

The Addicted Society I What Addiction Am I Hooked On?

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I gave a sermon on *The Spirit of Sodom* and how the ‘spirit of whoredoms’ has almost literally possessed this nation, if not the whole world. It brought up another thing that we really need to look to, and that is **this is the addicted society**. Let’s think about it. God made us so we function best when we have a regular routine. We were created to be habitual creatures. God made us this way so we could be made in His image and develop the character of Christ, learn the laws of God, and so forth.

Enter Satan and, of course, you know what happened in the Garden of Eden. Now we come down to our society today and let’s look at it this way: *Satan is more powerfully deceiving the world than ever before* because he has every tool available for him to do so. Today we are

- deceived and self-deceived
- driven by lust
- driven by addiction
- broken and shattered lives
- controlled, influenced or possessed
- ruled by Satan and his demons

More and more that’s the way the world is; reflected in the way that people live, reflected in all of the media, especially television, movies, etc. Then we have tremendous addiction problems:

- alcohol addiction
- drug addiction
- porn addiction
- sex addiction
- food addiction

and you can throw in with the foods that people are hooked on—junk foods—‘junk food junkies.’ Then you have the control of:

- television
- movies
- video games
- music
- witchcraft
- lying
- stealing

—all of those things.

Today we have a generation that has been brought up that is not responsible, does not understand the word *responsibility* except in a very few, rare cases. You can’t depend on them to come to work on time; they get there when they are ready, and they work when they feel like it. A lot of that is

reflected in their lives, and a lot of it is because they are suffering from *addiction*, and suffering from being cut off from God.

God has many witnesses and many people called into repentance and God works in the ways that are true. People, like Protestants, won’t listen to Sabbath-keepers—because after all we don’t know anything—but they will listen to one of their own. Mickey Bonner has written a book, *Brokenness, the Forgotten Factor of Prayer*

I want to focus especially on the *addiction factor*, and not only on alcohol and drugs, but addiction to pornography online. There are probably 30-40-million people *hooked* online to pornography; they are addicted to it. Some of them spend hours a day watching it—men *and* women. Women get all mad when men watch pornography, but if it weren’t for women showing off their bodies on television and on the Internet, for a fee, men wouldn’t be watching pornography. So, to condemn men without condemning women is the wrong thing to do.

From: *Brokenness, the Forgotten Factor of Prayer*, by Mickey Bonner:

pg 29—For many years we have taught spiritual warfare in fundamentalist churches throughout the country. Many learned critics from the realms of academics and traditional church leadership have accused us of teaching foolishness. In spite of these criticisms, the church at large is now faced with the explosion of witchcraft and suicides among young people in the families of pastors and other Christians.

They actually have an addiction center for recovering pastors who are addicted to pornography.

This has been brought on by rock music, the New Age movement...

Of course, false teachings within churches—a lawless grace.

...Suddenly the wise ones find themselves devoid of ability to offer doctrinal help in these areas. Now the church is being overcome and destroyed. It has lost its power to stand against what is happening. It is non-praying, leaders blinded by unbrokenness...

—because the theme of it is in brokenness that in order to return to God with such callous consciences that they have to have a ‘broken spirit and a contrite

heart' *and truly seek God that way*. What is happening? *The blind are leading the blind!*

And we said this before didn't we? Based on what? We see this in action (Matt. 13). What is interesting about Jer. 23 is that God said even the false prophets *that He didn't send*, who are teachers of Baalism: If they would cause His people to stand by His Word, He would honor that, because 'His Word is exalted above His name.' We're seeing this happen in a very profound way, much more so the difference between the Truth of what God's Word is and the reality of how the world is functioning, the gap is greater and greater because this living principle is happening:

Matthew 13:10: "And His disciples came to Him and asked, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' And He answered *and* said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given'" (vs 10-11). Now, that's something that we all need to really understand. We understand what we understand because of God, the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and because of God's Spirit *in* us. It's been given to us to know, to the world it hasn't been given to them.

