

**12. (Case Study) Assume that the information you have here is a straightforward presentation of the facts and write down the homework assignments you want Erik to complete after this first meeting with you. After you list the homework explain the specific issues you will address with Erik in counseling sessions. Please include the categories of “put off” and “put on” in your answer.**

- **Overview**

- Introduction
- Explain the specific issues you will address with Erik in counseling sessions. Include the categories of ‘put off’ and ‘put on’ in your answer.
- Provide the homework assignments that you would assign Erik after the first session.

**I. Introduction**

**A. Background:**

1. Erik is a 20-year-old Believer who has been struggling with pornography for the last three years. Before that time, he knew that pornography existed but had never seen it because his parents carefully monitored all the technology in their home. Erik discovered porn on a trip out of town when some of his friends from High School showed it to him on their phones. Since then, Erik has frequently looked at pornography. The problem became worse when he moved to college and had unfettered access to the Internet on his laptop computer. Several weeks ago, Erik became convinced that, as a Christian, he must begin to deal aggressively with this sin. He did the hardest thing he had ever done and told his dad about the problem. Erik’s dad loves his son and wants to help him but has no idea what to do about a problem like this. They came together to meet you for counsel.
  - a. **James 1:12-15** *Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

**B. Who should be present in the counseling room during this case?**

1. The background shows that Erik is an adult, he is 20 years old, but that his father accompanied him to the counseling session. His father loves his son and wants to help him, but doesn’t know how. More data is required to determine whether or not Erik’s dad should be present in the counseling room. Since Erik is an adult, and a born-again believer, it might be wise to counsel Erik as an adult, without his father present.

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C. A special consideration with the struggle of pornography.

1. Lambert “For many years, I have counseled people who feel locked in a losing struggle against pornography. They need grace-filled, practically relevant strategies as they seek to flee sexual immorality.”<sup>1</sup>

II. **Explain the specific issues you will address with Erik in counseling sessions. Include the categories of ‘put off’ and ‘put on’ in your answer.**

A. Build a Foundation of Grace

1. Jesus Christ died for us sinners. His sacrifice on the cross was a propitiation (the act of gaining favor) for us sinners.
  - a. **Romans 3:21-25** *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*
2. **Forgiving Grace**
  - a. Lambert “The sins we commit do not vanish into the air, but are documented and preserved. Just like we must pay our credit card bills to avoid legal penalties, so the record of our sin debt makes demands on us that are legally binding. The legal demand for our sin debt is divine punishment. Sin must be paid for.”<sup>2</sup>
    - 1) **Colossians 2:13-14** *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*
3. **Transforming Grace**
  - a. Lambert “Forgiving grace is wonderful and essential, but sinners need more than forgiveness. It’s not enough that our record of debt is paid; we also need grace to live like Jesus; we need grace that changes us so we can be like him in his holiness and love.
    - 1) **Romans 6:4** *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

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<sup>1</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 13-14.

<sup>2</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 20-21.

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- b. Lambert “Many people spend a lot of time pursuing forgiveness. They beg and plead for forgiveness after indulging in pornography, but they don’t know what to do next. The Bible teaches that in addition to confessing sin and seeking God’s forgiveness, you need to pursue God’s powerful transforming grace by believing the good news and walking in faith and obedience to the gospel. God’s grace pardons you and forgives your sin, and God’s grace empowers you to live differently and be obedient to him.”<sup>3</sup>
  - 1) Lambert “Transforming grace works when you believe that Jesus gives it to you. The moment you believe in Jesus’ grace to change you, you *are* changing. The more you continue to believe it, the more you will continue to change.”<sup>4</sup>

### 4. Process

- a. Confess your sins.
- b. Affirm God’s forgiveness for your sin.
  - 1) **1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- c. Request Jesus’ grace to change. Repentance is turning away from sin and to God for forgiveness, mercy, and strength.
  - 1) **Romans 12:2** *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
  - 2) **Matthew 7:7** *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*
  - 3) **Proverbs 3:5-6** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

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<sup>3</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 23.

