

Issue 1  
2012

*A Journal for  
Military-related  
Seventh-day Adventists*

# For God & Country





by **Gary R. Councill**

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# MORALITY

**G**od invented sex and entrusted a portion of His creative power with humans. He created humans male and female; perfect, yet incomplete. That missing element proves an attractive force; natural, right, and good. What a gift! The Bible is quite candid about sexuality and portrays it in a positive manner (Song of Solomon and Hebrews 13:4) as well as warning about illicit and immoral conduct.

Unfortunately, attraction and relations between the sexes have been abused, distorted, misused, and perverted. The advertising industry knows sex sells and uses its allure subtly and openly for profit. Pornography has become a huge

business, substituting fantasy for reality and promoting selfish addiction in place of an honest relationship. Porn viewing often prompts masturbation and other sexual deviancies. The problem lies behind the “eye” of the beholder (Job 31:5 and Matthew 5:28).

Temptation comes from within. It is an illicit manner of meeting even a legitimate need, arising from predisposition of the mind, responding to external stimuli entering through the senses (Philippians 4:8, 9). “All who take the name of Christ need to watch and pray and guard the avenues of the soul...You have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears and all

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your senses” (*Adventist Home* 401). When wrong thought is entertained and cherished, opportunity awaits, then action takes place (James 1:12-15). The God-implemented senses can be used by the Holy Spirit for good or by Satan for temptation.

Recently, a major news network reported only 51% of couples living together were married. In an age of greater “carnal” knowledge about sex and availability to birth control 70% of teen girls become pregnant in some cities. Sexually transmitted diseases are rampant. In 2009 almost as many people in the U.S. were HIV+ as the number serving on active duty in the U.S. military. Promiscuity costs.

Scripture declares sexual relations before or outside of marriage to be fornication. Pre-marital or extra-marital sex short-changes happiness and leads to damaged emotions. Expressing sexuality responsibly, in accordance with the principles of God’s Word, leads to true freedom,

peace of mind, and stronger family relationships. After forty-eight years of marriage (to the same spouse), I can honestly say the relationship gets better every day. Morality pays lasting dividends. I recommend trying it day-by-day for a lifetime.

We live in an age of the immoral majority, when immorality in many forms seems overwhelmingly prevalent. Immorality deceives and calls good evil and evil good. Your Adventist chaplain can provide confidential counseling and guidance on sensitive moral issues. Also, Seventh-day Adventist theologians and ethicists have studied many relevant moral concerns during the last few years to provide guidance for the church and members. Denominational official statements on moral issues such as marriage, birth control, homosexuality, pornography, same-sex unions, sexual behavior, etc., are available for your reading at [www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/index.html](http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/index.html).

## WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

Many Seventh-day Adventists have faithfully served God and country through military service. This is a legacy that should be shared with family, friends, and the church at large.

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries is seeking stories about Adventists serving on Active Duty, in the Guard or Reserve, or from veterans about their service experiences. Please contact the editor at [Deena.Bartel-Wagner@nad.adventist.org](mailto:Deena.Bartel-Wagner@nad.adventist.org) to learn how your story can be told.



# ONE MAN'S

**T**he computer screen flickered as Bernie Anderson gazed at the images on the website.

Once again he'd succumbed to the addiction that he had battled for years. Pornography had wrapped its silent tentacles around his soul and held Bernie tightly in its unforgiving grasp.

Anderson's first taste of porn occurred during a visit at a relative's home when he was nine-years-old. "I discovered a crumpled page from a porn magazine in a closet," says Bernie. "That scrap of paper was tantalizing and I looked at the images several times during my stay."



When he was 13, Bernie discovered a copy of *Playboy* in his home and eagerly looked at the photos of the models. His growing attraction to porn soon progressed to watching late night shows on cable television after everyone else had gone to sleep.

One day, while home alone, Anderson discovered an unmarked VHS tape sitting on top of the VCR. “I don’t know who the tape belonged to,” says Anderson, “but it was outtakes of hard core porn movies that captivated me.”

In the throes of puberty and attracted to porn, Anderson had also discovered masturbation. His conscience bothered him but the cycle of porn and sexual release increased in frequency.

to Christina,” says Bernie. “I was afraid she would reject me. If I told anyone else, I was afraid my secret wouldn’t be kept.”

Anderson clung to the hope that once he was married, porn would no longer be a problem for him. “My resistance lasted for about a month after we were married,” says Anderson. “Then I found myself standing in the local video store renting movies to watch while Christina was a work.”

Once Anderson was introduced to the Internet his addiction to online pornography rapidly grew. By this time he was a student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. “I had hoped again for a fresh start but my addiction to online porn consumed

# BATTLE

“I struggled with a pattern of temptation, failure, guilt and shame, and recommitment,” says Bernie. “I would beg God to forgive me and help me to overcome my urges.”

High school and college kept Anderson busy. “I was seen as a spiritual leader on campus and there were people who began to affirm my calling to pastoral ministry,” says Anderson. During his junior year in college, Anderson met Christina and they were engaged. School, pastoring a church, and planning a wedding kept Anderson busy during his senior year but porn still drew him in.

“There were times during our engagement that I wanted to confess

me.” For the next five years Anderson would be a slave to the very thing for which he begged God to forgive him.

