

VICTORY OVER ADDICTION
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VICTORY OVER ADDICTIONS

I. ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR DEFINED

Dt 4:23 "forget God"

Eph 5:5 "carved image"

I Jn 5:21 "keep from idols"

A. "An addiction is a worship disorder.

- Instead of worshiping the divine King, addicts worship idols that temporarily satisfy physical desire.
- Addiction is bondage to the rule of a substance, activity, or state of mind,
- which then becomes the center of life, defending itself from the truth
- so that even bad consequences don't bring repentance.
- and leading to estrangement from God. Ed Welch, *Addictive Behaviors*.

B. An addiction is an enslavement where something other than the living God becomes the ruler. *Jas 1:13-15, 4:1; Ezek. 14*

C. An addiction is an enslavement where one's thoughts, emotions and behavior are controlled by one's own inordinate wants and/or desires (*Gal.5:16-17; Ro 6:15-18; Jas 4:1-3*)

D. An addiction is an enslavement where the person is driven by the physical demands of his body and the idolatrous demands of his heart. I Co 9: 26-27; Mt 15:18-19.

I Jn 5:21

E. Other verses on enslavement:

II Pe 2:18-19 - slaves of corruption

Gal 4:1-3 - held in bondage

Jn 8:31,32 -Truth sets free

Jas 1:25 - Law of liberty brings blessedness

- II. **TYPES OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR INVOLVE**
- A. Alcohol - beer to hard liquor
 - B. Pornography - HBO to hardcore
 - C. Drugs - cocaine to nose drops
 - D. Food - chocolate, coffee, sugar, eating to much or not eating
enough
 - E. Money \$.32 stamp, \$1 lottery to riverboat casinos
 - F. Sexual - masturbation to fornication
- III. **CHARACTERISTICS OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR**
- A. An enslavement that one unsuccessfully tries to stop many times
1 Co 6:12; Gal 5:16-1
 - a B. An enslavement very often accompanied by excuses or blame shifting as
reason for failure - *Ge 3* *Mk 7:20-23*
 - C. An enslavement that is often denied as a sin by the one
entrapped - *1 Jn 1:8; 1 Sa 16:13*
 - D. An enslavement where sometimes the one enslaved
claims the ability to stop at any time - *Ro 7:14-15*
 - E. An enslavement that is often repeated even though pleasure is short
term and injury to self and others is intense and long term - *Ro 8:12-13*
 - F. An enslavement that one concentrates on concealing - *Ps 32:1-5; Pr 28:13*
1. Different friends for different sins - *1 Co 15:33; Pr 1:10-19*
 2. Lying to cover up - *Pr 6:16-19*
 3. Living a hypocritical, sometimes pharisaical life - *Pr 6:12-15; Mt 23:13-33*
 4. Acting offended when it is suggested they might have a problem -
Mt 14:1-12

G. An enslavement that is continued even though the one sinning knows his character is not conforming to Christ's image -
Ro 8:29; I Jn 3:2-3

IV. MODELS OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR

A. The Medical Model -

VICTIMS - BEYOND THEIR OWN CONTROL

1. Biological and physiological causes, a brain problem
2. Heredity causes - I Co 6:9-11
3. Trapped in a disease, no cure. "Once an ??? always an ???"
4. We reject this view because it supposes that a person is at the mercy of his body/genes over which he has no control. *I Co 9:26-27*
5. It is understood that substances affects some people more than others but control is not impossible and personal responsibility is not taken away. *Ro 14:10-12; II Co 5:10*

B. The Simplistic "Christian" Model VILLAIN - JUST DO IT.

1. Some churches show no mercy. Just change back.
2. No help or accountability, instantaneous change is expected.
3. Condemnation from others, feelings of loneliness and hopelessness.

C. The Biblical Model - VICTORS THROUGH THE SUFFICIENT WORD

- I. Must be viewed from a biblical hamartology.
 - a. A sin that is seen with other learned behaviors - *Gal. 5:19-21*
 - b. A sin that desires to enslave or control - *Ge 4:6-7*
 - c. A sin that often deceives the heart - *Jer 17:9; Gal. 6:7-8*
 - d. A sin that established ungodly habits as a lifestyle - *Eph 4:22*

2. Must be viewed from a biblical soteriology.
 - a. A sin that can be seen as **past** tense - *1 Co 6:9-11*
 - b. A sin from which deliverance is possible - *Ro 7:24-25*
 - c. A sin that won't deceive if the heart is "guarded" - *Pr 4:23*
 - d. A sin that can be replaced by godly habits/lifestyle - *Eph 4:22-24*
 - e. A sin that the person has responsibility to **change** - *Php 2:12-13*
 - f. A sin where the discipline to change may be painful at the start - *Heb. 12:11; 5:8; 2:10*

