

Fighting for our Family
Addiction—The Secret Destroyer—Part One

Introduction: Today we turn to “Secret Destroyer”—affects so many families—yet often hidden and not talked about—ADDICTION!

A. **Biblical Context**—Prodigal Son parable (alongside—lost coin/sheep)

B. **Interpretive note**

1. Parables communicate one truth—Father’s love for lost son, passion to restore
2. Still appropriate to draw implications/lessons without demanding doctrinal dogma

C. **Prodigal Son**

1. Father, 2 sons, 1 wanted to do his own thing, when he wanted, and with whom he wanted.
2. He left his father’s house, controlled by lust and greed. He could not stop, once fueled by lust. Became obsessed with life choices, many poor choices—spent all he had.
3. Spent on “riotous” (KJV) living.
 - a. “Asotos” one time in the New Testament
 - b. Also in 1st Century Greek (Josephus in Antiquities)
 - c. Means “dissolutely” drunken, lax in morals or “profligately”—reckless, loose wasted, and unthinking in the use of resources.
 - d. Describes a life out of control, quite picturesque of an addict, out of control or spinning downward.
 - e. Also pictures a sense of dissatisfaction with one’s life when out of control.
4. He lost it all and then stuck in his addiction with no money and worse, no one to turn to.
5. Not only did he waste all, the unexpected happened—finished him off (famine).
 - a. Wiped out
 - b. Desperate enough to go to the pig’s pen for food (life at rock-bottom)

(ILL) *“Addiction is the only prison where the locks are on the inside.”—Anonymous*

“Addiction begins with the hope that something ‘outside of us’ can instantly fill the emptiness inside us.”—Jean Kilbourne

6. Finally the son admitted his need, believed his father could forgive him, committed to seeking restoration—KEY to healing and recovery
7. Doubted the father's acceptance—found him to be full of grace and mercy.
8. Robe, ring, sandals, food (deal with later).

Use this context to discuss: Secret Destroyer of Addiction

I. Facing the Brutal Reality of Addiction

A. Societal Reality (ABC News)

1. Abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs cost the US 700 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity, and healthcare.
2. 21.5 million people age 12 and over were users of illicit drugs last year.
3. 7800 people a day try illicit drugs for the first time.
4. 11% of Americans received treatment for an addiction last year.

B. Beyond Drugs (Addicted.com)

1. Gambling—80% of Americans have gambled while 20% have an addiction, 12% are pathological gamblers.
2. Alcohol Dependence cost 170 billion last year
3. Sex Addiction
 - a. Estimated 8% of men are addicted
 - b. 3% of women

C. Drilling down on the numbers

1. Drugs

(NIDA)—National Institution of Drug Abuse

(NSDAH)—National Survey of Drug Abuse and Health

- a. 1-10 Americans—illicit drugs last month
- b. 1/4—18-25 year olds
- c. 8.8% of 12-17 year olds (16% of 16, 17 years old)
- d. 22% of 18-25—marijuana in the last month
- e. 7.3% of 18-25 year olds—opioids in the last month
- f. 3% of 12-17 year olds—opioids in the last month
- g. 2015—234 meth lab seizures in Delaware County (highest in the state)
- h. 9% of Americans used marijuana last month

- 6-1/2% of 12-17
- 20% of 18-25
- 7.2% of 26+

2. **Pornography** (Focus on the Family)

- a. 30,000 Americans watching porn at any given second
- b. 40 million sexually involved on the internet
- c. 8% of emails (2-1/2 million)
- d. 25% of internet searches—68 million
- e. 35% of downloads involve pornography
- f. 20% of men/13% of women admit to accessing porn at work

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:27-28 NKJV

g. 5 stages of porn addiction (Dr. Richard Cline)

- Early exposure
- Addiction (can't stop)
- Escalation (can't get enough, look everywhere)
- De-sensitization (taking more to thrill)
- Acting out

3. **Alcohol** (NSDUH)

NOTE: Does more damage to them than any other drug—society accepted

- 1. 52.2% of Americans currently drink
- 2. 23% binge drinkers in the last month

(Five or more drinks in a row in the last 2 weeks)

- 3.7% of 8th graders
- 9.8% 10th graders
- 16.6% of 12th graders

3. Alcohol Use

- 12% 12-17 year olds (6.2% heavy)
- 60% 18-25 year olds (11.3% heavy)

4. Alcoholism (Alcohol Use Disorder)

- a. Rose 49% in first decade of 2000's
- b. 1 in 8 adults or 12.7% of US population is medically an alcoholic (Washington Post)
- c. Other statistics show as little as 1 in 12 adults
- d. 88,000 deaths per year attributed to excessive alcohol use
- e. 1 death every 51 minutes when drinking and driving attributed to death
- f. Teenage alcohol use kills 47,000 a year—more than all illicit drugs
- g. 33% of 15 year olds admit to having at least 1 drink
- h. 20% have in the last month

TRUTH: Whole lot of folks in the pigpen of addiction.

