

Understanding Addictions

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- [0 : 00] Well, we start a series here for the next few weeks on addictions, really a topic that is pertinent in our day in which we live.
- And there are many different problems that we wrestle with, we and others wrestle with in our communities, really on a regular basis.
- And those might be problems related to parenting or marriage or anger, worry, on and on we go. As members of Grace Fellowship Church here, we believe that God has provided us with the truth we need.
- We're dealing with all kinds of issues of life. But do we believe the same thing when it comes to this whole topic of addictions?
- We don't see this word in the scriptures. I haven't come across it. So does that mean really God's word doesn't have anything to say about this topic?
- [1 : 24] And therefore, we need to leave this to others in our communities in order to deal with that and help those who are struggling. And there are many people out there seeking to help.
- People who are caught up and enslaved in bondage to various addictions. I'm really thankful many times for what they're seeking to do. But what about us as individuals and as a church?
- If the problem exists, and it does exist, and probably exists to a greater degree than we realize in our own community, even in the town of Greenland and Marshall County and on and on.
- So we have to believe, if we believe God's word has solutions for even this challenge and this difficulty in life that people are facing, then we have to consider, well, what is my response going to be?
- How am I going to move in the direction of people in need? And who are those people in need? Those are some of the things that we're going to be looking at starting this morning and in weeks to come.
- [2 : 37] And I know in the past when I've taught a class, I've given a lot of information. And if you would like the information, just let me know. Give me your email.
- I'll send you my own lesson. You can go from there. A lot of information available. A lot of good biblical resources available today that really wasn't available a number of years ago.
- I'll try and let those resources be known to you as well. A lot of books written on the topic in the sense of here are different issues related to addiction.
- And we're going to be, I've gone through those books. I'm going to be sharing a lot of information from those books. Dr. Ed Welch's book, Addictions, A Banquet in a Grave.
- Mark Shaw has written a good book. And both of these men have extensive experience in working with people in struggling with addictions.
- [3 : 37] And have developed ministries. And both of them actually have materials available that you could use with someone who's struggling with addictions.

Or in a group setting. Another individual, Brad Hambrick, also has some good information and a series that you could use. If you know somebody who wants to work with you and go through material like that, he has an excellent series that's available too.

So there's no lack of good information out there. And even as I was starting to do some research and reading, it's like going down the grocery aisle with 30 different choices of cereal to choose from.

Where do you start? How do you take it all in? Well, I can't take it all in, but I can take some of it in and hopefully pass it on to you. And we can leave with the confidence that indeed God's word does have something to say about this issue.

And I don't have to stand there. But I can move in the direction of helping people realizing that God's word is sufficient for the challenges that people are facing today.

[4 : 48] And that's what we want to take a look at. And we'll take a look this morning, starting at some of the different views of addictions, and really just try and present that idea, that thought, that what we're seeing manifested today is spoken of in the scriptures.

And the scriptures do tell us something about that, and that we can move, as I said, in that direction of helping people who are caught in addictions. But as I started researching this topic a little bit more, and it's going online, you've got all kinds of information available there as well.

Just type in the word addictions, and you've got that abundance of information. But I wanted to see how people were describing this whole matter of addictions, or defining it.

And just to share with you some of the ways in which it's described from just some organizations you might be familiar with, just in beginning to develop this idea of addictions, from Alcoholics Anonymous website, the definition of alcoholism as defined by the American Society of Addiction Medicine and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.

Alcoholism is a primary chronic disease with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations.

[6 : 26] The disease is often progressive and fatal. And I won't read all of these, all that's in these definitions. Another one from additional information on the AA website on alcoholism.

Today we're willing to accept the idea that as far as we're concerned, alcoholism is an illness. A progressive illness which can never be cured, but which, like some other illnesses, can be arrested.

We agree that there's nothing shameful about having an illness, provided we face the problem honestly and try to do something about it. We're perfectly willing to admit that we are allergic to alcohol and that it is simply common sense to stay away from the source of our allergy.

And then from the American Society of Addiction Medicine, their public policy statement defining addiction, and they provide a short definition.

Addiction is a primary chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory, and related circuitry. So the beginning introduced some of those things that would begin to be key words for us to see and recognize that, oh, okay, now maybe we do have something to say to this, because they're starting to talk about using these terms like reward, brain reward, motivation, etc.

