

# I Love My Addiction

## A Program with a Purpose – Exposing Your Value to God

1 Corinthians 16:15

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### Lesson Fifteen

#### I Love It

##### Replace the Things You Once Loved with the Things You Once Hated

*Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way* (Psalm 119:127, 128).

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, never had to say, *do as I say, not as I do!* The last verse of Psalm 16, gives the heart felt testimony of a man who chose to follow his leader, ***Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*** (Psalm 16:11). King David understood the due process to receive the blessings of God, ***For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin*** (Psalm 38:17, 18).

On the other hand, Jesus made this statement word for word two times in the book of Luke, ***I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*** (Luke 13:3, 5). Hanging out at His right hand and enjoying His pleasures are much better than the alternative—***likewise perish!*** God has no choice but to perform everything He says in the Bible. This means, if you choose not to accept Jesus as your personal Saviour you will be condemned to Hell. I have heard it said by some that they are living in Hell here on earth—not even close! The Lake of fire is eternal torment, eternal darkness and separation from the presence of God for ever and ever! It has also been said, *The party in Hell has been cancelled due to the flames.*

1. ***Thou wilt shew me the path of life*** – God will show you the right path to take. He will accomplish this task by your attendance to the House of God on a regular basis. The preaching of God’s Word will instruct you, ***For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God*** (1 Corinthians 1:18).
  - a. The old sinful man hates preaching – ***For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;***

- b. The new converted sinner loves it, for it provides the power to defeat the old addictions – ***but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.***
2. ***In thy presence is fulness of joy*** – Dwelling in the presence of God at all times is both peaceful and enjoyable. The only way for you to know this joy is to fully turn your life over to Him. Hate what you once loved and love what you once hated.
3. ***At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*** – Resting in the middle of God’s will for your life will cause you to actually enjoy life again! Fall in love with yourself and your God!

Repentance is one element that is seldom preached in line with salvation as well as recovery. The thought process of leaving the old destructive habits long enough to regain integrity, repair legal status or a relationship between the opposite sex, will become the formula for disaster! Many people will change their ways in order to avoid punishment. Noah Webster calls this action, *Legal Repentance*:

*In theology, the pain, regret or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, because it exposes him to punishment. This sorrow proceeding merely from the fear of punishment, is called legal repentance as being excited by the terrors of legal penalties, and it may exist without an amendment of life. (Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)*

As you can see by definition, the results of this type of repentance will not change your life or your destructive habits. It may give you temporary relief from your troubles, but even if you are successful on the earth, your lack of repentance toward God will eternally condemn you. ***For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*** (Matthew 16:26)? There is nothing on this globe that is worth eternal suffering—not a relationship or a bank account is worthy!

***When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*** (Acts 11:18). According to Noah Webster, there is another type of repentance besides *legal repentance*; it is known as, *evangelical repentance*:

*Real penitence; sorrow or deep contrition for sin, as an offense and dishonor to God, a violation of his holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is called evangelical repentance and is accompanied and*

*followed by amendment of life. Repentance is a change of mind, or a conversion from sin to God. (Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary)*

As Acts 11:18 states, *evangelical repentance* produces life, ...***Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*** (Acts 18:11). Does this mean that you will never sin again after your conversion—absolutely not! The fight between the old man and the new man will continue to rage in your life until we see Jesus. The strongest of the two will prevail in your character. If you exercise the old man and his ways, you will not reach the full level of success over your addictions; but when you exercise the new man, by choosing to forsake the old ways and replace them with the new ways, success is inevitable, ***Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass*** (Psalm 37:5).

