

Christ Community Covenant Church
“Not Able On My Own”
Adam Kemp – July 21, 2013

Prayer: Pastor Dave

Introduction:

- Family and Personal History at 4Cs (since 1997, saved while at 4Cs), Now my family attends.
- Today, I am honored with the opportunity to share my testimony. I felt called by God to speak on my battle with pornography addiction, which has been and continues to be a growing epidemic, which is affecting our society. I want to share my story and the redemption I received when I realized I couldn't take care of it on my own.
- So, this is an addiction that affects millions of people in this world. If you think it is just a problem with young people, it's not. If you think it is just a problem with single people, it's not. If you think it is just a problem with males, it's not. People that struggle with this can and have lost their jobs and spouses.

My Story:

- My story starts when I was a freshman in high school. I was shown a graphic image by a friend. I asked where he got that from and he told me the website. Late that night, after my parents went to bed, I went down to our family computer and visited that website.
- From there it quickly escalated. I would go to that specific website once or twice a week, then, it got to every night. At this point I am fully addicted. And just like any addict, the original “drug” becomes not enough for you to get your high.
- Since I needed more, I did a simple internet search. An entire other world was open to me at that point and I could not believe how much was out there. Even though I was caught by my parents multiple times and told to stop doing it, I couldn't stop. It just kept getting worse and worse. With advances in technology, porn was only more readily available. Now, my addiction was even mobile on my cell phone, at any time I wanted.
- It took one simple picture to escalate into an addiction. This explains how quickly Satan can capitalize on immoral actions and start to gain power over you.

The Enemy's Role:

- Once I was addicted, I became so desensitized to lust and other aspects of sexual immorality, because I started to believe the lies that Satan was telling me that validated my actions.
- During these moments, a simple trigger was all that was needed. A commercial, magazine cover or other small things would put these thoughts into my head. Then, Satan would seem to take control of my mind and body. Immediately after I would feel guilty and regret what I did.

Motivation to Change:

- My addiction continued after I got married and it was greatly affecting the relationship. My wife would find out that I was visiting these sites and would feel sick to her stomach, betrayed, and like there was a wedge between us. It got to a point where I had to ask myself, did I want to be a man who does not fully cherish and respect his wife enough to get rid of this addiction?
- Also, I started thinking of how I was going to teach my children about what God meant sex to be and what is right and wrong in this area. If I am not abiding by the same lessons. Do I want to be a man who feels like a hypocrite?
- Along with these, this addiction was greatly affecting my relationship with the Creator. Living with this secret and not confessing this to Him, didn't allow me to fully worship and give myself up to Him.
- Through these revelations and prayer, I began to read scripture to gain perspective. These verses were shown to me by God and they were exactly what I needed at that time.

- James 1:14-15 - These desires and temptations are of the flesh not from our Father, and they give birth to sin which leads to the death of our soul.
- Another verse that spoke to me was:
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 - God want us to learn to control our own bodies and avoid sexual immorality in a way that is holy and honors Him. Like Paul said in 1 Corinthians, our bodies were bought with a price and therefore our minds and bodies are meant to glorify God.

Action:

- Something that I feel our society struggles with from time to time is getting through our trials and hardships alone, because we don't want to bother anybody with our problems or be a burden to anybody else. To illustrate this I want to attempt to do one of Jerry Seinfeld's stand-up comedy bits that he uses from the male perspective: All men think of themselves as low-level superheroes in their own world. When men are growing up and reading about Batman, Superman, Spiderman...they aren't fantasies, these are options. This is the deep secret inner truth of the male mind. I'm not even supposed to be telling you this. I will give you a perfect example of what I am taking about... Have you ever seen a guy out on the highway, moving a mattress, tied to the roof of the car? Without fail, he has got his arm out of the window holding the mattress. This is classic male idiot superhero thinking. This moron believes if the wind catches this huge rectangle at 70 mph...I got it! I got it! Don't worry about it! I am using my arm!
- I know I struggle from superhero thinking. I handle all my struggles, emotions, and tasks without anybody's help, because only "lesser" men need help. I do this despite the fact that my wife and others genuinely want to be there for me and want me to confide in them in the times I need help or just need to vent. I still turn down this assistance and try to do it by myself, because I don't want to burden anybody with my problems.
- Therefore, I tried to stop my addiction out of pure personal will. I would be good for a little while, then I would struggle again, be good, then struggle, etc. Eventually, I had to put my ego aside and realize I needed help.
- For me personally, I love when music connects with your soul and helps you process through the good and bad times of your life. As a result, I have become sort of a "lyrics junkie." When listening to any song I listen to the lyrics and pay attention to what the true meaning is. To explain my heart at this time, I want to share some lyrics from a song called "Able." The song is by my favorite band, NeedtoBreathe, which is a Christian rock band.