“I continued to keep this a secret from Christina,” says Bernie. “Today I believe that my secrecy contributed to the hold porn had on me. No one knew of my addiction.” During those years, Bernie’s secret addiction was taking its toll on Christina. There were times when Bernie’s actions led Christina to believe he was having an affair.

As Christina’s suspicions grew, Bernie became careless in clearing the computer search history and cache. One day Christina discovered pornographic images on it and finally confronted Bernie with them.



Bernie and Christina celebrate daily that God has healed their marriage of Bernie's battle with pornography.

"Christina was hoping that I would deny any knowledge of them but I finally confessed my addiction to her," says Anderson. "I felt such relief in sharing this with her."

Christina assured Bernie that she loved him and would support him, but insisted that he be truthful with her and no longer hide what was going on. "We thought we could handle this ourselves," says Bernie. "It became apparent that we couldn't. In a few months I was back to looking at porn sites, which almost destroyed our family."

As the cycle continued, Bernie realized that he needed to confess and be accountable to someone else. It was after this action that Bernie finally felt a sense of release from the desire to engage in porn.

As they focused on finding ways of restoration, Bernie read everything he could on pornography and sexual addiction. He also attended an *Every Man's Battle* workshop.

True healing didn't come for Bernie until he and Christina made the painful decision to go public about his battle with pornography. It wasn't an easy decision to make, especially since Bernie was a pastor. "I knew that my admission could be the end of my

ministry as a pastor," says Anderson.

In November 2003, Anderson met with his church leadership and confessed his long-time struggle. Although shocked, the leaders were supportive and agreed that Bernie could share his story with other pastors at an upcoming meeting.

"I had no idea where my openness would lead," says Anderson. "As word began to spread about this pastor who admitted to having a battle with porn, news organizations wanted interviews. My willingness to talk about my struggle began a conversation about a subject that isn't often discussed."

"Porn is extremely enticing and appeals to those who are impulsive and seeking instant gratification," says Anderson. "We have to have a mission in life. Understanding our mission acts as a barrier and keeps us from straying into areas we shouldn't be in. If we are not clear on our mission we will gravitate to things like porn."

Anderson believes that you have to understand what stirs your soul. "God has gifted you with something special," says Anderson. "Spend time in exploring this and ask God to show you what it is. This isn't about an occupation in life."

Although Bernie's going public brought an overwhelming sense of



The Bernie Anderson Family

peace, at the same time it created chaos. "When you expose yourself to going public there are people who are hurt and angry in their reaction to your announcement," says Anderson. "True healing only comes about by getting to the truth of your situation."

One of the most challenging things was the rejection of friends. In the wake of this Anderson notes there are several things an individual can do to cope with the fallout of such an announcement.

- Have a deep sense and understanding that God loves you, understands you, and accepts you.
- Establish accountability with another person. Anderson recommends that this not be your spouse, who is dealing with his or her own hurt and pain.
- Have the acceptance of your family and closest friends. There will be those who say, "We have your back, no matter what."

"When a man confesses to his wife that he is struggling with porn, there are several things that can either encourage or hamper his breaking free," says Anderson. "It is very harmful to the relationship if the wife says, 'Once you get yourself healed we can continue with the relationship.'"

Another harmful reaction is if the wife chooses not to trust again because she is enjoying the power over her husband who did the harm.

"One of the most healing things for Christina and me was the realization that she was going to be with me through the process of change and, that I wasn't subservient to her and she was not the parent," says Anderson.

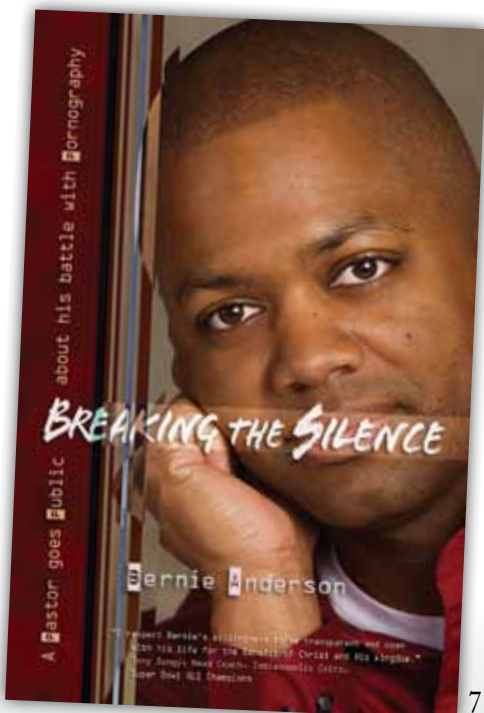
As you seek to rebuild the trust of your spouse you have to walk the walk. "You aren't going to regain trust

immediately," says Anderson. "Go beyond expectations in being honest with your spouse. Understand that your wife will probably be hyper-vigilant. You will live under suspicion for awhile and you are going to have to live with that."

"One of the most important factors in restoration is the wife's reaction," says Anderson. "If she doesn't come along on the journey to recovery, her husband will most likely relapse into using porn."

As Bernie Anderson considers his journey through the world of porn to that of restitution, he shares this thought. "The lie is that you will find value in porn. The truth is the God of the universe is the One who gives us worth and value."

To learn more about the Bernie and Christina Anderson story, read *Breaking the Silence* from Autumn House Publishers, a division of Review and Herald Publishing. You can also view their story at <http://vimeo.com/31602206>.



# PORNOGRAPHY D N A

## SEX ADDICTION



by Bob Davidson, M.Div., M.Ed., LMFT, CSAT  
Director, Family Institute, P.C.