Now a perfect example: One the news commentators on Fox News Channel—Juan Williams—wrote a book, *The War Over Christmas*, and because of the 'happy holiday' controversy, they've been promoting Christmas and 'merry Christmas' and putting up Christmas scenes everywhere as much as they can.

I've got here a little cartoon and it shows a woman buying a package in a store. And the clerk doesn't know how to treat the customers that come in because of the raging holiday controversy and she's handing the lady the package and she says, 'Happy holidays, unless that phrase offends you, of course, in which case: *best wishes* for the season, or *merry winter weeks*, or enjoy a *festive end-of-the-year revel*, or *felicities* on which-ever observance you may or may not be pausing to reflect upon within a familial, cultural, or sectarian milieu or whatever.' And the woman reaches out to take the package and says, 'Merry Christmas to you.'

All of those on Fox are good Catholics. It's owned by a good Catholic—Murdock—and he is a high mucky-muck in the Knights of Columbus and all of this sort of thing. They have been promoting all this Christmas. Here comes this fellow to tell you about mythology you don't know about. And Tony Snow says, 'Well tell us about Christmas.' He said, 'Well, Jesus wasn't born on this day.' What they've been saying is that Christmas is all about Christ and the birth of Christ, and even on the same program he

even had Franklin Graham on there and he's saying, 'Well it's all about the birth of Christ.' This man comes on and says, 'This has nothing to do with the birth of Christ. The 25th of December has nothing to do with when Jesus was born. It was originally pagan.' And then Tony Snow says, 'What else can you tell me?' He's trying to use up the two minutes, and then he starts on about Easter and how that's pagan and none of it's Christian. And poor old Tony Snow is sitting there swallowing, nearly choking, he can hardly wait until the two minutes is up so he can move on.

I thought it was interesting. Did God arrange that as a witness for all those gung-ho Christmas-keepers to give them a little witness that what they are upholding is a perversion of the Truth of God married to a pagan custom? Just like this man here [Mickey Bonner], he is a fundamental Protestant, so the Protestants will listen to him. Here is what he says of this generation:

pg 208—Future historians, if there be any, will look at what was once a Christian nation that died because the church lost its place by becoming involved in the business of doing things like the world did. The church became caught up in the busyness of propagation that brought to a dying planet a watered-down, compromising gospel that leavened its truth with error. Propagation became a religious foundation of sand.

Very well put.

Time has shown that many such churches are sinking; some are already gone. These churches have traded activity for prayer as well as compromise for conviction. They are now meeting the people where they are, rather than where Christ is.

Quite a statement!

Consequently, one complete generation of young people has been lost to the value systems that have been coordinated by the demonic calling evil good and good evil and having no use for God and His Christ. We now face the acceleration of the demise and disintegration of the world's first truly foundationally Christian nation. Its very beginning was a harvest of laws and rights for persons who sought God in deep brokenness and prayer. America was birthed by prayer and will die by religion as have many nations in history. America's traditions began with the Holy God and ending with mother earth or better said New Age Wicca or witchcraft. The auctioneer just like that declares at the end

of a sale: Going, *going*, **gone!** So have our traditional values been going and now are already gone. Not going, but gone are the principles of righteousness; not going, but are gone, the hope of glory.

Quite a thing— isn't it? A very accurate description of where we are in this world.

Let's see how this fits in exactly with Matthew 13:12—here is a living principle: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given..." What's the key to understanding? *A good understanding have they who keep His commandments* (Psa. 111:10).

"...and he shall have an abundance..." Why? *Because as we grow in grace and knowledge, we learn more and more!* That's why! And it all comes from God, just like Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, these are not My words but the words that the Father commanded Me to speak.' And the things that we learn, learn of the Bible, and the understanding that we have does not come because of any great intelligence on our part, but because of the mercy, love, grace and kindness of God as we yield to Him and are led by His Holy Spirit and keep His commandments.

