνέγκλητος is seldom employed in non-Biblical literature. Its only use in the Septuagint occurs in III Maccabees 5:31, where actions seen by the public are said to be “free from reproach, without stain, guiltless.”⁹³ In secular Greek Literature, Josephus uses ἀνέγκλητος to denote blamelessness and innocence in respect to guilt.⁹⁴ Plutarch uses ἀνέγκλητος to describe that a pledge may be taken for blamelessness or purity.⁹⁵ In each case, these three writings underscore the truth that ἀνέγκλητος refers to actions or a lifestyle conducted in the public eye.⁹⁶

⁸⁵Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 313.

⁸⁶Reede, Schneidervin, Schroeder, Strackbein, and Stroh, “A Scriptural Study,” 3: “[...] the word dei= It means ‘it is necessary’ or ‘must.’ It states what follows is necessary or essential.”

⁸⁷Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 2.

⁸⁸Arndt, Bauer, Gingrich, and Danker, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 273.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 273.

⁹⁰Verlyn Verbrugge, ed., *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 127.

⁹¹Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 2.

⁹²Arndt, Bauer, Gingrich, and Danker, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 76.

⁹³Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1:356-357.

⁹⁴Josephus *Jewish Antiquities*, 10.281.

⁹⁵Plutarch *De Stoicorum Repugnatis*, 2.1049-1050.

⁹⁶Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 682.

Scripture uses ἀνέγκλητος five times— a few more times than it uses ἀνεπίλημπος. ἀνέγκλητος appears in 1 Corinthians 1:8 and Colossians 1:22. These two references describe the Christian’s blameless character before God, made so through the forgiveness won for him through the shedding of Christ’s blood.

The other uses of ἀνέγκλητος occur in 1 Timothy 3:10, Titus 1:6, and 1:7. In 1 Timothy 3:10, Paul addresses deacons, not overseers. However, Paul still uses ἀνέγκλητος to stress the [need] to be beyond reproach, in the ordinary sense of common respectability. Thus, in addition to spiritual qualifications, ordinary standards of decency also become preconditions of office in the church, for the sake of the church’s good name in the world.⁹⁷

Finally, ἀνέγκλητος appears here in Titus 1:6 and verse 7. Paul teaches that the office of the holy ministry demands blamelessness from elders and overseers. The use of ἀνέγκλητος in direct connection to the qualifications of overseers is what concerns us in this essay.

An analysis of μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα

Paul has laid forth the command that the overseer is ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος. Now, he attaches the qualification that the overseer is a μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα (Author’s translation: “A one-woman man”). This exact same phrase is listed in both 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6.

This short phrase holds many different interpretations as to its meaning in the context. In the Concordia Pulpit Commentary, Spence presents three interpretations concerning the marital status of the overseer: (1) he remains unmarried, (2) he is not a polygamist, or (3) he does not re-marry after his first wife has died.⁹⁸ Knight III adds a fourth interpretation: the overseer is faithful in a marriage relationship.⁹⁹

Paul’s use of gender specific nouns γυνή (Author’s translation: “wife”) and ἀνὴρ (Author’s translation: “husband”) reference marriage. To tie “wife” and “husband” together is intentional. Most likely, Paul is referring to a “common situation, i.e., of being married and having children, and then spoke of what should be the case when this most common situation

⁹⁷ Verbrugge, ed., *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*, 127.

⁹⁸ H.D.M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, eds., *1 Timothy*, vol. 48, *The Pulpit Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Wilcox & Follett Co., 1917), 51.

⁹⁹ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 157.

exists in an officer's life."¹⁰⁰ Thus, it is understood that Paul does not seek to lay down rules and regulations that the overseer must be married. In fact, Paul states in Romans 7:2,3 and 1 Corinthians 7:9 that marriage is good and permissible for overseers, but he himself did not seek marriage in order that he might devote more of his life and time to the Lord. Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6, Paul neither forbids the pastor to get married, nor insists that the pastor remain unmarried if his first wife dies.¹⁰¹

Regarding the interpretation for prohibiting polygamous marriages, Knight III states the Romans already had a law forbidding polygamy among the Romans, but not the Jews.¹⁰² Once again, the gender exclusive terms (γυνή and ἀνήρ) direct the attention towards marital faithfulness to one spouse.¹⁰³

μῆς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα is phrase used in 1 Timothy 5:9 to express spousal faithfulness. Faithfulness in the marriage is an interpretation held by Theodore of Mopsuestia, who says that the overseer is "a man who having contracted a monogamous marriage is faithful to his marriage vows, excluding alike polygamy, concubinage, and promiscuous indulgence" (cf. Mt. 5:39; 19:9).¹⁰⁴ Liefeld explains μῆς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα as a reference to commitment and faithfulness within the marriage relationship.¹⁰⁵ Stock translates Paul's phrase as a "one woman's man," that

¹⁰⁰ Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 157.

¹⁰¹ Stuebs, "Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3," 2.

¹⁰² Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 158: "In A.D. 212 the *lex Antoniana de civitate* made monogamy the law."

¹⁰³ Ibid., 158: "[...] this statement positively affirms sexual fidelity couched in monogamous marital terminology. It is analogous, therefore, to the command 'You shall not commit adultery,' which is also couched in marital language, but which encompasses other sexual sins, as the outworks of that command in the chapters following Exodus 20 evince." Confer also Stuebs, "Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3," 2: "Paul had good reason for beginning with this qualification. At that time mature men were chosen for the overseership. Men, who as a rule, were married and had families. There were no seminary graduates to call. Many of those chosen for the overseership were converts from paganism. Sexual excesses were very commonplace among the heathen. Converts to the Gospel did not at once become irreproachable in their sexual behavior. Therefore, Paul says that a man who is not faithful to his one wife is to be barred from the office of overseer."

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 159.

¹⁰⁵ Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary*, 119: "It would serve more in a more meaningful way to society, than to just limit marriage regulations for the overseer."

is, a man true to his wife, thus forbidding divorce, but not necessarily forbidding a second marriage if the wife died.”¹⁰⁶

Therefore, it is completely suitable to state that a qualification for the “one-woman” overseer is sexual fidelity which guards against adultery.¹⁰⁷ Yet, Paul’s command to be a *μῦς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα* does not merely pertain to the married pastor, but it extends to the unmarried pastor as well:

Accordingly, the meaning of our present passage is simply this, that *an overseer or elder must be a man of unquestioned morality*, one who is entirely true and faithful to his one and only wife; one who, being married, does not in pagan fashion enter into an immoral relationship with another woman.¹⁰⁸

Determining ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος of the pastor

God’s reasoning behind his demand that the pastor is both ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος is quite simple: the pastor is not to put a stumbling block in anyone’s path (2 Co. 6:3) and must live his life as an example to others (1 Ti. 4:12).¹⁰⁹ The office of the public ministry remains intimately associated with the gospel message. If the pastor openly strays from carrying out the commands of the Lord, then the public eye will surely ridicule the Word of God. The pastor then brings disgrace on the Word and shame to God through his disobedience. To this point Luther writes:

Some theologian of the church might answer: ‘What is it to us what the heathen think or what the papists think? We live in such a way that the church does not judge us, for it is found on love and gladly endures the criticism: ‘You bear it... if a man puts on airs’ (2 Cor. 11:20). The heathen, however, do not do this.’ Paul says: ‘It is especially fitting for you, O bishop, to care what the heathen think about you. You see, you have been exposed in your ministry to men and women. Therefore you ought to live in such a way that the heathen are forced to close their own mouths. This is the way you can gain and convert them. If you live in such a way that you are faulted, you frighten them away and force them to blaspheme the name of God’ (cf. Rm. 2:24).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Eugene Stock, *Practical Truths from the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1983), 185.

¹⁰⁷ Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 289. Compare with Stock, *Practical Truths from the Pastoral Epistles*, 187: “Titus one ‘points to general self-control, though with particular reference to sensual passion.’”

¹⁰⁸ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1957), 121. (Emphasis mine).

¹⁰⁹ Brenner, “What is a Minister In the WELS?” 13.

¹¹⁰ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works: American Edition*, Vol. 28, *1 Corinthians 7, 1 Corinthians 15, Lectures on 1 Timothy*, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1973), 294.

The dominant idea in 1 Timothy and Titus is that the pastor has an untarnished reputation in the public eye.¹¹¹ Therefore, the pastor must examine his life and determine if he publicly abides by the commands of the Word. He must do everything he can to emphasize that the Word he preaches and teaches is the valid Word of God which God declares all humankind (including the pastor) to obey.

However, an honest pastor will recognize that he is far from perfect. Indeed, he recounts his many sins against the Word. Yet, Paul's command that the pastor is ἀνεπίλημτος and ἀνέγκλητος does not mean that he is to be perfect.¹¹² Looking at the context of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, Paul is not reiterating the fact that every human being is sinful (something the Christian already knows), but rather he lays out the qualifications for the overseer of God's church.¹¹³ At the time of his writing, Paul witnessed the conversion of many Gentiles who at one time had indulged in various immoral vices. Now, not only did Paul urge the converts to put off the old self and to put on the new self, created to be like God (Ep. 4:20-24; 1 Th. 4:1ff), but he issued God's qualifications for the pastoral ministry, lest their immoral conduct bring shame to the preaching of the gospel:

“Blameless” in each part suggests that subsequent qualities serve to define this broader standard of blameless. Thus, in a general sense, the qualities explore this measurement of character within a concrete framework that includes a person's domestic, personal (and interpersonal) and ecclesiastical (ministry) spheres.”¹¹⁴

Martin Luther certainly knew that no one, including a pastor, is truly “irreproachable” and “blameless” in God's sight:

Paul is referring to public vices which can be made the subject of an accusation. But this does not mean, does it, that they should be without any guilt at all, without any flesh and blood?... Paul is speaking about public vices, where the state is obliged to say and to give testimony about him that he is doing me an injustice and that the detractor will find

¹¹¹ Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary*, 313.

¹¹² Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 3: “Paul cannot be referring to being ἀνεπίλημτος in the sight of God. For, though according to his New Man *every* Christian is totally ἀνεπίλημτος [and ἀνέγκλητος] in God's eyes, according to his Old Man *no* Christian is ἀνεπίλημτος [and ἀνέγκλητος] before God.”

¹¹³ Ibid., 3: “In the use of these words in the Pastorals, therefore, the emphasis is on what the elder/overseer needs to be in the sight of men, both those in the church and those outside of the church.”

¹¹⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 681.

something to cavil at; that is, he should be the kind of person who cannot be accused openly and publicly. He must pray: ‘Forgive’ (Lk. 11:4).¹¹⁵

The difficulty surrounding ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος is not necessarily its meaning, but rather who determines whether the pastor is ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος. The appointed elders in the congregation have been instructed in Luther’s Catechism and understand how Christians live according to the Ten Commandments and the Table of Duties. The congregation itself is familiar with God’s commands laid forth in his Word. Together, both the elders and the congregation recognizes that a pastor’s actions are truly scandalous when they cause “spiritual harm, of leading or rather misleading someone to be harmed in his or her spiritual life or to fall from the faith altogether.”¹¹⁶ Because the congregation understands God’s Word and sees the life their pastor leads, WELS can say that God has entrusted the church with the privilege of determining who is a qualified candidate for the public ministry.¹¹⁷

This is not to say the secular eye has no weight in determining the eligibility of the pastor. There is a close relationship between the decision of the church and the public perception. Perhaps in the rarest of cases, a non-believing community member might witness the pastor’s sinful action before a member of the congregation does. After seeing this act, the community member soon spreads his report throughout the community. As the account circulates, a member of the congregation might hear it and relay all information to the proper congregational leaders. Again, the leaders of the church will have to determine their pastor’s conduct in the light of Scripture.¹¹⁸ At this point it is essential that the utmost caution is taken when determining the eligibility of the called worker:

¹¹⁵ Martin Luther. *Luther’s Works: American Edition*, Vol. 29, *Lectures on Titus, Philemon and Hebrews*, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1968, 18.

¹¹⁶ Mischke, “The Call to the Public Ministry,” 5.

