

I Love My Addiction

A Program with a Purpose – Exposing Your Value to God

1 Corinthians 16:15

Lesson Three Making the Move

Remove Man's Philosophy and Replace it With the Living Word of God

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, {to know} that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing {charging to their account} their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” {brought back in favor with God}. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)
(Explanations added)

The only way to successfully overcome your addiction is first to recognize your need for help, secondly, to have the desire for change, then make a move from gratifying the old master, self, and begin serving the new Master, Jesus; **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”** (Galatians 2:20).

Many people try to live a double life. They pick and choose what portion of the Bible they want to apply and what part they wish to deny. **“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”** (Matthew 6:24). The Word of God clearly proclaims the results of this double life will produce:

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:5-8)

The first sin recorded in the Bible was not lying, cheating, or stealing; Adam and Eve chose to live independently from God and His commandments. They wanted to be free to make their own choices. Anything with two heads is a monster!

God has gifted each person with free will. When a person willingly surrenders the leadership of his ways to the leading of the Good Shepherd, they can expect all the promises outlined in God's Word. Do not blame God for your trials when you try to hold on to what you may refer to as little sin; **"For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord"** (James 1:7). King David has the answer, **"Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart"** (Psalm 26:2). David asked God to examine him so he could make any necessary changes that would keep him on the LORD'S side.

"Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Always keep in mind that to be **"in Christ"** means to be born again; converted from a sinner to a saint. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified {justified – just as if you have never sinned} by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him"** (Romans 5:8, 9) (emphasis added). The Apostle Paul stated, **"saved from wrath"** which means the judgment of God.

1. To be **"saved from the wrath"** of God does not mean that once you become a born again, Bible-believing Christian, all of your problems will fade away into a life of ease.
2. To **"be saved from wrath"** simply means that you will never have to endure the eternal punishment for your sins in the Lake of Fire.
3. You will live with the consequence of your past life here on the earth, but with Christ, the Hope of Glory, you can defeat the devil and enjoy a life of freedom from your destructive addiction while generating fruit with your new productive habits!

When your addiction to the ministry becomes evident, you will gain the desire, ability, and power to instruct others about Jesus and how they, like you, can be free from destructive addictions; **"To open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me"** (Acts 26:18). Your place of residence holds no restrictions to this activity. Whether you are behind bars or in the comforts of your own home, you can be a witness for the Good Shepherd! When you diligently seek after your newfound knowledge and

wisdom and apply each truth to your life, you will have the power to teach others the secret to your success!

Religion offers no hope of complete forgiveness from God. Religions have their list of good works you must do, but they never leave you with the peace and satisfaction of eternal life. Religion is the doorway to doom, but the Good Shepherd will lead you to freedom and to eternal life! **“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”** (Romans 10:3). Jesus gave us a very clear outline of how to become a child of God, have your past, present and future sins forgiven and assured of an eternal home in Heaven:

“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:8-13)

1. Accept the Bible as the only source of spiritual information concerning salvation – **“The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;”**
2. Believe the Gospel – the virgin birth, sinless life, death on the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh – **“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”**
3. Believe the Gospel with a desire to change your life from your old sinful ways and adopt the righteous behaviors given in His Word – **“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness”** – the righteousness of Christ!
4. Call on God through prayer and ask Him to come into your heart and life to forgive you of your sin and help you live the remainder of your life pleasing Him – **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”**

The very moment you call on Jesus through prayer, He will save your soul by coming into your heart and applying His sacrificial blood to cover your sins: **“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him”** (Romans 5:8, 9). Your decision to follow Christ robes you in the righteousness of Jesus, allowing you access to the presence of God; **“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”** (Philippians 3:9).

Trying to overcome a destructive addiction without the Spirit of God living inside of you is like trying to move into a new house that does not have your name on the deed! **“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”** (Titus 3:5). One preacher said it this way, *“I did not quit drinking, I just change spouts to the one where the glory runs out!”*

You must always keep in mind that you have an enemy, **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”** (1 Peter 5:8). There are many names given to the devil in the Bible. One of his names is in Matthew 4:3; **“the tempter.”** Jesus, the Creator of the universe, Author of the Bible, and Saviour of the world, was also tempted by the devil. It is possible that the devil actually thought he could get Jesus to sin! **“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”** (Hebrews 4:15).

