

***Before the Fall:
Preventing Pastoral Sexual Abuse***

Mark Laaser

Editor's Note: Mark Laaser, Ph.D., a popular international speaker, has been involved in pastoral counseling for over twenty years, specializing in the field of sexual addiction, pastoral abuse, and compulsive sexual behaviors. Dr. Laaser has created several treatment programs, and has published several books, including *The seven desires of every heart* (2008) and *Healing the wounds of sexual addiction* (2004). Along with his wife, Debbie, Dr. Laaser leads Faithful and True Ministries whose mission is to help those affected by sexual addiction.

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I'm a compulsive story teller and a recovering sex addict. I was raised in the archdiocese of St. Louis. My father was a Protestant pastor and I've always felt proud of myself that I was never a member of a gang. The truth of the matter, however, is that I was a member of a gang – it was the public school gang, and across the street was Epiphany parish in south St. Louis and that was the Catholic school gang. We had many theological discussions about who was going to heaven and who was not going to heaven. So coming out of the 1950s, with all of the religious prejudice we suffered through back in those days, it is a great honor for me to be in fellowship with you today.

In the early 90s I was invited, along with many others, to join a commission at St. John's University in Collegeville for the expressed purpose of studying the question of pastoral sexual abuse in all churches, not just in the Roman Catholic Church. Now, that commission

caused many of us back in those days to ask the question, “How could we prevent, how could we have prevented some of the problems that we were seeing?” I don’t need to get into all of the cases, but the objective of that group was to understand the problem, where it comes from, and, in terms of formation, in terms of seminary development, how could we screen, how could we prevent the problem.

It was an inherently interesting question to me because of my own history. My father, the pastor, was an un-recovering sex addict all his life and never really got help. I wrote books about sexual addiction. He never read them. Until the day he died, he never really talked to me in an honest way about his own troubles with sexuality, but he did sexually abuse me when I was a boy of 2 or 3 years old. By the time I began to develop, I had already experienced full-blown sexuality and my sexuality had been awakened in a way that gave me no way to handle issues of psychological and spiritual maturation. And, not just that; who I was, with my history and my particular neurochemistry led me into pornography and compulsive masturbation, and after I was married – like all sex addicts who are married – I hoped that marriage would solve the problem.

I was talking to someone about this just the other day. I think that many clergy and religious go into celibacy hoping that celibacy will heal their problems with sexuality, and many of us who are married go into marriage hoping that marriage will fix our problems. That was certainly true for me. Luckily, I’m still married to my high school sweetheart, who has stood by me, stood **with** me, and we have been in recovery for the last 22 years. I found out that marriage was not the answer to an addiction, and my addiction continued to escalate and led to a lot of other things – affairs, encounters, and eventually into having sex with several of my clients as a Ph.D.- level therapist. So I am both a victim of pastoral sexual abuse and an offender of pastoral sexual abuse. I stand before you on both ends of the spectrum, and that was one of the reasons I

was invited to be on that commission. I was supposed to address how those who were teaching me, as a seminarian in formation training, could detect the problem.

What do we know?

Several of us, including one of the professors of pastoral care up in Bethels Seminary here in the Twin Cities, conducted a study. We led a group of about 25 pastors; some of them were Roman Catholic priests, some of them were Protestants. They were all male and all 25 of them in this study had had sex with at least 2 parishioners. These were guys who had crossed the line of having sex with a member of their congregation.

One of the things that we found, which is important for all of you to know, is that any of the psychometric testing that we've had available to us historically, like the MMPI, were virtually worthless in terms of prediction. We had all of the early psychological testing on these guys' lives from when they were in college and seminary, and we saw the results. The MMPI results were basically all within the normal range. In the early stages of our research, we were finding that psychometric testing was not a predictor of any particular factors that we could see that would direct us to think that here is a person who could enter pastoral ministry and have a problem. What we DID find through psychosocial interviews and history taking is that there were factors that were prevalent in all of these guys' lives. Let me review the list with you.

