

MarketFaith Ministries

Making Worldview Practical

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MarketFaith Ministries is an equipping ministry which is focused on helping Christians become more effective in living out their faith in the midst of the increasingly diverse worldview environment of modern society.

Introduction

There are a lot of moral issues that are prominent parts of the culture war in our day. One of the most damaging, though perhaps least talked about, relates to pornography. Pornography is at the root of many of the relationship problems that exist today. It causes individuals to have a warped understanding of human beings and interferes with people's ability to relate properly to other human beings. Today's article addresses this issue and tells how a person's worldview affects how they view the issue of pornography. Please pass this on to those you know who need to have a stronger understanding of why Christians need to leave porn alone.

We will be conducting the witness seminar a couple of times in the near future. This training will not only help Christians learn how to share the gospel message, but will give a solid foundation concerning how to frame the message for those who come from different worldviews. The essential message is always the same, but different worldview foundations require different starting places. MarketFaith Ministries is able to come to your church or Christian organization and share worldview training in an easy to understand format, and with the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. Check out the website at <http://www.marketfaith.org> and see what other kinds of training seminars are available. Then contact us to see how we might serve you.

Freddy

Worldview and Pornography

Most Christians believe that pornography is a bad thing. But really, what is the big deal? What is it about pornography that is really so bad?

First of all, lets define what it is. Pornography is any image, picture, statue, advertisement, writing, etc. whose purpose is to create sexual titillation. In modern Western culture, sex has become such a public topic that the lines between what is legitimate and what is illicit are harder and harder to draw. In fact, sexual images have become so prominent that what used to be considered soft porn, is now considered tame enough to be on prime time television. And while it used to be that people could only get access to it in magazines behind the counter – and then only at certain stores – it is now so pervasive that virtually anyone can access any kind of porn through the most basic internet connection. Many now even question why Christians think pornography is such a big deal.

The answer to this question emerges directly out of one's worldview. There are, obviously, many people who believe that there is nothing wrong with pornography at all. For others it is considered to be not such a good thing, but still there is no objective reason for it to be totally bad, either. But for Christians, there are some very significant reasons why it really is a bad thing.

First, lets examine how the different worldviews understand the concept of pornography. Then we will look more closely at the Christian faith and see why it is such a problem.

Naturalism

The Naturalistic worldview does not acknowledge the existence of the supernatural. Its defining element is that everything which exists is the result of eternal evolutionary processes. There is no creator God who did anything inten-

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tionally, so there is no transcendent meaning in any part of the natural order. As a result, there is no outside authority to define morality. It must, therefore, be defined by individuals or human social groups.

When it comes to pornography, there is no inherent reason why there should be any problem with it. The defining principle is that anything which provides for, or at least doesn't inhibit, the propagation of the species is potentially a legitimate activity. Related to pornography, there is nothing wrong with it in and of itself. It becomes good or bad depending strictly on the needs and desires of society at large at any given moment and in any given circumstance.

Animism

Animism asserts that humans are physical beings with a spiritual core. When a human's body dies, the spirit enters the spirit world and lives its life in that realm. But there is a connection between the material and spiritual world. Humans and spirits live in a symbiotic relationship with one another. Humans perform sacrifices and give offerings to care for the needs of the spirits residing in the spirit world, and the spirits respond by taking care of the needs of the humans in the material world. If a person does not take care of the needs of a particular spirit, that spirit will cause bad things to happen to the human until they correct the problem.

When it comes to the issue of pornography, there is not any particular reason why it would be considered a problem. There may be issues related to it in particular Animistic belief systems, but as a general tenet of Animism, there would not be any particular reason to view it as a problem.

The major issue revolves around how it affects the clan or family – including the gods associated with the group. Anything that would disrupt the connections between family or clan, both living and on the other side of death, is typically considered to be bad. As such, if the pornography is not seen to cause problems for the group, or the group's gods, there would not be a problem. If it is seen to be a problem, then it becomes bad.

Far Eastern Thought

In Far Eastern Thought, all of life is understood to be connected at its core, and every individual life form is on a path toward unity. Typically the journey toward unity progresses through many incarnations – each one hopefully taking the individual life closer to “oneness with the ultimate impersonal One.”

