



Issues, Etc.TM

Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

TRANSCRIPT

Rev. Todd Wilken, Host

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"Pornography"

Guest:

Dr. John Kleinig

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Author of *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*

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WILKEN: All right, I will admit that it is an uncomfortable subject. There's no two ways about it. Probably uncomfortable not only because it's something that until quite recently was kind of the dark under belly of our societies, something that was there but not readily recognized. However, I think the fact that pornography is now ubiquitous, not only through the Internet, but it's finding its way in a strange way, in some ways very obvious, into mainstream culture where even our culture, the accepted culture, the prime time culture, is becoming more pornographic in some ways. That's what

makes it uncomfortable. It's right there. Everybody knows it's there. Everyone has been exposed to it, our children exposed to it earlier and earlier. And yet we still have many who say that it's this shifting line. They'll argue what was considered pornographic a hundred years ago today is considered tame. So we really are ever enlightening our society to become more comfortable with our bodies. But it's a problem, and there's no doubt about that. We'll talk about pornography this entire hour of *Issues, Etc.* We're coming to you live this Tuesday afternoon, September 21. I'm Todd

Wilken. This is *Issues, Etc.* Thanks for tuning us in.

We're going to give away Dr. John Kleinig's book, *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*, in this hour to the listener with the best question or comment on the subject of pornography. Dr. John Kleinig will be our guest for this entire hour. Dr. John Kleinig is Lecturer Emeritus at Australian Lutheran College, and he's author of the book *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*. Dr. Kleinig, welcome back.

KLEINIG: Thank you.

WILKEN: What is it? Our lawmakers here in the United States have famously said, and so many of them have said, that when it comes to things pornographic, things obscene, we can't define it, but we know it when we see it. Is there something more objective to hang onto by way of a definition of pornography?

KLEINIG: It's notoriously difficult to define, because it's very easy to confuse, say, nudity with pornography. We need to realize that God made us nude, naked. He didn't clothe us initially, and clothing's only something that He gives to us after the Fall. But I would define pornography as the depiction of sexual activity for the purpose of sexual arousal and most particularly, to be quite clear, for the purpose of masturbation, to be quite blunt about it. So it's the depiction of sexual activity—heterosexual, homosexual, masturbatory—for the purpose of sexual arousal and then masturbation.

WILKEN: Okay, that is a blunt, very forthright, honest definition of the thing. Let's make that distinction that you think we need to make, and I agree with you completely. Let's go back to where you begin, and that is originally before the Fall into sin our first parents—explicitly in Scripture—they were naked. They were not

ashamed. There was no such thing as pornography before the Fall.

KLEINIG: No. And there was only nudity. And they were not only naked to each other, but they were naked to God. They had nothing to hide. And there was nothing wrong with that because they were in that not only clean state, but a holy state. So the pornography has to do with the perversion of our sexuality after the Fall and perversion of sexual desire. Perversion always takes something that's good, is twisted around and abused in a way that was never intended to be used.

WILKEN: We tend to think about pornography as a fairly recent development in our society. Does it have a history, a long history in the discourse of man?

KLEINIG: It has a very, very long history. In fact, it's nothing new. Some of the oldest pictures that we have are pornographic. And right through the story of humanity there's always been a fascination with what we'd say pornographic depiction of sexual activity. Now what's this? However there are some things that are new. In the ancient world pornography, as far as we can gather, had a religious significance. It was by means of sexual activity and sexual arousal that you tapped divine powers. And so it's quite common to have pornographic imagery that is basically religious in its nature and intent in pagan societies. And that's still to the present day, for example, in Hinduism. So pornography was very closely connected with religion, and sexuality was not just moral, psychological, but always had religious significance.

We have now reached a stage where due to the desacralization of our society where we see that there's no connection between sexuality and spirituality. You have psychology, physicality, yes, but not spirituality and not religion. And the other big difference, the big turning point is basically the Internet. Stuff that was done in

secret and that you had to go out of your way and to some extent into the public domain to access, say statuettes or pictures or books or magazines, are now available in secret on the Internet. And it's not just still pictures but you get actual video depiction of sexuality. And worse than that on Skype you can have interactive sexual activity in a safe way, in a way with another person of the same sex or opposite sex. Now that is new, and that's one of the things that has brought a whole new dimension to pornography that was never there before.

WILKEN: Other than it's obvious broad appeal—not a good appeal, but it's broad appeal—how do you, looking at it as a theologian, explain the problem it's become? Obviously always a problem, but now viral, not only in the Internet sense but in the spiritual sense. It is being acknowledged in every quarter of the Church that this is a serious and epidemic problem.