By quoting Scripture, Jesus overcame all temptations, lived a perfect life on the earth, died for the sin of the world, and rose from the dead, so we could have His righteousness cover our sins! The last thing the devil wants is another person who has defeated him with the power and presence of Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd! Let’s ruin his day as Jesus did!

Jesus came into the world as a man to live a perfect, sinless life so He could die for you, me, and every person in the world. It was impossible for Jesus to have sinned; **“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death”** (James 1:14, 15). There was no seed of lust in Jesus that could have produced sin. Jesus masterfully defeated Satan’s temptations with the Word of God!

Someone said that if you tell a lie long enough, loud enough, and often enough, people will believe it. The truth is, your addiction is no match for the healing power of Jesus! **“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us,**

that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11).

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEFEAT TEMPTATION IS KNOWING AND QUOTING SCRIPTURE!

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

The God-man, Christ Jesus, suffered temptations just like you and I have and will until the day we die. Even though there was no possible way for Jesus to sin, the devil still tried:

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:12-15).

It has always been and will always be the devil that will tempt you with evil. As the Scripture teaches, there was no lust found in the God-man Christ Jesus! No lust means no sin! Jesus allowed the devil to think he was tempting Him to give us the perfect example of how we can conquer all temptations by using the Scripture as our weapon against warfare. **“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matthew 4:1).**

1. First, notice who did the tempting; **“of the devil”**
2. Secondly, notice Who allowed the temptation; **“by the Spirit”**
3. Then, Notice Who it was that led Jesus into the valley of temptation; **“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit”**

“And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” (Matthew 4:2). Observe that the devil waited until Jesus was at one of His physically weakest moments before he attacked Him; the tempter, the old devil, fights dirty:

“And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:3, 4).

Jesus defeated Satan’s first attempt to conquer the world for eternity by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3: **“...that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”**

“Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Matthew 4:5, 6).

Once again, Christ Jesus used Scripture to combat the devil's tactics; **“Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matthew 4:7).** Jesus was quoting Moses, **“Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massa” (Deuteronomy 6:16).** Jesus used this temptation to remind the devil that God was his God too; **“...the LORD your God...”** That must have burned the devil to hear God the Son remind him that he was a created being!

His final temptation was going for the heart. Most men are more concerned about their possessions than they are about their eternal destination:

“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me” (Matthew 4:8, 9).

One last try by the devil was stopped cold with the Word of God, **“Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10).** This was, once again, a direct quote from the Old Testament, **“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:” (Exodus 34:14).**

Complete victory by Jesus was the final result of this conflict. What happens after this series of temptations is what will get you through the devil’s next invitation for a dip in your old cesspool of sin; **“Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him”**

(Matthew 4:11). Jesus defeated the devil in the valley of temptation by quoting Scripture! Notice the series of events that followed His victory:

1. The devil departed
2. The angels appeared
3. Physical help was administered

What took place after Jesus conquered Satan in the valley of temptation produces our hope for victory in the highest degree when the dreaded moment of enticement comes our way; **“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about”** (Luke 4:14). Carefully notice that Jesus returned from His victory in the valley of temptation in the **“power of the Spirit.”** When you choose to change masters, His power fueled by your faith will equip you with the strength needed to achieve the same victory each time temptation knocks on your door! Then, your testimony of the newfound freedom in the Good Shepherd will cause the fame of Christ to spread throughout the land. Your old friends will wonder what happened to you, and you will have many opportunities to tell them about the Saviour. **It’s true; you are valuable in the eyes of the Almighty God in Heaven!** Jesus, our Good Shepherd, leads you to do it His way:

1. Run the devil off with Scripture
2. The angels will help you too
3. You will continually possess the power of the Holy Spirit to conquer your old ways!

Here is the good news; **“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”** (1 Corinthians 10:13). This one verse states the truth that no matter how intense the temptation to continue in your destructive addictions, the Good Shepherd will be right there to lead you safely to the green pasture of freedom. When you change masters from self to the Saviour, the same power that assisted Jesus is always readily available to help you too: **“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life”** (1 John 5:20).