Remember the tsunami tidal wave that devastated Indonesia seven years ago? While Americans prepared for Christmas dinner, many earthquakes shook our earth at the same time. The Sumatra quake made the biggest impact, sending a tsunami racing over 500 mph and carrying with it more energy than 23,000 Hiroshima bombs.

As the wave approached the coast, it slowed and rose into a wall of water that was close to 100 feet in some places. It plowed inland like a derailed train, destroying villages, leveling forests, drowning people and animals and washing away *everything*.

The Indonesians *never* saw it coming, so they weren't able to save themselves. By the time they tried, it was too late. Nearly 250,000 men, women, and children who might have been saved were killed.

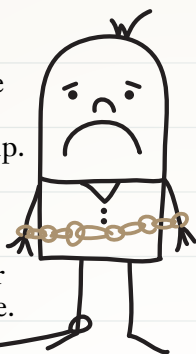
Today, too many don't see the pornography tidal wave bearing down on all cultures, religions, genders, and people. Pornography is what fuels the Internet. It makes more money

than all other Internet business ventures combined since 2004. How does a person stay pure and not be violated when using the Internet, watching a movie, TV sitcom, or going through the checkout line at the store? The porn range is from soft porn to hardcore porn and television, movies, and the Internet have all these variables. However, the Internet is more accessible without censorship. Even filtering software can be easily bypassed.

**Sexual Addiction.** Porn isn't solely responsible for sex addiction, but it feeds it. It is important to understand that looking at porn does *not* make you a sex addict. Inappropriate or overuse of the addiction paradigm leads to weakening validity and skews treatment. Many clients who present for sex addiction therapy are inappropriately labeled. Many call themselves addicts because they find themselves absorbed mentally in accessing porn or



other behaviors. They are convicted that it's wrong for them and have discovered that it hurts their intimate relationship. They feel the shame and experience the guilt of their behavior. They need help. They discover that they can't do it alone.



### **What makes it an addiction:**

There are two criteria necessary to determine any addiction. 1) You think (obsess) about it. It's in your thoughts and pops in your mind a significant amount of the time; and 2) you find yourself doing it compulsively, even when you say that you won't. The obsession and compulsion, thinking, and behavior results in a dance that controls the brain and uses a huge amount of mental energy in making poor (compulsive) choices in lifestyle and behaviors.

### **Literature and Biblical**

**History:** I believe that you can easily conclude from literature and biblical history that sex addiction has been around since shortly after Adam and Eve. The Bible surely indicates that. The Old Testament has a good share of stories about individuals dealing with obsessive and compulsive sexual behaviors. These stories are encouraging and give us hope when any of us have similar behaviors because God can bring healing and restoration to all who desire change and healing.

**Porn Concerns:** There are many. In my opinion the first major concern about the easy access to pornography is the damage that it does to the Sexual Arousal Template for children and young adults. This template is developed when the porn is viewed the first

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU DETERMINE AND GIVE YOU GUIDANCE IF YOU FEEL A CONVICTION THAT YOUR BEHAVIOR(S) ARE INAPPROPRIATE AND UNHEALTHY FOR YOU.

### **DO SOME SERIOUS EVALUATION, TAKE SOME TESTS**

If you would like to have some accountability in answering the questions, include your spouse in this process. This is useful if your spouse knows your behaviors and has confronted you on them. When taking these tests answer as honestly as you can. Go to either [www.sexhelp.com](http://www.sexhelp.com) or [www.iitap.com](http://www.iitap.com) where multiple helpful tests are available.

**SAST**—This evaluates all related sexual behaviors. Free

**ISST**—This evaluates primarily Internet and porn behaviors. Free

**Betrayal Bond Index**—This measures Betrayal Bonding, frequently associated with addicts and spouses. Free

**SARA**—This will be recommended if scores indicate behaviors associated with sex addiction. It also is more detailed in the questions and provides an excellent feedback and breakdown of your sexual behaviors, where the acting-out behaviors can particularly pinpoint an issue, and can provide a good report to share with your therapist/coach if you contract with one.

**Partner Sexual Screening Test**—This is helpful for the

time, and sexual arousal happens in a person (child). It is their first sexual encounter you might say. It gives such a rush and stimulation to the brain, that the endorphins and pleasure sensors pave a wide highway in the brain. This is the template that is the foundation for a sex addict. This arousal might be in the form of a love story, seeing soft porn in a movie, TV, advertising, or experiencing hard porn on the Internet or a movie, seeing someone naked for the first time, walking in on a parent during a sexual encounter, or a sexual violation by another child or adult. This sexual arousal template either sets the pattern of behaviors toward healthy sexuality or getting sucked into the tsunami tidal wave and massive devastation.

**Social Networking:** This movement is fast and furious. It is impacting young and old alike who are looking for some connection. Boundaries are easily crossed and blurred. Seduction comes easy and many fall prey not knowing what “hit them.” There are some sites that cater to infidelity (affairs); membership at one site is \$8,500,000.

Through research and brain studies, we have discovered that the brain pattern of a sex addict is very similar to that of a cocaine addict. The way the brain functions for both are equally intense and abnormal in their patterns. Furthermore, there is additional research indicating that sexual addiction has a significant risk factor tied to past Trauma or Template History.

spouse. It gives some feedback on betrayal issues and feelings of the partner.