First of all, we found that the number one predictive factor with these men was the fact that **they were lonely, that they were pretty isolated and had no accountability.** That's a classic finding that I want you to think about. When we are working with seminarians and candidates, who are the guys that are able to connect and have more intimate friendships, more intimate relations? Who would consider that being accountable was something that they should think about? All the men in this study were isolated, they were socially inhibited. They might

have been charismatic; they might have been dynamic; they might have been able to make lots of acquaintances, but they certainly did not know how to have intimate friendships. Now that's a factor that I think we can discern even at the college and seminary level.

The second thing that we discovered is that **they all felt a great deal of shame**. This was part of their larger personality makeup and not so much because of having offended and having been caught. They had been shameful for years before their offending behavior. As some of you who are familiar with sexual addiction know, my mentor and fellow colleague, Dr. Carnes, who is the founder of the field of sexual addiction, said that there were four core beliefs of sex addiction. One of these is that I'm a bad and worthless person. Well, that was certainly true of these men. Even though they were highly educated and well trained, they felt that they were worthless. The other three core beliefs are that (a) no one will love me as I am, (b) no one will take care of my needs but me, and (c) sex is my most important need (Carnes, 1992).

I often found in talking to these men – and this is also true of me – that they were hoping that their education and their ordination would provide them with some relief from their shame. In other words, if I'm a pastor – if I'm called father, if I'm called reverend – that will give me some relief from the shame that I otherwise feel. I wrote an article back in those days with the theme, "Ordination as a Shame Reduction Strategy."¹ The central theme was that, if I get ordained, if I have the priestly status, then people will like me. Generally, this is true. You're a priest and you go out to a parish and people are going to give you lots of positive attention. It works on a short-term basis just like a drug would do, but it doesn't really do anything for that long-term problem of shame.

Now, counter-intuitively, the result of shame can oftentimes be narcissism. Narcissism is basically that self-centered self that wants to talk about myself and be the center of attention.

¹ See M. Laaser (1991), "Sexual addiction and clergy" in the journal *Pastoral Psychology*.

One of the things that I found in this study was the fact that **these men had not received the “blessing” of their father.** Debbie, my wife, and I wrote a book last year called *The seven desires of every heart* (2008) . In that book we talk about the universal spiritual desires that we all have and one of them is the spiritual desire to be blessed. “Blessing” in this sense is knowledge of unconditional love and approval. God, the Father spoke to Jesus when he was baptized: “This is my son with whom I am well pleased.” Now, if you asked these men that we interviewed, did your father ever say anything like that to you – I’m proud of you; I’m happy you were born; thank you for being you – these men did not have that kind of experience from their fathers. I think it is very important for anybody whose role is a confessor or spiritual director that you become either a surrogate mother or father figure to these people. I feel it is incredibly important that spiritual directors, confessors, *formators* know how to “bless” these people and let them know about their true feelings and opinions of them.

Obviously one of the major components of offending behavior is that you’re angry. I look at this for myself and I know that, ever since I was 11 years old and stealing from the local drug store, I wanted God to come and deliver me from lust. I wanted God to come into my brain and rearrange the neurons. I wanted God to leave the neurons that were attracted to the life that He intended for me, but otherwise I wanted Him to take out all the other ones. It was unrealistic, but I wanted God to get rid of it so that I’d never struggle again with temptation. When God didn’t work that way, I was pissed off. I started being pissed off at God at age 11 or 12 and it stayed with me.

When I got married and Debbie wasn’t the answer to the addiction, then who am I angry at? Well, I’m angry with her. You see that all of this anger inside me – with God, with Debbie, with the world – it’s like we want the world to help us with our problems, so we’re angry with

the world. We've got this universal anger going against God, our friends, our spouse, the world. Now with ordained people, they're not supposed to be angry, and so they've got a lot of repressed anger. One of the ways you can discern a person who is potentially in danger to act out is that they are going to exude anger and you can intuit this. Many of the men we interviewed had family traumas, as long as you recognize that trauma is not just about physical abuse and sexual abuse, it's also about abandonment – the abandonment of nurture, abandonment of blessing, abandonment of affirmation. They were not well nurtured and they had a lot of deep sadness. A lot of the acting-out behaviors in any addiction are about loneliness.