V. GETTING VICTORY OVER ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR

- A. The **addict** must know Christ as Lord and Savior. *Ro 10:9-10; 1 Co 1:18*
- Any counseling apart from true conversion (repentance and faith) is just behaviorism.
 - Change of mind
 - Change of emotion
 - Change of will

REPENTANCE: *2 Co 7:8-11; Lk 15:11ff.*

C. The addict must have **Hope**.

1. Hope in the sufficiency of the Word of God - *2 Pe 1:3; 1 Ti 3:16,17*
2. Hope by understanding that addiction is a sin not a sickness and that Christ died for that sin - *Gal. 5:19-21*

B. The addict must acknowledge, repent and confess his sin to God and others, leading to forgiveness and cleansing. *1 Jn 1:9; Ro 10:9, 10*

3. Hope by understanding that addiction is not genetic, hormonal, or some deep-seated, driving, hopeless psychological problem with no solution.
4. Hope in that substance abuse is listed in Scripture with other learned behaviors - *1 Co 6:9-11*
5. Hope by claiming the words "and such were some of you" for his future

6. Hope by introducing him to others who have been transformed - *Ro 12:2*
 D. The addict must identify and root out the "idols of the heart."

Definition of an idol of the heart:

1. The ruling motives behind one's actions, words, thought, and feelings that are not of God but that motivate the person to dethrone God with their idols (not loving Him with all their heart, soul, and mind).

Examples of ruling motives:

- a. Wanting or desiring something that God does not want or desire
- b. Wanting something that God wants or desires but wanting it so much that one becomes ungodly to get it
- c. Being controlled by my expectations and becoming ungodly in thought, word, or deed when the expectation is not realized
- d. Perceiving a deserved right and attempting with ungodly thoughts words and actions to get it when that right is denied
- e. Believing in something, a standard or rule, that is not of God, that leads to ungodly practices
2. The addict with the idolatry may not even know it because of the deceitfulness of his heart. *Jer 17:9*
3. Only by evaluating the motives exposed by the addict's words and actions can the idol(s) be recognized. *Mt 15:18-20; Mt 12:33-37.*

Mt 15:19 - Evil thoughts

Adultery

Sexual immorality

Slander

Jas 4:2 - Quarrels and fighting

Mt. 12:34 - Words

I Ti. 6:10 - All kinds of evil

4. Since an addict sets up his own idol in thoughts, desires, expectations, wants, etc. he also creates in his heart his own doctrine to go along with the idol.
5. The doctrine is what they believe (faith) about this idol which leads to the worship (practice) of the idol.
6. The person who evaluates the actions of an addict and listens to the words coming from the addict's mouth will be able to identify these idols and help him see through his deceptive heart. *Mt. 12:33-37*

- **GOD SHOULD BE FIRMLY SEATED ON THE THRONE OF ONE'S HEART**
- **MOTIVATING EVERY WANT, DESIRE,**
- **EXPECTATION, THOUGHT, AND/OR ACTION.**
- **WHEN AN IDOL REPLACES GOD ON THE THRONE, GOD GETS DETHRONED**
- **AND THE IDOL AND ITS DOCTRINE TAKES CONTROL,**

- **LEADING TO DETESTABLE PRACTICES.**

- 7. Help the idolater to see that he has deserted worship of the true God for the worship of his idol (whatever is ruling him) and that God wants to be the ruler of his heart and wants him to repent of all his ungodly motives.

8. Encourage him to place God back on the throne of his heart and to allow his love for God and a desire to please Him to motivate his obedience (II Co 5:9; I Th 4:1).

9. Allow the "Put-ons" from God's Word to control all thoughts, actions, and attitudes.

Model For Biblical Change

10. Warn the addict of the results of continuing to worship idols of the heart.

a. Jas 1:15 - Death (of a relationship)

b. Jas 4:1-3 - Continued fights and quarrels, battling desires, kills relationships/people, coveting desires.

Examples of Idols

- Pleasure
- Respect
- Acceptance
- Love
- Power
- Control
- Pride

12. Help them to see the **choices**: Heb 11:24-26
Faith motivated

*Faith in a loving God and freedom -

*Faith in their idolatry and enslavement -

Feeling motivated

13. Help the addict to claim the definition of **FAITH**:

(FAITH VS. FEELING ASSIGNMENT)

**"FAITH IS BELIEVING THE WORD OF GOD
AND ACTING UPON IT
REGARDLESS OF HOW I FEEL,
KNOWING THAT GOD PROMISES
A GOOD RESULT."**

14. Change the name from addiction to **"IDOLATRY"**

E. The idolater must grow in worship, **fear**, and love of God.

1. Psalms - list and define the following:

The names of God

The attribute of God

The characteristics of God

The analogies of God.

