

The
SEX SPIRAL

Forgiven and Free From Pornography

DUSTIN DANIELS



AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA & BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

www.ambassador-international.com

INTRODUCTION

I WAS STANDING IN A closet with a loaded 9mm gun in my hand. I was hiding from an unexpected guest. I don't remember how long I was in there, but it seemed like forever. Regardless, I was somewhere I shouldn't have been—having relations with a woman who wasn't mine. Her son had decided to stop by and check on his mom. He had heard that she had moved out and was planning on filing for divorce. After he finally left, his mother opened the closet door to let me know it was “safe” to come out of hiding. She saw the gun in my hand, looked at me, and said with a scowl, “What were you going to do—shoot him?”

How does someone end up in that situation? I mean, this is the kind of stuff you watch on the local news. We think to ourselves, *This kind of stuff would never happen to me. What an idiot!* Well, idiot or not, up to this point in my life, most people would have told you that I was a really nice guy, a great employee, and a good neighbor. What they didn't know—what nobody knew—was that for over twenty years of my life, I was addicted to pornography.

I certainly didn't plan on becoming an addict, nor did I wake up one day and choose to become one. So how on earth did this happen? In other words, how does a child who found his father's collection of pornography wind up in a closet, hiding like a coward and still acting like that little boy—only now with a loaded gun in his hand—over twenty years later?

This book is somewhat of a narrative of how that happened to me, but more importantly, it's instructional. *The Sex Spiral* is saturated with God's Word and practical application to prevent the same idiotic type

of thing from happening to you. Ultimately, this book isn't about me or you. It's about Jesus Christ and the grace He offers to sexual sinners through a blood-stained, Roman cross.

I find it fascinating that Jesus' first sermon came directly from Isaiah 61:1 (ESV): ***“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me (Jesus) to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”***¹

That passage is really, *really* good news. Read it again, this time slowly and out loud from the New Living Translation: ***“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon Me, for the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed.”***

Are you beaten down and brokenhearted? Would you like to feel true comfort? Do you feel like a prisoner inside your own, self-imposed prison cell? Is the thought of being free from pornography only wishful thinking? Well, you're in good company, my friend, because you're not alone.

WE'RE DROWNING

When I was a child, my dad and I were playing on this pontoon-type raft at the lake. It had worn-out, sun-blazed, greenish blue, putting green carpet on the top. It was tied down by some sort of makeshift anchor. There were several teenagers playing on the raft as well. They soon began rocking the raft from side to side—up and down, up and down. I moved to the middle of the raft because I got scared and asked my dad, “Is it going to flip?” He reassured me that it wasn't. Needless to say, my dad was not a prophet; as those words exited his mouth, the whole raft tumbled over.

Everyone dove off, but I didn't know how to dive, let alone swim! I jumped as far as I could into the water, but the raft came crashing down

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016.*

on me. I was in the water for just a nanosecond before it slammed onto my head, pushing me further underneath the water. I opened my eyes, and all I could see was that greenish blue carpet. I kept hitting my head on the raft, trying to escape, but it was directly over me. I was paralyzed with fear, and panic set in. I was gasping for air but only gulped lake water.

At this moment, I didn't need someone yelling from the shore, "Hey! You should have learned how to dive before you played on that raft." I didn't need another person pointing and laughing at me because I didn't know how to swim. I didn't need to be completely ignored, and I surely didn't need someone telling me to "try harder; just hold your breath for a little longer; and everything will be okay."

No, I needed someone to *save me*. I needed someone to get in the water, risk their own life, and pull me out from underneath the raft. I needed *someone else* to do something. My life was completely out of my control at that moment. Ultimately, I needed a savior. I was a little boy who was utterly helpless. I was drowning and moments away from dying. Thankfully, someone did save me. They grabbed my arm and pulled me out from underneath the raft. To this day, I still don't know who that person was.

Today, the Church is also drowning with its passive reluctance to address the painful reality of what's going on in our homes. Many people call pornography a "white elephant." I vehemently disagree. I believe we are way past cute metaphors that most people ignore. Lust is an enraged lion that is seething to devour Christian homes at a pace that human history has never experienced before. We have a pandemic of pornography in the pews of our Bible-believing churches that is destroying families while ferociously corrupting our children. Yet it seems that we have the same mentality for solutions—we're trying to give swimming lessons to those who are drowning.

