

## More Than Conquerors

**God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble...Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:1, 10**

It was a night at home, not unlike many others. However, this particular night my husband was out of town on business. That would prove to be an interesting factor in what I would soon discover. The kids and I were getting ready for an evening activity.

Our chosen activity for the evening was to watch old family home movies. We had recently put them on my husband's computer, which he had left at home, but I wasn't entirely certain how to find them. I looked in various folders and finally clicked on the first video I found. What then showed on the screen shook me to the core. And two of my children also witnessed it. I quickly shut the computer, for what we had just seen was a pornographic video.

My heart raced; my body shook with confusion and fear. I managed to find the family home videos, but my mind was not focused on the hilarity of the joyful (and pure) images before us. No, all I could visualize was the sinful and gross image I had seen minutes earlier. My mind quickly filled with questions – "why?" would be the most obvious.

I was sure I had the possible answer. In my heart I didn't want to believe it. After all, my husband is a God-fearing Christian man, a loving spouse and a wise father. He leads his family in devotion and prayer daily. He is respected by his peers and a natural-born leader in church and work. Certainly he would never fall prey to *this* sin – the sin of pornography addiction.

With my husband gone, I was alone with my thoughts all night and I heard God's gentle whisper from His Word – "Be still and know that I am God." That means I need to be quiet, try to allow my heartbeat to return to its normal rate and allow God to take control of the situation. I knew that if this in fact was a sin that my husband had committed, Jesus had already paid for it.

For the night and most of the next day, I read and remembered God's promises from Isaiah and King David:

**Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze** (Isaiah 43:1b, 2.) I definitely felt like I was walking through fire and didn't know what I would look and feel like when I came out on the other end of it.

**The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love...As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us** (Psalm 103:8, 12.) I prayed that if my husband had fallen prey to the sin of pornography, that he was repentant. God would cover him with his love and forgive his sins.

And over and over I remembered "Be still and know that I am God." Be still, be still, be still. God would handle this.

God stilled my heart that night, but in the days, weeks and months to follow I've needed to turn to him continuously to still my troubled mind and crushed heart. God is always faithful and hears our cries for help.

I confronted my husband after he came home, almost 24 hours from the time I discovered the video, after I had time to think, pray and pour over God's Word without the presence of my husband. God's timing was not an accident. He wanted me to find out at that time and in that way.

My husband confessed, slowly at first. Then shame and guilt were written all over his tear-stained face. It had been years of porn addiction – years that I had no idea. I felt betrayed. My husband was unfaithful to me. Through many heart-wrenching conversations we discovered something more than just porn addiction. We discovered an addiction to self. In other words, we discovered the sin of idolatry...in both of us. All those times my husband had impure sexual thoughts or clicked on pornographic images and videos, my husband loved himself more than he loved God. The times when I clung to my husband more and put him higher than God, I loved my husband more than I loved God. Our dark and dirty sins were brought into the light.

It is only by God's grace that we are still (very!) happily married. God tells us to think on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely and admirable (Philippians 4:8.) The sins originate in our thoughts. We need God every day to guide us and remind us to love and serve him first!

In the moments following my husband's confession, I prayed God would help me follow his will for our lives. Thanks be to him for his indescribable gift of Jesus. Without his perfect example of forgiveness, I'm not sure our marriage could have survived through pornography addiction. God helped me forgive my husband and God helped my husband turn from his sin. We now remind each other who our first love is – God!

James 5:16 proved to be true and was affirmation to us that healing is possible. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. But it's an on-going struggle because of the consequence of sin. My husband is often faced with temptation as he sees images on raunchy commercials or billboards. Yet when he hears of another brother or sister in the faith who has also fallen prey to this sin, it reminds him to put on the full armor of God to resist the devil's attacks. He spends more time in personal devotion and prayer with God, and that causes him to flee from this temptation when it arises. At times I have doubts; can I trust him? Or I might be tempted to hold this sin against him?

Pornography has tainted our marriage and our sex life. We will endure the consequences maybe until God calls us to heaven. But only with God's assurance of forgiveness and his help are we able to forgive each other and put on the full armor of God to continue to resist the devil's attacks. "God help us" is sometimes all my heart is able to muster. But I know that God will still my heart again, and through Jesus has made us conquerors of this sin too!

**A note from Women's Ministry editing team:**

This sister in faith talks about how her husband turned to God during this time, but she does not mention any counseling that she or her husband participated in after the struggle with pornography was brought to light. Whether or not they sought counseling is between them and God; however, we strongly recommend that those struggling with pornography or any other

addiction seek pastoral and/or professional counseling. We also know that our God is mighty and powerful and with him all things are possible. For more help on overcoming pornography addiction, turn to your pastor and/or go to the WELS ministry on this:

[www.conquerorsthroughchrist.net](http://www.conquerorsthroughchrist.net)

**Prayer Suggestions:**

- Ask God to forgive you or your loved one of the sin of pornography.
- Ask God to cast these sins far from his presence and remember them no more and that he allow memories of sinful images in you/your loved one's mind to be erased too.
- Ask God to help you and your loved one put him first in your life.
- Pray that God renew in you and your loved one a pure and clean heart.
- Pray for the Conquerors through Christ ministry and all the people that struggle with the sin of pornography.
- Boldly ask God that society recognizes the danger of pornography and gets these images off mainstream media.

This devotion was written by a WELS woman, but because of the sensitivity of this subject and out of respect for her husband, the author has asked to remain anonymous.

Reviewed by Professor-emeritus David Valleskey