Charles Spurgeon, the great preacher of the 1800's, made this observation concerning repentance:

*Repentance is a discovery of the evil of sin, a mourning that we have committed it, a resolution to forsake it. It is, in fact, a change of mind of a very deep and practical character, which makes the man love what once he hated, and hate what once he loved.*

In order to finish your life on this earth, without going back to the old destructive ways that led you here, you must learn to hate what you were and the sin you once loved, with every ounce of your strength! When you hate something that bad, there is very little chance it will ever regain control over your life. On the other hand, when you learn to love the things you once hated, those elements will become your source of strength as well as your enjoyment leading you to a life of peace, joy, happiness! This attitude will make you a productive soldier in the Army of God! You are valuable to God! Jesus gave this instruction in Matthew's Gospel, ***And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment*** (Mark 12:30).

1. To love the Lord thy God with all your heart is to be in love with Him. This will cause you to have a desire to be where He is every waking moment.
2. To love the Lord thy God with all your soul is to allow Him access to every area of your life. Your soul consists of your emotions, will and intellect.
3. To love the Lord thy God with all your mind is to yield your thoughts towards His thoughts.

4. To love the Lord thy God with all your strength is to fight to the end to protect your testimony and propagate the Gospel message to the lost!

One way to remind yourself of the dangers of your former ways is to make a list of everything your addictions have cost you. **Be detailed in your list.** As you begin to put on paper each of these losses, you will lose the taste for the old ways. Do not dwell there long, it can cause great depression, but if you are even considering a visit to an old friend or an old resident where sin abounds, pull out the list and see if it is worth it! One of the biggest reasons why people fall back into their destructive ways is the fact that all they remember is the fun and enjoyment the substance provided—they forget the consequences! This is truly one of the greatest tricks the devil will use to do his best to reclaim one of his former soldiers!

The second way to combat the devil in these temptations is to make a list of all the blessings you have received since you have decided to follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd! **Be detailed in this list also!** The comparison between the two lists is a no-brainer. Call unto God for strength and call an accountability partner, a fellow Christian and sing, *What Can Wash Away My Sin, Nothing but the Blood of Jesus!*

## **The Church is a Hospital for the Hurting**

Most people do not like to be told what to do. This is why they are against church and the Bible. Unlike popular thinking, the exact opposite is true of both the church and the Bible. The Bible was given to mankind for their success and prosperity; the church is a safe place to learn and worship the Master. The Bible was not designed to be a book of rules and regulations to keep you from having fun, nor is the church a place your grandma makes you go so she can show you off to her church friends! The Bible is God's love letter to His children and the church is His house; the place where He longs for your presence and hears your prayers, ***Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer:*** (Luke 19:46).

There is one essential element involved in convincing mankind of their need to repent. Noah Webster states it well, *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from conviction that it has offended God* (Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary).

***Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*** (2 Corinthians 7:9, 10)

1. The sorrow you should have for your sin is not the fact you got caught, but it should cause deep anguish that your sin that caused Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to suffer and die on the cross, ***Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry***
2. This sorrow produces a desire for change, ***but that ye sorrowed to repentance***
3. This sorrow grants eternal salvation, ***For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation***
4. The sorrow that comes from the consequences of your sin will not produce anything that will remain for all eternity, ***but the sorrow of the world worketh death.***

Romans 10:10 also tells us that the belief we have in the LORD Jesus for Salvation will cause us to desire righteousness, ***For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*** (Romans 10:10). The word ***unto*** means that your belief will cause you to desire righteousness. The good news is the fact that we are robed in the righteousness of Christ from the point of our conversion! Our righteousness will never be enough to satisfy our old sinful ways, ***But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...*** (Isaiah 64:6).

Repentance has three distinguishing elements:

1. A sorrow for your sin, ***For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation*** (2 Corinthians 7:10).
2. A desire to forsake your ways, ***Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom*** (Proverbs 18:1).
3. Be willing to confess and forsake, ***He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy*** (Proverbs 28:13).
4. Believing that Jesus Christ is the only One who can provide your salvation, ***Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*** (Acts 20:21).

## **The Bible is the Proven Source of an Addiction Free Life**

The book of Psalms 119 is dedicated to the Word of God. There are only two verses that do not speak about the testimonies of God, the statutes of God or the law of God (Psalm 119:122, 132).

