



## **ACKNOWLEDGING HARMFUL ADDICTIONS AND OVERCOMING THEM!**

### **Introduction:**

- A. I Know That Some Of You Have Faced And Still Face Addictions.
- B. In This Lesson, We Will Talk About How We All Feel About, Approach, And Strive To Overcome Sin In Our Lives.

### **I. (Slide #2) What Is An Addiction?**

- A. It Is Something That CONSUMES You!
- B. It Is Something That CONTROLS You!
- C. Traits Of Addiction:
  - 1. Addiction is typically viewed as a terribly destructive enslavement.
  - 2. A person can be enslaved to a substance that they ingest (alcohol, nicotine, or drug), or to an activity, habit, or practice (gambling, fornicating, or shopping).
  - 3. It may bring some pleasure or euphoria; however it becomes compulsive, consumes your thinking and everyday life, destroys work life, relationships, influence, and health.
  - 4. There is a serious withdrawal when the substance or activity is not fed.
  - 5. Often people do not realize the negative impact, vehemently deny that they have a problem (“I am fine!” or “I have no problem!”), and do not realize how all-consuming the addiction has become.
    - a. It can become so powerful that objectivity and rationality seem to have NO influence or impact upon a person to bring change or to restore a person to his/her clarity of mind and personality.
    - b. And one addiction can lead to other addictions!

6. A person will do almost ANYTHING to continue using the addictive substance or action.
  7. Sources:
    - a. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/addiction>
    - b. [https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index;\\_ylt=AwrBT4IwiIFYuMgAU7BXNy0A;\\_ylu=X3oDMTBByMjB0aG5zBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzYw--?qid=20070425130559AA43wOG](https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index;_ylt=AwrBT4IwiIFYuMgAU7BXNy0A;_ylu=X3oDMTBByMjB0aG5zBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzYw--?qid=20070425130559AA43wOG)
  8. Statements people have made about addictions:
    - a. “Every form of addiction is bad, no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol or morphine or idealism.” -- Carl Jung 1875-1961, Swiss Psychiatrist
    - b. “The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.” -- Samuel Johnson
    - c. “All sin tends to be addictive, and the terminal point of addiction is what is called damnation.” -- W. H. Auden
- B. Why Do People Become Addicted?
1. Some people become ill, are wracked with pain, begin to take pain killers, and become completely reliant upon the pain killers.
  2. Some have serious psychological pains -- emotional struggles (some caused by chemical imbalances; some by unknown emotional burdens), boredom, desire for popularity, a need for withdrawal or isolation, or a desire for grandiose self-aggrandizement and narcissism!
  3. Some become chemically dependent and have a constant need for a substance that brings satisfaction as that drug mimics a neurotransmitter.
  4. They have become such a habit that the person turns to the addictive substance or action without thinking.
  5. So many let friends lead them into a path of addiction.
  6. Some turn to addictions like alcohol or drugs because they are masking or trying to cover the overwhelming guilt from another addiction!

### **III. (Slide #3) Overcoming Addictions!**

#### **A. HARMFUL ADDICTIONS CAN BE OVERCOME.**

1. The mantra is that “once an addict, always an addict.”
2. People will have to be very careful maybe for the rest of their life.

3. However, people CAN overcome!
  4. God does not use the mantra “once an addict, always an addict.”
    - a. I Tim. 1:13 “although **I was formerly** a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.
    - b. I Cor. 6:9-11 “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup>nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup>And **such were some of you. But you were washed**, but you were **sanctified**, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”
    - c. These sinners HAD BEEN sex addicts, thieves, and drunkards.
    - d. Note that they were those sinners “formerly”; however they had a conversion experience that brought them to Christ and to a NEW LIFE!
- B. (Slide #4) There Must Be An Understanding Of God, Of Man, Of Our Purpose, And Of Our Obligation To Be Submissive To Him!
1. Man must see God as the designer of life, Jesus as our Savior, the Holy Spirit as the revealer of abundant life as designed by the Godhead!
  2. Man must understand that mankind are made in the image of God, are deeply loved by God, and that His Will guides them to truly successful life!
  3. Man must comprehend that THE purpose for his life is to life for God!
  4. We must realize that His Will is to guide us to Heaven; we must follow His Will to have His pleasure and blessings!
- C. (►) First There Must Be An Acknowledging Of The Involvement In A Harmful Addiction!
1. There must be an admission that you have a problem.
  2. This mean rejecting self-deception and honestly admitting what the sin is!
  3. Take full responsibility for the addiction:
    - a. I Cor. 9:24-27 “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*. <sup>25</sup>And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable crown. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. <sup>27</sup>But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

- b. See life as a race that you run lawfully; you want to receive the reward.