[7 : 55] Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social, and spiritual manifestations. This is related to reflected in an individual pathologically pursuing reward and or relief by substance use and other behaviors.

And that goes there again that I don't need to read the rest of that. But if we're not careful, and as I was reading some of these definitions and descriptions, if we're not careful, we might conclude that, well, maybe we as Christians really don't have a whole lot to say and to offer people who are caught in these kind of addictions.

But then as I researched further and began to read and listen to other descriptions that people were providing, those who were caught in addictions, it was interesting seeing words and phrases that they were using that would alert us to things that we are seeing in the scriptures again.

And one of them actually was on the Narcanon website. And then you'll see a little bit more of what I'm talking about as I read this. There's a moment in every addict's life when they reach out for a drug or a drink for the very first time.

Whether or not you agree with the concept that addiction is a disease, the first moment of drug use or drinking is a choice that each person makes.

[9 : 31] And for each person, there's a reason behind that choice. Okay, so now we're beginning again to understand some of the motivation. What's being revealed here is something more than just what's outside of the person that comes upon them and gains control of them.

Beginning to see individuals, people bringing out this idea of voluntary choice and reason behind that choice.

It doesn't just happen. Here's some of the most common reasons that choice is made as told to us by those who started their drug use young, became addicted, and finally recovered at Narcanon Rehab Center.

Here's some of the reasons that people provided them. Everyone's doing it. It seemed like fun. I could relax. I could fit in. My curiosity grew real strong.

We would do anything that was bad. I fell in with the wrong crowd. And then there was another website from another organization that also provided some examples of motivation behind why people who were involved in their organization originally started with their drug or alcohol or whatever it was.

[10 : 57] And some of those listed were peer pressure, to look and feel grown up. I was modeling my parents' behavior. Curiosity, boredom, self-medication, or using drugs or alcohol to ease emotional pain, providing a way of escape.

Or rebellion or ignorance, to have fun. And it was interesting. Ken and I went to a wedding up in Michigan yesterday and sat with a couple.

And the man that was speaking to us, of course, we began sharing some of our backgrounds so he understood some of my involvement with the Word of God and counseling, etc.

And the class that I was going to be teaching today. And he was talking about a young man that he was working with in his church who was starting to use marijuana. And the reason the young man was using it was because of stress at work.

I was just under a lot of stress. It gives me an escape from all that stress that I'm feeling. So whether it's stress or just pleasure or acceptance, being part of a group on and on, we could go.

[12 : 14] And the different reasons that I was coming across as to why people were starting at this end of the spectrum of their drug use or alcohol or whatever it is.

So there were other descriptions given by those who were further along the addiction spectrum that really does show, again, how God's Word speaks to what these people are talking about.

And so I wrote down some of those ways people were describing what they were addicted to or their experience in their addiction further along the spectrum.

And it's important as you begin listening to people to listen carefully. Now, we're going to get into that a little bit more later on in our lessons when we start considering, well, how do I respond to people?

How do I reach out and help people? And one of the things that's going to be essential for us is to be good listeners. We're trying to listen for some of those key phrases and motivations that are really moving them to help us understand how they got started, which they may have forgotten about long ago.

[13 : 33] And now have taken on some other reason for why they're continuing to do what they're doing. And just like this man I was talking to yesterday, his first question to me was, well, what do you think about medical marijuana?

I'm thinking, well, where is this coming from? And a little bit into the conversation, he was talking about, he started talking about, well, I'm working with a young man who says he's starting to use it because of the stress.

Okay, so we're not just talking about whether or not medical marijuana is good or should be used or what. We're talking about a young man who has decided to substitute something for learning how to deal with stress rather than God and his word and the resources that God has provided.

That's the issue here. Not necessarily that it's marijuana or alcohol or TV or shopping or food or whatever else. It could be any one of those things.

But what we needed to be hearing was why he was using it, why he was turning to that. If we didn't catch that, we would miss the thing that was motivating him, the reason that was motivating him to pursue what he was pursuing.

[14 : 54] And so that's, we wanted to be good listeners. So some of these quotes really help us understand and begin to identify some of the motives of the inner man, the person that are driving them to these actions.