Notice what else happens. "...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him" (v 12). That's exactly what's happening in the battle for Christmas now. What they thought they had that was Christian is being taken from them, and being exposed for what it really is.

Verse 13: "For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand."

I couldn't help thinking of that when I was watching Tony Snow's face because they had the split screen showing the man bringing the things about mythology, and then Tony Snow's face over here and he was kind of glum and swallowing and anxious for him to get over, because what he thought he had with this man was taking away from him by really bringing the truth of what it really was. I couldn't help thinking of that.

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive...' [Now why does God do this?] ...for the heart of this people has grown fat..." (vs 14-15). If you want your way, that's exactly what God is going to give you! And when that happens:

- you're going to lose understanding
- you're going to lose Truth

- you're going to lose conscience
- you will go into the depths of satanism and addiction in any one of these things that I have mentioned here
- What are you addicted to?
- What are the secret sins that you may have that nobody else really knows except you and God?

And be guaranteed, sooner or later someone else is going to know and find out because you don't live in a vacuum.

- Which category do you fit into?
- Growing in grace and knowledge and having understanding?

or

- Do you fit into the other category: having your own way?

"...and their ears are dull of hearing..." (v 15). So, if you bring up 'Well, you shouldn't do this.' *Well, now you just don't understand. You've got to be broadminded about this!*

"...and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (v 15). You mean Christ doesn't want people converted? Have you ever thought of that? That's exactly what He is saying. *He doesn't want them converted, at this time!*

Now that's almost the same thing when Adam and Eve sinned and were put out of the Garden of Eden? What did God do? He closed the way to the Tree of Life so they couldn't be converted, and set cherubims at the east end of the Garden of Eden to preserve the way of the Tree of Life. What was the sentence? '*If you want your way, you have it, but get out of here!* If you want your way, you are going to suffer in pain, agony and the sweat of your brow, because dust you are and to dust you will return. You will die because I have cut off salvation from you.'

That's pretty strong medicine, and people don't like to hear that because a lot of people think they are saved. But you don't know if you're really a Christian or not unless you compare it with the Bible. If your behavior compares with it and you know that you have repented and have been baptized and received God's Spirit, you know you are a true Christian. Otherwise, you are a *fake* Christian, or as the Greek says 'pseudo'—*false* Christian.

You can't be addicted to these things and have very much of God's Spirit, if you have any at all. This is to say nothing of we used to make a great deal out of smoking, and let's add to this gambling.

Now notice what happens if you really believe God and the Truth, Verse 16: “But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard” (vs 16-17). All of it is a *gift of grace* from God!

Let’s see why these things are happening. These things go in cycles, because human beings are given to cycles starting out fresh with zeal just like the pilgrims did when they came to America, and now, as he brought out, we are right at the botch of corruption.

2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come.” Key that to 2-Chron. 35 about Manasseh and what happened when he gave all of Judah over to worshipping other gods and witchcraft and passing the children through the fire. It became criminal; innocent blood was shed. So, that exemplifies the cycle.

Verse 2: “For men will be lovers of self... [that’s where all addiction comes] ...lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God... [there you have a perfect description of the whole world] ...having an outward appearance of Godliness, but denying the power of *true* Godliness....” (vs 2-5). Isn’t that something? *Eighty percent-plus of Americans profess a belief in God*, and as James said, ‘Don’t think that’s any big deal, folks, the demons do and tremble!’

“...But *as for you*, turn away from *all* these. For from *men such as* these come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed *gullible* women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust. *They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* Truth. Now just as Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, in the same manner also these are *brazenly* standing against the Truth; *they are* men of depraved minds, reprobate in respect to the faith” (vs 5-8). Quite a thing!

Verse 13: “But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*.” There is where we are. That’s how we have all of this, that’s how these things come about.