As a result, the life force, in every form, is considered the most important and sacred element of reality. Since parts of the life force exist in every form of life, it is the goal of the adherents of Far Eastern Thought to preserve life to the highest degree possible so that each one can live out its destiny in its current incarnation. This plays out in slightly different ways in the various expressions of Far Eastern Thought, but this is the general principle.

As relates to pornography, Far Eastern Thought basically advocates a conservative attitude concerning sexual matters. Philosophically, there is not any compelling reason why this must be so, but that is the basic understanding. It generally teaches to observe celibacy when single and promotes faithfulness in marriage. This attitude is founded on a basic passivity that promotes restraint. It is believed that there is a basic order to the universe which includes traditional ideas about sexuality, and that humans should try to live within it. Moving outside of those parameters goes against flow of the universe and puts a person in a position to not progress toward his or her proper ultimate destiny.

Theism

In general, Theistic worldviews understand an individual to be a creation of God, and therefore of great value. There are, though, numerous expressions of Theism which makes it difficult to pin down a comprehensive rule as it relates to pornography.

In some Theistic belief systems there may be justification, or even acceptance of liberal sexual attitudes, including the use of pornography. In general, though, Theistic worldviews tend to view pornography to be wrong because of the fact that it objectifies the most important creation of God.

Relational Revelation

Relational Revelation is, of course, the form of Theism which represents Biblical Christianity. The Bible clearly teaches that human life is of highest value, and that each person is individually created by God in his own image. Relational Revelation views pornography as something sinful based on two key ideas.

First, it objectifies human beings who should, rather, be understood as persons created in the image of God. Human beings are not objects to be gawked at or drooled over. Rather, they are persons of great value.

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Secondly, viewing pornography causes those viewing it to entertain thoughts which are contrary to God's ideal for human sexuality. Sex is an activity which God designed to be exercised only within the bonds of marriage. Pornography titillates the imagination and tempts individuals toward sexual activity outside of God's purpose for sex, by promoting acts, thoughts and attitudes which are contrary to the purposes of God.

Summary

As a Christian, it is very easy for us to simply declare that pornography is bad based on the principles above – and really that is enough. But there are other issues which emerge, as well, that we ought to be aware of, and each of these issues carry a person away from relationship with God, rather than toward him.

First, the use of pornography is completely selfish in nature. It is used to excite oneself sexually. This kind of selfishness certainly does not move a person closer to God's ideals.

Secondly, pornography is addictive and its grip is compulsive. Because the sex drive in an individual is so strong, a constant diet of porn causes the brain to secrete an overabundance of chemicals that can create addiction. Once a person is addicted in this way, self-control is thrown out the window. This has the potential to destroy legitimate relationships and wreck marriages. Lack of self control in life definitely moves a person away from God's ideals.

A third problem relates to the role pornography has in deviant behavior. While not everyone who views pornography is going to become a sociopath, there is a very high correlation between people who participate in anti-social behavior and the use of pornography. It is common for there to be a link between porn and sexual aggressiveness, sexually hostile and violent behaviors, as well as individual problems related to drugs and alcohol. There is also strong evidence that the rise in sexual crimes, sexual dysfunction and family breakdown are linked to the increased availability and use of pornography. This, certainly, moves people away from God's ideals.

Finally, there is the problem of those who allow themselves to be used to produce pornography. Those who do that have, themselves, bought into the lie that any kind of sexual activity is okay. This puts them in the category of those who see intimate relationships as nothing more than a physical activity. They, and the ones who view them, are setting themselves up to experience difficulties in intimate relationships. This is another point where people have moved away from God's ideals.

The whole notion that the creation and use of pornography is a victimless activity is simply not true. It damages the individual and has a negative impact on society in general. And all of this emerges out of the worldview foundation that a person builds their life upon.

Christianity is not the only belief system which sees pornography as a bad thing. However, most others give nothing more than just a pragmatic or dogmatic reason as to why this is so. But God created mankind for a purpose, and those who want to fulfill his purpose and experience the fullness of life that he promises, must build their lives upon the worldview which represents ultimate Truth. This is much more than a pragmatic or dogmatic approach to life. It actually puts us in sync with the way God created the world to operate.

Coming in May - Answers to the Attacks of Naturalists

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