KLEINIG: Yes. It's not only in the Church. It's out there in the world. Social workers are aware of it. Legislators are aware of it. And particularly psychologists are aware.

WILKEN: Is it just the technology or is there something else at work here?

KLEINIG: That's what, well, people are puzzled, because what seems to be new or different is the whole range of sexual addictions and addiction to pornography. Now there are certain aspects about pornography that you can explain physically. So, for example, if you view pornography and at the same time masturbate, you are actually rewiring your brain, but you're also rewiring to some extent your body. So it's a physical reconfiguration that occurs. And you're doing the same psychologically. So it has a profound physical and psychological impact

But even going down that road, it still doesn't explain very strange phenomena.

And this is something that I don't think any of us have yet put our finger on. I've yet to see any satisfactory explanation for this. Why is it, for example, that of our young pastors it's not the weakest ones, it's not the ones with the worst marriages, it's not the ones that are psychologically inadequate, but those who are most spiritual have had the worst battles, coming from the happiest marriages—so there's no psychological reason for it—have the worst battles with pornography. And that seems to indicate that it's not terribly helpful just to regard pornography as a physical activity or a psychological activity and try and deal with it physically and psychologically – physically in terms of aversion therapy, if you like; psychologically in terms of some cognitive rewiring of your brain – but it's a profound spiritual problem. And that's what interests me, and in my dealing with people who are Christians and very often pastors, seminary students who are addicted to pornography, the key to this is the understanding of its spiritual nature.

WILKEN: Now that's where we need to go next...

KLEINIG: Yes.

WILKEN: ...and it sounds to me like you have brought us around full circle. You talked about the historical roots of pornography being in pagan religions, and we can deny it all we want that religious considerations and human sexuality are divorced from one another. We can maintain that if we like, but it sounds as though the religious aspects of this have found their way right back into our lives via this addiction to this pornography. When we come back, we're going to talk more about it with Dr. John Kleinig. We invite your questions and your comments. Given the very sensitive nature of this subject, of course if you want to call or email us anonymously, send us a tweet, we will by all

means honor your request to remain anonymous.

[BREAK]

WILKEN: Welcome back to *Issues, Etc.* We're talking about pornography for this entire hour on this Tuesday after noon, the 21st of September. Dr. John Kleinig is here in the studio with us. He's Lecturer Emeritus at Australian Lutheran College and author of the book *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*.

You use a term, Dr. Kleinig, about this in spiritual terms: sabotage and gradual entrapment. That this is, to put it as plainly as we can in Biblical terms, a tool of the devil to pervert a good gift of God and turn it against us. Talk about that if you would.

KLEINIG: Yes, that's absolutely right. I think we need to start by making a very old distinction which was not just Biblical but was quite common in the ancient world and which you find in the Bible. The distinction is made between "desire," which is good. So sexual desire is good. God created us in such a way that I as a man should desire a woman, and a woman should desire me as a man. Now sexual desire is good, and it's part of a whole range of desires, natural desires, that we have. Now they distinguish between "desire" and "passion." Now passion is where you take what's a normal emotion, a normal desire, and it becomes disordered. And instead of you controlling it, it controls you. So, for example, sexual desire becomes lust, and hunger becomes gluttony and greed. So you get that twisting of desire from being in control, we being in control of it, to it controlling us.

Now the normal pattern is that there's a very common pattern that happens with us if we access pornography or similar things. You look forward to it with great excitement. And the key to understanding it is there's an interface between the imagination, what we visualize, and the body and feelings. So our

imagination affects us physically, sexually, and then we have certain feelings and those feelings are good feelings. But the normal pattern is that you look forward to it with excitement and anticipation. You get involved in it because you feel emotionally flat or dissatisfied. You look for some emotional satisfaction, some emotional stimulation. But then after the event, then you get a switch that occurs, and very often you look back not with enjoyment. It doesn't satisfy; it merely whets the appetite for more, on the one hand. On the other hand, you look back with some degree of shame or even disgust, which is a very funny kind of a mechanism if one looks at it.

