

Instamacy: Out of the Shadows

Week of August 13th & 16th, 2026

READ:

Ephesians 5:8–14 ; Matthew 5:27–30 ; 1 John 1:7 ; Romans 8:1 ; James 5:16 ; Romans 12:2 ; Hebrews 10:24–25 ; John 8

KEY POINTS:

- Sin Thrives in the Darkness – Sin grows in secrecy and isolation. What is kept in the dark keeps us in shame, but Jesus invites us into the light.
 - The Gospel Offers Grace Greater Than Our Sin – Sin has real consequences, but it does not have the final word. Through Jesus, we receive forgiveness for our past and the power to live differently moving forward.
 - Bring It All into the Light – Healing begins with honesty. Confession, wise accountability, practical boundaries, and community help us walk toward freedom.
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QUESTIONS:

- Pornography is a counterfeit form of human connection. What do you think makes real intimacy different from what pornography offers?
- Ephesians 5:8 says, “You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” Why do you think shame often causes us to stay in the darkness and hide from God and others rather than move toward them? How should our identity in Christ change the way we respond to sin?
- Jesus addresses lust at the level of the heart in Matthew 5:27–28. What does this teach us about paying attention to what we are allowing our minds and desires to dwell on?
- Romans 8:1 says there is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” How can we hold together the truth that sin is serious while also believing that God's grace is greater?

- James 5:16 connects confession and prayer to healing. Why is bringing something into the light difficult, and how can Christian community help us take that step?
 - What is one honest step God may be calling you to take this week—confession, accountability, a boundary, renewing your mind, or something else?
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LIFE APPLICATION:

- Take One Honest Step – Identify one area you have been hiding or minimizing and bring it honestly before God.
 - Cut Off the Source – Identify a pattern, habit, or situation that makes you vulnerable and create a practical boundary.
 - Renew Your Mind – Replace unhealthy thoughts and habits with Scripture, prayer, worship, meaningful activity, and healthy relationships.
 - Choose Community – Don't fight alone. Find a mature, trustworthy believer who can offer both grace and truth.
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PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You call us out of the shadows and into Your light. Thank You that Your grace is greater than our sin and that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

Give us courage to be honest, wisdom to make changes, and humility to let others walk alongside us. Renew our minds, transform our desires, and help us pursue what is good and honoring to You.

Help us take one honest step toward freedom this week and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

World View	Biblical View
"It's harmless entertainment."	What we repeatedly look at shapes our hearts and desires. <i>Matthew 6:22–23; Philippians 4:8</i>
"Everybody does it."	Popularity doesn't determine what is healthy or holy. <i>Romans 12:2</i>
"As long as nobody gets hurt, what's the problem?"	Sin isn't measured only by visible consequences; God is concerned with what happens within our hearts. <i>Matthew 5:27–28</i>
"It's private. It doesn't affect anyone else."	Sexual sin affects us spiritually and can affect how we see and relate to other people. <i>1 Corinthians 6:18–20</i>
"Sexual desire needs an outlet."	Sexual desire isn't inherently wrong, but Scripture calls us to self-control rather than allowing desire to control us. <i>Galatians 5:22–23; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5</i>
"Looking isn't the same as doing."	Jesus specifically addresses lustful looking and moves the conversation from behavior to the condition of the heart. <i>Matthew 5:27–28</i>
"It's just fantasy."	Scripture calls us to take our thought life seriously. <i>2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8</i>
"Porn can spice up a relationship."	Biblical sexuality is built around intimacy, faithfulness, mutuality, and giving yourself to your spouse—not bringing other people into your sexual imagination. <i>Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4</i>
"You deserve to satisfy yourself."	Following Jesus involves learning to deny ourselves rather than making every desire our master. <i>Luke 9:23; 1 Corinthians 6:12</i>
"If you can't stop, just hide it better."	Scripture moves us toward confession, accountability, and freedom rather than secrecy. <i>James 5:16; 1 John 1:9</i>
"Your struggle defines you."	Your identity isn't determined by your temptation or past behavior. In Christ, forgiveness and transformation are possible. <i>1 Corinthians 6:9–11; 2 Corinthians 5:17</i>