

**SCRIPTURE: Romans 7:13-8:1 TITLE: "Struggle of the Gospel"**

**Intro:** Don't know if y'all noticed or not, but we **painted our church this week.** :-) Response has been awesome. Super positive. Exciting. Encouraging. Awesome. I'm pumped. Still. Running on adrenaline. But, did you know before we painted the outside of the church, we did a lot of work that people didn't see, or that most people didn't see. **Levels of improvement:** Carpet. Donate, yard sale, trash. Rearrange. Stage. Paint. TVs. Tech. Steps. Bathrooms in back. Lobby. Sound panels. Lights. New Bathrooms! Plumbing. Underground (septic). A lot of that was done in areas that were unseen. Dark. Dirty. To Septic guy: "Our jobs are a lot alike. We both help people deal with their crap." I sent him a text this morning to say thank you for being willing to do the dirty work that people don't see. **That's what we're doing today.**  
**Thesis: "B/c of Gospel of God's Grace, we can be honest about our sin & need for Jesus"**

## **I. Honest With Ourselves (13)**

- A. **"Hell No!"** Stop it Hell. Satan. Devil. Lies! (I gotta get all this out one Sunday a month).
- B. **Sinful beyond measure.** Until I allow myself to be the sinner I am, I won't experience grace.

**ILLUSTRATION: Steve Brown.** - **"If you knew everything I did/do/thought...If I knew..." Haha! Ground is level at the Cross.** Isn't it great we all can be here to talk about sin/His grace this morning?  
- **Playboy Bunny Icon** > Gospel Presentation of Campus Crusade for Christ. GRACE.

- **Interview:** "What do you mean 'sinful Christians'? What other kind is there?" I guess if they're thinking that I'd tell them to stop thinking they're so special.
- **Fraud.** You think you feel like a fraud?! My job is to be fake. Convince people I've got it together, spiritually mature, obey, holy, good. Atleast thought it was.

C. **"Only people who get better, are the ones who know if they don't Jesus will still love them."**

**ILLUSTRATION: Steve Brown.** "It's easier to hug a dirty kid, than a stiff one. Avoidant. Self-reliant."

**APPLICATION: 1. Bonhoeffer. 110-111. You're a sinner! And I'm a sinner. Isn't it great?**

**2. Best witness you have is your shame.** The most important thing you have to share with the world is your guilt and what Jesus has done with. Not what you used to do and how you don't do it anymore. Not what you do now. But what Jesus has and continues to do for you everyday b/c of his grace.

## **II. Honest with One Another (14-20)**

- A. **"We know..."** You know and I know: **"I, Paul, AM a sinner."** Present tense. Believer's struggle.

**ILLUSTRATION: Nate Larkin. Samson Society.** There's a group in our church now. Use our building. Not a ministry of church, but they use our building. Men, Let me know and I'll put you in contact with Rob.

- B. **"Preach to self."** Do every week:2-3x! Still forget! **Confession Preach gospel to one another.**
- C. **SB: "So bad at talking about our sin, admitting our sin & confessing, that we've convinced ourselves and others that this whole church and Christian thing is about getting better, looking better and not sinning as much. And that's just not it. Grow in grace/faith. Gospel for sinners.**
- D. **The place where you can make impact on family, friends, neighbors, talking about biggest regrets and biggest fears and how Jesus IS helping you heal and live in freedom, and those turn out to be their same regrets and fears, b/c that's when they'll see they're not alone and there is hope.**

**APPLICATION: 1. Bonhoeffer. 112-113, 118-119. Ortlund. Samson. Miller.** "Band of Brothers".

- 1. **Porn Stats. Covenant Eyes.** Sad, not alone. Your sin is not special exception. Not only one or worst.
- 2. **Addiction thrives in darkness and isolation.** Shame. Anxiety/Fear. Secret. Deceit. Denial. Deflect.

**ILLUSTRATION: Y'all Version. Haha! 1 Cor. 10:13:** "No temptation has overtaken **you** that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let **you** be tempted beyond **your** ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that **you** may be able to endure it." "Y'all!!!"

