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# Discovery

*Scripture & Science for Kids*



**NOTE TO  
Parents**

# BE CAREFUL ABOUT WHAT GOES INTO YOUR

# MIND



## Note to Parents

We at Apologetics Press understand that some topics are more sensitive in nature and more difficult to discuss in a magazine format like *Discovery*. One of those topics is pornography. We feel, however, that it is very important for young people to know how to deal with this issue. Thus, we have produced this month's magazine that discusses pornography. You may want to preview the magazine before giving it to your children, or go through it and interact with them about this sensitive subject.

Someone once said, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." True. But how does a person "waste" a "mind"? Or, for that matter, how does a person use his or her mind properly?

Our minds allow us to think, make decisions, and act. Sometimes, the Bible refers to the mind by using the word "heart." In Old Testament times, the prophet Jeremiah warned the Israelites that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). Was Jeremiah telling people that their **physical** hearts were "deceitful" or "wicked"? No. His point was that their **minds** could become deceitful or wicked.

Jesus Christ said: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matthew 15:18). Did Jesus mean that people's **hearts** could do those things? No, it was people's "minds" that conceived such wicked ideas.

Sometimes, the Bible speaks of our hearts and minds separately, using "heart" to refer to our emotions, and "mind" to refer to our intellect. For example, Jesus stated: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). If our "hearts" and "minds" control affections and intellect, then we should be careful about what "goes into" our hearts and minds. If we allow our hearts to become wicked,

then we will act wickedly. Yet the apostle Paul said that we should "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and that "we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11).

How do we do that? Paul answered: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report...meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8). Great advice! Instead of watching movies filled with nudity and bad language, what if we talk to one of our friends about what a person must do to be saved from sin and become a member of Christ's church? What if we figure out a way to save our allowance to help a child who is less fortunate than we are? What if we decide to take food to a sick family?

When we put good things **into** our minds, our bodies can translate those "true, honorable, pure, lovely" thoughts into good **actions!** We don't want to just "sit around and think" about good things. We want to **do** good things. Then, as Paul said, the "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). Guarding our hearts and minds is very important, and we need to be extremely careful about what we put into our minds.

# The Problem of Pornography in Magazines

A standard dictionary defines pornography as "the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement." If we understand this definition, we realize that pornography is prevalent in America. Pornography seems to be all around us—not just in "adult" bookstores or on the top shelf of the newsstand, but on television, posters, billboards, and in movies.

Many people believe in a much more limited definition of pornography, especially when it comes to magazines. They think that the only pornographic magazines are those that have special brown wrapping to cover the nudity on the covers. Before the invention of the Internet, many people who wanted to buy certain kinds of pornographic magazines had to "sneak" to the local adult bookstore, at the risk of being seen by peers, preachers, or parents.

Today, however, those who want "adult" magazines need only visit one of many Web sites dedicated to the sale of magazines and take their pick. Then, they simply wait for the magazines, which are conveniently sealed for privacy, to arrive in their mailboxes. In some ways, it appears that promoters of pornography have shifted their focus from magazines to more easily and widely accessible media, like cable television and the Internet. Meanwhile, well-known "adult" magazines like *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Hustler* are still being published. They tempt us to openly embrace sinful thoughts and sexuality.

The apostle Peter wrote: "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.**" Christians are those who "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires," and who practice "self-control" (Galatians 5:22-24). Because Satan constantly tempts us with pornography, we should develop the capability to quickly turn our heads and look away from images that show immodestly dressed people, make sex seem trivial, and separate it from the plan of God (Genesis 2:24). Even if our society keeps its eyes "full of adultery," and "cannot cease from sin" (2 Peter 2:14), Christians must remain pure, "just as He [Christ] is pure" (1 John 3:3).

# Internet Pornography

David tossed his book bag on the floor, walked over and closed his bedroom blinds, and then turned on his computer. He had homework to do—but it could wait until his parents got home. Right now he had other things on his mind. All day long at school he had been waiting to get back to his computer. After waiting for his computer to warm up, it did not take long for David to log on to the Internet. And within just a few minutes, David found exactly what he was looking for—sites that

revealed people without their clothes on. He had stumbled across Internet pornography just a few weeks earlier from an e-mail he received. Since then he had visited quite a few of the sites. He knew that many of the sites required a credit card, but some did not.

Sitting there in his room, David could not help but feel nervous. He

reminded himself not to worry—after all, he had taken all the necessary precautions. He never gave any information about himself on any of the sites, he knew how to clear the cache memory out of his computer, his blinds were closed, he knew what time his mom would be home from work, and he knew precisely how many seconds it would take her to enter his room once he heard the garage door open. He had nothing to worry about, right?

Unfortunately, David's scenario is very common. Internet pornography is abundant these days, and most people with e-mail accounts have been sent links to these sinful sites. More than 200,000 Americans have become addicted to Internet pornography, and that number is growing with each passing day! Years ago, pornography could only be found in magazines, or in X-rated movies. But the Internet and television changed all that. Now this material is easily accessible inside your own home. While David may think he is home alone and will never get caught, he has forgotten that God sees everything, even if the blinds are closed! Consider the following scriptures from God's Word: "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but **all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him** to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13). John wrote: "For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and **knows all things**" (1 John 3:20).

