

Don't Make Peace with the Enemy



Elvis Has Left the Building

In August of 1977, I was working in a paint factory before school started in the fall. There was breaking news out of Memphis. At the age of 42, Elvis — the King of Rock & Roll — was dead.

A lot of you remember Elvis. The guy was huge — easily one of the most popular entertainers in the world and an icon. Elvis had it all — fame, wealth, Graceland, millions of loyal fans.

But Elvis had something else. He had an addiction. He was hooked on prescription drugs — pills to wind down and sleep, pills to energize and perform, pills for anxiety, pills for everything.

But here's the thing: Elvis never saw it as an addiction. These were prescribed. He made peace with it by telling himself it was just medical treatment.

“This isn't like being a junkie. These are medications... from a doctor.”

But the peace he made with the drugs killed him. He died on his bathroom floor at Graceland. The autopsy found 14 different drugs in his system. In his last years, he was bloated, erratic, couldn't consistently perform, and more and more cut off from the people around him.

The real tragedy isn't just that he died young. It's that everyone around him enabled the “peace.” Elvis never had to face his addiction as an enemy — because he reframed it as healthcare. And that reframe cost him everything.

The Oldest Trick in the Book

Making peace with the enemy is something we do all the time. And we do it the same way Elvis did — through language. We rename things. We reframe them. We file down the edges until something destructive starts to feel, in our own minds, reasonable. Even harmless.

This isn't a new strategy. It goes all the way back to the garden.

You know the story. The serpent comes to Eve and asks,

“Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?”

Think about what he's doing there. He's not making an argument — he's planting a question. The implication underneath is: God is holding something back from you. And when Eve pushes back, the serpent goes further:

“You won't die!”

Which really means: He's not only withholding from you — you can't trust Him.

The message underneath the message has always been the same: “You're on your own here — but I can help.”

Sound familiar?

What We Were Made For

God designed us in His image — with a deep, hardwired need for love. And He designed the means to meet that need. That means is intimacy. With Him first, and then with each other.

Now, intimacy is costly. We all know that. It requires vulnerability. Transparency. Humility. It involves the real risk of embarrassment, the hard work of give-and-take, the slow grind of real relationship. Honestly — relationship can be hard.

And that's exactly the crack the enemy squeezes through.

The Bible is clear about who we're dealing with. Satan is described as a liar, the father of all lies, a deceiver, a counterfeiter — someone who is out to steal, kill, and destroy. He looks at our God-given need for love and intimacy, and he offers us an alternative. One that gives us a fraction of the feeling at a fraction of the cost. No vulnerability required. No risk. No mess.

He calls it a solution. The Bible calls it a trap.

The Pacifier

The chief counterfeit for intimacy is sexual sin. And it takes more forms today than ever before in human history. Flirtatious texts with a coworker. Pornography. Masturbation. Adulterous relationships. And in the last few years, something new has been added to the list: AI companions and bots designed to simulate intimacy on demand — willing to do anything, and to suggest things you may not have thought up on your own.

He's just here to help...

But every one of those things — regardless of form — functions the same way. They are pacifiers.

We see our seven-month-old granddaughter almost every day. When she's fussy and we've checked everything else — belly, pants, sleep, you name it — the pacifier works every time. Her brain lights up, she settles down, problem solved. For a while.

And here's why — it's not the real thing. It doesn't produce milk. It doesn't nourish. It just mimics. It makes the brain happy for a while. And then the hunger comes back — deeper than before, harder to satisfy.

That's exactly what sexual sin does. Whatever form it takes, it's a substitute for something real. It quiets the ache but never addresses it. And over time, it makes genuine intimacy harder to reach, not easier. It's a pacifier. Nothing more.

Are You at Peace with the Enemy?

Elvis made peace with his drug problem.

So, let me ask you: Have you made peace with something in your own life?

Maybe you've renamed it. Called it a harmless pastime. Something private that doesn't affect anyone else. Maybe it's something you've told yourself you'll deal with later — once you're married, once you have kids, once you hit some other milestone. Some guys go further than that, and they've actually convinced themselves that pornography helps their marriage — you know, spices things up.

About sixteen months ago, the Barna Group released their latest research on pornography in the church. Here's what they found:

75% of Christians report using porn at least occasionally

20% of pastors say they're currently struggling with it

That alone should stop us cold. But here's where it gets worse.

55% of Christians believe a person can regularly view pornography and still live a sexually healthy life

49% of practicing Christians say they're comfortable with how much they use

82% say no one is helping them with the struggle

14% say they actually want to stop

Those numbers don't describe a church fighting the enemy. Those numbers describe a church that has made peace with the enemy.