Now the way Satan uses our desires against us and perverts them. So the normal pattern is that he tempts us to sin. And then once we have sinned, then he accuses us of sinning. And then he uses that to condemn us and to shame us in such a way that we're filled with disgust at ourselves and we become ashamed of ourselves and we feel that we are totally unacceptable. And in this way he corrupts what's good. Sexuality, sexual desire, even imagination and sexual imagination is good in itself, but become corrupted and used against us. What is holy is profaned. What is clean is made unclean. And all the while – and this is the hidden dimension of pornography – sexuality in itself, sex or the opposite sex, the picture that we have of the opposite, becomes our idol that we look to for emotional stimulation, for emotional enjoyment. We look to it for good. And so by getting us hooked, he entraps us in a kind of idolatry and in that way sabotages our spiritual life.

WILKEN: Is this what – and I believe it's the Apostle Paul when he so often warns against sexual immorality, and of course in that context probably not far from our context, though they didn't have the Internet, they had access to all these things – is this why he says every sin (perhaps it's

our Lord who says this) every sin that a man commits outside his body is one thing, but sexual immorality a man commits against his own body?

KLEINIG: Yes. He says that in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 in connection with the young men in Corinth arguing that sex was as natural as eating and drinking. So if they felt the need for it, why shouldn't they have sex with some of the local prostitutes? And he says therefore this is not just a moral matter. Your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. You are desecrating Christ and His holiness. And it's in that connection, he says, all other sins we commit are outside the body; it's other people's bodies. But this is one that we commit in our own body. If you like, it's kind of... If you think of our bodies as temples, we have a little shrine to evil or darkness that is established within us that Satan can use against us. And I think that's quite helpful. There's a kind of a bridgehead for the evil one that he uses to defile us and desecrate our holiness.

WILKEN: Let's take some questions from our listeners. This one is from Dean in St. Louis. He asks, "What are the affects of pornography, from how it affects our view of the opposite sex to what it does to the partner of someone who views it? So many men excuse their viewing of pornography by refusing to see the pain and the heartache it causes their wives. How do we protect ourselves and our children? What steps can we take to help maintain accountability both for ourselves and our kids? With over half of our clergy viewing porn, we need to be very open and candid about this very real threat to our families." What are your thoughts there, Dr. Kleinig?

KLEINIG: My word, that's a lot there.

WILKEN: Sure is.

KLEINIG: And I can't possibly do justice to that. But it's not just Christians but even psychologists and philosophers, and

particularly feminist philosophers, have pointed out that what pornography does is treats human subjects as objects, as meat, if you like. And that has profound effects then. It distorts our whole sexuality, and it distorts marriage and normal sexual interactions. So a person then who has been shaped by repeated exposure to pornography, if you like, puts the image of the porn star over his wife and looks at her with pornographic eyes, not as a person, but as an object, as a sexual object and thing, and treats her in the same way, and then wants to engage in the kind of sexual activities that you see in pornographic films or depictions. And any sensitive woman will feel immediately that she's not there and he's not there. In a sense he interposes in his imagination another woman that he's having sex with rather than his own wife. And that is profoundly disturbing and damaging. But I'm not an expert in this. That's partly psychological and I prefer to go only that far.

WILKEN: Ken in Winter Park, Florida, asks this: "Some in the Church have condemned all nudity in fine art, consider it to be pornographic. Is any depiction of the nude considered pornography, or do we need to consider the context in which the nudity appears? Is there a Lutheran response to nudity in art?" Which I think in the past, especially in Church art, was actually rather common.

KLEINIG: Yes. As Paul says, everything that God has created is good. Nudity is created by God; it's good. It's sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. But anything that's good can be abused. So the important thing is not just context, but the use. No, nudity in itself is neither good or evil. It's the use that you put to it that determines whether it's good or evil. And Christians – I think it's more a problem here in North America, as far as I can see – have discredited the Christian faith by being too prudish in sexual matters and equating

nudity with pornography. There is a proper enjoyment of the human body. Think the Song of Songs, that this is God's Word and it's God's Word for our sexual enjoyment and our sexual sanctification. And there's key passages in the Song of Songs, which is a great treasure for us as Christians, in which both the man and the woman enjoy each other's bodies, naked bodies, and admire each other. But there's a difference. They don't look at each other objectively and assessing their sexual organs or that kind of thing as sexual objects, but they admire the whole person.

So, for example, there's two very famous passages where the bridegroom admires his woman/wife. And first of all, he starts off with the head and goes down to her bust and ends at the breasts. And then the other one is starting at the feet and going up to the hair. But all the parts of the body are admired in turn. He doesn't look at her but he sees her, and he sees her imaginatively and appreciates her for what she is.

WILKEN: And it's not an object, but this is his real, his actual wife or woman. When we come back, I want to pick up right there with Dr. John Kleinig. We're talking about pornography on this Tuesday afternoon, September 21, taking your questions and comments as well. When we come back, another twenty-five minutes. Stay tuned.