I almost always find that an addict, at a level below the addiction, is also what we call “co-dependent.” Now, co-dependent is a term that originated in the field of alcoholism and I don't think I need to get into the history of that except to say that over the last few years it seems to me that the term co-dependency has had so much stuff thrown at it that we can get confused about what it really means. So let me tell you what it means here. “Co-dependent” basically means that the people in the study were suffering from anxiety issues and afraid that other people wouldn't like them. When we say that they acted co-dependently, **they would do whatever they needed to do to get people to like them.** To me co-dependency is an anxiety disorder – the deepest anxiety that some of us can feel is the anxiety of being all alone – and if I'm worried about being all alone, I don't want to make you angry. You'll hate me and leave; that's one of the core beliefs. Co-dependents, therefore, exhibit a lot of approval-seeking behavior. As a recovering addict myself, even though I've had 22 years of ongoing sobriety from sexual addiction, I tell you the one that eats my lunch every day is co-dependency. It's like I'm still deathly afraid that people don't like me.

If we consider workaholism, for instance, it basically tells me that I better not say “no” to anyone. I better always say “yes.” Now this one in terms of spiritual formation really interests me. There were studies back in the 1980s examining the parallels between psychological development and spiritual development. In our study we took James Fowler’s conception of how people develop spiritually over time and compared it to Eric Erickson, Jean Piaget and others. What we found, even though these pastors in our study were ordained and had at least a seminary education was that their own spirituality was at a very adolescent level. These guys were out preaching, leading churches as pastors, seeing people, but their own faith was black and white, rigid and judgmental. The more rigid a person’s spirituality, the more black and white a person’s spirituality, the more I worry about his having the potential to get himself into addiction or other potential trouble.

Then, finally, all of these guys had what we call an **intimacy disorder**. Remember the core belief: if you knew me, you’d hate me and leave me. Intimacy disorder says: I’m not going to tell you the truth about who I really am, because if you knew me you’d hate me and leave me. So intimacy disorder is about not telling the truth, whether it’s the lie of omission or the lie of commission. Now, obviously a person who is married brings that intimacy disorder into the marriage. Marriage does not create addiction. Debbie had absolutely nothing to do with my bringing sexual addiction into our marriage. Perhaps some of you have dealt with one of the most frequently asked questions I get all the time from some of my ignorant Protestant friends: “If the Catholic church allowed their priests to marry, would they still have these problems?” If you bring the intimacy disorder or the addiction into celibacy, that’s not celibacy creating the problem. It’s really a parallel – marriage doesn’t breed the problem, celibacy doesn’t breed the problem – but both in celibacy and in marriage you will have some people who don’t know how

to really connect with others. Then, of course, we have to ask those that are ordained: Does the role of pastor contribute to the isolation that is already there?

Now, if you are interviewing people, or you're doing formation, or you're doing sacramental reconciliation or whatever you're doing, you can discern some of these factors. In a book that Dr. Nils Friberg and I wrote called *Before the fall* (1998), we say that one of the things that is important is to talk to each other. For those of you involved in formation, what we found is that if we go back to the seminaries where these guys had trained, everybody that had taught them or had done formation with them had a piece of the puzzle. If we sat them in a room and they talked to each other, they could put the pieces of the puzzle together. Four or five people who knew the candidate could generally assemble a rather scary looking picture. I think that's a very important thing for seminaries to think about, getting together people who have taught, directed, supervised the candidate for ministry before he or she is ordained, and letting them assemble a composite picture of what they know about this person. Let them think about some of the factors we've discussed here. Immediately, however, let me say that we don't discern these things so that we can exclude people from ministry; rather, we do these things so we can help form them into ministry. All of these things can be dealt with through counseling and spiritual direction.

What can we diagnose? What seems “normal”?

Dr. Richard Irons was a physician friend of mine. He was a recovering alcoholic and he died several years ago of a drug relapse. Richard was really interested in impaired professionals and we started doing a study of clergy who came to us for a professional assessment program and here are some of the things we found. We again had a group of about 25 clergy, all of whom

had been diagnosed with sexual addiction, several of whom were pedophile offenders. We found that according to DSM-IV diagnostic categories they didn't have full blown disorders. After all, if you have a full blown disorder like a narcissistic personality disorder, if you're that arrogant, you probably are going to tick somebody off so much that you're not going to get ordained. Basically we confirmed all of the things that we had found in the earlier study.

