

## **“Find An Addiction”**

**Romans 7:14-25 \* June 14, 2009**

*“I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.” ~ Rom.7:14*

### *I. Reasons why we may struggle with addictive behaviors:*

- A. We are \_\_\_\_\_ -forming creatures.
- B. We are creatures who love \_\_\_\_\_ & comfort.
- C. Paul’s answer: we have a nature ruined by \_\_\_\_\_.

### *II. What Is Addiction?*

#### *A. The Definition*

**Devoting or \_\_\_\_\_ yourself to something  
habitually or \_\_\_\_\_.**

2 Peter 2:19 ~ “A man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.”

#### *B. What are some of the clinical signs of addiction?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_. Which means what?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ dependence.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ dependence.
4. Loss of \_\_\_\_\_.

### *III. The Cost of Addiction*

#### *A. What can we be addicted to?*

#### *B. What are the costs and consequences of addiction?*

## **Breaking The Chains Of Addiction**

**B** \_\_\_\_\_ before \_\_\_\_\_.

**R** \_\_\_\_\_ of your sinful behavior.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_ effort.

**A** \_\_\_\_\_ accountability.

**K** \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_.

**F** \_\_\_\_\_ your mind and spirit with \_\_\_\_\_.

**R** \_\_\_\_\_ holy and sacred \_\_\_\_\_.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_ change.

1. *Where am I vulnerable to addiction?*

2. *Which of these nine strategies do I need to start practicing?*

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### I. Reasons why we may struggle with addictive behaviors:

- A. We are **habit** - forming creatures.
- B. We are creatures who love **pleasure** & comfort.
- C. Paul’s answer: we have a nature ruined by **sin**.

### II. What Is Addiction?

#### A. The Definition

**Devoting or surrendering yourself to something habitually or obsessively.**

2 Peter 2:19 ~ “A man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.”

#### B. What are some of the clinical signs of addiction?

##### 1. **Tolerance**. Which means what?

**Tolerance means you need more and more of the behavior or substance to produce the effect you are after. Some people boast of being able to “hold their liquor”. But that’s nothing to brag about. That’s just code language which says you are on the road to addiction. You’ve grown tolerant of alcohol.**

2. **Physical** dependence.
3. **Psychological** dependence.
4. Loss of **self control**.

### III. The Cost of Addiction

#### A. What can we be addicted to?

**Gluttony. Alcoholism. Smoking. Gambling. Drugs. Pornography. Deviant sexual practices. Workaholism. To name just a few.**

#### B. What are the costs and consequences of addiction?

**Addictive behaviors bleed our society of billions of dollars for lost wages, medical care, law enforcement, not to mention the damage inflicted on innocent people just minding their own business – the casualties of the drunk driver, the crime victims of the drug addict, the little child left without a father or mother who dies prematurely and unnecessarily of heart disease or AIDS.**

## Breaking The Chains Of Addiction

### **Bow before God.**

**James 4:10 – “Humble yourself before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” Freedom will never come to the addicted person until he admits his bondage and acknowledges his or her need for God to deliver them.**

### **Repent of your sinful behavior.**

**“Repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Acts 3:19. When the Alcoholics Anonymous people started talking about alcoholism as a “sickness”, some people protested because it made it sound as though the alcoholic had no responsibility for his problem. But what AA folks meant was that, like a sickness, an addiction becomes something a person can no longer control. The idea of personal responsibility is still very much a part of the AA philosophy, so much so that the alcoholic must admit to God and to other people the exact nature of their problem, they must make a list of people they have hurt by their actions, and then make restitution to them if possible. Well that’s repentance.**

### **Expend effort.**

1 Cor.9:27:“I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

This doesn't nullify the truth that we are saved by grace not works. It doesn't mean that Jesus' claim that apart from him we can do nothing has changed. It just means that there's something we have to bring to the table. He's still going to work with you, and give you his strength to work alongside of your strength. But you've got to want this!

### **Accept accountability.**

James 5:16. “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” One of the reasons why addictions have such great power over a person is because of the cloak of secrecy that it hides behind. We feel ashamed that we're stuck the way we are. We ought to know better. We ought to have the willpower to lick this thing. We convince ourselves that we're right on the verge of getting over it. Or we tell ourselves we're in so deep by now, that there's no turning back. But these are just lies we hide behind, and the truth of the matter is, we'll probably never get over it until we accept the accountability of strong brothers or sisters who will hear our confession and pray for us without condemnation, then stand beside us through the storm.

### **Know your limits.**

Galatians 6:1 – “Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” We pray in the Lord's Prayer, ‘Lead me not into temptation.’ That's an interesting thing to pray. It recognizes that we each have weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and if we're smart, we'll place boundary lines around those areas, then know where those lines, those limits are.

### **Fill your mind and spirit with God.**

Philippians 4:8 – “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.” I'm fascinated by the fact that after September 11<sup>th</sup>, crime rates in New York City dropped significantly for a few weeks. You know why? Because after 9/11, people's hearts and minds were occupied with deeper and higher things other than stealing and hurting and mugging. For a brief time, other things mattered. And people changed their behavior because of it.

### **Respect holy and sacred times and places.**

Ezekiel 44:23 – “Teach my people the difference between the holy and the common and how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean.” One of the strategies God has taught me about how to wean myself off of destructive behaviors is to recognize sacred times and places in my life. Places where sin cannot encroach. This building is one such place. A church building has always been holy ground for me. I cannot fathom sinning in this place. Some of you have no holy times or holy places in your life. You have no appreciation for the sacred. For some of you, not even Sunday morning is sacred. You've bought into this 24/7 culture of ours where there is no rest and nothing holy, and your life is so out of control. And you are so miserable.

### **Examine yourself.**

2 Corinthians 13:5 – “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.” This one comes straight out of emotionally healthy spirituality. That you must have an awareness of what's going on in here. I just bought me a chain saw recently. Now you have to know one thing about me and power tools or really anything mechanical. I am not good at putting things together. And when I buy a tool or a piece of equipment, I need to be able to just pull that thing out of the box and have it run for years and years, and I'll never have to do a thing with it than just turn it on and turn it off. So I'm not five minutes into using my new power saw, and the chain gets stuck in the tree I'm hacking on, and then the chain falls off altogether. And I had no choice but

**to sit down with the instruction manual and learn how to get inside the guts of this sucker so I could put the chain back on.**

**And as much as many people may hate it, doing life well requires that we know how to look inside of us and be honest about what is there. Because it's only a matter of time before you'll get stuck, and it'll be because of something jammed inside your heart, and if you refuse to look there, or don't know how, or are too afraid, you'll stay stuck.**

**Expect change.**

**Philippians 4:13 – “I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength.” Romans 8:37 – “We are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”**

*1. Where am I vulnerable to addiction?*

*2. Which of these nine strategies do I need to start practicing?*