2. Fear of God must be developed. (FEAR OF GOD TEST)
- G. The idolater must have accountability on a regular basis. *Pr 27:17 Ecc 4:9-12*
- H. The idolater must ingest large sections of scripture meaningfully into heart.
 Ro 6 and 7
 Gal 5:13-26
 Col 3:1-17
 I Th 4:1-8
- I. The idolater must set goals for reading God's Word and spending time in prayer.
 Ps 1 - "delight"
 Jos 1:8 - "meditates"
 I Th 5:17 - "Pray without ceasing"
- J. The idolater must understand the battle with the flesh.
 I Co 9:26-27 - "discipline my body"
 Gal 5:16-26 - "contrary to one another"
- K. The idolater must understand the battle with the devil.
 I Pe 5:8
 Eph. 6:12
 Jas 4:6-10
- L. The idolater must move toward the goal of Christ likeness.
 Ro 8:28-29
 II Co 5:9
1. Fill every area of life with control of the Spirit. *Eph 5:18*
2. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly, abundantly, thoroughly. *Col 3:16*
3. The evidence of the filling of the Spirit is when one responds positively to the authority of the Word of God.
4. A life of obedience to the Spirit's revelations of His will as found in the Word of God must be practiced.

N. The addict needs a **total** restructuring.

1. Negative factors need to be eliminated. *Col.3:8-9; Eph. 4:22*

a. Determine the factors that are feeding the sin.

Ro 13:14

b. Eliminate any "provisions" made to practice the sin.

(1) Eliminate contributing **social** factors:

corrupt friends - *1 Co 15:33; Pr 1:10ff*

foolish friends - *Pr 13:20*

ignorant friends - *Pr 14:7*

seductive friends - *Pr 5:7*

Parents, sibling, spouse, children

relationships -

(2) Eliminate contributing **places**:

houses - *Pr 5:8*

streets - *Pr 7:7-10*

routes - *Pr 1:15*

jobs

"Hot Spots"

restrooms in public places

bars, dining places

theaters, bookstores, sections of public library

health clubs, forest preserves

food stores

race tracks

casinos

(3) Eliminate contributing reading materials:

certain magazines

posters

books

catalogs

(4) Eliminate contributing **audio-visual** materials:

Videos, pictures, or tapes that
contribute to the problem

channels Remove or control TV, HBO, or

movie

telephone Ban all 900 telephone calls or

eliminate

Computer online services

(5) Eliminate an **undisciplined** mind:

Evil thoughts - *Mt 5:28*

Corrupt fantasy - *2 Co 10:5*

Labels of yourself from past thoughts or

experiences

Label that others may have used for you *Eph. 4:29*

- (6) Eliminate an idolatrous focus.

- (7) Eliminate certain contributing activities:
 - swimming
 - health clubs and massages
 - spas or baths
 - food store window shopping
 - listening or watching the races
 - working with certain age groups at church
 - vocation/work
 - volunteer work

2. Positive factors need to be continued, added, or increased.

- a. Don't just eliminate without adding something in its place. *Mt 12:43-45*
- b. Change requires two factors - put off and put on. *Eph. 4*
- c. Replace "put offs" with the Biblical "put ons".

Model For Biblical Change

(1) Replace with growing Christian friends:

- Proper friends - *Heb 10:24*
- Wise friends - *Pr 13:20*
- True Friends *Pr 27:10*
- Encouraging friends *Eph. 4:29*
- Quality family and close peer relationships
- A quality same sex relationship

(2) Replace with involvement in a Bible believing church:

- Worship in Spirit and in Truth *Jn 4:24*
- Teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers - *Ac 2*
- Preaching - *1 Co 1:21*
- Attendance - *Heb 10:25*
- Edification - *Eph 4:29*
- Giving - *1 Co 16:1-2*
- Eventual service in the church

(3) Replace with Christian Growth Essentials:

- Bible Reading
- Prayer life
- Scripture memory
- Regular fellowship
- Appropriate love for God and others

- Learning to ask for and grant forgiveness of sinful past activities
- (4) Replace with **Accountability** - *Ecc 4:9-12*
 - Someone to pray with
 - Someone who will encourage
 - Someone who will check up on elimination's listed above.
- (5) Replace with new activities and routes to follow - *Ro 12:17-21*
- (6) Replace with positive thought patterns - *Php. 4:8; 2 Co 10:5*
 Refocus the mind in every sphere by Godly principles of life
 Focus on true **labels** of who you are in Christ - *Book of Ephesians*

Jeremiah 1:5

Col. 2:13-14

Rev. 21:2-7

O. An intervention and a live-in situation with a church family or Christian addiction center may be necessary.