The Warning God Already Gave

This isn't a new problem, and God knew it was coming.

When He brought Israel out of Egypt toward the Promised Land, He gave them very specific instructions for when they arrived. Don't intermarry with the people of the land. Don't adopt their customs. Don't worship their gods. Don't make covenants or agreements with them.

In short — don't make peace with the enemy.

And the reason He gave was simple: because if you do, you will forget Me. You'll start thinking like them. Living like them. Worshipping like them. You'll drift — from Me, and from each other.

Israel ignored that warning. And the drift God described is exactly what happened to them. And if we're being honest with ourselves tonight — it's exactly what's happening to us.

Where Are You?

After the fall, God came into the garden and asked,

“Adam, where are you?”

This wasn't a raid; it was a rescue.

Likewise — the question for you is, “where are you?”

I want to talk about a continuum — because in any group of people, especially men, there's always a range of where guys land.

Some are genuinely free. You've surrendered to Jesus and you're living free from sin patterns that used to own you. That's great — congratulations.

Some of you are on the front porch. You haven't given yourself over to sexual sin, but you're knocking on the door — peeking through the windows. Sneaking a look here and there. Letting certain thoughts stay a little longer than they should. Playing images in your mind. I'll remind you what Jesus said:

“If you lust in your heart, you've already committed adultery.”

He didn't leave a lot of wiggle room.

Some of you have crossed the threshold and stepped inside. It may not rise to the level of clinical addiction, but it has a grip on you. Something — pornography, a charged texting relationship with a woman at work, compulsive scrolling — has become the thing you reach for instead of reaching for God or the people actually in your life.

And some of you tonight have gone all the way in. You're actively watching porn. Acting out with others or with yourself. You've got an AI companion. Or maybe you've done what I did for years — sitting in church, going through the motions, but having quietly decided:

“Forget it. I'm going to do whatever I want with whoever I want.”

The Bible describes those people as having cast off all restraint.

There Is Still Hope

Wherever you are on that continuum — please hear this: there is hope for you.

Second Chronicles says this:

“The eyes of the Lord roam back and forth throughout the earth to strongly support those whose hearts are completely His.”

He is watching — not to condemn, not to accuse, not to punish. He is watching because He's actively looking for the moment your heart is completely His. He wants to support you. That's what the verse says.

Salvation & Freedom

But I want to make sure we're clear on something, because this matters: salvation and freedom are not the same thing. There's a big difference between being regenerated and being free — and they don't always happen on the same day.

God's people in the desert belonged to Him — but they weren't free. They walked out of Egypt still thinking like slaves, and that identity kept them out of the Promised Land for forty years.

We see the same truth in John 11. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead — one of the most dramatic miracles in all of Scripture. And when Lazarus comes walking out of that tomb, the Bible notes something interesting. It says he came out still “bound hand and foot.”

He had life. But he was still bound. And Jesus turned to the people standing there and said,

“Unbind him and set him free.”

Jesus raises the dead — we loosen the grave clothes.

Life and liberty are not the same thing. A lot of men belong to God — and are not free.

But you don't have to stay bound.

Take a Step

I sat in a church for years living a double life. I was absolutely convinced that certain messages had been written just for me. They hadn't — but the Spirit of God had His eyes on me, looking for the day my heart would be completely His.

Now can be that day for you.

I invite you to pray. This is strictly between you and God.

If you're involved with sexual sin — or any kind of sin pattern you've been making peace with — God's eyes are on you right now, looking for the moment you surrender.

James tells us to “draw near to God and He'll draw near to you.”

Before you pray, I want to ask you to take one more step. Tell someone what's happening. Ask for help.

The animal that gets taken down at the water hole is always the one that wandered away from the herd. Don't be that guy. Reach out.

But reach out to the right person — someone who actually has the capacity to help you. Pray for you. Check in on you. Ask the hard questions. James tells us to confess our sins to one another, and that means finding someone who can walk alongside you. Don't confess to a fellow struggler — you two can't pull each other out of the mud.

Closing Prayer

You can pray these words or make them your own.

God, I confess that I'm a sinner.

I have a habit in my life that I've made peace with, and it has to go.

I call it what You call it — sin — and I hand it over to You right now.

I've covered up, made excuses, justified it, and tried to manage it on my own.

But it's in the way. And I'm bound by it.

I don't know exactly what this means or what happens next — but I know I need to be free.

So, I confess. I surrender. Before I ask You to show me who I need to talk to, I say “yes” to You.

Once You show me who — I commit to sharing this with that person. So show me.

I ask this for the sake of Your Son Jesus, that He will be made famous to the world through me.

Amen.