[BREAK]

WILKEN: We're talking about pornography. Dr. John Kleinig is our guest here in the studio on this Tuesday afternoon, September 21. Dr. Kleinig is Lecturer Emeritus at Australian Lutheran College. He's author of the book *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*. This book comes to us so highly recommended by some of our best guests and our listeners. I recommend it as well – *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today* – to counteract all of the kind of how-to Christianity that is so hollow, so

empty, and so popular today. This book is a great remedy.

Dr. Kleinig, one more word of diagnosis. You mentioned during the break that pornography itself is not the heart of the problem. It is a problem, but it is a symptom of a greater problem. What is that?

KLEINIG: Yes, I'm thinking spiritually here. It's not very helpful and you won't get anywhere in dealing pastorally with the problem of pornography if you focus merely on pornography. So, for example, I have been walking with a dear person, a man who's troubled with pornography, and he wants more than anything else to be freed from it and has tried everything. But it's most evident to me and increasingly evident to him that the real issue lies much deeper, and it has to do with issues basically of the First Commandment and the assurance of his salvation, the assurance of the fact that he is holy in God's eyes. So I would say that the key to helping people with pornography is to see that sexuality very often is the index of something that's happening in the spiritual realm. And the issue is ultimately having to do with the First Commandment and idolatry, and in this case it's sexual idolatry.

And it's very interesting that in the passage that I find most helpful and I've used most of all in ministering to people who are addicted to pornography is Ephesians chapter 5, and the key section is from verse 3 through to verse 14. There Paul says in verse 5, "You may be sure of this, that everyone who is a fornicator" – and fornicator is not just a physical fornicator, but also in mind, you know, in terms of mentality, imagination – "or impure, or who is covetous" – here in the same sense sexually covetous – "greedy" – this kind of gradation, you have a pornographic activity, either actual or in your imagination, makes you unclean and that whets the appetite, which is never satisfied – and then he goes to say, "that is, an

idolater, has any place, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” So he goes from the issue of porn, if you like – *porneia* is the word in Greek – to idolatry. And so any kind of psychological, physical therapy won’t do. But instead Ephesians 5 gives us, if you like, five different dimensions in dealing with this. Would you like me to speak about them in turn?

WILKEN: Yes, speak of them if you would.

KLEINIG: Number one, and if I just read, Paul says, “but sexual immorality” – that’s fornication; *porneia*, from which we get the word pornography, you see the same thing, which is the activity of a prostitute. So “fornication and all impurity or covetousness must not be named among you as is proper among the saints.” This is the important thing. He’s talking not in moral terms, but in terms of our holiness. We are holy, and that’s the starting point. “Let there be no filthiness or foolish talk or crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving” – this is all sorts of sexual kind of innuendo and stuff that’s so common. And then he goes on, “Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience.”

Okay. The first step is to stop excusing. You know, if I’m involved in addiction to pornography, to stop excusing myself and looking at it from a human point of view, but accept God’s diagnosis of this. And it’s very severe. He says, “This must not even be *named* among those who are holy people.” Out in the world is one thing, but among saints this is the point of difference. That’s God’s diagnosis. And he says, “You can be sure of this, that anybody who engages in let’s just say pornography has no inheritance in the kingdom God and Christ.” Now this is carefully nuanced. It has the present tense here. It doesn’t say, “They will be damned.” They’re still heirs, but they don’t have, they can’t enjoy the inheritance

that God wants to give them as saints already now in this life.

WILKEN: They’re not participating in the inheritance.

KLEINIG: They’re not participating in the inheritance, enjoying the inheritance. They are spiritually impoverished as a result of what they do. So that’s the first step, if you like – to accept God’s diagnosis in His Word and to accept the fact that the basic problem is idolatry, and sexual idolatry, that sex has become an idol for me. Instead of a means to an end, it’s become an end in itself.

The second thing that Paul mentions, and this is most surprising in coming right up front. He says, “Instead, let there be thanksgiving.” Now this is a little phrase that you can overlook. One of the problems that leads to pornography is sexual dissatisfaction with one’s own partner, sexual partner. And he says, “Let there be thanksgiving” to realize that I’m not entitled to sexual intercourse or sexual activity. There are two things. Number one, it’s a gift from my partner, and it’s a gift from God. And one of the ways to circumvent pornography is to thank God for what you have—thank God for being single, thank God for being married, thank God for the wife or husband you have, and even to thank your partner for the sexual favors that they bestow, if I can put it that way. So thankfulness to the other person and also to God begins to change our whole attitude toward sex. Instead of something that I’m entitled to, seeing it in gift terms, not only as gift from God but seeing as gift from the other person. And as such then it’s not something that I can demand or appropriate to myself.

