*New Life for Addicts*

Addictions are banquets in the grave. They are a love affair with death and destruction. But deliverance is possible. You may gain life and salvation if you truly turn to Christ.

The Religion of Substance Abuse

First, understand that you do not have a drug problem, *per se*. What you really have is a religious problem.

The god of your religion

Your addiction is a form of idolatry. The Bible says that we are either slaves to God or to other things. A slave of God will serve the Lord and have Him as the supreme object of his delight. An idolater will serve some other object (such as drugs, drink, sex, etc.) and will find his primary delight in it.

This is the nature of addiction. The drink or drug has become your master—your god. You feel cannot live without it. You crave it and throw your money at it. You likely give it an absurd amount of attention too.

But above all, you can’t bring yourself to stop. You’ve tried to stop, but you can’t. You are completely powerless to its dominion.

In sum, you worship it and it rules you like a god. The substance so controls you and you are in bondage to it.

The lifestyle of your religion

Continue thinking about the religious nature of substance abuse. What are traits common to all religions?

*For one, they have fellowship times with other “believers.”* Christians commune with other Christians. Muslims do the same with other adherents to Islam. Drug addicts follow suit. You probably have other users with whom you hang out. Whether you like them or not, you gravitate to them and spend time “worshipping” (i.e. drinking, shooting up, smoking) together.

*Religious people also practice their religion on their own.* That is to say, they do it while they are by themselves. A Christian will not only go to church and worship with his friends, he will also worship at home by reading his Bible and enjoying time with his God through personal prayer.

Addicts replicate this religious practice. Sure, you might party with a group of buddies during the week, but you also get your high while you are on your own. You spend personal time with your bottle, needle, or pipe. You might even have become what you not long ago despised: a lonely drinker.

*Finally, religious people are repentant.* That is to say, after renouncing their god they always come back to their god to worship and adore it.

Doesn’t this describe you? You’ve tried stopping. But what always happens? You always come back. You might renounce your drug for a while, but eventually you came crawling back. It’s a form of repentance.

Hopefully you are starting to understand. You don’t just have a drug problem. You have a religious problem. Your addiction is a problem of faith.

Recognizing this is important. For deliverance from your addiction comes only through faith in Christ. That is to say, you must have a full-fledged religious conversion.

Deliverance Comes through Religious Conversion

Jesus Christ promises life and salvation to anyone who looks to him in true faith. He promises to deliver you from the bondage of your sins if you turn to Him. *But deliverance means everything must change*.

Your Heart must Change

The first thing that must change is your heart. This is the reason why you’re attempts to stop have been in vain. You cannot peal yourself away because your heart clings to it. Deep down, you love your little god.

The only way to break free is if your heart changes. The good news is that God can do this. He can renew your soul and produce within you new affections and new desires.

Before going on, ask the Lord to change your heart. Ask Him to break your enslavement by giving you a new heart; one that desires Him and loves Him more than anything else.

Your God must Change

Up until now, you have been worshipping and serving a false god. This can no longer be. You must now follow Jesus Christ, and Him alone. If you want to be delivered from your sin, then you must be devoted to the Savior.

The best place to begin is by confessing that you have not loved the Lord or served Him as you should. Tell Him you are sorry for having rebelled against Him. Ask Him to help you serve Him alone from now on.

Your Lifestyle must Change

You will not be able to be delivered from your bondage if your lifestyle doesn’t change. You must break with the sinful patterns that support your addiction (e.g. friends, parties, etc). You need the support of godly friends and new influences that will help to keep you clean.

Moreover, you need to begin to worship the Lord. The more contact you have with the Lord, the more you will be drawn to Him (and away from your sins).

So find a good church and begin to attend its worship services. Associate with those people as much as you can. Get a Bible and study it. These are the primary ways God breaks the power of sin in your life.

Above all remember: the only way to break with your addiction is to be addicted to Christ.

*For more information on how to get clean, please visit…*

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Sunday 10:30 a.m.

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