¹¹⁷ Confer Reede, Schneidervin, Schroeder, Strackbein, and Stroh, “A Scriptural Study,” 4: “[...] we need to observe what is said in 1 Timothy 5:19, ‘Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.’ The question of a minister’s blamelessness or guilt of sin is to be settled by men – two or three witnesses. Finally, we need to observe what Paul told Titus on the island of Crete. In Titus 1:5-6, Paul told Titus he was to ordain ministers in every city *if* any man was above being charged. Titus, and surely those on Crete with him who knew the candidate, had to make that determination. Clearly, then, it is men, the church, who must judge whether the candidate and minister is qualified to serve in the ministry. And the chief standard by which they must judge is blamelessness.”

¹¹⁸ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012: In the case where a called worker does not live above reproach, WELS pastors, circuit pastors, and district presidents employ 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 to determine the eligibility for the public ministry.

But one thing is sure: in a matter as serious as establishing disqualification for the ministry we must be sure that we have our facts straight. The evidence must be solid. None of us can go through life without making some enemies and if someone is out to hang us, he can usually find a rope with which to do it. Therefore we dare not let hearsay or mere supposition or suspicion lead to the initiation of proceedings. If we suspect that someone is guilty, but can't prove it, our hands are tied. We shall commend the matter to the Lord. But if the evidence is clear, we dare not let selfish or sentimental reasons keep us from acting. Souls are too precious.¹¹⁹

Now, the pastor might read over Paul's qualifications and notice that he has not been ἀνεπίλημτος and ἀνέγκλητος in the public eye (cf. 1 Ti. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:6-9). He may have angrily lashed out against his church council during one meeting. At one time he might have held a tense and heated discussion with the teachers in the parish school. He might occasionally show his covetous side when discussing a recent purchase with members of his congregation. For the majority of cases, the public does not perceive these actions as offensive or detrimental to the gospel proclamation and would not consider him disqualified from the public ministry. In these types of cases, Valleskey clears the waters:

Even in the eyes of man (both the church and the world) a person will always be at best relatively ἀνεπίλημτος and ἀνέγκλητος. It would depend, it seems, upon at least two factors: how public the sin is and the nature of the sin. There is, of course, a close connection between the two. In general, the more gross the nature of the sin, the more wide-spread will be the reports of it.¹²⁰

Cultural and social factors will come into consideration when classifying the severity of a public sin. Again, Valleskey underscores this point:

Besides the fact the Lord tells us so, there are at least two other factors involved. For one thing, there is the trust *factor*. A pastor is a shepherd, called to feed and lead and guard the flock. The members of the flock need to have confidence that their shepherd is a good shepherd, one whose word and guidance and counsel should be followed. One whose conduct contradicts his counsel will not inspire the confidence of the flock (or of the "other sheep" that Christ wants to bring into his sheepfold) to follow him where he leads.

There is also the *offence factor*. Permitting someone to serve (or to continue to serve) in the public ministry whose reputation before the church and the world is not ἀνεπίλημτος and ἀνέγκλητος could result in leading someone to think lightly of the sin that appears to be tolerated in the minister of the gospel with the result that the person allows himself/herself to fall into the same sin. We all know what Jesus says about a person who causes someone else to sin (cf. Matthew 18:6).

¹¹⁹ Habeck, "What Disqualifies a Pastor or Teacher For the Ministry," 5.

¹²⁰ Valleskey, "The Pastor Must Be 'Above Reproach,'" 8.

A less than unassailable and irreproachable reputation could also lead others to think lightly of the ministry and ultimately of the Lord Jesus whose ministry it is. St. Paul addresses this issue in the passage cited previously, 2 Corinthians 6:3 (“We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path, so that our ministry [literally, “*the* ministry] will not be discredited”).[...] ¹²¹

Certain sexual actions will disqualify the WELS pastor from the public ministry because of the public nature of the sin.¹²² In fact, some sexual sins are of such a nature that they are not only sinful, but also illegal. The pastor who solicits prostitutes, views child pornography, or forces himself on another man, woman, or child breaks the law of the land. These actions are reported to the governing authorities, arrest warrants are issued, and the pastor is apprehended. The news media reports this misconduct to the surrounding community (or even to the state or nation at large) and soon the event is publicly disclosed. This sinful, illegal action has brought shame to God’s name and has tarnished the office of the public ministry. It has damaged the trust of the pastor’s parishioners. It may have closed the door for any unbelieving individual to ever listen to the Word of God. The pastor engaged in these acts must be removed from public ministry in order to preserve the honor and glory of God and his gospel.

Other sexual sins are not illegal in nature, but are understood by many as being morally wrong. The pastor who engages in homosexuality might not break a public statute; however, his action is detrimental to the public ministry. His congregation understands that the Bible speaks against homosexual actions (cf. Lv. 18:22; 20:13; Rm. 1:18-32; 1 Co. 6:9). Even some public organizations (such as the National Organization for Marriage) understand homosexuality as being unnatural.¹²³ If the unbelievers within a certain organization recognize and uphold the sanctity of a man and woman relationship, how would they look on a congregation in which a

¹²¹ Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 5.

¹²² Scherbarth, “Proposition: Public Sin Demands a Public Response!” 1: “Public sin is any sin which is publicly known by all the people of the congregation. Any sin which everyone knows about is public sin.” Compare with Valleskey “The Pastor Must Be ‘Above Reproach,’” 8: “Some sins on the part of a pastor, particularly gross sins against the 6th and 7th Commandments (e.g., adultery, homosexuality, sexual misconduct with children, stealing), may well make it impossible for a man to ever again be reinstated into the ministry; for they have been of such a nature and perhaps have become so public (after he has been caught) that he could never regain the status of being ἀνεπίληπτov and ἀνέγκλητον.”

¹²³ National Organization for Marriage, “Why Marriage Matters: Seven Scientific Reasons,” <http://www.nationformarriage.org/atf/cf/%7B39D8B5C1-F9FE-48C0-ABE6-1029BA77854C%7D/ProtestantEnglish.pdf> (accessed January 2, 2013).

minister does not hold to the teaching to which he has pledged himself? Again, shame is cast on the ministry.

Since Paul's command that the pastor be a *μᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα* refers to sexual fidelity, it means that the pastor will not involve himself in an adulterous affair. The adulterous pastor has previously vowed his faithfulness and chastity to his spouse. Once this vow is broken, trust is lost. The spouse may feel emotionally broken and unable to carry on the marriage. So, she files for a Scriptural divorce (Mt. 5:32). While the congregation might not have witnessed the act of adultery, it will surely question the motivation for their pastor receiving a divorce. Not only that, if the community hears about the cause for the pastor's divorce, they may very well heap ridicule on the Word of God. The pastor's actions have brought shame to the ministry. Both his congregation and the surrounding community will be hard pressed to get around the stumbling block his actions have placed in front of the Word.

However, there may be pastors who do not engage in homosexuality. Some pastors might never commit adultery with another; others might never be moved to access child pornography. Instead, there remain some pastors who only want to browse for heterosexual, legal forms of pornography. Unlike the public nature of physical sexual acts, pornography is secretive and involves only one individual. Because of this, the question arises: can the pastor continue his ministry if he uses pornography?

Generally speaking, pornography results from lust within an individual's heart. To observe suggestive images, poses, or acts stems from a mind which desires to remove modesty and partake in the activities God grants only to married couples. In Matthew 5:27-28, Jesus equates lustful thoughts with the real act of adultery. In God's sight, lustful thinking unites the two persons into an intimate union only shared in marriage (1 Co. 6:13-17). In the case of pornography, the sexual stimulation the pastor receives outside of marriage intimately connects him with another woman. Ultimately, the pastor, whether married or unmarried, unites with the participant in body even though physical touching does not occur.

Now, if secretary, school teacher, organist, vicar, or parishioner ever catches the pastor using pornography, he is no longer *ἀνεπίλημπος* and *ἀνέγκλητος*. The damage has been done; the public eye of the congregation has seen its shepherd delving into sins they know are wrong and a sin against which he preaches. It would be difficult to see a pastor on Sunday morning who, by his actions, condones the work of Playboy Magazine owner, Hugh Hefner. In a more

common occurrence, it would be difficult for a couple to take marriage advice from an individual who neglects his own wife. A divorced female congregational member might even tune-out sermons because she sees standing before her another man who emotionally harmed another woman.

The pastor very quickly loses much, if not all, validity for his preaching and teaching because the congregation does not believe that he practices what he preaches.¹²⁴ Therefore, his ministry at that congregation is severely crippled and must be healed. More often than not, when the pastor has been caught in a public sin, his resignation quickly follows:

Though in God's eyes a sin is a sin, some sins are more apt than others to render a person no longer ἀνεπίληπτον and ἀνέγκλητον in the eyes of man; for some sins are much more likely to destroy trust and/or cause offence than others."¹²⁵

Could there be a time when cultural trends move the congregation to not take issue with the public sin of pornography and ultimately forgive its pastor? Time will only tell. However, it must be mentioned that a pastor who uses or is caught browsing for pornography is sinning against God's timeless command: sexual release is intended for marriage (Hb. 13:4). If a pastor has been caught in a sexual sin and is repentant, he is offered forgiveness. However, forgiveness does not necessarily equate to a deletion of consequences for his actions. He may still have to resign because of the shame and disgrace his actions bring on the public ministry.

Whether a young man commits fornication with a girl he then marries, or whether he commits adultery with another man's wife, or whether he commits adultery with or without intercourse after he himself is married is a distinction without a difference. All are a sin against the Sixth Commandment. The person has rendered himself ineligible, for the person's entry into the ministry *will give offense to those who know of his sin and thereby bring discredit in their eyes upon the ministry as well.*¹²⁶

The pastor who browses pornography might never be caught by another. Is he, then, still ἀνεπίληπτος and ἀνέγκλητος? Remember, the context and Paul's vocabulary refers to a life lived in the public eye. That being said, just because his sin is unknown to others does not mean that he has not sinned against God. The concern (and prayer by every believer) is that the pastor confesses his sin, ceases from pornography use, puts on the new self, and lives in a God-pleasing

¹²⁴ Reede, Schneidervin, Schroeder, Strackbein, and Stroh, "A Scriptural Study," 10.

¹²⁵ Valleskey, "The Pastor Must Be 'Above Reproach,'" 6.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 10. (Emphasis mine).

manner. In some cases, the pastor might tender his resignation because he recognizes that if his actions are ever discovered, he could cause great spiritual harm to his flock. In addition, he might understand his need for restoration. However, the pastor who ignores this caution stores up mass amounts of potential testimony against him (because pornography may be traced via software).¹²⁷ When the sin is discovered, the potential devastation inflicted on the pastoral ministry in a particular congregation is severe. Luther cautions against hiding sin:

The snare is the certain knowledge and evidence of a crime, which can convince with compelling force. Earlier I mentioned that a bishop can live blamelessly before the world, but not before God. Here, too, Paul intends a blamelessness before the world. It is true that whoever is not sincere in his faith and the purity of his heart does not escape falling into obvious wickedness. If he is greedy, he cannot cover up his greed to keep it from breaking out. If he is proud, he cannot hide and conceal it. It must show. If, then, he can live blamelessly, it is a sign that his soul is blameless before God, but not completely.¹²⁸

Many who allow pornography to enter their lives feed an addiction that demands more and more time. Actions which had lasted for only minutes may soon transform into hours, even entire workdays scrolling through pornographic images.¹²⁹ The pastor could soon realize that his time for work has evaporated. He must cut back on something in his schedule in order to complete his tasks, leaving many ministerial tasks undone. Evangelism calls are not made. Liturgy is stumbled through. Sermons are watered down and read. Bible classes become a fumbling around for an answer. The massive amount of time pornography consumes remains a scary, sober truth.

If the pastor is never caught throughout the entire length of his ministry, he subtly brings disrepute on the ministry. Many in the church and outside of the church might stay away from his congregation because they are aware of its shoddy presentation of the gospel. The pastor's

¹²⁷ The name of interviewee is withheld by mutual consent, interview by author, Brown Deer, WI, October 27, 2012. Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012. Both interviews revealed some pornography addicts viewed adult content on cellular devices with internet capability or installed separate operating platforms on their computer in order to bypass the accountability software. Some accountability software such as SpectorSoft can track pornographic content on cellular devices. However, since some can bypass the accountability software by installing separate operating systems, the mentor will want to cater his questions for his client in order to ensure such software is indeed tracking all of his internet browsing.

