

September 1990 Prayer Letter

March 29, 1990

I grew up in a Christian home, the son of a missionary-then-minister, the third of four boys, and fairly protected from destructive influences. Prior to the sixth grade, I had very little knowledge of sexuality, male-female differences, etc. The summer I turned eleven years old, a boy visiting his grandparents for the summer introduced me to pornography and to the practice of masturbation. I soon became addicted, and developed a pattern of sin which I found impossible to break. This pattern continued through high school and college, and was accelerated when I got involved with female relationships in which there was immorality. It was somewhat complicated by two distinct sexual assaults by homosexuals, and also by sexual encounters with a few prostitutes. All during this time, I considered myself a 'struggling' Christian, with nearly continuous efforts to 'become pure,' only to fall once again into sin, grieve, confess, repent and purpose to avoid sin the next time.

This continued into my dating relationship with my wife, whom I met during the second year of professional school. She had also been involved in significant immorality, and was a Christian, although for her, sexuality was her way of gaining attention and acceptance. Finally, during our engagement period, wanting to have at least some period of purity prior to marriage, I really cut her off sexually and emotionally. I could not help but see her as contributing to my sin, and had resentment toward her for it.

Our wedding night was anti-climactic. What I soon realized after getting married, was that my interest in sex was largely related to the uncertainty of whether or not we'd go that 'far', as well as the wrongfulness of it. Once I was married, those were no longer factors, and I couldn't relate sex to an expression of love. I found that when I had cut my fiancée off during our engagement, I had also died sexually. It has taken years of marriage to begin to restore God's balance and love to this intimacy.

Since becoming married, I have remained externally faithful to my wife, but consistently battled with lust, especially with 'wandering eyes,' i.e. just gazing at other women when I should have been delighting in my wife. I found my thought life virtually 'impossible' to control, and had some a few occasions of very strong temptations, particular when I was not anticipating it, e.g. unexpectedly coming across a pornographic magazine or lewd TV program.

I went to a Christian conference very confused, crying out to God for help, distraught over what seemed to be a situation with no real hope. There I learned about spiritual warfare, and how as Christians we can give wicked spirits the opportunity to control areas in our soul and body (but not spirit) if we yield our members to them. As soon as the meeting was over, I sought out Jim Logan, asking him if he would meet with me and see if he could help me. He readily did so. That evening, we spent four solid hours praying, studying Scripture, sharing, and praying some more. By the time we finished, I was a squeaky clean man, with tremendous insight into spiritual warfare (and our victory in Christ), and, best of all, hope for the possibility of a pure Christian life.

Since that time, I have experience for the first time the blessing of freedom in Christ. The freedom and ability to quickly say no to temptation; successfully training my eyes to avoid letting the see sensual material; and the joy of seeing my wife gain a new trust in my covenant with her. I have never in my life experienced the freedom which I now have. I had never understood (experientially) what other Christians meant when they shared of moral freedom. Prior to deliverance, it just wasn't there. I was barraged with immoral thoughts; now I recognize them as fiery darts, particularly present since I had welcomed the demonic in earlier in life.

I know that the battle isn't over. But I know now how to experience the victory that is in Christ. The practices which I tried to add for my protection earlier in life have now become effective since Satan's beach-head has been removed. My wife and I have become real teammates in keeping Satan out of my life. She goes with me whenever I go out of town. she asks me how I'm doing, and I find that I can be honest with her. We have put the TV in the closet: I found that just by merely watching it, I was forced to compromise throughout the viewing time, and compromising there made me weaker in other areas. Now that the TV is gone, I have found much greater strength and diligence in governing myself.

My life since that experience has been one of the greatest spiritual hunger and growth than ever before. And by God's grace, it will continue. He who has called me is faithful. He answers prayer. He rescued me out of the pit.

Recently, I went before my church and confessed this area of my life, and asked for forgiveness. Afterward, I was deluged with men and wives who approached me to thank me, and to share with me their own struggles in this area. I have come to realize that immorality is a plague in the church, that many, many, men are in bondage, having yielded themselves to evil as I did. And they need to be free.