

Greater Hope Newsletter

Winter 2021 Issue

Breaking Porn Addiction

I was standing at the doorway of my home office. I stood there for a moment and could see the cursor blinking in the search engine box. I had just connected to the Internet by repairing a broken modem long-forgotten in my basement.

My wife was gone for the weekend. This was her first time away from me since my lifelong pornography secret had been exposed the month before. It had been incredibly difficult as I recounted the ways I had deceived her, the depth of my addiction and even the content of the sites I had visited. She was hurt and had lots of questions. She was also loving and gracious to me during that time. That weekend she had even taken our primary modem with her to help keep me safe.

But here I was, not thirty days removed from nights of teary confessions, contemplating searching for porn and masturbating. But then a thought jumped into my head. If I could destroy the modem, I would effectively cut off my access to the Internet. I ran to the kitchen and grabbed a hammer. Seconds later, I ripped out the modem and smashed it. Victory! Or so I thought.

What happened next was shocking. I sensed a dark presence in my apartment. I was so scared, I ran from room to room turning on every light in the place. I moved from one end of the building to the next, but the darkness was oppressive. I was desperate, so I called my wife.

It was two o'clock in the morning. I told her what happened. She immediately knew something was wrong and started praying for me. She said if I was still scared I should leave and sleep at my sister's house. When I hung up the phone it was worse than ever. I grabbed some clothes and ran out of the house. When I returned the next day all the lights were still on but the presence was gone.

Real idol hunting is serious business. When we go after the things that have trapped our heart, it is a fight. Closing doors to idols disrupts the spiritual order that controls this world. And we are not just oppressed; we also are invested in hanging on to idols.

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FINANCIAL CORNER



As we enter the Christmas season I am reminded that Christmas is about the gift of life – a newborn child, a Savior come to bring the gift of eternal life. This Christmas you have the chance to bring the gift of life to those in need of the ministry of Greater Hope – a life restored from the power of sexual addiction and pornography, a life renewed from the depths of sexual abuse and relational brokenness.

Your generous contributions and support contain the gift of life. No gift is too small. Please give to Greater Hope and help us share the true gift of Christmas – the gift of life more abundant in Christ. Following are ways you can give:

- Check - P O Box 772,
Harrisonburg, VA 22803
- Text - **GH199818** to **73256** to give using your text messaging. Standard text message rates do apply.
- Credit Card - Donate at www.greaterhope.org

To our partners who have given during 2021 we extend thanks and blessings for you and your faithful support to Greater Hope.

In the true Spirit of Christmas,

Kathy & the Greater Hope Board

What We Offer....

Living Waters: A 20 week in-depth healing and discipleship program which ministers to people who are seeking healing from relational and sexual brokenness.*

Boundaries, Beyond Boundaries, Safe People: Classroom study of books by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend, addressing specific issues that confront today's Christians.*

CrossCurrent: A 9 week Christ centered ministry and support group for those seeking more truth and grace in their relationships and sexuality.

Men Pursuing Purity: An 8-10 week group equipping men to live lives of purity, purpose and power.*

Conquer Series 1 & 2: Men's recovery series enabling freedom from sexual addictions.

Women at the Well: An 8 week group equipping women to live lives of relational integrity.*

The Journey: Women's group offering hope for spouses walking through the valley of sexual addiction.

Various Continuing Support Groups: Maintenance groups providing continued helps for recovering men & women.

Counseling and Consultation: Confidential consultations and referrals for professional counseling.

Prayer Ministry: Available by appointment at the Greater Hope office.

Resource Room: Books & videos, TV & DVD player available.

Standing In The Gap: A prayer group interceding on behalf of the prayer needs of the ministry.

GREATER HOPE NEWS: Quarterly newsletter features articles ministering to those overcoming sexual sin.

*A nominal fee is charged.

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Who We Are....An evangelical ministry promoting freedom from and healing for heterosexual and homosexual sin and brokenness. Originally founded in 1995 as Day Seven, and re-established in 1998, Greater Hope operates under the direction of an interdenominational board of directors. The work of Greater Hope is supported entirely by the 501 (c) (3) tax-deductible contributions from individuals and churches who share our vision for ministry.

We are a Covenant Eyes Affiliate



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The secret is idols provide us comfort. For years we have been complicit in this dance. We have created altars in our life that are regularly visited, whether it's a person, computer, TV or addiction.