¹²⁸ Luther, *Luther's Works: American Edition*, Vol. 28, 295.

¹²⁹ Durtschi, Ford, and Franklin "Structural Therapy," 337-338. The authors clearly explain the increase of time spent searching for pornography. In fact, while not universally agreed upon in the psychological field, the authors claim that sexual addicts will spend upwards of nine hours per day feeding their addiction through the internet.

credibility begins to decrease as many in the congregation see him as incompetent of fulfilling all the duties they have called him to complete. So some may transfer out; others stay, but have their soul malnourished through his poor presentation of the Word.

Still, some might never be caught and will be able properly finish all his tasks. If this is the case, then he must ponder how God views his conduct and how he pairs with God's law. Secrecy to covering up a sin never does a soul well. Not only does scientific evidence prove this, but a guilty conscience proves this. While the pastor attempts to deafen his sexual sins, he permits Satan to prey on his soul:

A grave lapse undermines the effectiveness of a man's ministry as far as the pastoral care of his own people and his efforts to win the outsider are concerned. Furthermore, he is exposed to especially severe temptations of the devil, either to cover up by lying, or to relax principles in doctrine and practice in order to curry favor and to maintain his position or to sink into despair.¹³⁰

Each known instance involving a pastor and pornography must be handled on a case by case basis. In some instances, the pastor daily devotes hours to browsing for pornography. In other occasions, a pastor may wrestle with lustful thoughts which lead him to access pornography once per month. Both scenarios depict varying amounts of time using pornography. A pastor devoting much of his time searching for pornography may have to resign from the ministry because the sin has consumed his being, and he needs time to treat his addiction. A pastor who occasionally loses the battle of the flesh may not have to resign from the ministry because the sin has not mastered him— lesser amounts of time are needed to assist him in his fight against sin. However, pornography cannot be something the pastor utilizes and is immediately considered exempt from resignation. For good reason it is stressed again, each known instance involving a pastor and pornography must be handled on a case by case basis. In determining the eligibility of the pastor who has used pornography, the question must be asked: "Is this an instance where the sin occurred because the pastor lost the battle of temptation, or has he become mastered by the sin of pornography?"¹³¹ The conclusion is not easily reached.

¹³⁰ Habeck, Irwin J. and Armin W. Schuetze. *The Shepherd Under Christ*. (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1974) 3-4.

¹³¹ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012.

Sanctified common sense must be used when applying this question in specific cases, for it is relative and not absolute.¹³²

Qualifications of pastoral mentors

Up to this point, the characteristics of sexual addiction have been discussed and both ἀνεπίλημπος and ἀνέγκλητος have been thoroughly discussed. It has been determined that Scripture permits a pastor to continue his ministry if his sinful actions do not place stumbling block before the public, or stated another way, the pastor is not mastered by the sin of pornography.

A pastor who struggles with pornography needs help. His inability to control the desires of the flesh demonstrates that the Sixth Commandment is difficult for him to obey. In fact, the chokehold of sexual misconduct seems like an unbreakable trap, leaving him frustrated with his lack of progress in abolishing pornography from his life. Failure to abstain from pornography only places extra burdens of guilt and shame on the conscience of the pastor. Here lies the dilemma of the client's dire situation: "For a moment, the addict recognizes that he cannot continue [his sexual addiction]. But the impaired mental process blurs reality with euphoric recall of sexual successes. The addict faces yet again the ultimate seduction: a unique opportunity that, of course, will be the 'last time.'"¹³³ Since the change cannot come from within (because the client holds an incorrect view of God, the Word, and prayer), change must come from outside help.

A mentorship system must be organized and publicized in such a way that those struggling with pornography make use of it. Removing the excuse of the absence of a restoration program will remove the excuse as to why a client cannot obtain help. Many sexual addiction counselors have noted that addicts seek help only after they have reached an unbearable point of despair (sometimes called "rock bottom"). When asked why they did not come earlier, addicts blame the lack of available assistance. Yet, because such addiction treatment centers already do exist, a counselor like Gallagher sees the addict's heart still pining for sexual indulgence:

I have heard people tell me many times that they do not have anyone to confess to. What they were really saying is that they themselves were not desperate enough to seek out someone that might be able to assist them. [...] if a man is determined to break free from

¹³² Paul Wendland, interview by author, Mequon, WI, January 12, 2013.

¹³³ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 23-24.

the hold of sexual sin, he will do whatever it takes. Making oneself transparent to another person is one of the difficult things that must be done.¹³⁴

WELS has already called circuit pastors to serve as the shepherds of other pastors in an assigned geographical area. That man's call not only oversees the work of his neighboring pastors, but also addresses whatever personal difficulties arise. In fact, the circuit pastor is considered as "a father confessor."¹³⁵ Therefore, a pastor struggling with pornography is free to contact his circuit pastor.

However, many hold a common misperception that approaching a circuit pastor or district president about sexual sin equates to resignation. This is not necessarily the case, nor is it found in formal documentation or publication. Oftentimes, the pastor is too anxious about informing another about his struggles because he is fearful of the consequences to follow. As long as this fear persists, he might never come forward about his sexual sin. Therefore, a list of qualified mentors must be created and distributed in order to dispel all apprehensions and excuses of the client.¹³⁶ Gallagher concurs:

However, when a godly man dedicates himself to disciplining the struggling Christian brother, something powerful happens. Truth is imparted. Sin is dealt with head on. The mentor expects change. Most importantly, the man experiences firsthand someone who is walking in the light and confronting him.¹³⁷

WELS pastors who mentor other WELS pastors struggling with pornography are the best method for restoration.¹³⁸ Mentors understand where counseling and the ministry intersect and

¹³⁴ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 63.

¹³⁵ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, February 22, 2013.

¹³⁶ The assumption is that counselors may not necessarily be circuit pastors or district presidents. While these synodical leaders may enlist themselves as mentors, perhaps a pastor (in a non-synodical leadership position) may have more time, opportunity, or ability to counsel to his client. Not only that, those in non-synodical leadership positions may enable more pastors to come forward because they do not have to immediately fear the consequences of their actions. Furthermore, allowing pastors (outside of synodical leadership) to enlist themselves as mentors can serve as a safeguard should a district president or circuit pastor ever need counseling. (Do remember, that coming forward about sexual sin does not automatically guarantee continuing in the public ministry. The extent of the sexual sin must be discussed and evaluated by the mentor, and if necessary, shared with other synodical leaders).

Each circuit within WELS may advertise a synod-approved workshop which trains pastors to become mentors. If WELS does not desire to manage such a workshop the mentoring program may still continue. Individual pastors may approach their circuit pastors and place their names on a list of available mentors. The criteria and qualifications will remain the same as those that would be taught at the workshop.

¹³⁷ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 66.

¹³⁸ Compare Lindholm, "Resignation From the Parish Ministry," 23. He suggests that WELS have a single, full-time pastoral counselor for only WELS pastors: "Should our synod engage a full-time counselor, who would

what to prescribe for spiritual healing. Most of all, they possess a strong and sincere desire to help those struggling under the enormous weight of sexual sin. Mentors serve as sober-minded individuals who do not have the personal guilt of sexual sin or irrational thinking with which to wrestle. They instill accountability for actions. They remain determined to confront the sexual sin head on, apply God’s Word, and guide the client to freedom. They remove the power from the client (so that the sinful mind ceases creating vain deceptions) and grant comfort in knowing that healing can occur. Furthermore, the two pastors share a common educational background and present career—the mentor understands the time constraints and stresses of the pastoral ministry. In some cases, a friendship is already established which may foster an atmosphere of trust and openness. Therefore, he is aptly suited to make specific applications to his client more than other Christian counselors might. The mentor who willingly deals with men who struggle with pornography truly desires to work restoration.

Entry into counseling session with mentors cannot grant the pastor struggling with legal forms of pornography an automatic guarantee to continue in the public ministry. Neither can a restoration model be used to insert a large group of clients, wrench them through a gauntlet, and see who comes out unscathed. Each session will face its own set of challenges. Because of the many variables involved, a mentorship approach promotes personal applications and decisions for each case.

Open to discuss sexual misconduct

Before pastors sign up to become mentors, they must understand that mentorship involves removing their own negative stigma about sexual addiction. Now, WELS might be more aware of the troubles caused by sexual addiction. Celebrities Charlie Sheen and Tiger Woods publicly suffered negative consequences due to their sexual indulgences and have opened the eyes of many to see sexual misconduct as a real and serious problem. Yet, uneasiness about publicly addressing the obvious issue of pornography persists.¹³⁹ Even within WELS uneasiness

specialize in counseling our pastors and teachers? I posed this question to our DP’s and whereas a few of them indicated that this might be a worthwhile position, none of them felt that we should engage a full-time counselor at this time. [...] there would be some question as to this person’s availability on a national basis. And I wonder if enough of our men would use his services to make the position practical.”

¹³⁹ Carnes, *Don’t Call it Love*, 10, 29-30: “We are surrounded by the signs of sex addiction yet still resist its reality. We can accept that people can be sick with alcoholism or can destroy themselves with gambling or food—but not sex. There are some who see the problem clearly but hesitate to call it an addiction. They choose words like “compulsive” or “hypersexual”—yet they have absolutely no problem calling compulsive gambling an addiction. Why is there so much resistance to recognizing the clear signs of sexual addiction?[...] The cultural expectation that

exists. Perhaps Valleskey adequately summarizes why the discomfort exists: “Are we tempted, perhaps, to single out one or two as worse than all the others, e.g., sexual immorality, and to more or less overlook some of the other qualifications?”¹⁴⁰ The only way to treat the addiction is to break through the negative stigmas and address sexual misconduct as it truly is— an addiction (albeit a sinful one).

The first step for any WELS pastor in handling sexual addiction is to remove his own uneasiness about sexual addiction, and the only way to attain this status is to normalize the sin, that is, admit that it can exist in WELS. Understand this is easier said than done. Various reasons exist as to a pastor’s personal disgust with pornography. He may so treasure the Word and despise sin altogether. Perhaps the pastor does not appreciate hearing the term “sexual addiction” in a synod charged with preaching the gospel. Maybe he saw another pastor using pornography, which led him to ponder why and how this sin could exist in an individual who received the same training he did. In other cases, a pastor might fear the disgrace cast on his own ministry because of another pastor’s pornography use.

These are very real concerns, but perhaps not legitimate emotions when viewed in the light of Christ’s forgiveness. The mentor must understand that Satan infiltrates a very private part of his client’s life and uses it to destroy faith in Jesus. Here in lies the key to removing any negative stigmas surround sex addiction: sexual misconduct is sinful, and pastors deal with sins. They are called to reveal the demands of God’s law to lawbreakers and to confer Jesus’ forgiveness to the repentant (Rm. 3:23-24). When sex addiction is acknowledged as it really is— a sin— then law and gospel can be properly administered.

Secondly, the tongue must be tamed. Paul already urges every Christian to cease coarse joking (Ep. 5:4). Joking in a way that objectifies women is not only sinful, but it might unknowingly paint a suggestive image in the client’s mind. He in turn may be led into a sin

‘boys will be boys’ obscures sexual addiction with popular notions of sexual conquest and the good life. In contrast, women addicts report that one of their greatest obstacles to getting help was not being believed because women are perceived as the guardians of morality and not prone to sexually excessive behavior. In earlier times it was also deemed to be manly to be able to control one’s liquor. Many men had trouble admitting they had a problem with alcohol because of how they perceived manhood. Women, on the other hand, were not supposed to have a problem with drinking. It took years before there was wide acceptance of women alcoholics in the health care system. Our cultural stereotypes prevent us from seeing that people are in desperate trouble.” (Is it possible that pastors may be generalized as individuals who never use pornography and are overlooked by those who offer help for sexual addictions?)

¹⁴⁰ Valleskey, “The Pastor Must Be “Above Reproach,” 5.

against the flesh. The mentor who takes Paul's words to heart lovingly recognizes that there might be those around us who cannot handle such joking.