Just as an aside, the characteristic that I like the most, particularly within the Evangelical Protestant community, is the histrionic thinking. That is, we're dependent, co-dependent, narcissistic, we having a blessing disorder just like other impaired clergy, but we're also histrionic which makes us really good speakers, presenters, teachers, the kind of pastor that a church is going to love to call because they're so entertaining.

If you're in an Episcopal system, the archbishop gets to appoint. In a Protestant church we get to select; the congregation gets to call. One of the things that we found in our study is that congregations who have the ability to call their own pastor were calling pastor after successive pastor who had the same personality traits, all of whom were having affairs with members of the church. We had in one church 8 successive pastors who had all had sex with a member of the congregation! So one of the things that we found was that churches as a "family" can be just as dysfunctional in terms of who they call as the pastor himself, which leads me to believe that an Episcopal system might be a little bit better. However, I have a good friend who is marching me toward becoming Roman Catholic. But, one of the things that I hate about our church is that we have these adolescent and basically immature elders calling pastors. They're looking for these traits because these guys are great preachers and can stand in front of these large mega-church audiences and entertain them. One guy who was the former president of the

Association of Evangelicals in Denver was struggling with homosexual issues and yet he built a congregation of 20,000 members.

Back to my point, we didn't find that any of these guys, despite the fact that they had this massive offending profile, were fully depressed; they weren't bi-polar either, although they might have had some cycling. They had substance abuse, and about half of them were actually recovering alcoholics. Many of them had family of origin stuff with PTSD and classic co-dependency. While we don't have a diagnosis for sexual addiction in the DSM-IV, we use the one that's a waste basket disorder, *Sexual Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (DSM-IV 302.9)*.

Dr. David Delmonico, the editor of *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention*, and I did another study with about 20 pastors who had been diagnosed as having sexual addiction. There's only one in this study who was a priest. They had all been ordained on average about 26 years, and in order to be in the study they had to be sober for at least 6 years. So the participants were all pastors who were sex addicts. One of the things we were interested in studying was what are the cross-addictions of pastors who had sex addiction. I was dumbfounded by this study because only three of the participants also had an addiction to alcohol. Food was not big; neither were nicotine or caffeine. Nobody was a gambler or a spender. However, workaholism was the number one cross- or co-addiction for pastors struggling with sex addiction. We also found 88% of them did have depression and 88% of them did have anxiety. Interestingly, none of them had any training on what to do with sexual trouble. Many had training on proper boundaries and professional ethics. But we were forced to ask what kind of training about human sexuality, sexual ethics, sexually compromising situations had they had. And, if they were in sexual trouble, what would they do?

One of the more fascinating evenings that I ever had was up in another diocese. I was doing a full day training on sexual addictions for the priests and at the end of the day the bishop came to me and said, “Mark, I’d like you to lead all of the priests tonight. I’m going to make it voluntary for them to come, but I want you to lead them in a conversation about celibacy.” I said, “Bishop, you’ve got the wrong guy. I’m a married Protestant and I’ve never tried to live a celibate life. What’s more, I’m a sex addict; I don’t know anything about this.” He said, “you don’t get it, Mark. If anyone Catholic is in the room, they won’t open up.” So I agreed to lead this and I didn’t know how many would show up. There were about 50 priests in this diocese and we had 44 of them show up that night. I’m a therapist, so we had the chairs set up in a circle. By the time everybody got in the room there were forty-four of them. That’s a larger group than I’m used to leading. I started out by saying, “I’m here tonight to lead you in a discussion of celibacy, and one of the first questions I have for you is what kind of training did you receive about celibacy when you were in seminary?” And that was the last thing I said. Two-and-a-half hours later they were still talking and I had to leave and I don’t know how long into the night they went, but all of them had stories about the absence of information or they had stories about unbelievably misguided advice.