For example, you know you need help with your porn problem, but the terror of telling someone (especially some type of pastor, minister

or priest) has prevented you from doing so for years or even decades. You finally get the nerve to tell someone who you believe is trustworthy, but, unfortunately, something like this takes place:

1. He immediately gives you a mental checklist of things that you “should” be doing and another checklist of things that you “shouldn’t” be doing. Basically, he has given you more rules (laws) to follow.
2. He laughs nervously at the topic because sexuality is way too uncomfortable to do otherwise. He makes you feel like you’re the only one with this “problem” and tells you to pray harder (whatever that means). He has essentially ignored you.
3. He spends enough time with you so that you can confess your sin. He also prays that God “will take away this desire,” but, ultimately, there is no guidance, resolution, or plan as you walk out his door. He believes that he has done his part as a pastor and privately hopes that you will never bother him again. After all, he has a church to lead.

If one, all, or a variation of those things has happened to you, I’m so sorry. I truly am. I want to reconcile that conversation with this book, workbook, and video series.² I want you to know there are people who care and are willing to answer your questions on this journey toward sexual sobriety.

A BOLD STATEMENT

Christian evangelist Josh McDowell says that “pornography is the biggest threat to the cause of Christ in over 2,000 years.”³ Wow, that’s a pretty bold statement, don’t you think? Statistics are all over the board when it comes to how many men and women, boys and girls are viewing pornography—intentionally or by accident. Regardless of

² Visit www.DustinDaniels.org to learn more.

³ *Dustin Daniels Radio Show*. “Let’s Do Something About the Porn Epidemic.” Episode 118. October 24, 2015.

CHAPTER 3

TRIGGER #1: AWARENESS

“QUIT STARING! YOU’RE DOING SO good! It’s almost been a whole month!” This kind of conversation used to go on in my mind as I stood in line at the grocery store staring at the magazines in the checkout stand—you know, *Cosmo*, *GQ*, and, of course, *Sports Illustrated: Swimsuit Edition*.

Unfortunately, a month was about the longest I could ever go without looking at porn. It seemed to be my breaking point. I’d be minding my own business—“living the dream”—and then *BAM!* something would happen. A smile from a pretty waitress, a random thought out of nowhere, the smell of a fragrance, a song on the radio, or any kind of pressure at work could start my head spinning with sexual thoughts.

Porn made me feel good. It was how I dealt with life. It actually changed my mood and was a lot easier to hide than alcohol or drugs. Ultimately, porn became my subconscious friend—the only one I thought I needed. “She” was always there for me. When I had a good day, I could celebrate with “her.” When I had a bad day, “she” would comfort me. “She” never said no and was always willing to do whatever I imagined.

What I didn’t realize, however, was that over time, “she” started to control me. There became a time in our relationship when I stopped choosing “her,” and “she” chose me. “She” eventually became the one in charge, dictating when and how I would spend my time. “She” became a powerful force in my life. I had willingly participated for so long that a moral and spiritual transaction seemed to have taken place. Jesus said it this way in Luke 11:34-35: **“Your eye is like a lamp that provides light**

for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. But when it is unhealthy, your body is filled with darkness. ³⁵ ***Make sure that the light you think you have is not actually darkness.*** ³⁶ ***If you are filled with light, with no dark corners, then your whole life will be radiant, as though a floodlight were filling you with light.***”

This change in my life was so subtle. I didn’t realize it until major consequences started to happen to my relationships, career, and health. Why didn’t I stop looking at pornography when I first sensed there was a problem? In other words, why didn’t I break off this relationship with “her”? Well, I thought I could fix it on my own. I thought I could just quit.

THE REALITY OF LIFE SETS IN

In Proverbs 27:19 (NIV) we read, ***“As water reflects the face, so one’s life reflects the heart.”***³³ I had no idea the kind of person that I truly was. I had become the “fruit” of pornography itself. My life exhibited a reflection of the anger and abuse that I had willingly viewed as entertainment for two decades. I knew something was wrong with me, but I had no idea the character of my heart and the deception of my own mind.