It would be a good practice to read Psalm 119 often! There are a few things noted in this passage that we once loved that need to go our hate list.

1. Our Psalmist made a conscience decision to hate sin and fall in love with the Word of God, ***Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way*** (Psalm 119:128).
2. Our Psalmist loved God's commandments more than his gold, ***Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold*** (Psalm 119:127).
3. His new habits consisted of reading and thinking on God's ways, ***And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes*** (Psalm 119:47, 48).

The Psalmist, believed to be King David, delighted himself with God's Word over and above all things. This did not make him a perfect man, he was a man indeed, a man subject to like temptations and fell prey to some! What made David a man after God's own heart was not his righteousness but his sorrow for his failure, His love for the Saviour and the Word of God!

In the beginning of this great Psalm, the formula for success was nicely formatted, ***Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*** (Psalm 119:9-11).

1. The desire to be converted from the wicked ways that destroys a person's life can only be found in accepting God's Word as truth and making Jesus Christ your new Master and Shepherd, ***by taking heed thereto according to thy word.***
2. It was not a half-hearted commitment to get him off the hook or to get his wife back, it was an **ALL IN DECISION**, ***With my whole heart have I sought thee:***
3. His prayer expressed his need for help from the Master for his recovery, ***O let me not wander from thy commandments.***
4. He recognized the answer to cleansing his ways was right before his eyes, ***Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.***

- a. This is not just the act of memorizing Scripture as part of the requirements to complete the program, if so, the Bible would have said, thy word have I hid in my mind!
- b. It is a heart issue! When you hate what you once loved, because God's Word tells you too, it will be easy to love what God loves just because He loves it!

This entire program is based on two principles. First, changing your master from self to the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, the Saviour of all who believe. Secondly, realizing that God needs you to tell others about Christ—you are valuable! When your ways are cleansed by His Word, His desires will become your desires, ***For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost*** (Luke 19:10). It is a matter of the heart who and what you will become after salvation! To be like Christ is to seek the lost and tell them how to be saved, ***For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved*** (John 3:17).

We are instructed by the Scripture to learn from God's Word and serve Him with all of our hearts. When you want God to work in your life, HE WILL! ***And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever*** (1 Chronicles 28:9).

Our Psalmist also hates when a wicked thought came to his mind. He would search the Scripture daily and he used memorization of them to combat the demonic attacks of his mind, ***I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love*** (Psalm 119:113).

The one area that must be turned over to our new Master is our thought life. It is absolutely essential that your old sinful ways do not entertain your thought life. You will become what you spend your time thinking about. Your thought life can either be the devil's playground or the Master's platform to use you to for His glory and the good of the sinner. Satan cannot possess a Christian but he can influence his thoughts. We see an example of this in the life of an early believer and his wife:

***But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it***

***not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.*** (Acts 5:1-5)

The early believers were willingly selling their goods, donating them to the church and allowing God to take care of them. Although this was not a requirement to become a member; many people were joining in this way of life. This young couple wanted the prestige of giving the land to the LORD while keeping back a part of the money for themselves:

1. Satan influenced them with half-truth; a half-truth is a whole lie.
2. After the thought entered into Ananias's mind, he shared it with his wife.
3. Then, they devised a plan to make them look good in the eyes of Peter and the church while enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. The sad truth is, they were not commanded to give it all; it was totally up to them.
4. God exposed their scheme to display His power to the early church—this power exists today as well!
5. There was no time to change their minds, no time to repent; once their sin was exposed, their execution was pronounced in the same breath!
6. They both paid for their deceptions – ***Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out*** (Acts 5:9).

The Apostle Paul give us these instructions, by the inspiration of God, on what to do when the devil attacks our minds with wicked thoughts. It is not, if he will launch an attack, but when! The devil cannot have the soul of a converted sinner, but he can have their testimony which will silence their ability to tells others about Jesus. Do not let old slew foot win! Take full control of your thought life by employing the Holy Ghost to help!