The third thing that Paul says, and this is most important. He says later on, “Walk as children of the light for the fruit of the light is in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord” –

and here comes the critical part – “take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them, for it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed to the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.”

WILKEN: Now this is very important here.

KLEINIG: This is the core.

WILKEN: We’re not talking here simply about saying pornography is bad, or even saying “Oh, I have a problem with this.” There’s a very particular shape to this. You say that the Church’s remedy is, as with every sin, Confession and Absolution, what Christ has empowered the Church to do.

KLEINIG: Yes, and it’s not exposing other people. So it’s not my job to expose and to shame people who are into pornography, but to expose myself to the light of God’s presence. And that’s the hardest thing, because Satan works best in this area when it’s kept hidden and the element of shame then stops us from bringing it out into the open. And the very fact of confessing it to another person, another Christian, but to a pastor and to God, brings the area of darkness into the light. And it does two things. One is that you can see it. As long as it’s in the dark you can’t see what’s going on, and Satan can twist it and use it, and you don’t see what he’s actually doing. But the other thing is that just by bringing it into the light the darkness is expelled. And to some extent one half of the problem is dealt with. So as soon as something that’s in the dark becomes exposed to the light, it ceases to be dark. So it loses its power when it is confessed. And not just once. People have the idea that, you know, one confession of this will deal with it. But repeatedly, that whenever it happens, you confess it to another Christian but best of all a pastor, and to receive the Absolution for it. And that has been the key for everybody that I’ve had some dealings with in terms of

pornography is that practice of Confession and Absolution. And then one step further is not just to stop with the Absolution, but then to say, “Okay, next Sunday I want you to go to church to receive the blood of Jesus, the blood of Jesus which cleanses you quite specifically from the impurity that you’ve suffered and makes your body holy again.”

WILKEN: Okay, let’s take a break, and when we come back, not the conventional solution offered by pop-psychology or even pop-American Christianity, but the one that Scripture gives to us and – surprise, surprise – it’s found right there in the Church, the preaching of Christ, His Absolution, and in the Lord’s Supper. When we come back, we’ll talk more about pornography and take your questions and comments in the last ten minutes with Dr. John Kleinig.

[BREAK]

WILKEN: Welcome back. I’m Todd Wilken. We’re talking about pornography. Ten more minutes with Dr. John Kleinig on this Tuesday afternoon.

Dr. Kleinig, we talked about hearing and accepting God’s diagnosis of this problem, responding with thanksgiving to the proper sexual vocation that God has put you in, be it singleness or marriedness, whatever it may be, to expose these things to the light of God’s law and to the light of His Gospel through Confession and Absolution, and then back to this kind of physical nature of the entire problem, to allow Christ to restore through His Body and Blood in the Lord’s Supper the body that has been soiled by this sin that harms the body. You said there are five. Is there another one?

KLEINIG: Yes. That’s three, I think. The fourth one is: Paul says dissociate yourself. “Therefore do not associate with them” – that’s the sons of disobedience, the people who are going down this pornographic road. Now that’s the way of the world, and the

world justifies it, and they see it purely as harmless sexual activity which in fact can improve your sexual life. It might desensitize you, but basically it's not evil; it's harmless. Paul says dissociate yourself from them and these activities. So there's an element of discipline and renunciation. You need to see what the problems are and who are the problems and reject them. So Jesus says, in connection with imaginative fornication, that if our eye leads us to offend, we should cast it out, and if our hand leads us to sin sexually, we should cut it off. Now He doesn't mean it literally, but it means quite literally that we cut ourselves off from the source of temptation, the eye, which is the imaginative, visual side, and the hand, which is the actual, physical connection. It involves self-discipline. So, for example, some people have found then that one of the ways of combating porn on the Internet is to put a filter on, or else to have it quite open so that then if they do it, their wife sees that they've been accessing it. I know even of one case of a young pastor who has disconnected is email, his whole Internet connection, and he only accesses his email from the local library. Now that's the kind of thing. You've got to make the break. Cut it off, but maybe not immediately. That's further down the line. Now be tough on yourself and recognize what happens to you.