Finally, the pastor's personal (and Biblically rooted) sentiments on masturbation and pornography cannot be voiced in a judgmental tone. The pastor who, in a tactless manner, gives the impression that sexual misconduct is an incredibly despicable sin may unknowingly turn away a struggling brother, and may prevent him from ever approach anyone at all. Instead, the mentor will base his personal sentiments on masturbation and pornography on what Scripture says. In the Word he sees the egregious sin as God calls it, but also knows that in Christ there is forgiveness. Therefore, the pastor who remains open to dealing with sexual sins announces that he is available to help the client.¹⁴¹

Still other prerequisites are required of the mentor. He must be willing to receive and read information concerning the nature of sexual addiction. He will seek to sharpen and hone his counseling skills. Pairing this knowledge with his familiarity with Scripture will equip the mentor to effectively counsel the client.

Maintain confidentiality

Pastors committed to serving as mentors must understand that the client's information disclosed to him must be held in strict confidentiality. Pastors struggling with pornography have a real fear for private confession because they are unsure if they are truly in a safe place. Black and Harlin explain:

Maintaining secrecy is part of the old belief system that needs to be put off. The greatest fear of a person who is in bondage to sex is that they will be found out. Ironically, the greatest way to experience relief is to be exposed [...]

Imagine how difficult that must be! If their greatest fear is that they are going to be found out, then how do they seek help? This is clearly an oxymoron. A crossroads for sex addicts occurs when they wonder, "Is there someone out there who is safe, somewhere I can go to share my shame, guilt, despair, and sin?"¹⁴²

The Lord has blessed WELS with a numerical size which gives it the sense of being a close-knit community. Pastors can easily communicate with other pastors, district presidents, and synodical leaders. Synodical preparatory schools familiarize students with current pastors and

¹⁴¹ Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 146.

¹⁴² Black and Harlin, "Sexual Addiction and the Internet," 48-49.

with classmates who may one day serve in the public ministry. In some cases, a pastor might be part of a large family structure that is well-known by other congregations or synodical leaders.

While such camaraderie among WELS is a tremendous blessing, it can serve as a deterrent for the pastor who searches for a safe haven for confession. Perhaps at a past conference he heard gossip involving another pastor's cause for resignation. He might have overheard pastors openly sharing the sins of other pastors. Whether his judgment serves as a valid excuse for not privately confessing his sin is not the topic for debate here. The concern seeks to ensure a safe place for private confession and the guarantee that information will not be circulated.¹⁴³ The serious nature of the sin will prevent it from becoming conversation at the next pastoral conference. Therefore, the mentor will remain the ever-reliable confidant of his client.

Personal nurturing in the Word of God

The chosen mentor is entrusted with sensitive material. Now he cares not only for the souls of his congregation, but he also tends to the soul of his dear client. He does all he can to prevent Satan from gaining an ever-stronger foothold in his heart. This is certainly a heavy privilege to have, and one he must not take lightly. Therefore, the mentor must continue his devotional work with his Savior. He must drink deeply from the well of Scripture. He must hear grace and forgiveness proclaimed to him, a sinner. To think that Satan will never tempt him into this sin makes him into a great fool. While he may not be struggling personally with the sin of pornography, he must watch himself lest he fall into the same sin (Ga. 6:1). An old Adam still exists, one who strives to pluck Jesus out of his heart.

There is a natural tendency, unless you are fully grounded in the Word of God, to have some mental voyeurism taking place when you hear the sin of others. There are many counselors who experience vicarious pleasure as they listen to their clients share about sexual activities. You don't need every sordid detail of your client's sexual experience. Just to know that it was dysfunction is sufficient.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Confidentiality can only be guaranteed by an outside party who seeks to help, not by the one searching for help. It is not up to the counseling party to mandate that people make use of it. All it can do is simply present itself as a safe haven for confidential help to all who wish to make use of it. Just because a restoration program is publicized does not mean that every struggling pastor will make use of it. Yet, to establish such a list of qualified individuals remains a crucial step to encourage the struggling pastor to seek help. It removes one more excuse as to why the struggling pastor does not seek help and provides one more step to climbing out of the pit of sexual immorality and onto the path of God's commands.

¹⁴⁴ Black and Harlin, "Sexual Addiction and the Internet," 41.

Daily contact and devotional use of the Word equips the mentor to take up the armor of God and take his stand against the devil (Ep. 6:11-18). The Word is the source of strength to take up the attacks of the ancient foe (Hb. 4:12). Its proclamation of Jesus' victory over Satan gives the mentor confidence in his correcting of another (1 Co. 15:57).

Understand the time requirements

The mentor needs to appreciate that counseling may be a labor intensive process; pornography is not easily conquered. Gallagher claims that restoration comes quicker for those who only struggle with masturbation, while more time must be spent with those who struggle for years with his sexual sin.¹⁴⁵ "The further the person has gone down 'The Spiral of Degradation,' the more difficult will be his climb out."¹⁴⁶ Addicts who spend several hours per day browsing for pornography may expect 3-5 years for complete restoration.¹⁴⁷ Finally, though, when applying a specific timeframe for restoration, Carnes offers caution:

What addicts, family members, and professionals want to know is, does it have to take three to five years to rebuild one's life? Could the process be speeded up? No answers exist at this time. [...] It is possible that, with the advent of treatment, the greater experience of therapists, and the growing maturity of fellowships, recovery can move faster. Nonetheless, some aspects of recovery address core developmental issues, which take time to heal.¹⁴⁸

Psychologists and counselors have noted that sexual addiction can remain dormant for many years in the recovering individual, only to come out again years later. As a result, someone who has struggled with sexual misconduct at one time, and has since stopped, can easily revert to his old habits.¹⁴⁹ The mentor must be willing to allot portions of his time to help his client. He

¹⁴⁵ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 126-127, 151-152: Gallagher suggests that sexual buildup, released through masturbation, can stop after five to ten days of sexual abstinence. While this is an unconfirmed hypothesis, it might merit some consideration.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁴⁷ Carnes, *Don't Call it Love*, 187. If a pastor has proven by his time and actions that his restoration will be a labor intensive process which will take several years to complete, he might have to resign from the pastoral ministry. The demands of intensive counseling will undoubtedly consume much of his time otherwise devoted to his ministerial tasks. Furthermore, if his case stands as one where a grave relapse is a very real possibility (or inevitable), then he risks the possibility of being caught by a third party and becoming permanently disqualified for the ministry.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁴⁹ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 129. Rebecca Plath also mentioned that some people may successfully complete therapy, only to relapse later. This could come because the individual was not entirely honest throughout therapy. However, the majority of relapses demonstrate the ensnaring qualities of sexual addiction.

must make himself available with an open-door policy to make the client feel comfortable to reach out for help in his continuing battles against the sinful flesh.

It is difficult to pinpoint just how long the initial meeting between the two might last. It will ultimately come down to the time permitted in each one's schedule. The early stages of restoration will require almost daily contact, which can easily be accomplished through phone or video calls. The hope is that, in time, the frequency of personal contact may decrease from daily to weekly meetings. In short, the first meeting ought not to be the last. The mentor might be an encouragement partner for many years or even for life.¹⁵⁰

A walk-through of the counseling process

Listed below are the components of a suggested restoration model which contrives an artificial interaction between a mentor and a pastor struggling with sexual addiction. While the model demonstrates the ideal conversation in a brief meeting, the mentor must understand the real-life restoration process occurs over many independent sessions. In some cases, counseling might occur in a face-to-face session. Certain circumstances may govern that phone or video calls are a better method for meeting.¹⁵¹ Complete restoration from sexual misconduct is a process and one that will prove rewarding when completed.

Prepare before the meeting

After the meeting has been set, but before the client arrives, the mentor must map out the goal of the session. To enter a counseling appointment without having created a specific long-term and short-term goal will prove to be fruitless.¹⁵² Counseling cannot be an aimless rambling about sexual misconduct. Simply put, "talk is not therapeutic."¹⁵³

The mentor will select portions of God's Word that handles the sin of pornography and proclaims forgiveness that comes through Jesus. An agenda of topics to be discussed may be

¹⁵⁰ There might be special circumstances when the mentor-client relationship will have to be altered. The mentor or client might accept a new call, a mentor might retire or die, or there may be no mentor who can relate to the client. In such cases, a relationship could be built through phone calls, e-mail, or Skype. The client could even "transfer" his struggles over to another pastor upon the death, resignation, or retirement of his former mentor. These are real concerns and will have to be taken as they occur and dealt as they arise.

¹⁵¹ Consider that some pastors are located over one hundred miles away from the nearest WELS church. Others are located in different countries (or continents). For this reason, the two parties involved in the restoration process will have to determine which communication method proves the most conducive for counseling.

¹⁵² David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structure Model* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992) 27.

¹⁵³ Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 75.

printed off and shared with the client. Future homework assignments will be thought out in advance and properly administered at the right time. This kind of careful planning will be helpful steps taken towards complete restoration.

Sign a mutually-binding waiver

The client finally arrives in the office of the mentor. They have introduced themselves, shared some personal background, and are now ready to discuss the matter at hand: freedom from pornography. For the sake of professionalism, the mentor will present a waiver for the client to sign (see Appendix A for an example). A waiver serves as a binding agreement which can be used by a third party to mediate should a dispute occurs.¹⁵⁴

Note that the waiver discloses the expectations of both parties. Guidelines about practices and content, the length and frequency of sessions, and the qualifications of the mentor will be understood by the client. The mentor is to meet his goals; the client will strive to do what is expected of him. Furthermore, the signed document will guarantee confidentiality. The client will understand that “client/penitent privilege states that a cleric may not have to reveal information about a client when heard in a ministerial role especially if the client was seeking absolution through the formal rite of confession.”¹⁵⁵

Finally, the waiver reveals the client’s determination to work towards complete restoration. His signature acts as a pledge to comply with the requirements of counseling. In the case that the client fails to meet the required standards, even after receiving admonishment for his negligent behavior, the case will be taken to another authority.

Ask the tough questions

If the mentor truly desires to help, he must ask the questions that will lead to freedom. Sexual addiction is a deceptive sin and its personal nature can easily keep information hidden. Probing questions will bring secrets to light and motivate the client to change.

¹⁵⁴ The term “third-party mediator” (as used throughout this essay) refers to the client’s circuit pastor of his respective circuit and/or the client’s district president of his respective district.

¹⁵⁵ John C. Johnson, “Counseling, Confidentiality, and the Pastor,” (Mequon, WI: WLS Essay File, presented to the Milwaukee Metro Conference, September 18, 2000) <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1036> (accessed September, 12 2012), 1. Understand that even a waiver might not shelter the client from past and frequent illegal sexual activities. In terms of mandatory reporting [to secular authorities], the pastor may not have to report that his client viewed child pornography if the illegal content is not someone specifically known. However, if the illegal content is someone with whom the counselor or client is familiar, it must be reported. In either case, the mentor will have to decide (maybe with third-party input) if his client has, because of his sin, disqualified himself from the public ministry.

Quality counseling always rests on three legs: an accurate appraisal of the problem, the solution provided by God's Word, and the loving discipleship that will help the counselee live according to that solution. The use of pinpoint questioning that leaves no room for vague generalities is essential to arrive at a correct understanding of the man's struggle [...]¹⁵⁶

A series of closed questions may prevent indecent or explicit information from being disclosed.¹⁵⁷ Although the questions may be personal in nature, they are asked so that the counseling pastor might better understand the intensity of the struggles and to assess the progress of the mentoring. Examples of questions are: Did he look at pornography this week? How long did he watch it? Did he masturbate? Did he simply view it once and immediately crave intercourse with fantasies instead of his wife? Did he hear the world's open use of pornography and reasoned that he might use it in good conscience? Did he claim it functioned as stress relief? Did his heart rejoice in lusting after other women? Was the thought of breaking God's command thrilling? Did he enjoy the thrill of thinking that he could get away with it? Did he commit the act because he believed he could cover it up and get away with it? Was it because he deliberately disregarded God's commands because he placed his selfish ego in the primary place of obedience?¹⁵⁸ This technique forces the client to examine the truthfulness of his heart and it allows the mentor to search for the reason why his client fell into pornography use.