Even if I had wanted to tell someone about my struggle, who would listen? I was so wrapped up in myself that I only had one friend. Truth be told, I really didn’t want any other friends. I remember turning down opportunities to go to the movies or dinner with a small group of people for the sole purpose of staying at home with “her”. Not only did I not have any friends, but I also didn’t have a relationship with God. *But* if you had asked me if I was a Christian, I would have said, “Yes, of course.” After all, I went to Catholic school, was an altar boy, prayed, took communion, went to confession, etc. How could I *not*

³³ *The Holy Bible: The New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

be a Christian?³⁴ Just look at all the stuff I did growing up. However, Jesus says in Matthew 7:21-23:

Not everyone who calls out to Me, “Lord! Lord!” will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of My Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to Me, “Lord! Lord! We prophesied in Your Name and cast out demons in Your Name and performed many miracles in Your Name.” But I will reply, “I never knew you. Get away from Me, you who break God’s laws.”

This is one of the scariest verses in scripture. I *thought* that I was a Christian, but I *thought* very wrong. Notice the wording—“***Only those who actually do the will of My Father.***” What is the will of our Heavenly Father when it comes to sexuality? The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, “***God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor— not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and His ways.***”

Wow, how crystal clear is that? I certainly was not in God’s will. In fact, I was the pagan that Paul is talking about in this verse. I was kidding myself. No, wait, that’s not strong enough. I *chose* to believe in a lie that said, “Yes, I’m a Christian, *but* I can still keep this porn thing for myself.”

I believe it’s entirely possible that the pandemic of pornography within the Church is due to people who *think* they are Christians, but are not. This is possibly the biggest fatal, eternal assumption of our generation. Once again, we need to look at the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:15-20:

Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes

³⁴ Please know that I’m not condemning the Catholic faith or our Catholic friends. This problem fell directly on me.

from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

Sexual sin is *the* battle of our generation. We don't just have churches blatantly rejecting the authority of the Bible in this area, but rather entire denominations are losing their mind over it. False prophets, pastors, priests, and ministers teach half-truths. Their intention is to deliberately turn people away from the one true God and toward themselves. They leave out truth that seems to be inconvenient. Make no doubt about it—their motives are evil. We have plenty of false prophets—each with their own microphone for misguided and unfounded theology. They preach a message that is anti-Christ. They call evil *good* and good *evil* (Isa. 5:20). These people have the appearance of godliness but deny His power (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Are you sitting under a false teacher? How do you know? Ask your pastor, priest or minister two questions:

1. Is the Bible the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God? If he answers no, you have a problem.
2. What is marriage? If he gives you his opinion instead of quoting Genesis 2:24, then it's time to find a new, Bible-based church home.

AWARENESS

The first trigger in *The Sex Spiral* is *Awareness*. Awareness is *not* temptation, and it's *not* a sin. Awareness is simply taking notice. It's being consciously aware that you are overly-sensitive and susceptible to lust. It's at this moment that you are vulnerable and "aware" of your

temporary state of weakness. Once you become consciously aware that you have a problem with lust, you must make a decision. This very moment is paramount because if you don't proactively choose to make a godly decision, then you will passively make an ungodly one. We read in Genesis 4:7, **You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.**"

Being aware of the severity of your lust is a huge part of the discovery process. As you engage in this journey toward sexual sobriety, you'll notice just how chronic your problem is. For example, it took more than a year for me to *not look* in the rearview mirror when I passed a female jogger alongside the road. I literally had trained and conditioned my body to do so. The good news is that *The Sex Spiral* will allow you to start breaking those habits and creating new, godly disciplines as you become more aware of your thoughts, motives, and feelings.

OPTION 1: FLEE!

Think of awareness as the warning light on the dashboard of your car. It's telling you that there is a potential problem. In other words, it's "go-time" for you to become very aware of your surroundings. When triggered, ask yourself these questions:

- What exactly are you doing?
- Why are you doing it?
- What are you looking at?
- What are you feeling?
- How are you feeling?
- What are you thinking?
- What are you planning to do?
- What's your motivation and agenda?

If you have the desire to engage in what your trigger is offering, *flee* the situation immediately! Using my grocery store example—I would find another cashier to check out my groceries. If that was not an option, I could simply exit the line and walk around the store for a few minutes. If that didn't work, I could leave the store and come back later.