True, David's parents may never catch him viewing pornography on the Internet—but God has already seen him. Think for just a moment about what David's actions are doing to his relationship with God. The Bible tells us very plainly that lasciviousness or lustful behavior is a sin (Galatians 5:19-21). In a letter to the church at Rome, Paul described a group of people whom God gave up to "vile affections"

(Romans 1:26-32). It should be obvious that God considers looking at pornographic material sinful.

Since the Bible teaches that sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), what is David doing every afternoon when he surfs the Web for naked pictures? He is separating himself from God! Those pictures may seem important to David now, but think about how they are affecting his immortal soul. Can you imagine being in David's shoes and having to give an account to God for all that material he viewed, having never repented of such actions? Also, consider the people who made those images. Are they doing what God expects? No. Sadly, they are sinfully trying to get others to "flock" to lust rather than "flee" from lust (2 Tim. 2:22).

The Bible makes it clear that we're to fill our hearts and minds with good things—things that God would approve of. Pornography is definitely not one of those things. Remember what Paul wrote: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8). When David turns on the computer in the afternoons after school and views pornography, he is not meditating or thinking on pure and good things. While the material is available, David needs to learn how to stay away from it in order to be pleasing to the Lord. It may take effort, but this decision is of eternal importance!



# ACTIVITY PAGES

## FILL IN THE BIBLE VERSES (NKJV)

1. "Out of the \_\_\_\_\_ proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matthew 15:18).
2. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly \_\_\_\_\_, we should live soberly, righteously, and \_\_\_\_\_ in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12).
3. "And there is no creature hidden from His \_\_\_\_\_, but all things are naked and \_\_\_\_\_ to the eyes of Him [God] to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13).
4. "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—\_\_\_\_\_ on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Dear Digger Doug,

Has pornography been a problem for a long time? Is it only a problem in America?

Dear reader,

While many ancient writings no longer exist, we do know that pornography is not a new problem. One writer observed that pornographic literature or art has been around since humans could write or draw. The Canaanites (people whom the Israelites were to drive out of the Promised Land) had religions focused on false gods and goddesses who represented pornographic ideas.

We have records of ancient Greek and Roman literature that included pornography. Jesus warned against the immoral viewing of that kind of material, when He said: "Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Paul told young Timothy to "flee...youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22).

Many trace the beginnings of modern pornography to the 1650s, when several major pornographic works were released. Pornography has been much more widely accepted in European countries than in America, but American promoters of pornography are using the Internet more eagerly, so many unrighteous Americans see less and less wrong with it. Instead of asking a good question like yours, many Americans might ask: "Is pornography really that bad?" How tragic.



## TRUE OR FALSE

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Bible writers sometimes referred to the mind as the heart.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A person's physical heart and his mind are the same thing.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ We need to be extremely careful about what we put into our minds.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Pornography is defined as "people who are fully clothed."
5. \_\_\_\_\_ People spend billions of dollars on pornography each year.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Pornography is difficult to find.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Television and movie pornography is fairly easy to avoid.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Physical hearts can be wicked.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ God sees most things, but not everything.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Even if our society keeps its eyes "full of adultery," and "cannot cease from sin" (2 Peter 2:14), Christians are to remain pure.

## UNSCRAMBLE, FIND, AND CIRCLE

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Editor: Kyle Butt, M.A.  
 Associate Editor: Eric Lyons, M.Min.  
 Layout and Design: Rob Baker, M.Ed.

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# PORNOGRAPHY ON TELEVISION AND IN MOVIES

Sadly, there is an abundance of pornography on cable television and in movies. Professionally made pornographic movies bring in billions of dollars each year—more than the combined revenues of all professional football, baseball, and basketball games. While this type of pornography is very dangerous, the greater danger for Christian boys and girls is the kind of indecent material that appears on popular television shows and movies. It is more dangerous because it seems less harmful. Sexual relations have become so casual in prime-time sitcoms and dramas that people usually don't think twice about a scene with a man and woman in bed, yet this may be pornographic, too. It may not be as graphic as some pornography, but it still has a subtle and negative influence on our minds.

The Bible says, "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 15:26). To the Christians in Rome, the apostle Paul wrote: "Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, **not in lewdness and lust**, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts**" (13:13-14). "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).

Fortunately, television and movie pornography is fairly easy to avoid. First, always check the ratings of movies you watch. You and your family should have a rule about what movies are acceptable for Christians to watch. Second, choose what you watch on television before it comes on. It is easiest to fall victim to pornography when channel surfing, especially when alone. Third, have your parents consider purchasing filters such as *TV Guardian* or *Clearplay*, which can remove most of the filthy language and/or scenes from television shows and movies.

Just remember to be on guard constantly so that you don't fall victim to the continual temptations of the flesh. As Paul exhorted Timothy: "Keep yourself pure" (1 Timothy 5:22).



## ANSWERS

TRUE OR FALSE: 1. F; 2. F; 3. T; 4. F; 5. T; 6. F; 7. T; 8. F; 9. F; 10. T.  
 UNSCRAMBLE, FIND, AND CIRCLE: 1. heart; 2. mind; 3. pornography; 4. Bible; 5. lust; 6. purity; 7. righteous; 8. godly.  
 FILL IN THE BIBLE VERSES: 1. heart; 2. lusts; 3. godly; 4. sigh; 5. pure; 6. love; 7. meditate.  
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