The counselor should ponder the following questions: Does he seem as though he has a lot of spiritual pride? To what degree is he in delusion over his sin? Is he blameshifting or taking responsibility for his own actions? Does he seem sincere in his efforts to change?¹⁵⁹

Probing for answers and reasons behind the use of pornography enables the mentor to better understand at what stage of sexual addiction the client is. Clear descriptions of the preoccupation and ritual phase must be shared.¹⁶⁰ The mentor, who is able to empathize with the pastoral ministry, can then determine the triggers for the use of pornography.

¹⁵⁶ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 75-76.

¹⁵⁷ Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 27.

¹⁵⁸ Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012.

¹⁵⁹ Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 73.

¹⁶⁰ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorder*, 290: "The ideal sequence of the activities the addict would like to act out will reveal the pattern of this thought processes."

A progression from closed to open questions will aid the mentor into probing the client's heart to reveal precisely why he fell into the snare of pornography. Open questions help the mentor understand the triggers involved and what spurred the client into using pornography. "What" questions reveal the content and legality of what was viewed, and the rationale for viewing that specific content. Because "why" questions come off as accusatory and ultimately might shut down the client, "how" questions may be substituted. It will do well for the client to admit what visuals, television programs, radio advertisements, or computer sites that might trigger an impulse to sin against his body.

It is simply not enough to know what processes are involved in reaching sexual climax; still more information must be shared. The mentor strives to see the emotional or physical cause which moved the client to enter the realm of sexual addiction.¹⁶¹ Again, a series of questions may reveal the desired content: "How has he rationalized [his behavior] or distorted reality? How has he provided himself with justifications for what he is doing? How has he played down the impact of his behavior on others?"¹⁶² This direct approach deals with the root issues. The client uses pornography for a reason, and restoration will not come until the core issue is combated. Gallagher says, "The first step toward victory over life-dominating habit is understanding that you are in your present circumstances because of the choices you have made for yourself."¹⁶³ While the sexual sin may have clouded the original motivation in the client's mind, a mentor can remove that foginess and lead the client to take complete responsibility for his actions.

The Word of God is the primary tool in revealing the determining cause for pornography use.¹⁶⁴ The mentor takes the client to the opening chapters of Genesis and reveals how a perfect sexual life is played out in a perfect world is lived out. No pain or sorrow exists. Animals and humans live in perfect harmony together because they are centered on the ordinances of God (1:31; 2:15-20a).

¹⁶¹Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 42-51: Gallagher discloses four primary factors for entering sexual addiction: (1) its forbidden state, (2) to fulfill the ego, (3) reward self, or (4) for the sake of sinful variety.

¹⁶² Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorder*, 291.

¹⁶³ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 103.

¹⁶⁴ Exposing the Word to the client reveals that his actions are truly sinful. The mentor allows the Word of God to do its work, to cut to the heart, to point out and correct the sinful lifestyle. The client who stubbornly and willfully adheres to his sin of internet pornography will have to answer to God as to why he did not listen to the Word and amend his ways (Ep. 4:30; 1 Th. 4:3-8, Hb. 12:16-29, 2 Pt. 2:19).

Adam loved God, but quickly realized he did not have a similar partner (2:20b). God, in his immense love, took a rib from Adam and created a helper suitable for him. This woman was different from all the animals Adam had seen and named, but she was not different from him. He could communicate with her in intelligible ways and she could share and reflect his emotions. She was a perfect partner for him (2:23-24). Adam was to cherish her, fulfill her wants and desires, and place her needs above his own. While God has never explicitly revealed how intimacy was carried out in a perfect creation, undoubtedly Adam would remain faithful to his wife in thought, word, and deed.

This perfect marriage did not last for long. The fall into sin ushered in a blame game. Adam no longer saw his goal as striving to please his wife's every need. Instead, he saw her as a burden and a hindrance to the personal joys he desired (3:12).

God's original intention for marriage remains the standard he employs today. He demands chastity between the marriage couple. The pastor who uses pornography breaks the vow he made to his wife in the sight of God. He has thrust an illicit third party into his marriage (1 Co. 10:16).¹⁶⁵ Just like the married pastor, the single pastor remains accountable for sexual sins against his body (1 Th. 4:3-5, 7-8). God clearly is displeased over pornography, as well as the thoughts and actions which accompany it.

After the client's confession of sin, the mentor proclaims specific forgiveness. This is important for two reasons. First, the mentor assures the client that God can relate to his sin. The years of failure to live a chaste life has built up a storeroom of fear and anxiety that God will never forgive him. The client must understand that God is not an adversary to his recovery, but a helper who has already served him through Jesus and someone who remains willing to help.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012: The wife must be notified about her husband's pornography use, and it would be wise for the couple to enter marital counseling. While this essay does not address methods for counseling the pastor and his spouse, other literature and therapists offer effective couples counseling. (See, for examples of counseling the pastor and his spouse, Earle and Laaser, *The Pornography Trap*).

¹⁶⁶ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 130. Compare with Earle and Laaser, *The Pornography Trap*, 125. Mark Laaser explains that many pray to God for deliverance from sexual temptation, but still fall into sin. They do not believe their prayers were answered, so they get angry with God. By looking to God and Jesus' death on the cross, pastors discover "that [our] personal brokenness has led to a deeper understanding of what it means to really trust God, to turn our lives over to His will. This is the movement from head knowledge to heart knowledge."

Specifically citing the ways the God-man Jesus perfectly obeyed the Sixth Commandment provides true comfort for the weary heart.¹⁶⁷

Secondly, the client must remain confident of his forgiven status in God's sight. So, the mentor directs the client to the complete satisfaction Jesus obtained on the cross. The mentor must hold this cross of Jesus before the client's eyes. Because of Jesus guilt is quashed; spiritual strength is restored. The client sees Jesus and understands that God is for him, not against him.¹⁶⁸ Therefore, he knows that he can go to God in prayer and receive the strength to fight the battles of his sinful flesh.¹⁶⁹

The mentor must understand that a continual proclamation of forgiveness must accompany the client throughout the entire restoration process (and even beyond). There will be doubting thoughts which infiltrate the client's mind.¹⁷⁰ Satan strives to prick the conscience and drive the repentant child of God into despair. Thoughts of unworthiness or fears of not being forgiven in God's sight will flood the mind of the client. He needs to hear from another that his sin is forgiven. He must receive the assurance that pornography is not an unbreakable trap. He must know that Jesus is in control over the sin and has freed him from its clutches.

Whenever guilt rises, the mentor will hold out Christ's real and unchanging forgiveness, won for him on the cross (Jn. 1:29; Rm. 3:23-24; 2 Co. 5:19-20).¹⁷¹ The forgiveness which flows from Calvary's hill certainly washes away this sin, just as it does his other sins. Even when droves of doubt plague his mind and he feels the chief of sinners because of the shamefulness of

¹⁶⁷ Ponder how meaningful it is that the Father sent Jesus into the world for that brother who struggles with pornography. Jesus lived as true man. He lived in human form so that he could be the perfect sacrifice for sinful mankind (Hb. 2:14-15). Jesus never committed adultery, never browsed pornography, never lusted after another woman, and never masturbated. He obeyed the Sixth Commandment perfectly. Surely Satan tempted him to break the Sixth Commandment and gratify himself sexually (Mt. 4:10ff; Hb. 2:17-18). Yet, Jesus bent his will to meet his Father's perfect commands and remained without sin. This includes completely harnessing his sensual emotions. At Calvary, Jesus died as the Substitute for all people in the world (2 Co. 5:19-20). He died for those who lust and browse porn, paid for those sins with his life, and stilled God's righteous anger (Hb. 9:28).

¹⁶⁸ Earle and Laaser, *The Pornography Trap*, 127: "If we believe pain and loneliness are unique to us, we can get very depressed and angry. If we believe we are not alone, that even God in Christ understands that pain, the burden becomes much lighter."

¹⁶⁹ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 122-123.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

¹⁷¹ Penner and Penner, "Understanding and Treating Sexual Addictions, 290: "Some addicts are in such despair over their actions when they come for help that they may be depressed or even suicidal."

his sin, the mentor must instill the truth: “You are forgiven through Jesus. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

Encourage cross bearing

The client might never entirely be free from lustful thoughts and sexual desires. This might be his cross to bear in life. In some cases, this cross may suggest that the pastor resign from the public ministry because he sincerely fears that his actions will never be truly kept in check. For others, the temptation to gratify the sinful nature will be extremely fierce. Some days he might wish to indulge in his old ways because he simply does not find it worthwhile to continue obeying the commands of his Lord or the temptation seems too strong to resist.

Many counselors have noted that clients have read the Bible through temptations, only to have fallen into temptation.¹⁷² This leaves the client feeling as though God has not answered their prayer and has broken his promise to deliver them from temptations (1 Co. 10:31). Ultimately, the client feels completely powerless and inept to ever overcome the temptation.

The mentor wants to show the client the mighty arm of the Lord because true rest and comfort is found there. The power to overcome temptation is his through Christ. The ability to live a life apart from pornography is a real certainty. As the cross presses into the heart of the client, Jesus tells the client to “deny [himself], take up [his] cross, and follow him” (Mk. 8:34-37). God, his loving ally, has defeated Satan, stripping him of all his fiendish power. As a result, the client can cast all his burdens on Jesus because he loves him (Mt. 11:28-30). His victory gives him the right to deliver believers from temptation (1 Co. 10:16).

Early on in recovery, the client will face many temptations to succumb to sexual sin again. While the mentor cannot remain with the client every waking moment of the day, he encourages and teaches the client to make himself personally accountable for his actions. This will go a long way in restoring the client. It will teach him how to properly view and use the internet. The client will become a better manager of his time. Most importantly, he will grow closer with his God. Laaser cautions the road to restoration takes some time: “If you say you will stop a certain sinful behavior, you must be able to do that over time. In addictive behavior, this is

¹⁷² Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 37-38. The name of interviewee is withheld by mutual consent, interview by author, Brown Deer, WI, October 27, 2012: The interviewee stated that some addicts feel that God’s Word just “did not seem to stop the temptation.”

called maintaining sobriety. If you pledge to do something, such as keep a marriage vow, you must be consistent in doing it over time.”¹⁷³

Study Scripture

Statistics demonstrate that many pastors who delve into pornography remain in little personal contact with the Word.¹⁷⁴ Yes, the pastor uses the Word to craft his sermons and to share devotions with members. Yet, if he never takes the time to hear what God is telling him personally, his spiritual life becomes strained. He becomes fixated on retaining head knowledge over heart knowledge.¹⁷⁵ It is only a matter of time before the client turns from love for God to love for self.

[The sexual addict] may still continue to go through the outward motions of a believer, but something within him is drying up. He is losing his sense of adoration for the God who has saved him. This waning of this first love is enough to allow an altar of sexual idolatry to be erected in a person’s heart, and once established, he will turn from worshipping God to worshipping the perversion of his sexual lust.¹⁷⁶

Personal Bible study is a major step in personal accountability (cf. Ja. 1:19-21). Daily, personal devotions acquaint the client with the precious truths of God. Thorough use of the Word will begin becoming engrained in the mind of the client. On the day of temptation, Scripture will flash in his mind and offer him that sword which strikes down the temptations of the evil one. At the very least, the client may reach for the Bible on the shelf and employ it in battle.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Earle and Laaser, *The Pornography Trap*, 119.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with my home district president, interview by author, October 24, 2012. Compare with Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 39: “The man in habitual sin cannot hope to escape his carnal lifestyle and twisted perspectives on sexuality without a substantial dosage of the Bible everyday.”

¹⁷⁵ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 72-73. Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012: Plath used the same terminology during her interview. She described how easily pastors might focus more on memorizing aspects of the Bible so that their mental intellect might grow, but spend very little time on hearing what God is telling them. When this happens, she says, a disconnect between head and heart occurs, and it leaves the door open for sins that were at one time unthinkable. The key is listening is to hear Jesus speak to the heart, and then intellectual studies will naturally follow.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 226-228. Gallagher cites an anecdote shared with him from one of his former clients. He explains that this man had actually memorized portions of Scripture, so that when sexual temptation flared up, he could instantly recall what the Word said on the matter. The individual stated that his memorization helped him fight the temptation—especially when he was nowhere near a Bible. Furthermore, memorization helped this individual grow in his love and knowledge of the Word. In short, his physical act of committing himself to the Word was his way of forcing himself to remain in the Word.