***For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to***



***the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*** (2 Corinthians 10:4-6)

1. Our battles are not in the flesh, but they are spiritual battles, ***For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.*** The Apostle Paul also gives us this truth in the book of Ephesians, ***For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*** (Ephesians 6:12).
2. Our armory is not filled with weapons that we have come up with! The LORD is well capable of defeating the devil, ***(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*** A stronghold is anything that has control over you.
3. Get rid of those wicked thoughts by replacing them with memorized Scripture that you have chosen to be your rule and practice of faith, ***Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,***
  - a. Quote your Scriptures outload, let the devil know there is nothing higher than the knowledge of God!
  - b. Then sing, *What Can Wash Away My Sin, Nothing but the Blood of Jesus!* The devil hates the Blood!
  - c. The demonic forces, that are doing their best to lure you back through your thoughts, will recognize defeat when they see it!
4. You must become totally obedient to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and assume the office of the sheriff of your thoughts, ***and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*** Cuff and stuff the old thoughts and think on the marvelous, wonderful love of Jesus!

***Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*** (Philippians 4:8, 9)

King Solomon also gives us a practical way of changing our thought life, ***Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established*** (Proverbs 16:3). Do not just use God, the Bible and church for selfish purposes; allow the LORD to use you in His work! No part in the house of God is too big or too small. Find something you can do to help the church and watch how your thought life will begin to change!

***Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*** (Isaiah 55:6-9)

The last eight verses of Psalm 119, is a prayer to the LORD from the Psalmist. When you choose to love what God loves and hate what He hates, this too will become, not only your prayer, but your only hope for survival in this crazy wicked world!

***Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word. Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word. My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.*** (Psalm 119:169-176)

We must learn to hate the old ways that have dominated our heart, mind and life; and begin to love what we once thought was a strange way of living. Learning to hate what we once loved and love what we once hated, will grant freedom and victory over your addictions! Remove the things you once loved and replace them with the things you once hated!

1. What statement did Jesus make, word for word, two times in the book of Luke?
2. How will God show you the right path to take?
3. What will being in the middle of God's will cause?

4. What does *evangelical repentance* produce?
5. Write out Charles Spurgeon's quote concerning repentance.
6. What is the second way to combat the devil and his temptations?
7. Why are many people against church and the Bible?
8. What does Godly sorrow produce?
9. What are the three-distinguishing element of repentance?
10. What will grant freedom and victory over your addictions?

(Answers to these questions are all located within the pages of this lesson)

Regardless of what you have been told or even what you may think, God loves you enough to make you free from your destructive addictions and restore your life to the purpose in which He created you—***Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*** (Revelation 4:11). By changing your shepherd from self to Jesus, the ***Good Shepherd***, you will begin to bring God the pleasure you were created for. God wants to use you to tell others how to receive the same freedom you now have and introduce lost souls to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. ***Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*** (James 5: 20).

God the Father wants His children to be successful and prosperous, ***Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long*** (Psalm 35:27, 28). As you continue to trust in your new Shepherd, Jesus, He will make you prosperous so you can cheerfully, without being ashamed, tell others about His great love—you are valuable in His eyes! ***Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee*** (Psalm 51:12, 13).

Seek Knowledge

Apply the new-found Knowledge and Wisdom to your life

Then, teach others the secret to your success!

***Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*** (Matthew 5:19).

Memory Verse:

***The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all of his thoughts*** (Psalm 10:4)

Suggested reading:

- A chapter of Proverbs each day according to the day of the month
- Five chapters of the book of Psalms each day
- Ephesians Chapter 6

Model prayer to help you remove the things you once loved and replace them with things you once hated:

Dear Heavenly Father, Please, help me to overcome the wicked thoughts that bombard my mind. Help me to think on things that bring You honor and glory! Teach me to love Your Word and hate the ways of the world. Thank You for giving Your life for my sin. I love You! In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen.

**Be sure to pass out at least five Gospel tracts this week and invite at least one person to come to class with you next week. Use your past to build your future!**