The reason that you must flee is because you haven't learned the self-control to stay. You literally become drunk with lust. King Solomon writes in Proverbs 7:21-23, ***“So she seduced him with her pretty speech and enticed him with her flattery. He followed her at once, like an ox going to the slaughter. He was like a stag caught in a trap, awaiting the arrow that would pierce its heart. He was like a bird flying into a snare, little knowing it would cost him his life.”***

We learn how to flee from the story of Joseph in Genesis 39:6b-13:

Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. “Come and sleep with me,” she demanded. But Joseph refused. “Look,” he told her, “my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God.” She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, “Come on, sleep with me!” Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

I'm hedging my bets that most men would not turn down an opportunity to sleep with a powerful and beautiful woman. However, Joseph did. It certainly is possible for Christian men, and God shows us this as an example. Joseph *ran*! He didn't think. He didn't ask questions or quote scripture. He *ran*! This is why fleeing your trigger is

the fastest way to remove yourself from a situation you don't want to be involved in. As you continue to read Joseph's story, you'll find out that even bad things can still happen with right decisions. But let's take a step back and learn from a major mistake on Joseph's part before the drama unfolded.

JOSEPH'S MISTAKE

Is there a way all of this drama could have been avoided? I believe so. Joseph's mistake was that he didn't talk to his boss, Potiphar. He didn't tell him that his wife was flirting with him. Awkward, I know, but Joseph is basically in a no-win situation either way. I get that. But was Joseph aware of her flirtatious behavior? Of course. Was he vulnerable to actually saying yes to her advances? You bet. Did Joseph think that her sexual nagging would stop? Possibly, but the reality is that her *looking* at Joseph moved to her *seducing* Joseph.³⁵ Sexual sin always escalates when not confronted. *Always*. In this instance, flirting turned to violence because misplaced passion often does.

So let's learn from Joseph's mistake. We must be willing to communicate the uncomfortable in order to prevent worse things from happening. Is it possible that Joseph could have avoided being accused of rape by Potiphar's wife and then thrown into prison if he would have talked to Potiphar man to man? Is it possible that Potiphar's wife has done something like this before?

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE #1

About five years into my journey toward sexual sobriety, my wife, Amy, and I were visiting some friends over the weekend. One night we were watching TV, and our friend was flipping through the channels. He landed on a show where two people were having sex. I was expecting him to change it immediately. He and his wife started to laugh, and their teenage daughter gasped, "Oh my gosh!" After maybe

³⁵ Weiss, Dr. Doug. *Clean: A Proven Plan for Men Committed to Sexual Integrity*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2013.

five to seven seconds (which seemed like an hour), I literally jumped off the couch and walked briskly to my room for the night, saying nothing to anyone. I must admit that I was a little anxious about what the breakfast conversation was going to be like, but I didn't care.

Regardless, I fled. God had prepared me by making the willful and conscious decision to read His Word and spend quiet, devoted time with Him almost every morning for the past five years. Because of that time with the Lord, I was able to take immediate action in what I thought was a safe place. I was able to honor Him and my wife by fleeing.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE #2

Ten years into my purity journey, I was asked to meet a pastor friend for lunch. I'd heard of the place he recommended but had never been. When I walked through the door, there were several young women standing by the hostess booth who were practically naked. I started to stammer, trying to explain that I was supposed to meet someone for lunch. After a second to grasp the fact that I was looking at nearly-naked women standing directly in front of me, I turned my head into the seating area, looking for my friend. Everywhere I looked, there seemed to be another nearly-naked waitress! I then looked back at the women at the hostess counter, who were now looking at me with scowls on their faces. I immediately turned around and fled, saying nothing more to the women.

I called my friend from the parking lot and asked, "Is this some kind of sick joke?"

He replied, "What are you talking about?"

I said, "I was just in the restaurant with all the girls."

"What?" He said, "I'm sitting down having an appetizer right now. Where exactly are you?"

I said, "I'm standing in the parking lot looking at the restaurant sign that reads _____."

The phone went silent, and then I heard a roar of laughter. "OOHH, NOOO! Not _____! I'm at _____!"

He whispered, “Did you actually go in there?”

“Yes!” I replied. “I had no idea. I’ll be over in a second to choke you!”

So yes, there were two restaurants that just happened to have a very similar name in the same exact shopping plaza. Go figure. However, before I went over to the right restaurant, I called my wife, Amy, and told her what happened. The phone went silent again. In one of the most serious tones I’ve ever heard, she asked, “Are you okay?”

Right then, I felt the weight of my past plague me. Please understand, Amy doesn’t know the “old” Dustin (Eph. 4:22-24). Sure, she sees bits and pieces that come out from time to time, but she doesn’t know that guy. Her question and tone of voice came from a love that I’ve never experienced. It’s only by God’s grace that I was able to say, “Yes, babe, I’m fine, but I wanted to tell you exactly what happened.”