The only way to grow close to God is to read the living Word (Rm. 10:17). The client must plumb the depths of the Word to nurture his own heart. For this reason, the mentor will want to engage in one-on-one Bible study. The two may deal with passages directly dealing with sexual sins. He can provide some structure to the study so they both understand the sly temptations of the wily foe. They can combat and flee into the arms of Jesus. Together they might build each other up in the Word, understand their own personal battles of the flesh, and remain victors over and against the onslaughts of Satan. In it, God urges every Christian to pray, and to do so while trusting that his requests will be heard and answered.

Assign homework

Many counselors agree that homework plays a primary role in therapy.¹⁷⁸ Through various assignments the client's corrected beliefs are reinforced through applicable situations immediately impacting his life.¹⁷⁹ Only a diagnosis of the perceived restoration will set the required assignments. The assignments need not be tedious. Rather, each assignment begins where the client is at spiritually and mentally and progresses from there.¹⁸⁰

The primary objective for assigning homework is that the client will reflect on the real cause for his fall into sexual sin. More often than not, the selfish old Adam will appear. It is this narcissistic drive which declares that one will not get caught and begins to justify the use of sin. A completed assignment will permit the client to see his sinful side revealed because the assignment methodically reveals the client's inmost secrets:

[...] the ultimate purpose of biblical counseling is complete transformation. This change comes about primarily as the person begins to live according to the mandates of Scripture. A life of obedience becomes one of the prime overall objectives. Talking about these biblical guidelines has its place, but it is important that the man actually begins to

¹⁷⁸ Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 77.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁸⁰ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 294. Penner and Penner suggest keeping a journal in which the client lists his sexual temptations—either when he is under spiritual attack or when he knows something could lead him into sexual sin. The journal can then be examined by both the counselor and client and a course of action can be mapped towards healthy thinking.

Other examples include that the client's first assignment might be that he read his personal devotions and list a one sentence application to his personal life. This assessment will be returned to the counselor at the next meeting. Then the counselor could ask his client to list 25 activities which would deter his internet usage. In later meetings, the client would then enact his list in his daily life.

implement these changes in his daily life. Homework provides the necessary structure to do this.¹⁸¹

The secondary goal seeks to determine the client's case and his room for growth. The mentor will read the completed assignment and be better suited to serve the recovering pastor in the restoration process. He can aptly apply law and gospel as needed. He can better understand the signs that accompany this fellow pastor's struggle with pornography. At the end of each meeting, the mentor can accurately gauge where the client has grown and where there is still room for him to grow.¹⁸²

Stress personal accountability

It has already been noted that counseling's goal is to allow the client to an upright and Godly life. The mentor can mandate certain precautions be in place so that the client does not relapse. If the client is to live apart from pornography, he must hold himself accountable for his actions.¹⁸³ A chief example is when he is alone with his computer.

Accountability software may serve as the third-party support which keeps the client sexually pure.¹⁸⁴ When the software is installed, internet tracking is initiated and recorded. Multiple resources abound. The counseling pastor might be the individual who installs these programs on the computer of the client (see Appendix B for available websites and a review of each). Furthermore, this software will train him to become personally accountable as it keep him honest and open about his website search preferences. However, the setback with such accountability software is that it cannot provide complete restoration. The client might not browse pornography for one of two reasons: he is fearful of getting caught or he desires to live a God-pleasing life. The latter motivation is pure, the former is not.

Seek to change habits

¹⁸¹ Gallagher, Steve. *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*. 77.

¹⁸² Ibid., 79. Gallagher quotes Jay Adams' six reasons behind homework assignments: "(1) Regular homework assignments set a pattern for expectations of change, (2) homework clarifies expectations, (3) Homework enables the counselor to do more counseling more rapidly, (4) Homework keeps counselees from becoming dependent upon the counselor, (5) homework enables both the counselor and the counselee to gauge progress or the lack of it, and (6) homework allows the counselor to deal with problems and patterns that develop under controlled current conditions."

¹⁸³ Ibid., 72.

¹⁸⁴ Again, note that accountability software is able to be bypassed through various means and methods. While they have their place in restoration and personal accountability, the mentor will have to ask questions or even visit to his client's office to ensure that these technological safeguards remain employed.

The computer is the not root of the addiction, and computer software cannot be the sole method to restore the client. Rather sexual addiction comes from the self-gratification of the sinful nature.¹⁸⁵ The Word is an effective weapon against sexual temptation. Yet, part of living according to the Word is to separate the new self from the sinful world and to be held accountable for personal actions. Changes in the way the client lives will motivate physical change.

The chief suggestion is that the client limits his time spent on his computer. Many (if not every) church office has access to the internet. This provides easy access to pornography. When the temptation arises to search explicit content, the client can immediately disconnect from the internet or power down his computer. The pastoral ministry does not need 8-10 hours of continuous internet access per day. If e-mails must be checked, then the client may set aside specific periods of time to browse his e-mail, lest his browsing leads to pornographic websites. Perhaps a good habit to get into is to remain disconnected to the internet until the need arises to connect. Even when he does check his e-mail he might set a 10-minute alarm on his phone. This will allow him enough time to check his e-mail and send out any needed replies.

Another practical suggestion encourages the client might to work with his door open, with the computer screen slightly tilted to the view of the public, when others are in the church building. The point is simple: the pastor is to do all he can to prevent doubts from creeping into the minds of others. Tilting his computer screen demonstrates openness and transparency. Passers-by can see colors and make out shapes of an open word document, but will not be able to read sensitive e-mails or information. One can certainly distinguish the Word document of a sermon from moving images streaming from pornography. Sensitive data will not be lost. In most cases, whenever an image is moving, sound is associated. This is not to suggest that every moving image must be accompanied by sound, but the sound does clear the air about suspect motives. Take for instance, if the client plays a YouTube video or an ESPN clip. If the sound is left on while the clip is viewed, the worst that could happen is that someone chastises him for watching a three minute sports highlight reel. Nevertheless, the point is still clear: leaving the sound on and the screen visible to public sight proclaims that he has no actions to hide. He is transparent in his computer use.

¹⁸⁵ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 111.

Abstinence from pornography can be stilled just by opening a door. No conversation would be audible enough that privacy would be lost if the door is opened. If someone meets with the pastor and must have the door closed, then that meeting must take place during regular business hours or at least when another individual is either in the building or aware of the meeting.

The final thought of church office usage is quite simple: always have another individual present. Some pastors may harbor enough self-control to work when no one else is in the church building. Others might not wish to willingly place themselves into Satan's temptations. Therefore, the pastor might wish to post office hours so that he keeps himself honest about his time spent in the office. By doing this, he holds himself accountable to others who might come in after office hours for various items of business. If some members were to see their pastor staying after hours, they might recognize he has work to complete. Meanwhile, the congregation might not know his struggles, but he does. By remaining transparent about his time spent in the office, the pastor is able to keep his sin confidential while using others as his accountability partners.

When dealing with temptation, a practical action to employ would be to leave the room and go to a safe place where he is unable to access the internet. The company of others makes the client accountable for his actions because the public is present.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, conversing with others gets the mind off of the sexual temptation that waits.

The temptations for the pastor do not rest in the office; they follow him home. Television increases its sexual references. No longer does a show center on an issue of two individuals living together—it is taken for granted. Books create tantalizing images in the mind. Movies are loaded with sex scenes, and push the envelope in the amount of nudity displayed. When media leads the client further into sin, the temptation to act out sexually intensifies. For the client whose struggles will only intensify by being around these subjects, he would do well not to be around them. If the client's struggles are not fueled by these channels, he might still close his eyes to physically block out all temptations.

The aforementioned suggestions might prove beneficial, but they still place control into the hands of the client. The client still possesses a sinful nature which can craft the most devious

¹⁸⁶ Martin Luther, *Letters of Spiritual Counsel*, ed. Theodore G. Tappert, vol. 18 of *The Library of Christian Classics* edited by John G. Baille, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. VanDusen (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1955), 86: "Whenever the devil pesters you with these thoughts, at once seek out the company of men, drink more, joke and jest, or engage in some other form of merriment."

lies to attain what it craves.¹⁸⁷ Excuses may surface as to why the physical steps are taken. While all the aforementioned approaches may be employed, restoration cannot come from changes on the outside; the desire to change must be present.

What happens if the client relapses?

There might be an occasion in which the client slips and falls into the temptation of pornography. In the case of relapse, he would do well to confess his sin to his mentor. Recognize, of course, that simply confessing sin does not automatically stand exempt from resignation. Relapsing is terribly detrimental to his recovery; it also poses some serious questions about his eligibility for the ministry.¹⁸⁸ The counseling services agreement signed by both parties at the beginning of the restoration process clearly presents the criteria for the client to meet. Also, a relapse suggests to the mentor that the sexual sin might require an alternative approach to reach restoration (such as obtaining help through admission to a sexual addiction rehabilitation center or receiving counseling from a certified sexual addiction therapist).

While each individual occurrence must be carefully weighed in a case-by-case basis, a few words and guidelines can be set. If the client is secretly covering up his use of pornography, then the trust factor is broken between him and his mentor and serious doubt is cast on his sincerity in seeking restoration and freedom. According to the waiver signed, the mentor might deem it necessary to involve a third party authority.

The counseling pastor will want to verify the client's confession. He might do so by sifting through the search history which can be printed out through the internet accountability software. Through this tool he will be able to determine if the relapse was a one-time occurrence or a habitual problem. He will see how long the desired content was sought. This information is vital to determining the next step in the restoration process. At the end of the search, the mentor

¹⁸⁷ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 24-26. Gallagher lists isolation, blameshifting, manipulation, and becoming judgmental of others as some of the methods sexual addicts employ in order to protect and feed their addiction. The sexual addict does all this to justify his actions or to feed his selfish, sinful nature. The latter is the primary reason sexual addictions might continue for many years.

¹⁸⁸ Penner and Penner, *Counseling for Sexual Disorders*, 295-296. Some counselors employ the terms "slip" and "relapse" in order to clearly categorize the continuing struggles of pornography. A slip would refer to someone who, while enrolled in counseling, is moved to use pornography and then (either during the process of or after using pornography) immediately regrets his action and confesses his fall to his counselor. A relapse refers to someone who is in counseling and uses pornography, but then considers his restoration useless. As a result he returns to his old habits. Because this classification system is not recognized by current psychology, this essay uses relapse when referring to a fall into the sexual sin of pornography use.

again ponders if the client still has a chance to reach complete freedom from pornography or if the sin has mastered him, and if it would be necessary for him to resign from the public ministry.

If the client has been caught in habitual pornography use, he has demonstrated that needs additional help is needed to combat the temptations of the flesh. His secretive actions reveal his fear about approaching his mentor about his sin. The mentor has always left his door open so his client could approach him for help, but the offer was not accepted. Something greater may be wrong within the life of the recovering individual and something greater must be done. While this is not an open and shut case, it would be strongly advised that the mentor involve a third party authority at this point so that the two might determine the proper course of action. Perhaps the suggestion for resignation from the public ministry stands here.

Additional points of consideration

Humanly speaking, very little can be done to reach out to a client who hides information from his mentor. Confidentiality has been offered to those seeking confession. A personal mentor is available. A restoration program has been established. The external promise is set in place; the client must face his personal inner tension, put it aside, and confess his sin. Still, while human persuasion uses various approaches to reach out to the addict, it is the Word of God which remains the primary force to move a pastor to obtain help: “The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hb. 4:12).

Secondary procedures have their place in counseling. They seek to determine the various reasons an individual indulges in pornography. Unlike the Word which cuts to the soul and spirit, the counselor explains that correction and personal responsibility is offered to participants in a restoration program.

See the warning signs and act!

Several sexual addiction counselors cite their familiarity with symptoms leading toward pornography use.¹⁸⁹ Individuals give off subtle calls for help when they isolate themselves, grow paranoid about who uses their computer, grow judgmental of others, harshly and frequently

¹⁸⁹ Rebecca Plath, interview by author, Brookfield, WI, November 2, 2012.

attack sexual infidelity, or demean themselves.¹⁹⁰ WELS pastors, who are well-acquainted with a fellow-pastor and observe these symptoms arise, can express their concerns to him.