**FACE THE DENIAL** Figure out what is real. Addiction is behavior that wants to suppress pain, hurt, and trauma – pain that hurts so bad that a person wants to numb out. This is where counseling – a coach – could be very helpful. Get serious because your mental health is only as healthy as your secrets. Get honest with yourself and especially with God.

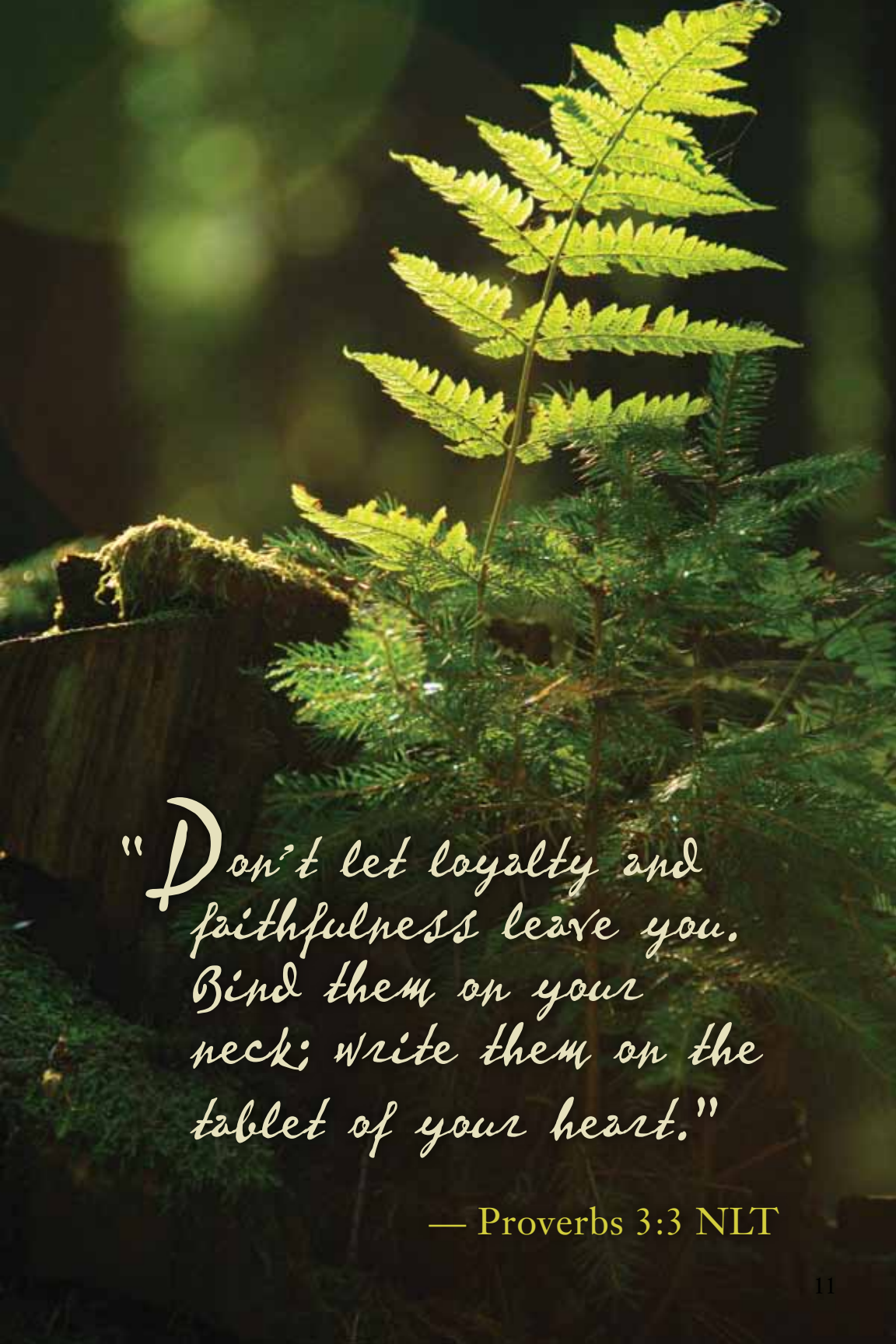
### **PRAY A PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE.**

Be careful here, because you can pray about the obsession and obsess more about the porn... and porn more. You will only perpetuate more shame and pain. Pray about what God wants and not about what God *doesn't* want. That is what you're convicted about. If you focus on what God wants for you, He will help you with a changed heart and convictions. Claim the classic quote from Job 31:1-4 that begins with: “I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl...”

**SEEK A COACH, DON'T DO THIS ALONE.** Seek out a Certified Sex Addiction Therapist (CSAT) trained by Patrick Carnes. You can find them on [www.iitap.com](http://www.iitap.com). If one isn't in your area, look for someone who specializes in sex addiction. As a Christian, it might be helpful to discuss or ask questions about spirituality as fundamental to the therapy process. Someone who works with trauma issues is helpful too.