When I got out of jail, I decided I'd control my drug use better and stay out of trouble. But there's no such thing as control when it comes to addiction. You just want more and more and will do all kinds of crazy things to get high again.

Another description by another person. Drugs like opiates, alcohol, methamphetamine, cocaine, synthetics like spice and even marijuana can change a person.

Who is loving and open with their family into someone who has to manipulate everyone so that they can let her keep using drugs. Another quote.

Everyone else did it. The first time I got drunk, I was 15 and I was living at my parents' house and they were gone. And I opened a bottle of gin and drank almost the whole thing.

[16 : 02] And got violently ill. Had to be taken out of my bedroom by some friends. And threw up all over my bedroom. Another one. I feel like everybody got addiction.

You know what I mean. Because they have addiction to smoking, addiction to going to work. You know. So somebody has an addiction somewhere in them. Another one.

It is anxiety and stress that I was dealing with. The alcohol just calmed me down so that I used it as a tool. Like a self-medication for me. I have depression and anxiety and overwhelming problems with employment.

It was very stressful. But it has nothing to do with family or anything. I would quit for a month here and there. I have quit for a couple of weeks here and there. But I always went back when the anxiety and depression set in.

When I'm dealing with work. Another one. I had a blackout. Don't remember. Ended up in the hospital. Then I got out of the hospital after three days and swore I would never drink again.

[17 : 06] And within those two weeks. Within two weeks I was having wine again. I told myself it was just wine. It couldn't do any damage. So yeah. And it just spiraled down and I was very, very depressed and constantly hopeless.

I have emotional triggers that are problematic. And then one last one. It always felt. I always felt out of place. I always felt like I didn't fit into my skin.

I was so afraid of people and of the world. And I had horrible social anxiety. And all I ever really wanted was life to be part of something. To have friends and to be comfortable with people.

And I couldn't do it sober. And when I had my first drink it was like wow. This is what I've been looking for all my life. And so. I mean it would be wonderful for us to take the time and go through each one of these.

And what do you see as some of the key words or phrases. That begin revealing something about what's going on in the inner person. That indeed with the information you have already from your study of God's word.

[18 : 13] That you recognize God's word speaks to that. And God's word deals with that. And this person doesn't know it. He's not seeing it. Just as we didn't see it at one time in our lives as well.

But now we are beginning to see. And so. What looks like a person who's controlled by some force outside of themselves. At the latter stages of addiction.

Could be better described as an enslavement. That began and continues with voluntary choices for specific reasons. And so we again.

We are trying to apply a biblical perspective to what we're hearing. And we're seeing indeed. God's word does describe what these people are describing.

What they're verbalizing. And so again. We don't have to be standing back. As people who don't have an understanding. And a resource that relates to what they're experiencing.

[19 : 18] Quote from Cardinal DiClemente. In his book Addictions and Change. It takes choice and commitment to continue to obtain effective access. And to seek the addictive behavior.

When there are negative personal and social consequences that begin to emerge. The addicted individual appears to be functioning more on autopilot than choosing.

Nevertheless. A chosen commitment to the addictive behavior continues. There are virtually hundreds of little decisions. That are made daily and weekly.

To ensure access to the behavior. Arranging schedules. Making excuses. Sneaking off for periods of time. And minimizing consequences. Are all part of the process of protecting continued engagement in addiction.

So this is what is happening in the life of that person. There are biblical reasons and explanations for what we're hearing and what we're seeing.

[20 : 22] So in God's word. Where we have God's revealed and preserved word and counsel for us. Indeed. God's word speaks to this kind of thinking.

And acting in people. He speaks of the origin of such things. Where is this all coming from? God tells us in this word.

He speaks of the dangers. And the consequences from choices that people make. That are contrary to his wise counsel. It's found in his word.

And he reveals solutions. For the problems and challenges. And even greater core human problems. That are behind what people are struggling.

And with what people are enslaved to. And we begin to see God's instruction in the book of Genesis. And you know from previous lessons and classes.

[21 : 22] I'll have most of these scripture passages. Don't I care? One of these scripture passages. I have a PowerPoint book. If they're not. You can go to God's word here. Genesis 1.

26 and 27. These are verses you're unfamiliar with. But biblically we understand that man acquired his ability to make voluntary choices.