My point in sharing these fleeing stories is to show you that freedom really is possible. This is not wishful thinking, nor do we need to touch the hem of Jesus’ robe (Lk. 8:43-48). Freedom really can start today by applying this one biblical principle alone (Prov. 5:8, 2:16-22, 6:20-29, 7:1-27; 1 Cor. 6:18, 10:14; 2 Tim. 2:22). So yes, you can do this too. The reality is that you never know when something like this will take place, but you can bank on the fact that it will happen when you least expect it.

OPTION #2: CONFESSION

The apostle John writes in 1 John 1:9, ***“But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”*** Confession changes everything. Think of this verse as the vertical portion (stipes) of the cross. Here we see that God is faithful when we are not. He not only forgives us, but He also doesn’t hold our sin against us (Ps. 103:12). He actually purges us from evil each time we confess.

I can’t tell you how many times I’ve confessed my sin to God in the midst of my “addiction.” I would tell God, “Okay, Lord, I’m not going to do *that* again.” Then the next day would come, and I would say, “Um,

okay, Lord, I know that I told You that I would never do *that* again, but I did. Please forgive me.” The next day turned into next month, which then turned into a year, which then turned into two decades. Did God forgive me each time? Yes. He is the One who is faithful; I was not. So why wasn’t I changing? Jesus’ half-brother answered that question in James 5:16 (NIV): **“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”**³⁶

This verse is like the horizontal portion (patibulum) of the cross. Just as God forgives us vertically in 1 John 1:9, the verse in James holds the key to unlock the prison door by reaching out horizontally. Notice that James doesn’t tell us to confess our sins to God. It’s like he already knows we do that. When we learn how to confess a secret sin to a trusted, Christ-centered friend, the secret loses its power (Eph. 5:12-14).

Now some of you may be thinking, “Wait a second. Are you telling me that I must confess my porn and masturbation habit to someone else—like face-to-face?” Nope, I’m not saying it; God is. Look at the rest of the verse, **“so that you may be healed.”** Confession is where your healing begins! Confession allows us to come out of hiding.

Back to my grocery store scenario—there I am, standing in line, waiting to pay for my groceries, and staring at the *Cosmo* magazine. I’m triggered, and I need to confess what I want to do next. So what do I do? I phone a friend (yes, just like the cheesy game show). I would pay for my groceries, get to my car, and call a friend. Now here’s where the power of God through confession comes in. My friend may or may not answer my call. I may get voicemail. But the truth of God’s Word through confession is so powerful that all I have to do is quickly tell my story in the voicemail, and the healing process will begin. Your friend’s only job at that point is to call or text back, telling you how proud he is of you and that he loves you. It’s very important that these phone calls don’t turn into counseling or therapy sessions. If these

³⁶ *The Holy Bible: The New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

phone calls turn into a list of things that should and should not be done, then the phone calls will cease because the friend is not safe. The trusted friend is to be exactly that—a friend, not a counselor and not a therapist (even if he is one.) There is a time for counseling, but it's not here.

Secondly, the type of confession that we're discussing here is the confession of the awareness trigger. It's not of the sin because we have not committed the sin yet. The goal of confession is to confess what you are thinking about doing, not what have you have already done. Your trusted, Christ-centered friend is not acting as a priest to where he absolves you of your sins, but rather a Brother who is walking your purity journey with you.

The psalmist writes about confession in Psalm 32:3-5.

When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. ⁴ Day and night Your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. ⁵ Finally, I confessed all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

OPTION #3: PRAYER

Jesus tells us in Matthew 26:41, ***"Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!"*** The word *watch* in the Greek is used twenty-two other times in the New Testament. It implies "staying awake, being ready, and alert." It's translated "to have the alertness of a guard at night." A guard at night must have a different skillset than a guard during the day. He must rely on his other senses instead of just sight. He must

by “hyper-alert” to keep him from being attacked. This is the type of prayer Jesus was referring to.

It’s taken me forty-five years to learn how to pray. I used to tell God what to do during my quiet time for years. It’s only when we discussed James 1:5 during group one day that I realized that I had completely missed it all these years.

“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking” (Jas. 1:5). God will always give us *wisdom* when we ask. My problem with prayer was that I wasn’t asking for wisdom; I was telling God how to do His job. Needless to say, that never worked out so well. I was telling Him how He could make my life easier, rather than simply praying, “God, will You please give me wisdom in how to handle this situation?”

Now you may be thinking, *But I have prayed, and I have asked for wisdom—for years, even decades, but it’s like God refuses to answer.* If that is the case, let’s turn to more scripture to find out why (emphasis mine).