### **BOOK RESOURCES**

*Facing the Shadow, Starting Sexual and Relationship Recovery* by Patrick Carnes. This is a personal “workbook” that is extremely helpful to the addict, and relates to Carnes' *Out of the Shadow* text on sex addiction. If you do the work of



*"Don't let loyalty and  
faithfulness leave you.  
Bind them on your  
neck; write them on the  
tablet of your heart."*

— Proverbs 3:3 NLT



# Marital Fidelity—

IT'S MORE THAN CONJUGAL CHASTITY

**F**idelity is defined by Dictionary.com as having several characteristics. These include:

a. strict observance of promises, duties; b. loyalty; c. conjugal faithfulness. Starting with dating, then your engagement, progressing to your wedding, and into married life, you begin to put down roots of marital fidelity. While dating, you learn the principles of fidelity and decide what kind of future you will build for yourself. The engagement period is a time when you make a promise to commit your life to your future spouse. At your wedding, you promise love, faithfulness, and loyalty. Marriage also entails the duty of

becoming one in your relationship with your spouse (Genesis 2:29 and Matthew 19:6).

Marital fidelity is more than conjugal chastity. When you assume the duty of being married you are committing to being in a relationship where “two shall become one,” lasting until “death do us part.” Marital fidelity also means being present in the relationship. Show up emotionally for your spouse and children. Don’t take them for granted. It is easy to slip into a relationship-deadening routine. Take the initiative to evaluate if you are “in the moment” of being married to your spouse.

Don’t allow work to become your surrogate spouse. It’s far too easy to bury yourself in the demands of work.

At times it may even seem more



rewarding, but you made a promise to be faithful to your spouse. When work supplants growing a relationship, you are being just as unfaithful to the vows you spoke as if you were having an extra-marital affair.

When children join the family circle, don't allow them to become more important to you than your spouse. Yes, children have needs that must be met. That doesn't change the duty to your spouse to keep your marital relationship vibrant. If your attention is consumed with taking care of the children's needs and ignoring those of your spouse, you will find yourself waking up next to a stranger when your last child turns 18-years-old.

Don't abandon your family for video games, cyberspace, sports, social networking sites or anything else that consumes all of your free time. Cloistering yourself away with your own interests is taking the easy way out. The popularity of social networking sites also contributes to individuals committing virtual infidelity. During 2011 one-third of divorce cases in England implicated Facebook as a contributing cause of divorce.

A real life scenario of virtual infidelity was chronicled in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. Imagine her dismay when Sue Hoogestraat

discovered Ric, her husband of seven years had married another woman. Ric had never met his "second" wife in person. In fact, they'd never even spoken, not even on the phone. Ric created his own virtual world at *Second Life*, a fictional cyberworld. The site encourages people to build a virtual life and world as they participate in commerce, sex, and relationships. Ric and his virtual wife constantly spent time building their relationship, which led to "marriage." Eventually Ric and his real-life wife, Sue, divorced.

The anonymity of the Web can be a dangerous thing that has people dancing on the edge of emotional adultery. God gave husbands and wives the gift of intimacy. Too often it is squandered for little more than a "virtual" experience.

Life is real, and the people to whom you have made commitments are real, too. They need you. Leftover portions of you are not sufficient. That is unfair to them, and to what you used to expect even of yourself. Those who have fallen into surrogate or virtual life have a tough battle to escape from it. It requires changing the patterns that got you there. Find someone of your own gender you can trust to hold you accountable and be honest with them and with yourself. Be ready for pain and suffering. If you are strong enough to endure, you can reach the goal of the life your family and you deserve.

# WHAT'S SO *with Ho*

Culture and society are engaged in moral battles that are changing the values, not only of the youngest generation but also of older ones as well. One of the most noticeable areas is that of pre-marital sex. Historically and extra-biblically, the term pre-marital sex referred to the sexual encounter of a couple who was planning to be married and spend the rest of their lives together. According to researchers Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker, that has changed. In their book, *Premarital Sex in America—How Young Americans Meet, Mate and Think About Marrying*<sup>1</sup>, they write:

“Yes, premarital sex has lost much of its association with marriage, at least marriage to a particular partner. It now tends to refer to any act of sexual intercourse that occurs prior to a person’s getting married.” p. 1.

This has always been the biblical view. Now, with hooking up and hanging out seemingly becoming

the norm, Christians still must make their life choices based within a biblical worldview. The temptation to follow the crowd always comes with implications. Choosing to participate in pre-marital sex cannot be based solely on biological, emotional, or social influences.

The act of sex is not just one of physical mating. The intangible emotional relationship between two individuals must also be considered. True intimacy occurs when both partners take responsibility for each other not just physically but emotionally, socially, and spiritually, through communication, trust, shared understanding, and long-term commitment.

Although society and secular media often argues on the side of encouraging pre-marital sex, what are the actual facts of how this affects relationships over a lifetime?

One argument is that restraining oneself sexually before marriage will cause harm. Physically, no harm comes to those who choose to wait. On the other hand, individuals who become sexually active often struggle

# WRONG Doing It?

with guilt, anger, lowered self-esteem, and even depression.

The scenario of two virgins on their wedding night is often used as a source of comedy. Shouldn't Christians, look at this with admiration and commit to such a standard? Others ask, how will you know if you are compatible if you haven't experimented? This puts the focus on the wrong part of the relationship. The person who you are with should be the focus, not the physical act.

If you choose to have pre-marital sex, remember it is possible that this will not just be between you and your partner. A baby conceived because of your actions will also be impacted by your choices. Besides, the physical act is potentially affected by the health of every previous partner each person has experienced.

Sexually transmitted infections (STI's) are on the rise and can be attributed to the increase in multiple partners and pre-marital sex. Annually, Americans spend \$8 billion dollars diagnosing, treating, and attempting to cure them.<sup>2</sup> STI's such as chlamydia and gonorrhea can be treated. Others,

such as the Human papilloma virus (HPV) and genital herpes (HSV-2) can only be controlled by medication and are never cured.