As a result of God's creative act in him. Genesis 1. 26 and 27. God said let us make man in our image. In our likeness. And then Genesis 2.

Verses 15 through 17. It's not all the verses here. The Lord God took man and put him in the garden of Eden. The Lord commanded the man you're free to eat from any tree in the garden.

But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For when you eat of it you will surely die. So Adam and Eve had that ability to choose. To obey God or to disobey God.

[22 : 21] And each choice would have its own consequences. They would choose to obey God. They would continue to experience the enjoyment they were having in their obedience to God.

In the garden. But if they chose not to believe God. And instead to disobey Him. And experience death and all the hardships of life that proceeded.

And also come after it. So they had this ability to choose. To make that choice. Will I continue to obey God? And God had instructed them and told them.

Listen. If you have this choice set before you. Don't eat of this tree. If you eat of this tree. This is what you will experience. And what will follow. So basically their life was to be a life of faith in God.

And belief in what He had established for them. So the choice was. Are you going to continue to live a life of faith in God. And who He was.

[23 : 19] And the counsel He provided. And continue to enjoy. Like what you are already enjoying. Or you continue. Or you can make this choice. And move yourself out.

And away from faith and belief in God and His counsel. But you have to understand. This is what will follow that kind of life. They had that ability. As individuals made in the image of God.

To make that choice. And of course we understand. That the image of God in them was distorted by sin. That they chose to disobey God and to sin.

Now in Genesis 3.6. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing it high. And also desirable for gaining wisdom. She took some of it and ate it.

She gave some to her husband. Who was with her. And he ate it. A voluntary choice for a specific reason. You see it there with Adam and Eve. Of course for Adam and Eve.

[24 : 19] Their choices led to a brokenness in their relationship with each other. With God. And in their environment. You'll see the same thing as you explore. The consequences in the lives of those who were enslaved to various addictions.

These same consequences reached the whole sphere of their lives. Their relationships certainly with God. With those closest to them.

And just all kinds of relationships. And certainly with their environment. Their surrounding environment. Whether it's their work, etc. And so the inclination of their hearts.

After their disobedience to Adam and Eve. Their sin. Was not to run to God. For fellowship and counsel. But away from God.

They hid from God. And in this situation. This condition. They had to devise and follow their own plans. For dealing with life.

[25 : 19] As they now were experiencing it. And that's the same way. Anybody who runs away from God. It's not like they're in a vacuum. They still have to live.

And respond to their sphere. Their environment. But because they rejected God and his counsel. They now have to depend on. Some other counsel.

And they have to devise a plan. A way in which they can handle their situation. Apart from God and his counsel. And so that's what Adam and Eve were simply doing.

And now in their fallen condition. Their counsel led them away from God. To hide. In fact. Their relationship with God. To come up with some sort of plan. For dealing with their present situation.

The guilt. The shame they were experiencing. Cover themselves with fig leaves. And then. And then. The consequences. That reached into every sphere of their lives.

[26 : 21] Was there. Now when we think of it on this side. Maybe Adam and Eve did too.

Once they received counsel from God. We look back and think. Adam and Eve. What a vain attempt. To deal with your situation.

Fig leaves. Really? Was that going to handle. Your true condition. Your situation. Of course we're looking at it. That makes no sense whatsoever. But to them.

At that time. That made sense. They were trying to deal with it. And the same thing we see. In those. In the lives of those. Enslaved to addiction.

I mean. We've all been there. In trying to deal with situations. In our own lives. When we are. We're going contrary. To the counsel of God's word. At some time in the future.

[27 : 14] We look back. And how silly. And ridiculous. Was that. For me to act that way. And to think. That I could actually handle. That situation that way. Now it makes no sense to me. Whatsoever.

And. But. In the time. It was making sense to us. And so as we. Begin to move in the direction. Of helping people.

Minister to them. We're going to have to be. Discerning. And patient. And persevering. And sharing the truth. Of God's word. Because to them. What they're doing. Is making sense.

In reality. It doesn't. And it's very destructive. For them. Well. The consequences. And. And. And. And. And. It didn't end with them. It certainly.

Reached. To their posterity. We know that. We've heard this teaching. In our church. For not only. Did Adam and Eve. Now have a nature. Inclined to oppose God.