Let’s look at some of the addictions, especially sex addiction, which this whole nation is given over to a whole *spirit of whoredoms*. The

reason I am bringing this is because there are a good number who are in the Church, or *who have been* in the Church who are currently deceiving themselves—who are hooked on porn, hooked on drugs, hooked on alcohol, destroying their marriages, destroying their lives—and they know better, but are unwilling to listen because they are caught up in the times.

Jeremiah 6:13: “For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain; and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely.” That’s exactly what he wrote in this book: *Brokenness, the Forgotten Factor of Prayer* And in doing so, all of these things are a step-by-step-by-step process to sear the conscience, to make it almost impossible to repent. So, we’ll talk a little later about how you recover from that.

Verse 14: “They have also healed the hurt of *the daughter* of My people slightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when *there is* no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed, nor could they blush; therefore, they shall fall among those who fall. At the time *that* I punish them, they shall be cast down,’ says the LORD. Thus says the LORD, ‘Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way *is* and walk in it... [that’s talking about God’s way] ...and you shall find rest for your souls....” (vs 14-16). If there is any one thing that an addict does not have it is rest and peace of mind.

“...But they said, “We will not walk *in it*.” Also I set watchmen over you, *saying*, “Hearken to the sound of the ram’s horn.”.. [Disaster is coming!] ... But they said, “We will not hearken.” Therefore, hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it” (vs 16-19). That’s to say nothing of pornography and things like that.

Now let me read to you from the book *The Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian. What occupies your mind? Because a lot of people may not be addicted to drugs, or addicted to sex or to pornography, but a lot of people are addicted to music. If you want to know if you are addicted or not concerning music, try this: Turn off the radio. Turn off the TV. See if you can think, because most people have their minds occupied by other people’s words and other people’s ideas, which come straight from Satan the devil through music right into your life and into your mind and into your heart.

We learn how things go into your mind, because everything that you do is registered. What

did Jesus say? *In the judgment day we're going to give account for every idle word!* That's why repentance is important, that that can be wiped out and forgotten.

Things you learn:

- 1% you learn through taste
- 1.5% through touch unless you are blind, then you learn more
- 3.5% through smell
- 11% through hearing
- 83% through sight

People are glued to television. Try this with your kids: Turn off the TV, take away the cartoons and sit down and see if you can carry on a little mini-conversation with your kids.

Things we remember:

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 80% of what we say
- 90% of what we say as we do a thing.

Very interesting— isn't it? What happens when we come to church and we bring our Bibles, and we open them up and we go from Scripture to Scripture?

- you are **seeing**
- you are **hearing**
- you are **reading**
- you are **understanding**

—at the same time. That's why Sabbath services become so very important. I dare say this; none of us would survive very long without the Sabbath.

How many people who have given up the Sabbath, have really survived? *They haven't!* They have gone back *into the world, and they don't want to be bothered.* This happens because they've been programmed and we've seen it even happen within the Church. It's called a *paradigm shift*. Have you heard that before? *Yes!* 'Oh, we've got to get rid of the old paradigm.' God says go back to the old paradigm there in Jer. 6, but people don't want that.

from—*The Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian

pg. 185-186—Media Matrix: Don't think for a minute that this dynamic of being programmed by others occurs only in far off lands. It goes right here in the good old USA in your state, in your town—perhaps in your home. Of course, for most of us, particularly in America, the pressures are usually less obvious than they are for those living under horrendous "isms" like

Communism or radical Islamism. But the principles are exactly the same. Pick a behavior—say, body piercing....

or we could say tattooing

...Do you really think millions of people independently arrived at the idea that it's a great thing to bore holes in multiple parts of their bodies (and I'm not talking about earrings) and imbed metal objects there? Obviously, people do this because they see others doing it...

Remember what I just read here?

...yet somehow they still believe it's their own idea! No one likes to think he or she has a weak mind or is acting out of the suggestions of other people!"

So what do they say? *It's my choice! I want to express my freedom!*

But here is the key point about being influenced and shaped by peer pressure:

We're going to talk about that in just a little bit because the Bible talks about peer pressure.