Establishing your own personal code of honor in your life involves making a decision about pre-marital sex. This can't be made on the basis of the feel-good moment. If you are single and tempted to participate in pre-marital sex, it's important to understand that most women are looking for sex to occur as part of an emotionally fulfilling relationship. Although there are exceptions, many men are only looking for steady access to a sexual relationship.

For those who may have already crossed the line, remember Jesus forgives sin in a truly repentant person. You can begin again. All you need to do is ask Him.

1. Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker, *Pre-Marital Sex in America—How Young Americans Meet, Mate, and Think about Marrying* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (online). Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats08/trends.htm> (accessed March 21, 2012).



# one, two, three..

## *Live or Die*

One, two, three, four, five. Live or die? One, two, three, four, five. Live or die? The words ricocheted through the mind of Rothacker Smith as he plodded down the road in the blackness of the night. Would he live to see the dawn?

After receiving his draft notice in January 1943, Smith reported for duty in March. "During World War II, seven African-American infantry regiments were active and three were attached to the 92<sup>nd</sup> Division to which I was assigned," says Smith

During the next months, Smith, as a World War II Buffalo soldier, would serve as a medic, a truck driver, a cook, and a surgical technician. Finally, in March 1944, Smith's division shipped out to southern Italy. For the next few months, Smith's regiment was delegated the task of guarding ammo and bomb dumps.

"I took the opportunity during those months to learn to speak Italian," says Smith. "At the time I had no idea how this would help me later."

On D-Day Smith watched as 860 planes flew overhead on their way to southern Europe, which

eventually led to Smith's regiment moving north also. "After our arrival in Italy part of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Division had been sent to fight the Germans north of Rome," says Smith. "In August we received orders that our regiment was to join them. By October we began the move north. The words of our commanding officer rang in our ears as we moved into combat. He told us that he didn't ask for us and he didn't want us. In his opinion we had too many high ranking officers."

On December 1st Smith and his fellow soldiers began the march up the hill to Sommocolonia. "I was one of four medics assigned to the group who were to occupy and hold the town," says Smith. "Sommocolonia was a key position in the German defense line, called the "Gothic Line." Stretching across the upper third of the Italian boot this formed a last major line of defense for the Germans in the final stages of World War II in Italy. They knew it had to be held at all costs.

The ancient town of Sommocolonia had a population of around 250 people. "All the houses were made of stone with walls that were 12-18 inches thick," says Smith. "The cobblestone streets either ascended or descended. The only

The village of  
Sommocolonia, Italy





Rothacker Smith in the summer of 1944.

Smith, wearing the shirt and re-enacting the position he was in when the mortar slammed into the house where he was holding a defensive position.



Smith carrying a gun. This decision baffled his compatriots.

Early on December 26, Smith made his way to get water from the town spigot. "When I returned to my post, the Germans had begun shelling the town," says Smith. "I felt impressed to put my first aid kit on. Our sergeant was standing by the window and a private was standing by the fireplace trying to warm his hands. I walked over to the wall opposite the window, bent down, and with my right hand reached out to pick up the aid kit canvas harness."

At that moment, Smith's world became a flash of fire and the room was filled with a deafening sound. "A strong force shoved me against the wall, and I heard metal strike my helmet," says Smith.

As Smith righted himself he saw destruction all around. The sergeant had injuries to his chest, the private suffered a cut to his head and Smith

level piece of land in the entire town was the town square."

For almost a month Smith's group held the town. "Our ammo was rationed and so each day at 11:55 a.m. all guns, from carbines to M-1 rifles to 105 mm howitzers, would fire 16 rounds on the Germans," says Smith. "At 4:55 p.m. the Germans would return fire, using only mortars because of the hilly terrain."

Although raised a Seventh-day Adventist, Smith had wandered away from his relationship with Jesus. "I didn't have an active prayer life," admits Smith. "Many of the guys in my outfit called me a saint but I knew I wasn't living right."

Smith might not have been praying, but he believed that if God was going to keep him safe, He could do so without



The piece of shrapnel that lodged in Smith's back (lower left corner), Stalag 7-A identification tag, and the medals Smith received are tangible mementos of his World War II experiences.

Jesus. I attempted to pray, but all the things I'd done wrong kept flooding my thoughts."

The terror and struggle in his mind were indescribable. Smith began to plead with God to forgive him. "I finally realized that God still loved me and accepted me," says Smith. "At that moment a great calmness flooded over me and I knew my sins were forgiven. If I died, I knew that when I saw the face of Jesus, He would be smiling at me."

When the Germans discovered Smith he was sure death was imminent. "One of the German corporals spoke Italian and I was able to communicate with him. I was so thankful that I had spent those months in southern Italy learning Italian."

The private and Smith were moved to another part of the village. They were told a medical team would transport the sergeant. All of the Buffalo soldiers who had survived were being rounded up.

On December 28, the prisoners of war were told they would make a forced march to a prison camp. At first, other Buffaloes tried to assist Smith during the march. Finally a lieutenant appeared and told the Italian-speaking corporal that if Smith couldn't keep up under his own power, the corporal was to shoot him and leave him by the side of the road.