[28 : 10] But also. All who came after him. Came. Their son. And. That same. Pattern. Was manifested. In. In him. In his rebellion. Against God.

In Genesis 4. Verses 1 through 8. When Cain. Brought an unacceptable. Sacrifice. To God. God rejected it. Instead of listening to God. And offering an acceptable sacrifice.

Which he could have done. And God helped him understand that. Just. Offer an acceptable sacrifice. He had a way out of this situation. In this circumstances.

And back to. A life of experiencing. The joy. And relationship with God. His family. And his environment. And. In this situation. In this situation. But instead of listening to God.

And offering an acceptable sacrifice. Cain became angry with God. And turned away from him. In verse 5 of chapter 4. Now God graciously. Told Cain.

- [29 : 06] Of the dangerous. Self-destructive path. He was heading down. In verse 7. God came to Cain. And said. Sin's crouching at your door. It desires to have you.
- But you must master it. And you must master it. Not by again. Coming up with his own plan. And his own willpower. But. By listening to God.
- And the counsel of God. Listen. I've told you. What you need to do. And I'm. I'm warning you. And helping you understand. If you refuse this counsel. I want you to understand. Sin is standing at the door.
- It's crouching at the door. And longs to master you. And to gain control of you. But you must master it. In other words. You must come back.
- And follow me. And my counsel. It's the only way. You're going to master it. Well. We know what. Cain chose. Voluntarily to do. He voluntarily chose.
- [30 : 01] To refuse God's. Refuse God's counsel. And he devised his own way. Of living life now. And it'd be. Indeed. He became. Inslaved to sin.
- And ended up. Killing his brother Abel. And life for him. Became burdensome. So there he was. He had that. Opportunity. To make that choice.
- To obey God. But there was something. Bigger within his heart. That he wanted. He wanted it. So badly. That the counsel of God. Did not seem best.
- For him. And so he had to. Once he made that. Rejection. Of God. And God's counsel. And turned his back. Against God.
- And became angry. With God. Is faced with doubt. Yes. All those are symptoms. Of what was going on. In his heart already. And so at that point.
- [30 : 54] I mean. His circumstances. Were still the same. And so he had to come up. With what. In his mind. Was a logical way. Of dealing. With his circumstances. Apart from the counsel of God.
- And so he made this plan. In his own mind. That he would pursue. And then he started. Living out that plan. That he had made.
- For dealing. With his situation. And he followed through. His plan. Told his brother. Hey. Went to this field. Meet me out at this field. Of course.
- One thing led to the other. And he killed his brother Abel. And even after that. God confronted with him. He had another opportunity. To repent. And turn him. Turn aside.
- But. No. I didn't. Who. Am I my brother's keeper? No. So. He was caught. In this. In this. Bondage.
- [31 : 51] To his sin. And the manifestation. Again. Of it. Was. Lying to God. To cover up. Just like. Adam and Eve. Did the same thing.
- They did the same thing. Because they had the same. Element. Operating within them. That element of sin. That was controlling them. Well.
- Not only with Cain. Adam and Eve. And Cain. But. Really. It's the reality of sin. In each of us. That makes us susceptible. To this whole matter of addiction. The sinful heart.
- Desires something more than God. And chooses a path. Contrary to God's counsel. To obtain it. Or to retain it. To keep what you really want. What you really love. What's really most important to you.
- In Luke 6. 45. The good man brings good things. Out of the good stored up in his heart. The evil man brings evil things. Out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart.
- [32 : 49] His mouth speaks. So all of this that we're seeing. Outside of us. Whether it's our speech. Or our actions. Is all coming out from what. From what is within us.

From our hearts. And so what the individual sees. As a promising road ahead. Eventually is revealed. For what it truly is. Bondage and destruction.

With Cain. The bondage that he. Was experiencing. So let's think of addictions. As a line of progression. Or a spectrum. And we're going to get into this.

More specifically next week. As we begin to look at. The descent. That takes place. Or the progression. That takes place. From beginning point. To the end point.

But let me introduce it. At least this week. And as I did some reading. There are different ways. Different terms. That people use. In describing this. Spectrum.

[33 : 48] This progression. That takes place. To common. Addiction language. Would use the terms. Begin to be a user. Then an abuser. And then you're at the point.