In addition to the aforementioned warning signs, Gallagher adds five “‘P’ flags” for pastors to look for: prayerlessness, pressure, prosperity, pleasure, and power.¹⁹¹ Perhaps prayerlessness closely ties into the lack of a devotional life. The pastor who considers time alone with God as another burden places security in himself to get through the struggles of daily life.

Pressure in the ministry abounds for the pastor. He has sermons to write, Bible classes to finish, calls to make, evangelism tasks to complete, and management of meetings and events. These tasks are expected to be complete by the end of the week and are expected to be completed in successive weeks. Throw in the unexpected hospital call, church discipline issue, or mid-week services, and the pastor is hard-pressed to finish his work, let alone spend personal time with his family. Lindholm summarizes what thoughts roll through the pastor’s mind:

The work is never done. And among those whom he serves are not only the loving, the kind and the gentle, but also the vengeful, the stubborn, the indifferent, the proud and the fallen. It places a heavy burden upon a man and upon his time, talents, patience, and yes, even his faith. For those who can’t cope with it all, resignation seems to be the most logical step.¹⁹²

Coping mechanisms will seek to ease the mind. Income leads to a relative prosperity and sinful pleasure leads the pastor to seek out things that comfort him. In the case of sexual addiction, money and pleasure lead the pastor to purchase online pornography. The money poured into these resources may put the pastor in a financially tight position.

As the pastor sinks into the despair portion of the addiction cycle, he begins to believe that he is a victim of the ministry. He fights with all his might to guide the flock of Christ only to be attacked by the people he loves so dearly. Yet, his faulty belief system convinces him that a man in his position deserves rest and relaxation. Since he deserves these things, he can obtain them however he desires.

¹⁹⁰ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 23-28. Gallagher gives a brief listing of traits displayed by sexual addicts. While every characteristic does not need to be demonstrated, many of the symptoms point to a larger problem.

¹⁹¹ Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict*, 121. For further reading on all these points, read pages 121-125.

¹⁹² Lindholm, “Resignation From the Parish Ministry,” 12.

Sometimes these five warning signs are hidden; other pastors might never diagnose them. This is not to say that a specific pastor's actions are not screaming out for help. The fellow pastor notices that one pastor who never attends circuit meetings, always appears stressed, or demonstrates isolationist tendencies. While the problem might not involve pornography, it does come from a heart which needs to unload its burdens. The listening ear of the pastor who reaches out will prove to be a true friend indeed. In this case, a simple "How are you [really] doing?" can go a long way.

At other times, a WELS pastor might witness a fellow pastor using pornography. This sight weighs heavily on his mind, and he wonders what or how he should approach the issue. If a conscience is burdened, it would do well to confront that pastor about his sexual sin. It may prove to be an awkward, unsettling conversation. Yet, by openly addressing the sin, a giant step has been taken; healing can soon begin. Ignore the sin or label sexual addiction as "worse than all the others," the pastor may never come forward about his sin and remain in a state of immense shame. Address the sin and he may express his yearning desire to obtain help.

Still, the primary way to prevent use of pornography is for the pastor to never dabble in it. It is proven to be a destructive vice which drags its victim into an ever downward spiral.

Prevention at the Seminary level

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) already has established a restoration model of its own for students who struggle with certain sins (see Appendix C). If the student struggles with alcohol, pornography, masturbation, or family, he is able to see a certified counselor at a reduced rate. Because he is not called into the public ministry, some leniency is employed in the counseling procedure. This is not to say that sin is overlooked. Instead, he is encouraged to seek help with a professional counselor. After enrolling in the counseling sessions, the student does not have to sign a mutually binding waiver with his counselor. Therefore, during this process, his struggles are kept confidential between him, his counselor, and his faculty advisor. Should the problem (for which he seeks to correct) rear its ugly head again or continues at the same intensity, and he proves that he is unable to overcome it, the counselor would notify the student of his intent to contact the Seminary president about the lack of progress made. If another individual should catch the student frequently repeating his sin, further disciplinary steps might be taken by the Seminary.

In reality, some students might not wish to see a counselor. Some might tackle struggles on their own; others might believe their addictions will pass away with time. These are faulty belief systems, but the faculty can do little to address a problem of which it is unaware. The vicar year bishops might never see the face of personal struggles. For the typical student, the other people with whom they frequently interact are other students. Because of the casual atmosphere in this setting, the student is able to demonstrate more of his true personality. Lindholm takes this into account when he ponders how to prevent resignation in the ministry.

It would be interesting to be able to get the Sem students' views on their own classmates. History shows that class-mates were able to predict those who would do well in the ministry and those who would fail. This is obviously a touchy matter and would have to be handled with great care.¹⁹³

If peer reviews on a student level were ever to take place, guidelines would have to be set so that the Eighth Commandment is properly honored. Structure for this topic would be best handled by the faculty and the assignment committee at each respective school.

Remove all self-pride

A common denominator in self-evaluation is the reflection on one's own struggles. The pastor who struggles with frequent pornography use must reflect on his faithfulness to his call. Has he been faithful in his time management, sermon preparation, and Bible study? If so, why has sexual misconduct seized hold of him? If not, how might he remedy his situation?

In either case, he must understand and confront the excuses which prevent him from seeking help. Perhaps he fears his wife will divorce him, he will lose his children, and his extended family will ignore him. He wonders if his resignation from the ministry means that he loses his pension. He might fear losing his reputation around peers and friends. These are certainly legitimate concerns, but are not necessarily true. Families may enter counseling. Pension funds remain to their owners. Reputations may not be damaged. While the client's personal life may remain unaffected, he must listen to what God's Word says about his anxieties.

¹⁹³ Lindholm, "Resignation From the Parish Ministry," 15: "It would seem to me that when we talk about remedies for preventing resignation from the ministry, we should first look at the very beginning, before men even begin their ministry. Many attitude problems and other problems should be dealt with already before a young man enters the ministry. This takes us back to the Seminary and, yes, even to Northwestern College. Concerted efforts need to be made to counsel and encourage prospective candidates for the ministry and to weed out those who would appear to be destined for the title "misfit in the ministry."

God hates sin and demands its price is death (Rm. 6:23). To consider sexual sin to be tolerated or of no importance is to disregard what God clearly states in his Word.

Certain secondary issues ignore the primary problem of sin. Pride, fear, anxiety, and worry must be placed aside. While pension funds and family are not indispensable, the client must recognize his soul is not dispensable. The key to overcoming sin is to confess it, to have a brother in the faith to bear him up, and help him with his daily struggles.

At other times, the pastor who keeps his sin a secret is too proud to admit his failures. The pastor might be respected among his peers. He might be generalized as the older, wiser pastor who should know better than to fall into sexual sin. He might be a leader on boards and committees. These matters cultivate a sinful mind which leads him to believe that he is insignificant and weak if he confesses his use of pornography as a sin. Inexperienced peers will look better than him. Younger pastors will appear more mature. Power and respect will be lost if he had served on boards and committees.

The client holds fears about outside perceptions; he also holds misconceptions from within. Countless excuses are vocalized as to why private confession is out of the question for the client. Yet, the inner motives are what drive the outward professions. Proudful thinking motivates the pastor to keep his sin hidden:

Each core belief contributes to the disconnection between the interior world the addict experiences, with its pain and shame, and the exterior image the addict projects to keep the secret world safe. The addict lives in constant personal “jeopardy,” dreading the moment when the secret world will be unmasked.¹⁹⁴

The pastor shamed by his sin fears that his actions might become public knowledge throughout the synod. He feels that privately confessing his sin to his circuit pastor will later be shared with the district and synod president. He believes that counseling costs covered by WELS VEBA will be itemized and the information be sent to the synodical offices. Delusional thinking drives the client to cover up his sin, but the more time spent hiding the secret life results in greater shame and disgrace when he fails to live according to God’s Word (cf. Pr. 6:32-33).

As the addict enters the beginning stage of remorse, he will often make certain promises to God vowing never to repeat the same sin again: “Lord, I swear I won’t do this ever again!” As his eyes are opened to the reality of the horrible emptiness and nature of his sin, he readily makes such a vow; for, it is at this moment that he truly sees sin for what it really is.

¹⁹⁴ Carnes, *Out of the Shadows*, 108.

However, the problem with making such a resolution is that it stems from the man's own strength and determination to resist and overcome an evil. This sort of "promise-keeping" will never endure future temptations in the same area. It is for this exact reason that the sex addict has attempted countless times before to break the habit, yet to no avail.¹⁹⁵

Sinful pride stems from a heart which seeks to protect the selfish ego (Mk. 7:14-15, 20-23). The actions flowing forth from such a heart demonstrate the deception sexual sin has over him. Such notions inflate the selfish pride and drive one to proudly cover up their sin.

An individual with self-protective pride has a very difficult time being vulnerable to others. He is extremely defensive and easily offended. This person has fortified himself with an elaborate system of walls and defense mechanisms, in an attempt to keep himself from vulnerability. Because the person with self-protective pride is generally a sensitive person by nature, often the slightest offense will drive him to "save" himself from further harm. Hence, the walls of his personal fortress thicken and become even more impenetrable to any additional "intruders."¹⁹⁶

Those who want clients to come forward about their sin can only allow the Word to crush the sinner. Until all selfish pride is removed, sexual addiction will run rampant in the life of the pastor. Gallagher admits this sober truth.

This reminds me of a man we had in the live-in program one time. I hate to say it quite so forcefully, but this man reeked with arrogance! You could almost feel the tension when he walked into a room. It was obvious from the first day he arrived that he saw himself exalted above everyone else in every area of life. How could we help him with such an attitude? He was unwilling to humble himself and left within two weeks of arriving.¹⁹⁷

Surrender humbly and confidently

Perhaps at the forefront of every mind is the lingering question: "If I come out, what will I lose?" Some might fear their computer usage will be restricted or they might lose all internet privilege. They might fear losing secrecy because they will have to daily report their actions to their mentor and someone else might find out or overhear about their problem.

Boundaries must be set for the one who has struggled with pornography. The reason is simple: these freedoms were once theirs to use at will, but they have since been violated. Consequences follow to instill lifestyle change (Hb. 12:5). Consequences might be painful, but

¹⁹⁵ Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, 94.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

they are surely more tolerable than eternity in hell. So, the consequences enacted upon the recovering pastor might limit freedom in his life, but they seek to prevent his sinning and damaging his ministry and family. Remember, these consequences are meant for help and freedom, not for pain and limitations.

This belief system must be replaced with a healthy, spiritual knowledge. The client must realize that the gratification produced by the brain is powerful and does require additional help. God has bestowed the blessing of medicines, therapists, family, and friends to help defeat all kinds of struggles in life. Many would do well to make use of them.

Conclusion

Sexual addiction is very ensnaring. This is most devastating for the pastor struggling with pornography. Psychology proves that sexual release discharges neurotransmitters in the brain which stimulate the individual. Ultimately, it will leave him craving for more of that high. As a result, he will continue desiring greater stimulation and will invest increasing amounts of time striving to attain it. Recognizing this vicious cycle of sexual addiction underscores the very real dilemma in the client's life— he will run out of time to properly carry out the tasks of his call. Not only that, the client will observe his time fleeing from him. As he desires to complete his ministerial tasks, he will find himself at odds with the cravings of the flesh. The two antagonists fiercely tug at his heart until he gives way to one of them. In the end, this mental battle leaves him in a pit of despair and desperation.

When he understands that he truly needs correction, he can approach someone with a confident knowledge that coming forward does not necessarily (but still could) result in resignation from the ministry. Scripture demonstrates that the pastor is to be “above reproach” and “blameless” in matters pertaining to the public eye. If the pastor has not been publicly caught in sexual sin, then he might remain eligible to carry on his current ministry.