My favorite story involves the formation director of a seminary in the Midwest. There were seven or eight guys who had all gone to this seminary, and they said that this formation director told them to go out and have all the sex they possibly could, so that they would get it out of their systems before final vows. Now, I’m a recovering sex addict and I think that this is a recipe for neurochemical tolerance. “Go out and get all you can.” As a sex addict, you know that the more you get the more you want, so this was a set up.

Finally at the end of my part in these conversations, there was a priest who stood up and said, “ I’m really ashamed of all of us. Celibacy is a charism, either you have it or you don’t.” I said, “well, what happens if you’ve now been ordained for 25 years and you just don’t feel like you have that charism?” The point I’m trying to make is that these guys were desperate for this conversation and this was the first time that they had ever had it.

I had a similar conversation right after several of the monks up at St. John’s Abbey were exposed by a TV station there. I met with a small group of the monks and we had a conversation about masturbation. I asked, “have you ever had a conversation with any of your brother monks about masturbation?” They all said that this was the first time that they had ever talked about it publicly. So my experience would lead me to conclude that there is a desperate need for education and conversation.

Now here’s the problem. If you go to a seminary and say you’d like to add a course on human sexuality you will run into problems with the overall curriculum. If you add that course, you’ll have to subtract another course, and that steps on the turf of New Testament or Christology. I taught a course last summer up in Fuller Seminary, which is one of the more prominent Evangelical seminaries out in Pasadena, CA. The course was offered as an elective. I had about 10 alumni come and sit in the class. They called Fuller and said that they had been Fuller getting their degrees but felt abandoned regarding any education about sexuality. “You owe it to us,” they said, “ to let us come to this class for free.” They talked the registrar and the dean into letting them come for free and they sat in this course, and said they had been needing this kind of course out in the parish for years. There is a need for this; if people don’t get it they’re going to get themselves into trouble.

Addiction Cycles

INSERT DIAGRAM

This is a diagram of what I think is part of the problem for clergy. If you notice on the right I have what Pat Carnes originally described as the sex addiction cycle. It starts with preoccupation about sex, then it goes to a variety of rituals. Just one story about rituals. I had one case from the archdiocese of Los Angeles. A priest was meeting regularly with a particular pimp and engaging in prostitution. After years of the priest doing this, the pimp thought that he should call the archbishop or the vicar general. He got in touch with the vicar general and said, "Father, I thought I ought to call you today when Father so-and-so came in and paid his bill all in one dollar bills. Now, Father, there is only one place those one dollar bills came from and that was at mass this morning." That was part of the priest's ritual. He was taking a little bit of money everyday out of the offering plate to pay for his prostitution habit. You know, you can come and engage in sex with a prostitute but don't take the money from the offering plate. Even a pimp has his principles.

So the acting-out and then the despair is the next stage of the cycle. "I'm a bad and worthless person, I did it again." And then, of course, the cycle assumes that you cycle back from despair to preoccupation. I think what happens – we call this the "addiction interaction" – is that I would go to despairing *because* I was in ministry, and what I would do is go to my preoccupation with ministry and work. I would go to all of my work rituals, and then I would go to my work acting-out in 12-16 hour days. I would get burned out despairing. This, of course, was a set up for acting-out sexually... again. I would go from despair back to my sexual addiction because that was the reward for working. Using various drugs (alcohol, nicotine, food) and activities (live TV, sex), I had basically seven or eight addiction cycles all addressed to each

other at the level of despair. When I would get to despair, or burnout, or shame, I would switch and juggle addictions. Addiction interaction is like a slinky and I had seven or eight things; I was juggling addictions.

Addiction and ADD

Now I want to talk to you about dramatic research that is examining the connection between addiction and Attention Deficit Disorder or ADD. In terms of religious and clergy formation one of the things that you can discern about people is whether they are in trouble with attention issues. According to the Centers for Disease Control one of the things that we've seen for years is that ADD can be one of those overused diagnoses. We have kids with behavioral issues who go to the school counselor. The counselor says, "you must have ADD." The parents are told and go to the pediatrician, who's not sophisticated enough to officially diagnose ADD yet prescribes Ritalin. In some cases if the kid is prone to be an addict, he's going to sell his Ritalin at school.