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### B. Accountability

1. Lambert “Accountability is an essential element in the fight for purity and freedom from pornography. The Bible is clear that we need each other, whether we are the one who is caught in a transgression or the person restoring one who is.”<sup>5</sup>
  - a. Lambert “The Bible is clear that believers need accountability. . . The word *accountability* is not found in this passage (Gal 6:1-2), but the text teaches two crucial lessons about our need for others in the fight against sin. First, if you are caught in a sin, you need to be restored by someone who lives by the Spirit. We are not designed to pull our way out of our spiritual ruts in our own strength. We need the help of other Christians. . . Second, this passage speaks to you if you are in the position of providing accountability for someone else. Paul instructs spiritual mentors struggling persons in a spirit of gentleness and love.”<sup>6</sup>
    - 1) **Galatians 6:1-2** *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
  - b. Accountability should be used as PRN. That means as needed. For an accountability partner or group to be effective, they need to be available when the temptation arises, not only at a scheduled time of the week that you meet. This would only allow the group members to disclose failures rather than helping when the temptation has arisen.
2. Elements of Accountability
  - a. “First, you need to find someone who understands that the commitment to accountability is more than simply the commitment to meet regularly. They must be willing to take time through the week to pray for you, call you, answer your calls, and check up on you.”<sup>7</sup>
  - b. “. . . requires someone who possesses the biblical knowledge and practical wisdom to guide you toward purity. This does not require years of experience or advanced degrees.”<sup>8</sup>
  - c. “. . . requires an effort to be committed in the long term. It’s quite typical for these sorts of relationships to start strong, only to taper off after a relatively short period. When people get lazy and stop trying, failure is not far behind.”<sup>9</sup>
3. **Warning:** Avoid disclosures of explicit details of sinful behavior. This only provides an opportunity for further temptation. Rather focus on the failure to fulfill the Law of God perfectly, that fact that you sinned.

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<sup>5</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 47.

<sup>6</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 46.

<sup>7</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 55.

<sup>8</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 55.

<sup>9</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 55.

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4. **Warning:** Lambert “Too often, people who struggle with pornography use accountability as the only weapon in their arsenal against porn. While it is an important weapon, accountability is only one weapon among many.”<sup>10</sup>

### C. Radical Measures

1. **Matthew 5:27-30** *You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*
  - a. Lambert “. . . Jesus provides a *serious standard*. If a person want purity, it is not enough to avoid having a physical, sexual relationship with someone who is not his or her spouse. If they want purity, Jesus says, they must not *want* sex with someone who is not their spouse. Jesus raises the standard of purity from physical acts of fornication to lustful intentions of the heart and lustful looks of the eyes.”<sup>11</sup>
  - b. Lambert “To be clear, Jesus does not mean you must get an actual knife and literally remove these parts of your body. Jesus often speaks in powerful metaphors. After all, even people who lack eyes and hands can still lust and sin in their hearts. Jesus is urging something even *more* radical than a one-time physical amputation.”<sup>12</sup>
    - 1) Lambert “Foundationally, this battle begins in your heart—with your thinking.”<sup>13</sup>
2. Identify environmental triggers that lead to him looking at pornography.
  - a. Begin working with your counselee to identify specific triggers that tend to tempt them to look at pornography. Does it occur at specific times during the day or night? Is it only on your phone, tablet, or computer?
    - 1) Lambert “You most likely view porn from the same sources again and again. You must eliminate, not limit, your access to these outlets for pornography. There are three main ways in which a person can access pornography today: pay for it in a store, view it on the Internet or TV, or access it through a friend. . . Since our sin turns us into inventors of evil (see Romans 1:30), you may find creative avenues for accessing porn, especially as technological advances make it even more accessible.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 48.

<sup>11</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 61.

<sup>12</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 61.

<sup>13</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 63.

<sup>14</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 66-67.



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5. **Ephesians 4:27** and give no opportunity to the devil.
6. **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
7. Search the Scriptures for at least five (5) other verses that might apply to this situation, write a short blurb about why he felt they were appropriate for this specific issue, and bring them with him for the next session.

### B. **Literature:**

1. Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace*.

### C. **Memorization:**

1. Assign a verse that is most appropriate for the situation your counselee is in. In this case, I would assign **1 Corinthians 10:13**.

### D. **Church Attendance:**

1. This is highly recommended, with an emphasis on in-person attendance.

### E. **Prayer:**

1. Gratefulness for salvation, regeneration, and for the transformational work of the Holy Spirit working in his heart.
2. Confession of sins. This would include thoughts, words, and deeds.
3. For victory over this sin. For self-control & self-discipline.
4. That the Word of God would reign as supreme in his life, denying the desires of the flesh.

### F. **Application:**

1. Make a list of all the times when you are most tempted to view pornography. Discuss this list with your accountability partner and plan what to do when the temptations arise. Use this list as a guide for denying the opportunity for the flesh.
2. Use the list created during the counseling session as a guide for situations to avoid, denying the flesh the opportunity to gratify its desires.
3. "Make a list of a few spiritually mature Christians you respect and would like to join you in accountability. Ideally, they should be believers from your local church or shared ministry who will encounter you in the normal course of life."<sup>15</sup>
  - a. "Once you find a spiritually mature person who is willing to be an accountability partner, set up a regular time to meet every week or every other week. You should agree on an agenda for your time together."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 57.

<sup>16</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting For Purity with the Power of Grace*, 57.

IV. **Suggested Reading**

- A. **Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace.***
- B. **Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, 176-216.**
- C. **Jay Adams, *How to Help People Change*, 190-200.**
- D. **Jay Adams, *Theology of Christians Counseling*, 237-248.**
- E. **David Powlison, *Breaking Pornography Addiction*. Available at:  
<https://www.ccef.org/breaking-pornography-addiction-part-1/>**