"I was in constant pain," says Smith. "All of my concentration was used on keeping up with the group. I looked at the telephone poles lining the side of the road and told myself to just reach the next one and then decide whether to lay down and be shot."

had been hit with shrapnel along his entire right side. "The explosion happened just at daybreak," says Smith. "As I looked out the hole that used to be a window, I could see the Germans flooding over the hill in front of us. I also began to realize that my injuries were serious. Blood was running down both of my legs. My right hand was completely numb and when I put my left hand up to my right cheek it seemed as though my finger went into my mouth through a hole in my cheek."

Smith wouldn't realize until later that a piece of shrapnel had also hit his back and travelled five inches through his body. If he'd been standing upright when the mortar hit, the shrapnel would have pierced his heart. "I should have bled to death after the explosion, but God preserved my life," says Smith. "I later learned that my parents were praying for me at the time of the attack."

Although the Germans had shelled the village, the battle continued. Smith and his companions were unable to leave the house because of their injuries. As the physical battle raged outside, Smith was fighting a spiritual battle in his heart. "I felt a terrible sense of dread," says Smith. "I knew that I was about to die and that the next face I would see was that of



As he grew weaker, Smith told himself to take 15 steps, then 10 and then five steps and make his decision whether to live or die. “I finally reached the point where I could go no further,” says Smith. “I put my hand in my pocket and my fingers curled around a piece of hard candy. As I began to suck on it, I felt energy and strength flow from my mouth, down my throat, and throughout my body. For the rest of the march I was able to take five steps and then decide I could make it another five steps. I didn’t have to decide to die.”

Life on the trip to the POW camp was difficult at best. Food was practically non-existent, living conditions were filled with battling bedbugs, lice, and rats. Through it all Smith continued to cling to God for strength.

Eventually Smith and the others were sent to Stalag 7-A in Germany where they spent the rest of the war.

## **LIBERATION!**

On Sunday morning, April 29, 1945 the POW’s could hear an artillery battle within three to four miles of the camp. Finally, the battle drew nearer and Smith saw the sight he’d been dreaming of for months—an American tank and a halftrack tank destroyer burst through the gates of the POW camp. “I cried, knelt down, and kissed the ground,” says Smith. “When I turned around the camp was full of flags that represented every Allied nation! They had been made in secret and hidden until this moment!”

Smith received his honorable discharge on November 4, 1945. Re-entry in civilian life was full of its own challenges. “I had to learn the niceties of life again,” admits Smith. “I often slept on the floor because the bed was too soft. It took me about three years to feel as though I had reintegrated

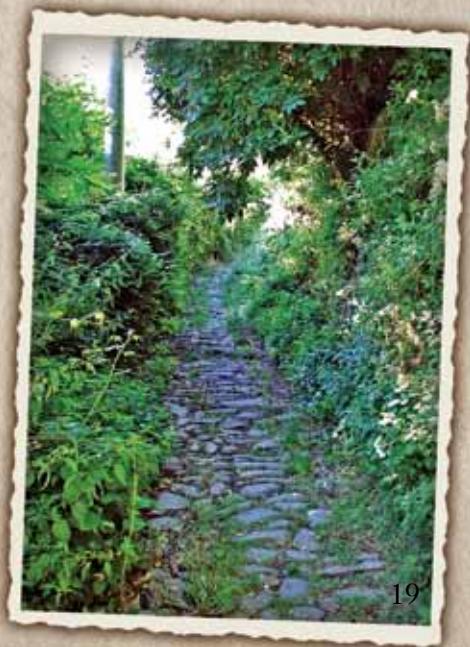
into society again.”

## **LIFE AFTER STALAG 7-A**

Smith eventually married, fathered five children, earned a Ph.D. and spent 50 years as an educator, 48 of which were in Seventh-day Adventist institutions. Through it all, Smith remembers how close God was to him in his time of greatest trouble. “You can’t prepare for a time of trouble. However, you can walk with God daily and build and practice your faith. We talk today about how we feel the Spirit,” says Smith. “When you feel it, you aren’t exercising faith. When you are having faith in troubled times, you aren’t going to feel the Spirit. You have to have enough faith to see you through those times.”

- Rothacker Smith’s complete story is told in his book *No Way Out: The War Story of a WWII Black Buffalo Soldier*. It is available as a paperback at Amazon.com and as an ebook on Kindle. Smith is available for speaking appointments. Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries can provide for contact information about Dr. Smith.

A portion of the trail Smith used to enter and leave Sommocolonia.



# Resources

## EUROPE

- **Daenner Kaserne**  
Kaiserslautern, Germany  
Point of Contact: Shane A. Taitt
- **Nachrichten Kaserne**  
Heidelberg, Germany  
Point of Contact: David J. Bramhall, Jr.
- **Rose Barracks**  
Vilsek, Germany  
Point of Contact: Dr. Nettie Rios
- **Aviano Air Base**  
Aviano, Italy  
Point of Contact: JoNell Varnado
- **Rota Naval Base**  
Rota, Spain  
Point of Contact: Shannon Gamero
- **International SDA Church**  
**Frankfurt International Church**  
**English Language**  
Daimlerweg 2  
Darmstadt, Germany  
64293 Darmstadt Germany  
Directions: <http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Daimlerweg+2,+64293+Darmstadt,+Darmstadt,+Hessen&ie=UTF8&z=16&iwloc=addr>