Now given the fact that there is a lot of misdiagnosis in ADD, there's also a lot of under-diagnosis and according to the CDC half of the cases of ADD go unreported. Undiagnosed teenagers with ADHD are twice as likely to develop addiction as an adult. Now partly, ADD is a function of the prefrontal cortex. The functions of the prefrontal cortex include impulse control and internal supervision, that is, important stuff in terms of making healthy choices and decisions.

I don't know if any of you are familiar with the work of Dr. Daniel Amen. He's a psychiatrist and has a number of books such as *Change your brain, change your life* (1999), *Healing ADD* (2002), and *Healing the Hardware of the Soul* (2008). One book that I discouraged him from writing, but he went ahead and did it anyway is called *Sex on the brain:*

12 Lessons to enhance your love life (2008). I'm trying to talk Dr. Amen into doing a study of brain scans with people who have been in spiritual formation and with a spiritual director to see a before-and-after effect of several months of spiritual direction or regular practice of prayer, and what effect they might have on the brain. I'm trying to gather some anatomical evidence to suggest that spiritual formation is incredibly important, even if it's something as simple as the repetition of the rosary or other prayers. What effect can this have on the brain?

Let me tell you my own witness to this. There was an FMRI study done at Vanderbilt University and I'm just going to describe it briefly. I was on the research committee. They were sticking people into an FMRI tube and they had goggles on which showed pornographic videos. Participants were hooked you up to all kinds of monitors including what was referred to as a PMEL plathismograph, which measures penile erections. They would show the pornography and scan activity in the pleasure centers of the brain which branch out from the prefrontal cortex down to the amygdala. They were showing pornography to the research candidates and they were showing how the pleasure centers and pleasure pathways lit up like a Christmas tree.

After they had normalized this with a group of men, then they wanted some sex addicts who had at least 10 years of recovery to get scanned just to see if there was any effect of recovery on the brain. So I was volunteered. I was on the research committee and had 10 years of sobriety, so with the consent and permission of my wife and my accountability group, and with my sponsor present, I participated. So here I am in the tube. I'm looking at pornography for the first time in about 15 years. I didn't think. I looked at it and thought, "I recognize that. It does look familiar. It takes me back." But, I didn't feel like I had any sort of sexual arousal in my mind. So I come out of the tube on fire for self-righteousness. I am a paragon of sexual addiction recovery. The head psychiatrist, Dr. Peter Martin said, "Mark, you're right, you didn't

have any human sexual arousal; you did fine; you did great. Congratulations, you don't need to go to a meeting."

About 2 weeks later, however, we were lecturing together at another conference – you should know that it takes a while to generate the full fMRI results – and I said, "Peter, what were the results of my scan?" He said, "I have some good news and bad news. The good news is you don't have a brain tumor." I thought was a really good thing after all those years of pipe smoking. But then he said, "the bad news is amygdala, your pleasure pathway, looked like Times Square on New Year's eve. It was just going like gang busters. Your amygdala was on fire. Your pleasure pathway was lit up like a Christmas tree." I said, "well, the amygdala is in the autonomic nervous system. It's going to send signals to the rest of the body whether we want it to or not." He said, "yeah I know. What we found in your scan and several other scans like it is that you created a new set of neurons that bypassed the effect and blocked the transmission of the signal from the transmission down to the spinal cortex. [He called it an overwrite.] You've overwritten your own autonomic nervous system." He asked me, "what do you think was a part of that? What were you doing in there when you were looking at this pornography?" I said, "well, you know the truth of it was that I was saying some of my stuff from my 12 step meetings. I was saying some scripture verses and at one point I even sang a hymn to myself." He said, "basically what you're telling me, Mark, is that you were practicing spiritual discipline while you were in the fMRI tube. You were watching pornography and you were doing spiritual discipline and the result was that you bypassed your own autonomic nervous system."

I want you to hear this because I think it is so important. In Romans 12:2 Paul said, "Don't be conformed to the ways of the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." What I'm trying to show you here is that spiritual discipline is one of the main tools that

we have to transform the brain and I'm not talking about some spiritually hokey thing, I'm talking about anatomical evidence that we have that you can do it.