There's a host of hurts we come across,
 None of which alike.
 From the air inside the birthing room,
 To the darkness where we die.
 Though I feel I'm just as strong as any man I know,
 I'm not able on my own.
 Carry 'round the secrets,
 Only heaven knows.
 Crawl into our darkness rooms,
 Where only victims go.
 Though I feel I'm strong enough to carry all this load,
 I'm not able on my own.
 (Later in the song)
 If we're not better than the rest,
 How will children do their best?
 Find your patience, find your truth,
 Love is all we have to lose.

- There are multiple lyrics that I connect with in this song, but the one that stands out is "Though I feel I'm just as strong as any man I know, I'm not able on my own."

Enlisting in God's Help:

- In the end, I needed to humble myself to accept God's help and that didn't mean I was any less of a man, less strong, or less of a Christian. In fact, it reflected higher on my character and strength to enlist and rely on God's power and grace.
- I began to recognize that my will was not enough to overpower the hold that Satan had over this part of my life. See, Satan loves to attack anything that has to do with the Truth (capital T), which is his kryptonite.
- Okay so who is the biggest supplier of Satan's kryptonite? The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To succeed against Satan it was essential for me to have a teammate. So again, I began to do some soul searching and reading of scripture to figure out how to use God as the ultimate teammate in my journey.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 - There will be temptation, but God is always there with you. He will give you the ability and the way to escape from it.
- Okay am I even worth God's help and love?
 - Romans 8:38-39 - Nothing, nothing can separate us from the love of God. This means no matter the level of sin or unworthiness you might feel, He is always there and ready.
- I truly started to realize that I needed God's support to get me through the tough times. And even when those times came, I knew that God's strength is unmatched and undefeated. If you rely on his power, there is nothing that He cannot do through you. God and only God is going to truly provide healing, freedom, and empowerment over this addiction.
- I began to pray for God's healing. I was praying that God would walk along with me, not that he would pull me because I was too weak to do this or nothing without Him. I knew and God knew that I could do this; I just needed God's power to get me through. This is when I started feeling these immoral actions and desires dissipate. Satan's control over my thoughts during these temptations went away, because I would immediately pray for God's power and will over the enemy.
- I remember a specific day vividly. A couple of years ago, I was sitting on my couch alone, praying. God chose that moment to release the hold the addiction had on me. I wish I could explain it better, but all the images and immoral thoughts that would normally be triggers, no longer had any power over me.
- Now don't get me wrong, it wasn't like a light switch. I wasn't automatically freed from the addiction once I prayed for God's help. It was a long process that took some discipline to suppress the temptation through prayer and the will to become a better man.
 - Gen 4:7- God talking to Cain- "sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."
 - Having His help kept the momentum of the change moving along and in the end got me to where I am today.

Result:

- It brings me great joy to report that I have not struggled with my addiction for two to three years. God has provided me with healing and the path to true freedom from this addiction. Those doors where sin is crouching at are not only locked, but are really small. I feel redeemed!
- Ephesians 1:7-8
 - Through this redemption, my relationship with my wife has been even more fulfilling than it already was, we are closer than we have ever been, and I continue to build the trust that I lost. I am now even able to openly discuss any temptations and ask for prayer from her where before I would have tried to hide it from her.
 - ♣ A little tangent here. First off, I want to say thank you to my wife for her continued patience and encouragement during this trial. I am truly blessed to have her in my life.
 - ♣ If you are the one affected by any addiction, I want to stress the importance of avoiding putting anymore guilt on the individual or condemning him or her.

They are more than likely feeling guilty already and you are doing more harm than good. Please decide to provide love and encouragement instead.

- I believe our kids feel God's love in our house through our marriage and the fact that Satan no longer has a presence in our home.
- My personal relationship with Jesus Christ is thriving and it is apparent through every aspect of my life. I have realized that I have been made complete through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. No matter how dark it seemed, my Savior was there with open arms to show me the way.
- I now know that I am loved and free because God is the light, He is life, and He is more than enough.
- I do not want to act like I have the answer to solve all addictions, etc. I didn't succeed over this addiction, God did. All I did was yield to His grace and power. My goal is for our society to break through any habits of living our lives with hidden secrets without God's or His community's help. I don't have the answers, but He has the answers and will provide you with a path to healing and redemption and back to the true purpose He has for you.
- I am going to conclude with this. I encourage each and every one of you who are struggling with any trial, addiction, or challenge to enlist in the strength and grace of the greatest teammate there is and ever will be. God does shine light on dark times and brings life out of destruction. This may seem like a simple message, but we miss this concept sometimes. Just don't do it on your own! Thank you.

Benediction:

From the song we sang, Lord I Need You:

Teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus, You're my hope and stay.

Thank you again and God bless.