Most of all, mentors will remain a crucial cog of the restoration program. They understand that psychology aids Scripture in revealing the hold sin can have over the body. Yet, pastors place their complete confidence that restoration can come from the power of Scripture. Because sexual addiction clouds its certain reality, it remains crucial that a mentor remove the irrational thinking and direct his client to the cross. God has blessed WELS with many men who are capable of using the Word to grant peace of mind and freedom from sin. The insight gleaned

from various resources equips many more WELS pastors with the knowledge needed to grant correction and healing.

Several steps might be taken to ensure that all tempting devices are removed from the client's life. However, a few key elements of counseling can never be substituted or removed. The client must feed and strengthen his faith through daily personal devotions. He must trust that confidentiality guarantees safety and privacy over very personal matters. He must put off his prideful nature and recognize that he needs help. Chiefly, these elements will stand only if the client comes forward about his sin. By employing these three components, he is better equipped to be set free from pornography's snares.

Still, there will remain much more to study and research in the future; the handling of sexual addiction is a very complex and dynamic topic. A distinction in treatment must be made between the repentant pastor who comes forward about his sin and the unrepentant pastor who notifies other about his sin. Additional consideration must come in when a third party approaches a synodical leader with knowledge of pornography usage by a called worker or when a congregation has concerns and knowledge about a called worker's use of pornography. Disciplinary measures from Matthew 18 will be used in some of these matters, but how that will be played out remains undetermined.

It would be of great benefit to discuss the manner and method of counseling the pastor and his wife. If the client is married, his wife must, at the very least, be notified of his sin. She has already suffered from his wayward sexual life, and must understand that she is not the problem or cause for his sin. Correct counseling may help prevent the dissolution of the marriage. In some cases the question will be raised as to whether or not the pastor, by his pornography use, is no longer a "one-woman man," thereby permitting his spouse to obtain a Scriptural divorce. Much more Scriptural study has to be undertaken before one can come to a definitive conclusion.

Certainly other called workers (such as teachers and staff ministers) struggling under pornography will greatly benefit from a restoration model catered to their specific training backgrounds. Teachers and staff ministers do not receive the same type of training as pastors. They work in different office settings, chiefly interact with children, and maintain a professional relationship with parents. Because they might indulge in sexual sins at different times of the day, or because they could be caught by minors, they risk easily losing the trust of their parents either

through the neglect of faithfully carrying out their teaching tasks or after getting caught. Therefore, special attention with specific application must be directed to them.

Peer-mentoring counseling has not been publicly tested nor documented, but nevertheless remain a viable option for restoration. Perhaps various aspects of the program might be further researched and expounded upon to achieve maximal effectiveness. Restoration programs always carry along a certain amount of room for modification. Yet, some core strategies, recommendations, and teachings will remain steadfast. The flexibility in this system allows the mentor to adapt the model to make it his own and to use it as he sees fit.

Nevertheless, peer counseling enables a mentor who will restore the pastor to a God-pleasing life. Through God's powerful Word, Satan's temptations for sexual gratification will be harnessed and the client will no longer be known as "client," but as pastor.

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Appendix A

PASTORAL COUNSELING SERVICES AGREEMENT¹⁹⁸

This agreement for pastoral counseling services between _____ (Name of your church) and clients shall govern all professional relations between the parties. It is agreed that any disputes or modifications of agreement shall be negotiated directly between the parties; if negotiations are not satisfactory, then the parties *agree to mediate any differences with a mutually acceptable third-party mediator, (i.e., circuit pastor of the client's respective circuit).*

A. THE PASTOR MENTOR is _____ (Your name here) _____. He is an Ordained Minister and Pastoral mentor, not a _____ (Name of your state) _____ licensed therapist.

B. PASTORAL COUNSELING AT _____ (Name of your church) _____ is confidential, supervised counseling by one trained and experienced in both pastoral and counseling ministry. Pastoral counseling will be limited to an indefinite set of sessions with monthly evaluation regarding the progress of counseling. Counseling shall be terminated or referral for further treatment may be made at this time, whichever is in the client's best interest.

C. CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All therapeutic communications, records, and contacts between the mentor and client will be held in strict confidence. Information may be released, in accordance with state law, only when (1) the client signs a written release of information indicating informed consent to such release; (2) the client expresses serious intent to harm himself/herself or someone else; (3) there is evidence or reasonable suspicion of abuse against a minor child, elder person (sixty-five years or older), or dependent adult; (4) a subpoena or other court order is received directing the disclosure of information; or (5) when, after careful deliberation, the mentor has determined, that his client's actions are to such an extent of such a nature that the client may no longer be eligible for the public ministry, then the issue at large may be shared with the circuit pastor and/or the district president. It is our policy to assert either (a) privileged communication in the event of #4 or (b) the right to consult with clients, if at all possible barring an emergency, before mandated disclosure in the event of #2 or #3. Although we cannot guarantee it, we will endeavor to apprise clients of all mandated disclosures.

Clients with any concerns or questions about this policy agree to raise them with their mentor at the earliest possible time to resolve them in the client's best interest.

D. WORK AGREEMENT

It is agreed that the client shall make a good-faith effort at personal growth and engage in the counseling process as an important priority at this time in his life. Client gain is most important in pastoral counseling. Suspension, termination, or referral shall be discussed between mentor

¹⁹⁸ Adapted services agreement from Johnson, "Counseling, Confidentiality, and the Pastor," 2.

CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION¹⁹⁹

I, _____ (Name of client) _____, do consent and authorize _____ (Name of mentor) _____ to: (check off and fill in the blanks)

release all records of my (or my dependent's) counseling or other work done by _____ (Name of mentor) _____ to _____ (Name of new counselor) _____ (except for the records of _____)

obtain all records of my (or my dependent's) counseling or other work done by _____ (Name of mentor) _____ (except for the records of _____).

These records are to be sent to _____ (Name of other practice and address) _____, in care of staff member _____ (Name of mentor) _____ and _____ (Name of person or organization) _____ for the best interests of my (or my dependent's) goals in counseling or other work.

This consent is valid and is to be acted on upon receipt of this form regarding the records of: _____ (Name of client) _____.

This consent will terminate without express written revocation by the client named herein on or when _____.

Client/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Client Address _____

Client Birth Date ___/___/___ Client Social Security Number _____

Signature of Mentor _____ Date _____

Note: Federal regulations require ALL blanks to be filled in, including date, event, or condition that terminates consent for release of confidential client information.

¹⁹⁹ Adapted services agreement from Johnson, "Counseling, Confidentiality, and the Pastor," 3.

Appendix B

LIST OF AVAILABLE ACCOUNTABILITY RESOURCES²⁰⁰

[Covenant Eyes](#)— Internet Safety, online Integrity, accountability, and filtering helps you protect your family online. Learn how the Internet is used in your home.

[My Mobile Watchdog](#)— Monitor your child's mobile phone use and get instant alerts if he or she receives unapproved email, text messages or phone calls. Monitor and block websites. Block applications and set time restrictions for your child's phone usage.

[Your Sphere](#)— Social Networking and Internet Safety Information for Parents.

[Internet Safety 101](#)— As one of the nation's leading Internet safety organization since 1994, Enough Is EnoughSM created the multi-media Internet Safety 101SM program to educate, equip, and empower parents, educators and other caring adults with the knowledge and resources they need to protect children from the online dangers of pornography, sexual predators, cyber-bullies and threats related to social networking, online gaming and mobile devices.

[SocialShield](#)— Your Child's Facebook needs SocialShield like your PC needs Anti-Virus.

[NetSmartz Workshop](#)— A program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

[bsecure](#)— Bsecure Online is the Ultimate Online Family Protection. As the recipient of PC Magazine's Editors' Choice Award for parental controls software, we're proud of our new version 6.1!

[NetLingo](#)— The Internet dictionary.

[NetSmartz411](#)— NetSmartz411 is parents' and guardians' premier, online resource for answering questions about Internet safety, computers, and the Web.

[NetSmartz Kids](#)— Interactive site for ages 5 through pre-teen

[NSTeens \(by NetSmartz\)](#)— Interactive site for teens - Internet and social media safety

[WI Sex Offender Registry](#)— Database of registered sex offenders in the state of Wisconsin (each state carries its own online database).

²⁰⁰ Permission for use granted by Alan Siggelkow. This list cites various accountability software resources available for download and installation. Clicking on the hyperlink will direct one to the website itself.

[Common Sense Media](#)— Common Sense Media is dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in a world of media and technology.

[NetFamilyNews.org](#)— Kid-Tech News for Parents.

[GetNetWise](#)— GetNetWise is a public service brought to you by Internet industry corporations and public interest organizations to help ensure that Internet users have safe, constructive, and educational or entertaining online experiences.

[KeyKatcher](#)— Example of hardware that secretly captures all keystrokes including passwords.

[Guardian Software](#)— Guardian Software lets you monitor and control Internet activity — even when you can't be there in person.

[SpectorSoft](#)— Supervise the online activity - Windows, Mac, Android, Blackberry.

[Web Watcher](#)— Record and control everything that happens on your computer and see it online from anywhere.

[Paraben's Porn Detection Stick](#)— Whether you think someone is viewing pornography on your computer or whether you think your machine was exposed to pornography unwillingly or by accident, the Porn Detection Stick will help you quickly investigate your computer and help you determine if pornographic images are present.

[NetSmartz Workshop](#)— NetSmartz Workshop is an interactive, educational program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) that provides age-appropriate resources to help teach children how to be safer on- and offline. The program is designed for children.

[Cyber Safe Kids / Cyber Savvy Teens](#)— Essential strategies to keep children and teens safe online.

[CyberBullying.US](#)— created by Justin Patchin, professor at University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh.

Appendix C

WLS RESTORATION PROCESS

Three Stages

Revised 7-2-08 – 10-21-09

1. Stage One - Prevention:

1.a personal accountability and use of accountability software

This stage is one that is taught and encouraged to all men and women.

1.b Key steps in prevention

- Basic training in the “habitual patterns of pornography” is conducted with all WLS students.
- Exposure to various authors for management of this issue is given to all WLS students.
- Lifestyle management as a key step in the freedom from this destructive behavior is encouraged for all WLS students.
- Education of both men and women about the myths and facts about the issue is done.
- Guidelines for development of personal accountability are outlined to all WLS students.
- Connection to prevention resources such as Covenant Eyes is offered to all WLS students. (The denomination can develop an arrangement with Covenant Eyes to be a provider of this resource for about 2 dollars per month.)

2. Stage Two – Personal Problem-solving

- The individual student recognizes his problem and seeks the help of selected classmates and peers.
 - The individual student expresses repentance and receives Gospel absolution from his peers.
 - The classmates and peers form an encouragement group, using accountability software.
- A referral to a WLS approved therapist is made by the mutual agreement of the individual and his encouragement group. (The student may choose to seek help from a WLS approved therapist prior to forming an encouragement group of peers.)
 - Confidentiality between the therapist, the individual, and his accountability partners is maintained.
 - Through a contract or arrangement between WLS administration and approved therapists, the individual pays a small portion of a discounted fee to the therapist and WLS pays the remainder.
 - WLS is billed by the therapist in a way that insures the confidentiality of the individual student. The invoice from the therapist contains neither the name, the initials, nor any other code that would allow WLS to identify the individual student who is receiving the counseling.

3. Stage Three - Requested Intervention:

3.a This stage would involve the individual asking for assistance from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

- The individual has not been caught by the WLS administration and has attempted to resolve the struggle on his own through the process of Stages One and Two, but has not been able to maintain extensive avoidance of the behavior. So the individual asks for help.
- The individual, his therapist, and his encouragement partners have agreed that the individual needs to report his inability to resolve the struggle with pornography to the WLS administration for the good of his future ministry.
- The commitment from administration would be not to use the information to block the individual from a ministry position or vicarship if the individual meets the following requirements.

3.b The following would be key requirements for successful completion of Stage Three:

- Repentance
- The student will complete a counseling process with WLS approved counseling (those trained in a model designed specifically for the denomination) 6-12 months
 - After consulting with the therapist providing the counseling to the student, the WLS administration should have a clear understanding of the student's specific needs
- If married, the student's spouse will be involved in the process
- The student will maintain recovery for a period of 12 months
- The student will make a commitment to do all key requested behaviors to assist him in changing the behavior.
- This may involve the student requesting a deferral of a call or a vicar assignment in order to complete the work of recovery.