# ADVENTIST MILITARY CHAPEL WORSHIP GROUPS

*(As of 1 March 2012)*

## JAPAN

- **Camp Zama and Sagamihara Housing Area**  
Sagamihara and Zama, Japan  
Point of Contact: GS-11 Tom Johnson
- **Misawa Air Force Base**  
Misawa, Japan  
Point of Contact: LT Gregory B. Norris, USN
- **Camp Hanson**  
Okinawa, Japan  
Point of Contact: Chaplain (CPT) Roy A. Hamilton
- **Sasebo Navy Base**  
Japan  
Point of Contact: LT Adrienne Townsend, CHC, USN
- **Yokosuka Navy Base**  
Japan  
Point of Contact: LT Robert E. Mills, CHC, USN
- **Yokota Air Force Base**  
Adventist Military Chapel Worship Group  
Base Chapel  
Fussa, Japan  
Point of Contact: Ron Merino

## SOUTH KOREA

- 121<sup>st</sup> Medical Hospital  
Yongsan Army Garrison  
Seoul, Korea  
Point of Contact: MSG Elian C. Strachan
- **Osan Air Force Base**  
Osan, Korea  
Point of Contact: M/Sgt Benjamin W. Johnson, USAF

## AFGHANISTAN

- Bagram Air Field  
Points of Contact: Chaplain (CPT) Carlos A. Molina or  
SSG Hasting L. Newbill, Chaplain  
Assistant NCOIC
- Camp Leatherneck  
Point of Contact: Tom Parsons
- Kandahar Airfield  
Point of Contact: SSG Ericka Davis

**NOTE:** If you know of other groups or need to update POC information, please contact ACM at gary.councell@nad.adventist.org.

# Online Giving

**H**onoring God through faithful stewardship is encouraged of all Seventh-day Adventists. In the Bible rich blessings are promised to those who return an honest tithe and are generous with offerings to support God's work.

In response to requests from Adventist members in the United States military, the NSO has made arrangements for members in the U.S. Armed Forces serving outside the United States to be able to send tithes and offerings through the North American Division, and thus qualify for a receipt for tax-exempt contributions.

For your convenience go to [www.nad.adventistchaplains.org](http://www.nad.adventistchaplains.org) and use the drop-down menu to make your contribution online.

Chaplains and members are encouraged to support ACM/NSO as their "conference" that provides pastoral care and religious materials for their spiritual well-being. Also, please remember to support your base chapel program. Military members serving in countries in other world divisions should contact their conference/union leadership or the division ACM director for further guidance in this area.



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HONEST TITHE.**

## NAD MILITARY CHURCH

### *Charter Membership*

If you are assigned overseas for six months or longer in some type of official government or military-related service for Canada or the United States (active duty in the armed forces, civilian employee, teacher, AAFES worker, contractor, or family member), then you are eligible to join the NAD Military Church. To request a transfer of your membership, visit <http://nad.AdventistChaplains.org>. Click on the link "NAD Military Church."

Membership transfer request forms are available under "Membership."

**Your NAD Military Church  
staff and board look  
forward to serving you!**

continued from page 11

this text and work with a therapist, you will have a good 35% success rate of not relapsing again.

*Mending a Shattered Heart, A Guide for Partners of Sex Addicts* by Stefanie Carnes. This volume is excellent for spouses or family members of an addict. It answers questions about addiction and behaviors to look for and offers advice for work on safety/healing issues.

*Sexual Anorexia* by Patrick Carnes. This excellent book describes sex addicts who close down and are in control of their sexual obsession. This is for spouses who have little or no sex and find that it's repulsive. These addicts are harder to treat and heal from past trauma and pain. However, Part II of *Sexual Anorexia* has the best and healthiest work on what healthy sexuality involves. It is helpful for both the sex addict, as well as healthy sexual couples.

THERE ARE MANY BOOKS  
AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN SEX  
ADDICTS TWO THAT ARE  
RECOMMENDED ARE

*Ready to Heal, Women Facing Love, Sex, and Relationship Addiction* by Kelly McDaniel.

*No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Addiction* by Marnie C. Ferr. Recommended by Patrick Carnes.

*Thirty Days to Hope and Freedom from Sexual Addiction* by Milton S. Magness. A brief workbook that gets a person moving in the right direction.

Remember that a day's journey in recovery is better than any day in the addiction. Don't be afraid to start the journey. It will be worth every step you take and God will be with you on that journey.

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*HardingDesign*

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The FOR GOD AND COUNTRY journal is published by the National Service Organization (NSO), a chapter of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM). It is mailed free of charge to Seventh-day Adventist men and women serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, e-mail ACM or call 301-680-6780. Comments and/or articles are welcome and should be sent to the editor at Deena.Bartel-Wagner@nad.adventist.org. Include your full name, complete mailing address, telephone, e-mail address, and current digital photos with all submissions. Items submitted by mail will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped return envelope.

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URL: <http://nad.AdventistChaplains.org>.

The National Service Organization is the official military-relations office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its primary mission is to provide pastoral care and religious resources to support the spiritual well-being of Seventh-day Adventist military-related personnel.

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WITH THE MASTERY OF  
YOUR THOUGHTS. IF  
YOU DON’T CONTROL  
WHAT YOU THINK, YOU  
CAN’T CONTROL WHAT  
YOU DO. SIMPLY, SELF-  
DISCIPLINE ENABLES  
YOU TO THINK FIRST  
AND ACT AFTERWARD.”

– Napoleon Hill



Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®

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Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600

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