That's what I did. I developed my attachment to porn after years of believing the lie that I was unlovable. It brought a temporary relief to the aching aloneness I felt. It was a way that I met my needs and self-soothed my pain. Destroying that modem did not bring relief; it brought terror. I felt exposed and alone. I had to ask for help. It was humiliating. It was the exact opposite of hiding in comfort. But it was necessary.

Saying no to idols is not always dramatic. Sometimes we have to just say a resolute no to temptation or to our sense of entitlement. If we want freedom, we have to be willing to be uncomfortable. We have to ask ourselves regularly: Am I avoiding God here? Am I trying to meet my own needs?

In Jeremiah, God says this about Israel: For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer 2:13 ESV)

This is a great picture of our predicament with idols. We first turn our backs on God, the spring of living water. Then we create a substitute by digging out cisterns, or deep holes, to catch rainwater. After the rain, when the cisterns are full, we feel pretty good. But it doesn't last. There is a flaw and they can't hold water. We're soon empty again and thirsty. and I see my life full of cisterns that have been sealed closed. Even now when I expose a comfort or empty cistern, my Living Waters community responds, "What are you going to do about that?"

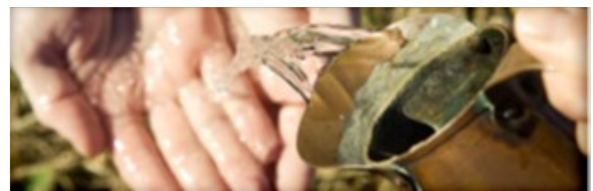
They are not content to let me wallow in my self-pity. They do not gloss over my confessions. They want God's best for me.

An example of this came up during a prayer time a few years back. I confessed that I had watched a TV show that troubled me in my spirit. It was a dark show, but I was still drawn to it. It was popular and a part of me felt like I should be able to watch it. The two women praying for me looked at me and said, "Matt, it will never be okay for you to watch that show." It was a blow to my false self. At my core I knew it was true. It would never be inbounds for me. That door needed to stay closed.

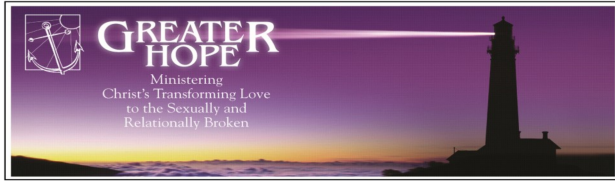
As you grow, the idols become smaller but sometimes more stubborn. You have to keep hunting them, and when you become aware of them you have to get rid of them. Take heart, Jesus is our collaborator in this. He is not calling us to a life of joyless self-denial. He is offering us something valuable in return. C. S. Lewis writes of this in Mere Christianity:

The Christian way is different . . . Christ says "Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. I don't want to cut off a branch here and there, I want to have the whole tree down. . . . Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked . . . I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours."

By Matt Dobschuetz – Matt and his wife Janice live in Evanston, IL and have two sons. Matt co-leads Living Waters in his local church and hosts a weekly podcast called, [Pornfree Radio](#).



See page 4 to learn more about Living Waters and our upcoming Living Waters Group in 2022



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Our Mission

Greater Hope exists to offer hope, minister healing, and equip people for sexual and relational wholeness through Christ's transforming love.

Our ministry is for those who desire to develop the ability to love others in a Godly manner both physically and emotionally.

Living Waters...

*Intensive, immersed in healing curriculum
that will change your life!*



Why would someone go to Living Waters? If you are struggling with...Fear - Insecurity - Marital problems - Codependency - Pornography - Effects of abuse - Poor boundaries - Sexual addiction or Promiscuity -Isolation - Inability to trust - Anger or Unforgiveness - Masturbation - Gender identity issues -Unwanted same sex attraction - Fantasy, Shame and Self-hatred.... Living Waters provides a thoughtful and safe place to look at the ways we've become ensnared. Through weekly times of worship, teaching and small group prayer, our program leaders walk with participants in their struggle so they can live in freedom and truth. We pray for God's healing to restore broken areas of life so that people can "love well" as God intended.

Classes begin on Tuesdays, February 2022, in Harrisonburg

Apply online: www.livingwatersusa.us/

Print or download an application, forward completed application to kkipps@greaterhope.org

or mail to: Greater Hope, P O Box 772, Harrisonburg VA 22803

More information: contact Greater Hope @540-574-4189