If you are unwilling to recognize that something is wrong with your programming, with the way you think and act and feel, that means you're firmly in its grip.

In other words, you're *deceived, self-deluded*.

But if you are more self-aware—if you're introspective and sincere enough to recognize that there is something wrong with the way you are living—then you can break out the peer-pressure matrix....

How do you break out of addiction?

...God rewards honest people, those who are willing to give up the lie, no matter how painful that is, or how damaging to our pride.

But since we all seem to have this part in our nature that is somehow more inclined to believe flattering con men than prophets telling us painful truths, it's essential that our nation's culture revolve around reality.

However we have a ready-made deceived reality.

That's what true civilization is. A culture that affirms good as good and evil as evil acts as a mirror of sorts, helping each of us keep a firm grip on public and private morality.

Then he quoted Isaiah 5:20: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and

sweet for bitter!” Another four-letter acronym for that is ACLU.

Indeed, this book is about how evil is packaged and perfumed to look good—and good made to appear evil.

‘Why, you wouldn’t want to read the Bible! You must be nuts!’

Unfortunately, today’s establishment press, the primary filter through which we receive most of our information about the world, does not revolve about reality. As a matter of fact, over the past few decades no institution has been more culpable for making evil appear good and good appear evil than the media.

So, we are in the age of evil.

- What is your addiction?
- What do you need to overcome?

Let’s look at some of these things. Deut. 30 is what God sets before everyone. You cannot change this proposition. Everyone has to choose. Everyone has to know what is right and wrong; *no one is going to have an excuse!* Even Paul Harvey and Zig Zieglar made the comment concerning the Ten Commandments when people say, ‘They’re hard to understand.’ Well no, the Ten Commandments are very easy to understand, but people don’t want to understand them because it infringes upon their sins and makes them uncomfortable, and they don’t want to change. God made it simple.

In reading this I want you to think about how many Bibles there are in the world. *Billions!* Translated into how many languages? *Probably pretty close to 500 by now*, and the New Testament in over 1,800 languages, and the book of Mark in probably 2,500 languages. So, it’s not hidden, and I dare say every home must have a Bible in it somewhere. That means God made sure it was there. It’s a witness against them, *for* them and *to* them, and if they don’t read it, that’s not God’s fault.

Deuteronomy 30:11: “For this commandment which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’” (vs 11-12). Just think of the billions that men would spend if that were the case. ‘Oh we’ve got to go up and do it!’ *No!*

Verse 13: “Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it” (vs 13-14). This is

telling you not that God’s laws are in your heart and in your mouth, but the language that you speak is in your heart and in your mouth. If you read the Word of God, you can hear it and do it. That’s what it’s saying here.

Because of this, v 15: “Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.” That’s before every human being, and everyone has to choose. God wants you to *choose the right thing*. We are also going to see the answer to addiction begins right here:

Verse 16: “In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it. But if your heart turn away... [that’s exactly what both of these men in both of these books are talking about: *a national turning away*] ...so that you will not hear...” (vs 16-17).

Wouldn’t it be interesting if all of those advocates of Christmas on Fox News and elsewhere really understood about it? I wonder, since they say they want the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth. Do they really? or Do they really want the Truth the way *they* view the Truth and want to enforce upon other people?

Bill O’Reilly also had someone tell him about Christmas, that it’s pagan and saturnalia and everything, and he just kind of flipped it off. Now, if “...you will not hear...” —that’s important.

“...but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it” (17-18).

What is the leading cause of premature death today? *Drug addicts reaching the old age of between 40 and 55!* Did they prolong their days? Think about all the teenagers that died when they got in a car and had their drunken graduation parties, etc. Did they prolong their days? *No!* You can add on many more here.

To give the reality, and lot’s of times it’s good to have a reality check, whether you believe God or not. Everyone can do this, they can go outside and stand on terra firma, the earth, and they can look up and see the heavens, and every time you do, you affirm this verse whether you agree with it or not.

