

masturbation

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT...

MASTURBATION?

"What does the Bible say about masturbation?" is one of our most frequently asked questions. Many Christians have found it difficult to answer this question according to the Bible, because the Bible never mentions masturbation specifically. To understand how God feels about this subject, we must examine other verses that deal with issues such as lust, self-control and purity. Also, we must examine its fruit to see if it is from God. We have tried to address this issue by answering some of the most frequently asked questions. Our prayer is that God will use this page to bring freedom and deliverance.

"Does God care about what we do in the privacy of our bedrooms?"

Sex is God's invention. He is the mastermind behind it—and His creation is worth far more to Him than it is to us. This beautiful expression of love was created out of His own heart, as a gift to be experienced between a husband and wife. It is only in marriage that this manifestation of intimacy can be fully enjoyed in the depth for which it was created.

"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and the sexually immoral" (Hebrews 13:4, NIV).

"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4, KJV).

The more beautiful and unique something is (like sexual intercourse), the more power it holds over our lives, either for good or bad influence. That is why it is so easy for the devil to corrupt the most precious of God's gifts. When we become more in love with the gifts than the One who endowed them, the things that were designed to bless us begin to destroy us instead. Yes, God cares about what we do with our bodies, in public or in private. He doesn't want us to abuse ourselves in any way.

In fact, an older definition of masturbation is **"self-abuse."** Although more modern dictionaries may no longer carry this definition, they are still linked together under self-abuse:

Self-abuse noun¹

1. Abuse of oneself or one's abilities.
2. Masturbation.

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NIV) further confirms this, saying that unlawful sexual relations defile our own bodies. **"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body."**

"Isn't it still better to masturbate than to commit fornication?"

The easy answer to this question would be, "Yes, it is better to masturbate, because at best it corrupts only one person. It certainly is the lesser of two evils." However, why would a loving, holy, all-powerful God abandon you to a situation in which you have to choose *any* evil, whether it be "lesser" or "greater?" To really answer this question, we must again go back to God's original plan for sex.

First of all, masturbation will not truly relieve the sexual pressure that one may feel. It may for a short moment, but in the long run it only creates a deeper desire and capacity for sex, which will lead to more masturbation. If you let yourself become enslaved to a sexual high, you will find that you need to go to increasingly extreme acts to maintain the same degree of excitement. There are even ungodly sex therapists who recommend masturbation as a way of *increasing* sexual desire, not lessening it. This creates a vicious circle, like the junkie who craves a "fix," but is only temporarily satisfied. The more he indulges in his dependency, the more ensnared by addiction he becomes. This is the nature of all sin. That is why Jesus declared that all who sin become a slave to sin (**John 8:34**).

Furthermore, masturbation usually involves fantasy, visualization, and often pornography. The Bible is very clear as to what God expects of us in these areas of fantasy and lust. It teaches that we must not look lustfully at each other nor should we behave in such a manner as to entice others to lust after us.

"I made a covenant with my eyes not to look with lust upon a girl. I know full well that the Almighty God sends calamity on those who do" (Job 31:1-3, The Living Bible).

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

While the above verses refer to men lusting after women, all women know that it can very easily be reversed to apply to them as well. Men may be more easily visually stimulated than women, but women can be just as vulnerable to sexual fantasy in the emotional realm. Both are sin in God's eyes, and both can be brought into subjection by controlling our thoughts through Christ's power.

All sexual immorality begins with a thought. A lustful thought not taken captive, will eventually lead to other perversions, because sin reproduces itself in increasingly greater measures. If we do not deal with our evil thoughts, they will take root in our hearts.

It is for this reason that God is so concerned with our thought life. Jesus came not only to deliver us from our "outward" sins, but also from wickedness that begins in the heart.

"Isn't God unreasonable to demand sexual purity after giving us sexual drives that seem to overwhelm us at times?"

Our loving God never demands from us what is impossible for us to do. We are so weak within ourselves that it may seem impossible, but He will equip us with His holy power to overcome *any* sin, if we ask in faith.