**3. Guys (& Girls), we were never meant to do this alone! Ever!**

## **III. Honest with God - Hope (7:21-8:1)**

- A. **Paul's Ruminations. O.C.D.** about sin. In therapy: Recognize. Fill mind with good. Truth.
- B. **What does it mean to be honest with God?** It means to **believe the Truth.** His Truth. **Gospel of grace and what He has done for us in Jesus His Son.**
- C. **Yes, we confess to Him.** He already knows. And if we've been honest with ourselves/others, We have been honest with Him. So now...it's time to believe the Gospel! Truth. Facts.

**APPLICATION: Podcast: "You will run out of sin, before God runs out of grace."**

So believe God, not the devil. Satan/Accuser doesn't want you to believe. Honest with God.

> **"No condemnation! Haha! Take that Devil!" JOHN NEWTON. Slave ship. Raped women.**

> **Greatest Trick of Devil:** "Convincing world he doesn't exist." Not involved. No threat. He is.

> **Hates Lord's people.** Steal Joy. Ruin peace. Since he knows he can't prevail against them! Whoa!

> **Satan doesn't guard water boy. Doesn't punch cut man. In the Game. Fight. Mansion/battlefield.**

**SCRIPTURE: Romans 7:13-8:1 TITLE: "Struggle of the Gospel"**

"Kent, if you lead whole Town of BL to Christ and pastor a church twice the size of the whole town, or if you totally given in, blow it, humiliate yourself, betray everyone's trust including your wife, tear apart your family, and cause disrepute on the Name of my Son Jesus, ***I will not love any more or any less than I do right now.***" ***The Gospel is that radical!***

> ***Raise all your kids*** and they love you, come see you, married, families, church/ministry, or they all go apostate and estranged and you don't talk to them anymore..."

> ***Best marriage***, help other couples, counsel, teach, speak, pray, or ends in ugly/messy divorce."

> ***Never touch alcohol*** in your entire life, don't even cook with, never bought it or had it in your house, or you get slap drunk every weekend to numb yourself from life, stress and work, and one night end up on the road and take the life of an entire family with 2 young kids in head on collision..."

> ***Never have sex your entire life***, remain a virgin until marriage, didn't even know what I was talking about for half of this sermon, or if your career was producing films for the porn industry. Managing the websites. Hiring the actors, or even if you were or ever become an actor..."

> ***Or if you've fought drugs*** your entire life, and you slip back again. Living in a tent in the woods in a drug village, serving the dealers just to get your fix..."

***You know why?! Because this stuff does happen! Every day. And if the gospel isn't true for those scenarios, then it wouldn't be true for you either, and we would all be without hope.***

> ***But the gospel is true. Grace is that good! It's that radical. And it's that amazing. Let's pray.***

## Pornography Websites

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"It seems so obvious: If we invent a machine, the first thing we are going to do—after making a profit—is use it to watch porn. When the projector was invented roughly a century ago, the first movies were not of damsels in distress tied to train tracks or Charlie Chaplin-style slapsticks; they were stilted porn shorts called stag films. VHS became the dominant standard for VCRs largely because Sony wouldn't allow pornographers to use Betamax; the movie industry followed porn's lead. DVDs, the Internet, cell phones. You name it, pornography planted its big flag there first, or at least shortly thereafter."

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— Damon Brown,<sup>11</sup> author of *Porn and Pong* and *Playboy's Greatest Covers*  
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## Among Churchgoers

According to a survey by the Barna Group in 2016:<sup>95</sup>

- 41% of practicing Christian boys 13-24 use porn at least once a month.
- 23% of practicing Christian men 25+ use porn at least once a month.

According to data taken from Internet users who took part in the General Social Survey for the year 2000, regular church attenders are 26% **less** likely to look at porn than non-attenders, but those self-identified as "fundamentalists" are 91% **more** likely to look at porn.<sup>96</sup>

In 2003, 34% of female readers of *Today's Christian Woman's* online newsletter admitted to intentionally accessing Internet porn.<sup>97</sup>

According to a survey conducted by the Barna Group in the U.S. in 2014:<sup>98</sup>

- 64% of self-identified Christian men and 15% of self-identified Christian women view pornography at least once a month (compared to 65% of non-Christian men and 30% of non-Christian women).

## **KEITH & MELISSA Send off!**

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