The fifth thing is, Paul says, "And try to discern what pleases the Lord." And that's the other side of the thanksgiving, that God didn't create us to be sexually frustrated. He wanted us to enjoy the good gifts He gives us sexually. And the important thing is not so much to focus on what pleases me sexually or what pleases my partner, because that can be as much of a problem as anything, but what pleases the Lord, and to accept that He's not a killjoy. He's not, in Australian terms, "a wowser," a person who disapproves of anything you enjoy, including sexuality. But that He wants to give us all things, all His good gifts, for our enjoyment.

And to learn then, and this much harder, and that's the last, most difficult thing, is to learn to discern. It's not obvious what pleases the Lord. And that may differ from person to person, marriage to marriage, situation to situation. So what pleases the Lord, say, in Africa is going to be different because of customs and the way people dress and marriage arrangements, it's going to be different in North America, and it's going to be different in Asia where you have a different culture.

WILKEN: This is from Jim in Evansville, Illinois. He says, "Pornography involves the sinful use of the imagination." You've talked about that quite a bit.

KLEINIG: Yes, that's critical.

WILKEN: "Could Dr. Kleinig talk more about the proper use of our imagination, why God has given it to us?"

KLEINIG: That's the question I wanted above all questions. The biblical solution to this is not just negative. In fact, there's very little that deals with it negatively. God has given us the Song of Songs. Now the Song of Songs, if you like, has to do with the reprogramming of our imaginations sexually, from negative to positive. Now the remarkable thing about the Song of Songs is that it appeals at every single line to our imagination. It consists of a dialog between a woman, who's the main character, and a man. So the focus is on verbal intimacy first of all, verbal intimacy. And the woman takes the lead, and the man responds to the woman. So she is in the forefront and helping him to refine his imagination sexually in a way that doesn't debase her in any way. So you get that dialog and then you get the appreciation of each other visually. So you get verbal intimacy first, then you get visual intimacy, and in the whole book there's no physical intimacy. The focus is on these two things. And in this whole program, I mean in the whole book, if you follow it through, the story of it, and

realize that it's God's Word, it's God's Word for, if you like, the refinement, the purification of our imagination for not only natural sexual enjoyment but to sanctify sexual enjoyment. If it is the Word of God, and everything is sanctified by the Word of God, then the Song of Songs is given to us for the sanctification of our sexual imagination.

Now that's one of the key things that we need to realize. What the devil does is to take our sexual imagination, which is very, very important and a precious gift, and pervert that. What God does is gives us the Song of Songs and other similar material to, as His Word, to sanctify our sexuality.

WILKEN: So we're really talking about something as simple as kind of that Adam and Eve moment where shall we receive this as a gift and hear what God says of it and allow God's Word to have it's way in our minds and in our bodies, or shall we close ourselves off from the gift that God has given us by listening to what Satan wants to tell us about this gift and how he wants to use it against us?

KLEINIG: Yes, yes. And to take it... What he wants to do is this is a right, this is our possession, and no longer seeing it as gift anymore, as a gift from another person and as a gift from God.

WILKEN: Talk finally then, with about thirty seconds, if you would, Dr. Kleinig, about the full and free forgiveness, the full sufficiency of Christ's atonement for us even in the depths and entanglement that we find in this sexual sin. About thirty seconds, Dr. Kleinig.

KLEINIG: Christ is not only our holiness, but He is our purity. And that means that in Christ we can be... If I can put it another way, it's very interesting psychologically: psychologists talk about "re-virgination" psychologically. Now a lot of that sounds to me just as fanciful talk and I'm not completely convinced by it, although there's something in it. However, through Christ, faith in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, we can be, if you like, sexually "re-virginated" in the deepest sense, not just in a natural sense or psychological sense, but spiritually, so that we are through the washing of water with the Word, like the bride of Christ, we can be spotless and blameless before Him. So what's very, very important is that Satan wants to tempt a person who's been involved in pornography to stay away from the Lord's Supper. And to realize that if you come to the Lord's Supper trusting in Christ and in His forgiveness and receive the Absolution, then there's nothing to be ashamed of. When Christ looks as you, even if you've been involved in pornography, He says to you, "You're My beloved son. You're my beloved daughter. I'm well pleased with you."

WILKEN: Dr. John Kleinig is Lecturer Emeritus at Australian Lutheran College, author of the book *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today*. I believe that it's going to go to – oh, my goodness, let's see – I think it's going to go to Jim in Evansville, Illinois, the copy of *Grace Upon Grace*. Dr. Kleinig, thank you very much for your generosity in time today.

KLEINIG: Thank you, Todd.

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