Of dependence. Another example. Is from Craig Nathan's book. The Addictive Personality. I don't believe this man. Is a believer. The book is written. From a Christian perspective.

But just ordered it. So that I can read. A little bit more. It seems to be. One of the popular books. On dealing with addiction. And learning about it. But he uses the terms.

Internal change. That takes place. Well we can understand that. Certainly. The lifestyle change. The lifestyle. Changes that take place.

As a result. Of the internal. And then the breakdown. Of life. And then Ed Welch's book. Addiction's banquet. In the grave. He would describe it. With a biblical terminology.

[34 : 41] Which is what we want to be comfortable doing. We believe God's word. Has answers. For the struggles of life. We need to be understanding. And using biblical terminology.

So that people begin seeing. That God's word. Is certainly relative. To what I'm talking about. In the solutions. But also in the descriptions.

Of how I got here. He uses the terminology. Sin, slavery, and tragedy. So when an individual. Chooses a path. He or she places himself.

Or herself. On the spectrum. That eventually leads. To that which is destructive. Let me give you an example here. Where God speaks to this.

And shows us in his word. An example of. We'll use the example. Of sexual desires. Inordinate sexual desires. Because we're. We're expanding beyond. Alcohol and drugs.

[35 : 36] And understanding. And there's all kinds of things. That people. Can become enslaved to. So this would be. One of the other ones. Inordinate sexual desires. And I would define that.

As pursuing the fulfillment. Of sexual desires. In ways contrary. To God's design. And we see that. Proverbs 7. 6 through 27. And I don't have time. To read all these verses.

But if you want to turn there. I'll refer to some of those verses. But we have two individuals here. On different ends of the spectrum. That I'm talking about here.

We have a young man. Who has sexual desires. And looking for a way. To fulfill those desires. In a way contrary to God's design. Here's the young man.

A simple young man. Who we find him. Going out for a walk. Very interestingly. Walking in an area.

[36 : 30] Where there would be this woman. On the other end of the spectrum. So we have this woman. Who also has sexual desires.

And has established. A habitual pattern. Of pursuing sexual fulfillment. Contrary to God's design. Both are living out. Of a nature.

That has been affected by sin. While there were outside factors. That may have had influence. On their choices they made. That which determined.

Their final choice. Came from their own sinful nature. And we understand. That there are outside influences. That come to bear. In a person's life.

Who eventually becomes enslaved. Through addiction. But what we're saying. Is that those outside influences. Are not determinative. Determinative. To bring that person. To the place. Where they are at.

[37 : 25] They can be influences. Just as this young man. Or this woman. May have had. Difficult circumstances. Of life. That made them.

Susceptible. Or contributed. To their downfall. But they were not. Determiners. Of how they ended up. Doing what they were doing.

And so it is with addictions. There are elements. Outside of the person. That while not being determinators. Of causing the person's addiction. They can be influences.

That contribute. To the temptation. Set before the person. And what you'll generally see. And many of the things. That you would read. Would indicate. Environments. And the neighborhood.

The person was in. The family. That they grew up in. The poverty. That they're involved in. And some would list. Genetic. Connections. As well.

[38 : 22] But we're recognizing. Again. That they're. I've said it. Influences. But not determiners. So each one. This young man.

And this woman. Are on this. This spectrum. The young man. Who has already made. The turn from God. Inwardly now. Is beginning to live it. Outwardly. He puts himself. In situations.

Where his desires. Can be fulfilled. He's anticipating. Good things ahead. Disregarding God's counsel. That tells him. Of the opposite. And we see.

God's counsel. In other chapters. Of Proverbs. And I would expect. Even Cain. Would have understood. Some of this. I mean. I can't imagine. They wouldn't have told him.

What life. In the garden of Eden. And how they got. To where they were. You know. My children. Probably heard. Over and over again. Experiences. From my life. In the past.

[39 : 15] So I can't believe. And Eve. Didn't tell Cain. This is what life. Was like back then. But this is what happened. And this is how. We got to where we are. So. Those kind of examples. Are out there.

That kind of instruction. Is out there. Well. This young man. Has put himself. In a position. Where he's. He's anticipating. Good things ahead. He's made his plan.

For fulfilling. His desires. Good things. Are going to come. Well. The woman. Out of the end. Of the spectrum. Well practiced. In her pursuit. As you read.