- Isaiah 59:1-2—***“Listen! The Lord’s arm is not too weak to save you, nor is His ear too deaf to hear you call. It’s your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, He has turned away and will not listen anymore.”***
- Proverbs 28:9—***“God detests the prayers of a person who ignores the law.”***
- 1 Peter 3:7—***“In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.”***

The other item that goes with prayer is memorized scripture. Do you know the Lord’s prayer? (Matt. 6:9-13). If so, pray this out loud when triggered. There is power in speaking God’s Word *out loud*. After all, God spoke the universe into existence from nothing. The Old

Testament prophets performed miracle after miracle with that same power. Jesus used this power to heal the blind and raise the dead. We have this same power! It carries authority from Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit.

At the end of the day you have a choice. You can either pray for someone or you can prey on them.³⁷ Praying for someone that you find attractive prevents you from preying on them and taking something from them that's not yours. It's hard to lust after someone when you are praying for them. I like to pray something like this:

Father, there is a very attractive woman over there, and I want to lift her up to You. I praise You and thank You for her beauty. She is beautiful because You are, indeed, the Creator of all beauty. She is a reflection of Who You are. You created her in Your own image—of course she's beautiful! But, Father, there is a part of me who wants to look and lust. There is a part of me who wants to fantasize, but, Lord, I choose not to. I know that with You all things are possible. I know that Your grace is sufficient, therefore, I want to pray for this person and not prey on them. I pray for her soul, Lord God. I pray that she knows You and the salvation You offer. I pray for a godly man in her life to treat her as You treat her. I pray for her family, her home, and her health, Lord God. It's in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

It is amazing what a sixty-second prayer like this will do in your life. You don't have to pray it word for word; I would encourage you to write your own and pray it aloud. Lastly, if all this seems overwhelming, I would encourage you to pray and repeat three short, yet life-changing words from the apostle John in Revelation 22:20b: ***"Come, Lord Jesus!"***

37 Peter Bartolini, "Important Things About Men," (camp book for kids, 2007).

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN DO THIS

What happens if you choose not to flee, confess, or pray when triggered? The next layer down the spiral is *unhealthy thoughts*. Essentially, it's shame. It's the unhealthy thoughts we tell ourselves as we go through this spiral. It's the voice that always tells us what a loser we are and how we'll never be anything.

When we refuse to exit a trigger, the winds of the spiral pick up speed and thrust us down further into the tornado where the winds become more powerful. This downward progression is inevitable because the lure of lust is inescapable, unavoidable, and irresistible when you choose to do nothing. Choosing to do nothing is, indeed, a very real choice we make. You are, in fact, allowing lust to choose you. The more your awareness intensifies *without* fleeing, confession, or prayer, the more your mind is consumed with lust.

Ultimately, the reason we don't want to flee, confess, or pray is because of our pride. The apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:12-13: ***"If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you can endure."***

Notice three things about this verse. First, Paul is telling us that you can't do this alone. Secondly, those thoughts and fantasies that you're having are the same thoughts and fantasies experienced by *many other people as well*. Basically, God is telling you to quit believing the lie that you are the only one who thinks this stuff up.

Thirdly, notice the word *endure*. This means that God wants you to "go through the temptation," not around it. He wants you to *experience* the trigger and then make a *godly* decision by fleeing, confessing, and praying because this builds spiritual muscle as you learn to draw your strength from Him. If we continue to work within our own discipline, strength, and wisdom, we'll crumble every time because we don't have the *supernatural* strength to say no.

The apostle Peter writes in 2 Peter 2:9, “**So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials . . .**” Think about the last time you were aware of your lust. How did God give you a way out? In this verse, we see that He does. Most of us, however, can’t see God giving us a way out because our mind immediately starts to think about the pleasure of lust rather than fleeing from it. If we choose not to flee, confess, or pray at this point, what happens? We move down the spiral another layer into shame—trigger #2.

For more information about
Dustin Daniels
&
The Sex Spiral

please visit:

www.DustinDaniels.org

www.SevenPlaces.org

[@PurityPastor](https://twitter.com/PurityPastor)

www.facebook.com/DustinDanielsRadio/

www.linkedin.com/in/puritypastor/

For more information about
AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL
please visit:

www.ambassador-international.com

[@AmbassadorIntl](https://twitter.com/AmbassadorIntl)

www.facebook.com/AmbassadorIntl