“Sin will take you further than you want to go and keep you longer than you want to stay.”—Steve Farrar

II. Acknowledging the Primary Culprits of Addiction

A. Superficial Culprits

1. Poor substitution used to numb the reality of a life too difficult to face on our own due to a lack of hope. (Phil Miller)

(ILL) Edgar Allen Poe (died in 1849—alcoholic)

I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have periled life and reputation and reason. It has been the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories, from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending doom.

2. Poor choice of friends

Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character." 1 Corinthians 15:33-34 NLT

- a. So important for parents to teach and guard
- b. So important for adults to realize for yourself

He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed. Proverbs 13:20 NKJV

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. Psalms 1:1-3 NKJV

Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge. Proverbs 14:7 NKJV

NOTE: How do I win the lost? Must be careful—they will affect you in time.

B. Real culprits

1. Self-life (flesh)

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. 17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. 20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. Romans 7:15-20 NKJV

2. Satan

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you. 1 Peter 4:12 NKJV

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. Luke 22:31 NKJV

Nor give place to the devil. Ephesians 4:27 NKJV

3. Sin—(Cultural trend away from this word)

Teaching of James

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. James 1:13-17 NKJV

— God NEVER tempts us to sin (v. 13) (He is altogether good, holy, and loving and can neither tempt nor be tempted).

NOTE: He does try us but never tempts us to sin.

— Human desire is where sin starts

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. James 1:14-15 NKJV

(one...his own desires)

NOTE: “Drawn away”—luring fish from hiding place”

“Enticed”—luring by juicy worm on a hook

NOTE: We are ultimately to blame

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders. Mark 7:21 NKJV

"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV

— Destructive process

Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. James 1:15 NKJV

Desire (epithymia)—Sin (hamartia)—Death (thanatos)

— Desire (power that seduces the believer from faithful obedience—internal impulse—flesh—concerns (gives birth) a plan for sin.

Sin (How does James see sin?)

— Relational

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. James 2:8-9 NKJV

— Judicial

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. James 2:10-11 NKJV

— Theologically

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17 NKJV

Death: Physical—separated from God, prodigal in the pigpen

Conclusion:

More to say next week—just started—bring it to a close today

- A. Addiction is real, powerful, and ultimately will destroy (many forms)

NOTE: Individuals and Families

- B. Many things contribute to the life of addiction—Satan, self, sin is at heart
- C. But not God—He is our only hope

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. James 1:16-18 NKJV

NOTE: As sin gives birth to death—God give birth to new life

Two Tales

Seattle Group Believes Alcoholics Can't Change

Can alcoholics overcome their addiction? Seattle's Downtown Emergency Services Center doesn't seem to think so. It's spending \$11 million on permanent housing for homeless alcoholics.

Seattle taxpayers were fed up with spending \$50,000 per alcoholic, every year, on recovery programs, prison, and emergency room visits. The solution is 1811 Eastlake, a housing complex that accommodates 75 alcoholics. They residents are allowed to drink all they want, and they don't have to be in a recovery program—as long as they're off the streets.

Bill Hobson the program's executive director, believes most alcoholics can't change. "Once you're an alcoholic, you're always an alcoholic," he says, citing the example of an alcoholic who got drunk 10 minutes after leaving a detox facility he had been in for two months. Hobson and his group reject the transforming power of Jesus Christ and believe some people are beyond hope and healing.

Father Expresses Love to Alcoholic Son

In his book, Searching for God Knows What, Donald Miller shares a story of how he helped a friend whose alcoholism was destroying his life:

Last year, I pulled a friend out of his closet. His marriage was falling apart because of his inability to stop drinking. This man is a kind and brilliant human being, touched with many gifts from God, but addicted to alcohol, and being taken down in the fight. He was suicidal, we thought, and the kids had been sent away. We sat together on his back deck and talked for hours, deep into the night. I didn't think he was going to make it. I worried about him as I boarded my flight back to Portland, and he checked himself into rehab.

Two months later he picked me up from the same airport, having gone several weeks without a drink. As he told me the story of the beginnings of his painful recovery process, he said a single incident was giving him the strength to continue. His father had flown in to attend a recovery meeting with him, and in the meeting my friend had to confess all his issues and weaknesses. When he finished, his father stood up to address the group of addicts. He looked at his son and said, "I have never loved my son as much as I do at this moment. I love him. I want you all to know I love him." My friend said at that moment, for the first time in his life, he was able to believe God loved him, too. He believed if God, his father, and his wife all loved him, he could fight the addiction, and he believed he might make it.

(ILL) Prodigal Father

Song: Oh Come to the Altar