

Pornography

But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. *Matthew 5:28*

Our faith teaches us the value of purity in both our actions and thoughts. Pornography can distort healthy perspectives on intimacy, relationships, and self-worth. It's essential to discuss these issues emphasizing that our faith encourages us to seek purity and honor God. By talking about the harms of pornography and sharing the biblical principles of respect, love, and purity, we can help our teens foster a healthier understanding of relationships and their own worth.

➤ conversation starter

I know that growing up in today's digital world can expose you to many things, including pornography. It's important to understand that you're not alone in facing these temptations, and God's forgiveness is always available. How we can work together to protect your heart and mind from things that might not be in line with God's calling on our lives?

How do you think something like pornography can negatively impact aspects of our lives, such as our ability to show compassion for others or maintain healthy relationships?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Kill the Shame:** Start by assuring teens that your conversation is a space where they can be honest without fear of judgment. Emphasize your love and concern for their well-being.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** For example, "What do you understand about pornography?" or "How do you think it might be affecting your life?"
- **Share Biblical Values:** Integrate biblical principles into your conversation. Discuss the importance of treating others with respect, valuing relationships, and how God's design for sexual intimacy is sacred.
- **Highlight Consequences:** Gently explain the negative consequences of engaging with pornography, both from a relational and spiritual perspective. Emphasize the impact on self-esteem, relationships, and one's understanding of God's design for sexual intimacy.
- **Use Positive Language:** Frame the conversation positively. Instead of solely focusing on the negative aspects of pornography, highlight the positive aspects of healthy relationships, mutual respect, and the beauty of God's plan for sexual intimacy.
- **Provide Resources:** Share appropriate resources, whether books, articles, or websites, that provide guidance on overcoming struggles with pornography from a biblical perspective. Point them toward helpful tools without judgment. Also, talk about installing internet filters on teens' phones and devices which help eliminate pornography.
- **Set Clear Boundaries:** Discuss the importance of setting boundaries in various aspects of life, including online activities. Encourage healthy habits and wise decision-making.
- **Be Supportive:** Let your know that you are there to support them through any challenges they may face. Offer guidance on finding accountability partners or seeking pastoral help if needed.
- **Pray Together:** Ask for guidance, strength, and a deeper understanding of God's plan for their lives.

