

Keeping Your Guard Up Against the Crouching Lion

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Another pastor or ministry team member had to resign in shame because of a sexual indiscretion. We hear of a new one almost weekly. The enemy cheers! Many people, however, are hurt and confused. "How could this happen to _____?" Fill in the blank; each one is a tragedy.

How do these happen? Many begin on a computer! Chat rooms, email, and—more than any other contributing factor: internet pornography.

The enemy is smart. He knows our weaknesses, and he knows how to play us. He's been studying mankind since The Garden.

The Problem

Personal computers feel—well—personal! It feels like whatever we do on them is private, and so it's easy to let our guard down. They're even named *My Computer!*

That's the power behind the lure of internet porn. It *feels* private and hidden; undiscoverable! This is, thus, an area that people who would *never* go into an adult book store and buy pornographic magazines can do nearly the same thing with no one watching.

One of the problems here is that porn is very addictive. And the enemy, being smart, sends us unsolicited invitations to view what's available. A visit in a weak moment can lead to another, and to another, and so on. Before one knows what's hit them, they're looking at their co-workers, parishioners, and neighbors differently. The enemy has them right where he wants them.

The Solution

To overcome the private and hidden feeling of internet porn, many have gathered friends around them with similar struggles and formed accountability groups. I am not recommending against that. Many find it to be effective, however, I have found that these groups usually lack the ability to do something of consequence when one slips back into sin.

We found a ministry with a solution that is almost guaranteed to work. The organization is Covenant Eyes, taken from Job 31:1 in which Job says, "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl." (NIV) It puts the fear of the Lord back into this otherwise hidden sin.

How Does It Work?

Once Covenant Eyes' software is installed onto your computer, it logs every place you go on the internet. It doesn't filter where you can go, it only logs where you've visited. When setting up your Covenant Eyes account, you can choose accountability partners that will receive a report every week or month listing where you've gone and scoring each site.

I recommend establishing Covenant Eyes accountabilities with your supervisor and your spouse. If you're not married, then set up an accountability with your mother or grandmother. The idea is that if your spouse and boss knew everywhere you visited on the internet, you'd likely avoid going anywhere you'd have to explain!

If Covenant Eyes is on every computer you and/or your ministry owns, you're protected. If any don't have it installed, you're vulnerable to the crouching lion. Install it on every computer. And each computer user needs their own Covenant Eyes account; group logins only reduce the power of the tool.

Can You Get Around It?

No! You can email Covenant Eyes' technical support for an uninstall code, but your accountability partners will know you did. And if you're not logged in to Covenant Eyes, it won't let you view anything on the internet (email content is the exception).

Concluding Encouragement

A friend once said that we're all like pianos. If you were to open a piano lid and yell a single note for a moment, you would find when you stopped that strings were vibrating in sympathy with your voice. That's natural. We're all like pianos in that our strings naturally vibrate when the enemy yells into our lives. The sin isn't in the vibration, but in what we do with the vibration.

No one should have to feel bad that they're tempted. It's unfortunately natural. Just don't give in. And a great way to keep from giving in is to shed light into this otherwise dark and private-feeling area.

Covenant Eyes will help dampen the effects of the enemy's yelling. It's not free, but it works. And the sorrow it will save is well worth the cost. Visit them right away at www.covenanteyes.org.