

White Stone Ministry  
Houston, Texas

**For the Love of Pleasure**  
**BY STEVE GALLAGHER**  
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It should be understood at the outset that pleasure has its rightful place in life. However, problems arise when it is given more importance in a person's daily life than what is proper and allowable.

People who are addicted to viewing pornography are lovers of pleasure at heart. In fact, it is impossible for a porn addict *not* to be ensnared by the love of pleasure.

Making pleasure the most important aspect of one's life could be compared to a teenager who thinks he can live on candy bars and soda pop. True, he won't drop dead within a few days of such an unhealthy diet, but his quality of life will be seriously impaired. The constant intake of sugar will gradually rot his teeth, deplete his overall energy level, and could even lead to something serious such as diabetes. Worse than that, by substituting healthy food with sweets, his body will not receive the nutrition that is required to ward off sickness and to sustain life. Undoubtedly, the results of such a lifestyle would be a sickly life and an untimely death.

In the same way, pleasurable experiences are meant to be the dessert of life. Kept in its proper perspective, it is balanced by the staples of the healthy spiritual diet of prayer, Bible reading, church attendance, deeds of kindness, giving of tithes and offerings, and so on. However, when gratification becomes the main focal point of one's daily existence, it not only rots a person's spiritual life, but it eventually chokes out everything that is wholesome.

Jesus said that the love of pleasure chokes out the Word of God. (Luke 8:14) James told his constituents that their love for pleasure thwarted their prayers and kept them in a spirit of lust. (James 4:1-3) The writer of Hebrews held Moses up as an example to us all when he said that he chose "rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin." (Hebrews 11:25) The apostle Paul spoke of those who are "enslaved to various lusts and pleasures." (Titus 3:3)

While these passages are each uniquely profound, it is Paul's prophetic words in 2 Timothy 3:4-5 that are most alarming. There the apostle speaks of those alive in the last days who are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power..."

The sobering truth is that, when seeking pleasure becomes the emphasis in one's life, a person's love for God becomes corrupted. The apostle John expressed something similar when he said, "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but

is from the world." (1 John 2:15b-16)

Both of these inspired writers were speaking of the same spiritual phenomena: the desire for worldly pleasures nullifies one's ability to be in a true, loving relationship with God. Their outward "form of godliness" might remain intact, but in reality, the person's spiritual life becomes gutted of the power that comes from godly living.

Pornography is extremely addictive because of the intense pleasure it provides. However, those who have fallen into its clutches can attest to the fact that, while it does indeed provide a source of temporary gratification, the long term consequences are the loss of one's spiritual health and vitality.

There simply cannot be any sustained intimacy with God as long as a man indulges in a life given over to pleasure and pornography.