Through that scripture. Passage. What a contract. She invests. She has become bold. In her pursuit. Of what she desires. She invests heavily.

In time. Money. Reputation. And relationships. Again. All these things. That are easily spent. By the person. Who is on the other end.

[40 : 09] Of the spectrum. To get what she wants. Really a sad picture. Of what we're seeing there. And the young man. Is headed. Toward tragedy. And she is living. In it already.

And when people. Experience this sense. Of being out of control. When it comes. To their addiction. They might wrongly. Conclude. Even at times. That. Say this woman. What started out. As sin.

Has morphed. Into a disease. That one has no control over. Again. While there are differences. As what is transpiring. In both. The enslavement. To the substance. And the consequences.

One experiences. We still need to recognize. Sin. As the fundamental problem. From start. To finish. And I'm not. Never saying that. To a person. Has become addicted.

To drugs. Or alcohol. And even some other things. Some. Sexual bondage. That there aren't. Actual. Physical. Connections. Now. That.

[41 : 04] And. In this person's life. With what he's doing. And. Physical. Physiological. Things. That need to be dealt with. They. There. They are there. And need to be dealt with. But what we're. What we're not wanting to do.

Is forget. The origin. Origin. Of. What is happening. In the person's life. Another quote. From.

Ed Welch. From Banquet in the Grave. A more precise way. To think about. The progression. Of addiction. Is that it begins. As a sin. Of the naive. And develops. Into the sin.

Of one. Who is hardened. And trapped. It starts. As a sin. With few consequences. And develops. Into a sin. With painful consequences. And Romans 6.

16. Speaks of this. Don't you know. That when you offer yourself. To someone. To obey him. As slaves. You're slaves. To the one. Whom you obey. Whether you're slaves.

[41 : 58] To sin. Which leads to death. Or to obedience. That leads to righteousness. So. Many other spots. In the scriptures. Where we can draw from.

And we will be. In the weeks to come. Where we see. That God's word. Indeed. Speaks. To what people. Are experiencing. And what they're wrestling with. To speak. Of sin.

In situations. Like this. Is not harsh. And cruel. It's simply. The truth. Of our condition. As human beings. That sets the stage.

Really. For our susceptibility. To becoming enslaved. To various addictions. And we're all. On this spectrum. Some place. And we need to recognize that.

But we also recognize. That just as God gives counsel. About sin. And its dangers. And consequences. And the tragedies. He also shows us. His plan.

[42 : 55] For forgiveness of sin. And transform lives. For both now. And throughout. All eternity. So that is the hope. That we can bring to people.

Who are in bondage. To addiction. And remember. We're not just. Trying to help people. To become. Recover addicts. We're trying to help them.

To become. Transformed people. Into a more. Perfect image. Of God. While they're still. In this world. And to enjoy. Transformed life.

To the praise. Of God's glory. Throughout all eternity. It's like that first. What shall profit a man. If he gave him. The whole world. And lose his own soul. His own soul. Well what shall.

It profit a man. If I help him. Become. A recovered addict. But he loses his soul. For eternity. So will I apologize. For bringing the scriptures. Into the discussion.

[43 : 49] On addiction. Well no way. Because what the person. Is facing. Is something far. Greater. Than addiction. To a substance. But his addiction. And his bondage.

To sin. That only Jesus. And Christ. Can deliver him from. God. And. And. Help him. Enjoy life. While he is yet. In this world. And life. Throughout all eternity.

While the other problem. Is. The group. Besides. Never have time. For really discussion. I'd love to hear. More of your thoughts. And so. Don't ever hesitate. To grab me. Shoot me an email. I'm still in this.

Learning process. As well. But love to. Carry on further discussion. With you. But let's close in prayer. Father. This morning. We give thanks.

For your grace. To us. Grace that brings us. Into your family. Frees us from the power of sin. And Father. That continues that. Operation.

[44 : 44] That function. In us. Even while we're still struggling. With some of those elements. Of sin yet. So help us. As your ambassadors. To be growing. And speaking the truth.

And love. And helping others. Who were such as we. In bondage to sin. And need to hear. Of the grace of God. And. And what you. What you can accomplish.

In our lives. Grow us in this knowledge. And love for you and others. I pray in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you.