Once you experience the newfound freedom in Christ, you must maintain it daily, or it can become a thing of the past. The devil lurks in the backdrops waiting for weak moments to send temptations your way. However, keep your weapons ready by reading your Bible every day, praying regularly, and doing your best to live a life pleasing to God. Finding, joining, and becoming active in a good, Bible-preaching, Bible-believing church is also vitally important. The pastor and church members will come alongside you to help you when you are down, teach you when you are ready, and worship with you when you desire.

Psalms 19, a Psalm of David, gives us great insight into the power of the Scriptures:

1. **“The law of the LORD is perfect** {flawless, without errors}, **converting the soul:** {His Word will convert the vilest sinner into a saint} **the testimony of the LORD is sure** {steadfast and unmovable}, **making wise the simple** {His Word will turn the simple-minded into an intelligent thinker}” (Psalm 19:7) (explanations added).
2. **“The statutes of the LORD are right** {totally accurate}, **rejoicing the heart** {gives total satisfaction}; **the commandment of the LORD is pure** {unadulterated and uncorrupted}, **enlightening the eyes** {opens the ability to understand}” (Psalm 19:8) (explanations added).
3. **“The fear of the LORD** {the constant awareness of His presence} **is clean** {spotless and unsoiled}, **enduring for ever** {always has been and always will be}; **the judgments** {decisions and verdicts} **of the LORD are true and righteous** {blameless and unspotted} **altogether**” (Psalm 19:9) (explanations added).
4. **“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold** {better than all the money in the world}; **sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb** {spiritual food that satisfies and answers all life’s questions}” (Psalm 19:10) (explanations added).
5. **“Moreover by them is thy servant warned** {cautioned and advised}; **and in keeping of them there is great reward** {peace that passes all understanding}” (Psalm 19:11) (explanations added).
6. **“Who can understand his errors** {Scripture will reveal what is right and what is wrong in the eyes of God}? **cleanse thou me from secret faults** {own up to your sin and ask for God’s help}” (Psalm 19:12) (explanations added).

7. **“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous {willful and bold} sins; let them not have dominion {control over your life} over me {a cry for help}: then shall I be upright {honest and respectable}, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression {free from destructive additions}”** (Psalm 19:13) (explanations added).
8. **“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart {thoughts and speech}, be acceptable in thy sight {something that could be said if He was standing right beside you, by the way, HE IS!}, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer {David gave glory to God and His Word for his uprightness, his ability to stay clean, and the redemption of his soul}”** (Psalm 19:14) (explanations added).

The Bible not only has the answers to all your questions, but it is also the answer! If you make a conscious decision to allow God to become your Shepherd in all life’s choices, you too can enjoy the freedom He designed for His children. There is an old song that says:

“This blessed old book that I hold in my hand, it’s true from beginning to end. It’s the Solid foundation where I firmly stand, sin kept me from it now it keeps me from sin!”

This lesson was designed to help you to see the need to change from serving yourself to serving the Good Shepherd! Recognizing and accepting this change of command is accomplished by removing man’s philosophy and replacing it with the Living Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. What is the first thing you must do to overcome your addiction?
2. What does it mean to be born again?
3. Who else besides you and I have suffered temptation?
4. What stopped the devil cold in his last try to tempt Jesus?
5. How did Jesus defeat the devil in the valley of temptation?
6. How did Jesus return after His temptation in the valley?
7. When you choose to change masters, what fuels His power to equip you with the strength needed to achieve the same victory each time temptation knocks on your door?

8. No matter how strong the temptation to continue in your old ways is, Who will be there to safely lead you to the green pasture of freedom?
9. Who will come alongside you and help you when you are down?
10. What should you remove, and what should you replace it with?

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

Regardless of what some may say 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 for 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 yourself to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, you will begin to bring God the pleasure He desires. In addition, God wants to use you to tell others how to receive the same freedom you now enjoy by introducing them 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 Jesus, your new Shepherd, He will make you prosperous. Your freedom in Christ will cause you to 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 Newfound 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:

“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Suggested Reading:

- A chapter of Proverbs each day according to the day of the month
- Eternity, A Long Time to be Wrong

Model Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me! I know that I will be tempted again today. Without your help, these temptations are hard to overcome. Please remind me of the Scriptures I have studied and allow me to use them to fight off the devil! I want to live a life that You are pleased with and tell others about the saving Grace that Jesus offers! Help me to change my master from self to You, the Saviour! 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 class with you next week. Use your past to build your future!