D. (►) Overcoming Demands Complete Rejection Of And Participation In The Addiction.

1. This is repentance!
2. It demands admission of wrong and a determination to leave sin and addiction and to be obedient to God!
3. It starts with faith; it must be combined with BULLDOG determination!
4. There must be a determination to FIGHT sin! Eph. 6

E. (Slide #5) Determine To RULE Over Sin And Addiction!

1. God Word to Cain about his murder of Abel: “If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.” Gen. 4:7
2. Sin always couches around us; you must RULE OVER IT!
3. Paul’s affirmation as an Apostle: “But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” I Cor. 9:27
4. I Cor. 6:12 “I will not be brought under the power of any.”
5. Mt. 5:29,30 “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”
  - a. This is figurative language; it is the use of hyperbole!
  - b. Jesus is using the “pluck out” or “cut off” language in relation to sin, not our literal bodily parts!
    1. Push yourself away from the table rather than overeating.
    2. Stop drinking alcohol; drink things that will not affect your self-discipline!
    3. Cease being in an immoral relationship!
    4. Take your eyes off things that are sinful; put them upon holy things.
    5. Take your eyes off things that may be right but are absorbing your time and keeping you from spiritual emphases -- reading the Bible, prayer, worship, teaching another God’s Word, or being with your mate or children.

- c. It would also involve ceasing a friendship that is detrimental to your relationship with the Lord! I Cor. 15:33 “Evil company corrupts good habits.”
  - d. You may cut off some things instantly or stop “cold turkey;” others may require an intense battle!
  
- F. (►) Turn To And Trust In God With All Your Heart!
  - 1. HE is the motivation to succeed and to overcome!
  
  - 2. Determine that you want to live for, please, and obey Him!
  
- G. (►) Do Everything To Avoid Temptation!
  - 1. Stay away from ANYONE who would lead you into addiction.
  
  - 2. Stay away from ANY TOOL (computer, etc.) that would keep you addicted!
  
  - 3. Believe God’s promise! I Cor. 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.”
  
- H. (►) Fill Your Life With GOOD!!!!
  - 1. Otherwise you will revert to the addiction!
  
  - 2. Consider the parable about the demon that left the house. Luke 11:24-26. The Point: you CANNOT put out sin and addiction and be successful unless you fill your life with good!
  
  - 3. Guard and protect your thoughts!
    - a. Phil. 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.”
    - b. Do not listen to, read, or watch things that tell you sin is OK!
    - c. Protect your mind and heart!
  
- I. (►) Seek Support From Others.
  - 1. Seek support from Holy People!
    - a. Seek to be around Christians who are determined to live holy lives!
    - b. Heb. 3:13 “but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘*Today*,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

- c. Pr. 27:5,6 “Open rebuke *is* better Than love carefully concealed. <sup>6</sup>Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.”
  - d. Pr. 27:17 “As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”
- 2. If you cannot overcome, seek professional help!!
  - a. Do not give up.
  - b. Determine to overcome!
- 3. Have An Accountability Partner.
  - a. When done in the right way, this is a Biblical concept.
  - b. Js. 5:16 “Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
    - 1. This demands openness!
    - 2. It requires that you are willing to talk about your struggles.
    - 3. It requires trust of the one who motivates you.
    - 4. Pray for each other!
- 4. Have a trusted fellow-Christian to encourage you and to hold your accountable!
- 5. If you have overcome an addiction, reach out and help others who struggle with addictions presently.
- 6. I urge those of you who have struggled with addiction to for a support group to help other Christians and those who seek to escape the throes of addiction!

### **Conclusion:**

- A. **(Slide #6)** Addictions Are POWERFUL; They Are SO DESTRUCTIVE; They Are SO ENSLAVING!
- B. **(Slide #7)** God Reminds Us That We CAN Be Successful!
  - 1. Phil. 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
  - 2. We CAN choose to serve Him; we can overcome!
  - 3. You DO NOT KNOW what God can do with you when you overcome addictions!
    - a. Look what He did with Saul (Paul)!
    - b. Look what He did with the prostitute Rahab!
    - c. “It Is NO SECRET What God Can Do!”

C. **(Slide #8)** Focus Your Life Upon Holiness!

1. Be consumed with God and His Will!
2. I Cor. 16:15 “I urge you, brethren--you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have **devoted** themselves to the ministry of the saints--” [KJV -- “addicted”]
3. **(Slide #9)** NONE OF US have to be addicted to wrong; we can choose to love the Lord and do His Will! DO IT! Seek To Be Holy And Blameless!

D. **ALWAYS** Consider The Consequences Of Your Choices!

1. If you stay addicted; LOST!
2. If you overcome and if you live a holy life, you CAN BE justified, you CAN BE forgiven; you CAN go to Heaven forever!