I simply want to point out to you that if we do have candidates for ministry and they do have some of the symptoms for anxiety, depression, or ADD we certainly do need to get that accurately and adequately diagnosed. Bottom line, most of the charismatic pastoral offenders that I have treated are almost universally ADHD. I could say to them, which I have as a matter of fact, go to counseling, go to group therapy and I've had many of the guys do all of that religiously and in the end they don't get sober, they're still slipping and sliding around. Well, what I've found to be the case in my chronic relapsers, almost 100% of the time my chronic relapser is a person with untreated ADHD.

Another way that we can detect a person that is in trouble is by looking at some of the boundaries that they are crossing. Every person that is crossing sexual boundaries has crossed at least six or seven personal boundaries before they get to the level of crossing sexual boundaries. The one that I used to do all the time was making myself excessively available to a select few or just one person. One of the things that was part of my own intervention in 1987 was one of the women said, "Mark, you have no idea how much sexual humor you use with women."

I believe the treatment of this issue, whether it's sexual offending or sexual addiction, is five dimensional. There's a physical component which we really just talked about in terms of the brain. There's a relational component, the intimacy disorder. There's a personal element, which is altruistic trauma resolution. There's a behavioral dimension which is all about accountability. And, there's the spiritual component.

Two more things that I'd like to do with you this morning is (a) talk to you a little bit about the personal side of things and (b) talk to you about the spirituality. One of the things that

I would encourage you to think about, those of you who do counseling and spiritual formation is to take a *fantasy history* of your candidates for ministry. Fantasy history is all about what a person normally fantasizes about, and a person in trouble with sexuality obviously is having sexual fantasies. Now, here's my main point with this: every fantasy that I've ever heard is a message from the soul about what a person is longing for. Let me give you a couple of example to make my point.

Do any of you have athletic fantasies in which there is a different result than the original one? You got cut from the varsity basketball team, but in your fantasy you go one to stardom. One of the things a fantasy can do is that it can recreate an old event with a different result. I was listening to a lecture done in Orlando last week about a guy who was talking about how he wrote a book called *Close Calls*. It's about people who get into affairs. He said that a lot of affairs now are about people making connections on the internet with old high school girlfriends or boyfriends. You don't just have to go to the reunion any more.

I was tempted when Classmates.com first started to make a connection with my old high school girlfriend, pre-Debbie; that would have been a disaster. But you see sometimes we think, "boy, if only I had been allowed to pursue that relationship," and I can imagine or recreate an old event with a different result. My high school basketball team lost in the quarter finals of the state tournament, for example. I can recreate that and I can have a different result in which I sink the shot at the buzzer to win the championship game. It was actually made into a movie, it was called *Hoosiers* and I've watched *Hoosiers* over 50 times. I can go on with that but sometimes power, money, I've had money fantasies, you know the lottery gets to be about 250 million dollars, that's my boundary if you gets that high I'll buy a lottery ticket and I bargain with god. God I tithe to my church, tell me the 6 numbers and my church will now have 25 million, the

Laaser wing of my church. But seriously the fantasies that any of us might have about money, what might it be correcting from the past, what might it be correcting in the present. I don't have a lot of money in the present day or a lot of power or status. Fantasies come along and we imagine things and the fantasy corrects them.

The second thing a fantasy does is it brings love and nurture to us that we sometimes think we don't otherwise have. When I saw my first playboy centerfold in 1961, this woman was doing something that I don't remember my mother ever doing. I'm not talking about being naked; it was the fact that she was smiling. I was have a biological testosterone response and an emotional response and what we say in our field happened – and this happens with every perpetrator that I've ever known – is what we call an arousal template.

When an emotional need gets cemented into a sexual activity, then every time I look at pornography and I see the women smiling, it's feeding that emotional need. This runs parallel with a biological response. So sex and emotion get locked and loaded and cemented. If I'm fantasizing about sex, if I'm even just looking at pornography or having an affair at a massage parlor, part of the purpose is to meet an emotional need. (tape ended).

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