(go to the next track)

Now v 19 is a witness to everyone in the world, because every human being in the world is on

the earth. They know about the earth, they know about the world. They can look up and see the sky and see the heavens. So, God makes it simple.

Verse 19: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you...” If you don’t believe a man, if you don’t believe the Word of God, the heaven and the earth have already witnessed against you—it’s very existence. What did Jesus say of His words? *‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.’* You can’t run and hide! Where are you going to go? As long as you’re on the earth or in the heavens, if you’re shot out on a rocket, God is witnessing to you that He is Creator, that He has given laws, commandments, statutes, judgments, and that He has commanded you to love Him. As we’re going through this, I want you to ask:

- What occupies my mind?
- What am I addicted to?

Any one of the things we have covered here? Then we will see the solution, what to do about it.

Verse 19: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing....”

Human nature is perverse, because human nature, *the carnal mind*, is enmity against God; deceives itself. *It wants to live in a state of sin and to receive all the blessings of God.* That’s an impossibility! There is a deception in it that begins at first when you are sinning which is this: There’s ‘pleasure in sin for a season,’ and then reality hits you; the circumstances around you hit you.

I recall Dolores read an article about a man who was a cocaine addict, and he had been to many different twelve-step programs to overcome his addiction. But all of those overcoming-addiction programs do not work ***unless you choose*** to quit being addicted! He had just gotten out of the rehab center and was on his way to buy some cocaine. Reality struck him and he remembered his kids, remembered his wife. Turned his car around, went back home and *stopped everything* from that instant on *because* he made up his mind and ***chose*** to do so. That’s what God is telling us here. What we are talking about is your own personal responsibility. You are responsible for your own life.

“...set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.... [What does God want you to do? *You have to choose!*] ...Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed... [descendents] ...may live, that you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him...” (vs 19-20). That’s what God wants. Every blessing will come from God because of that; *even eternal life!*

Here is what most people don’t realize. Everyone thinks that he or she, because of

independent free choice that God has given them, that it’s ‘my choice to make and it’s my life to live.’ That is true! ***However***, you have this witness against you.

Now God says, “...for He *is* your life, and the length of your days....” (v 20). What makes you keep breathing? *God originally breathed into Adam the breath of life*—didn’t He? What makes you keep breathing? *You hardly ever think about it!* How many thousands of times a day do you breathe? *Hundreds of thousands of times a day*, and figure your whole life long. Times that by 70-years, 80-years, and even some people live up to be 120 maximum. But the only way you reach whatever age you reach is because *you breathe*. God put it in you, in your system to do so, and it’s automatic, it’s involuntary. We are all breathing right now. God gave that to you. ***You live and exist because of God!***

“...for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them” (v 20).

Brethren, that’s why we’re here in good old USA, *because of the blessing of God!* Isn’t that something? Even to the wicked, God does not take away the right to breathe, they may live shorter lives because of their sins, but God hasn’t taken it away. What all of this tells us is another thing, and we can sum it up this way when we realize that Satan is ‘the god of this world’: ***You are either under the authority of God, or you’re under the authority of Satan, and a lot of people would like to choose the middle ground, but there is no middle ground.***

So, as we go through this ask yourself:
What addiction am I hooked on?

- Is it alcohol?
- Is it drugs?
- Is it pornography?
- Is it sex?
- Is it video games?
- Is it television?
- Is it music?
- Is it witchcraft?
- Is it fun and daring?
- Is it sports?
- What drives and motivates your life?