Of course, sexual urges in and of themselves are not wicked. They are natural. God created us that way. He desires that we get optimum pleasure out of them by using them the way they were created to be used. However, many desires for physical gratification (whether it be food, sex, etc.) stem from a deeper need that is unfilled deep inside us. Gorging our flesh can *never* fill a hunger that grows out of our spirit. Only intimacy with God can fill the deepest needs inside of us. No other created thing has that power.

God is no more unreasonable than any caring parent who lovingly disciplines their child. It is only because He knows what is best for us. He sees a mighty potential in each one of us that far supersedes our wildest dreams, and He loves us enough to do all He can to bring it to pass.

"I agree with all the theory, but living it out on a day to day level is another story."

This is the place where we need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in our everyday lives. The Holy Spirit is not a vague "force," but the very power of God to comfort you and strengthen you against the sins that

used to rule you before you were born again. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we have the very ability that Jesus had to resist temptation. He depended completely upon the Father and so must we.

Something you must know is that God is not the one who is tempting you in this area to "test" you. God is on your side and wants to set you free from these things, not lead you into them! **"When tempted, no one should say "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (James 1:13-14).**

God wants us to overcome every sin and temptation in our lives. Please slowly read the following verses and let their message seep deep inside your spirit.

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

"For though we live in the world we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, *they have divine power to demolish strongholds.* We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, *and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

"In the same way count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. *For sin shall not be your master* for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:11-14).

"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, *and find grace to help in time of need*" (Hebrews 4:15-16, King James Version).

"Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, *perfecting holiness out of reverence for God*" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

"Can I really be set free?"

"In (this) freedom, Christ has made us free—completely liberated us; stand fast then, and do not be hampered and held ensnared and submit again to a yoke of slavery—which you have once put off " (Galatians 5:1 Amp).

If you are in a real struggle with any form of sexual sin, we do not believe it was by accident that God led you to this teaching. He wants to set you free, starting *right now!* We would like to share several things that you can do to break loose from this stronghold:

1. Confess this sin first to God, then go to a committed Christian you trust, such as your pastor. Ask God to lead you to someone that you can be accountable with, who will be faithful to pray with you and for you. This will take humility on your part, but it will lead to life. **James 5:16** says: **"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."** (You may not feel "righteous" but if you have admitted your sin to God and received His forgiveness, you are! That means your prayers are powerful and effective!)

2. Flee from and reject anything that aggravates this sin. For example, you may need to get off the Internet for a season or purchase software that blocks out pornography. This may sound too drastic, but it certainly is mild compared to Jesus who said, **"If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body, than for your whole body to go into Hell" (Matthew 5:30).** His point was that we must be willing to part with anything that causes us to sin—even if it hurts temporarily.

3. You may need to seek healing and deliverance from qualified Christians who are anointed in this area of ministry. If you have been deeply involved in sexual sins, the devil probably has a stronghold in that area of your life. If you can, find some people who can help you stand against the devil, for he is the one who seeks to lead you into temptation, and whispers lies of hopelessness and shame into your ears. If he drops a filthy thought into your mind just when you are trying to pray (he has used this tactic on even the holiest saints of God), tell him to leave in the name of Jesus! Recognize his voice for what it is, and submit yourself to God. As you do this and resist the devil, he will flee from you! He is deathly afraid of those who are submitted to God in brokenness and humility.

4. Don't give up! Deliverance might take time. Self-control takes effort. You may slip occasionally—or even a lot. But remember that God loves you and He will be faithful to perfect His character in you as long you keep submitting to Him. Eventually you *will* win—and not because of *your* best efforts, but because of God's mercy (**Titus 3:5**). Just as salvation is received in faith, so deliverance must be received in faith. This has nothing to do with our character, strength, or failings. The only thing it is dependant upon is you receiving it in humility. If you should fail, recognize it quickly, ask God to forgive you—and then receive His forgiveness! He is faithful to do that which He promised, not just in a select few mighty men and women of God, but in *all* who are willing to come humbly before Him. That includes ***you!*** We want to encourage you to hold on to this scripture as your anchor:

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept *blameless* at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and *He will do it*" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).