We’ll see how we can look at it. You are either under the authority of God or under the authority of Satan because he is the ‘god of this world.’ Paul wrote, ‘There are spirits and principalities at work in high places’—***which sets the agenda for Satan’s way.*** You read Rev. 12:9, he’s got the whole world deceived—right? ***The whole world!***

Now let's look at some things concerning how we think and how we act and how we behave. In what we're covering, we have to go through some basic Scriptures, but these are fundamental. This is a Scripture to learn and never, never forget:

Proverbs 14:12: **"There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death."** It seems right, natural, good, fun, exciting, thrilling, exhilarating! *Ends in death!*

Let's look at another Proverb. We're going to spend some time in the book of Proverbs because the truth is, the book of Proverbs is perhaps the most important book for anyone who has led a criminal life—been addicted to whatever addiction—to get your life straightened around, because the only way you can recover is to understand there are absolute truths: right and wrong, good and evil. The book of Proverbs tells you in simple, easy-to-understand terms.

Let's come to Proverbs 23:7, a very interesting verse. "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he..."

- What's in your heart?
- What occupies your mind?
- What are you addicted to?
- Who is your god?
- Where are you going?
- How are you going to end up?

Especially if you are in the Church and baptized, and you have any of these problems, I tell you *in the name of Jesus Christ*, you are on dangerous ground. We will cover on how you can get out of it, because *God is there to help*. But *God is not going to help you unless you repent* and understand the weaknesses that are involved.

Whatever your addiction is, whatever your secret sins are, *God knows* and He wants you to get rid of them, but *you have to choose to get rid of them! You have to choose to want God's way!* This is easy to understand, this is not complicated. God wants us to live *His way* and wants us to avoid the evil, He tells us how.

Proverbs 4:14: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil *men*." That's the way of transgressing the laws of God, the commandments of God.

Verse 15: "Avoid it... [don't dabble in it] ...do not go in it... [in other words, don't go that way] ... turn from it, and pass on!" All the marketers of evil, the purveyors of evil that want to ensnare you in satanic culture and drugs and addiction and sex and pornography and gambling and all the other addictions that I have mentioned.

Verse 16: "For they do not sleep except when they have done mischief..." That's exactly what David Kupelian brings out in the book *The Marketing of Evil*.

- they plan it
- they plan the response
- they plan the television
- they plan the movies

All of these things are scripted for a response from you! Every ad you see or hear is scripted for a response! Every song, every word in those songs is scripted for a response! That's why:

"...and their sleep is taken away unless they cause *some* to fall" (v 16). They would lose sleep if they started losing numbers. And I tell every teenager: ***Do not get involved in MTV.***

- Do not enter into it!
- Don't turn on the channel!
- Don't go that way!
- Avoid it!
- Pass by it!

Interesting, I was in Nob Hill the other night and I couldn't resist. Here is a mother exasperated with her teenage daughter gawking and looking at these women's magazines. When you go through the checkout counter, and I have mentioned this before, every magazine is geared to women to keep them deceived and locked into *the way of the world*:

- sin
- divorce
- promiscuity
- envy
- jealousy
- lust

I will have to give Nob Hill credit, they had at the bottom, almost could hardly see it, a picture on a man's magazine with a muscle man on the front; only time I've ever seen it.

Here is this mother, and I looked at the teenaged girl, and she was looking at these and I said, 'Hey, you need to be careful, these things are designed to make you do wrong, to keep your mind on evil.' Her mother is sitting over there nodding her head And I said, 'You would do well not to pay any attention to them.' And the mother is nodding her head—yes, yes, yes!

Now here is their agenda, v 17: "For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence." To see how many people they can ensnare in it; to see how many teenage minds they can blow and corrupt.

Do yourself a favor some time, when high school gets out, go park the car and watch all of the sad teenagers pass by hooked with their music blasting in their ears, talking on their cell phones to their friends, knowing that they are going home to a home devoid of mother and father because Satan has created a world where mother and father must work and they cannot do what they need to do to take care of the family. The kids are left to their own and swamped and deluded into all kinds of evil, beginning with sex education in the third grade, maybe even kindergarten, so what do you suppose they are going to do when they get home? *Caught! Hooked! Addicted!*

Verse 19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." They have problems, they have difficulties; they don't know what to do. They can't find any answers. Their lives are a wreck; their emotions are a wreck. They have given the most precious thing that they have in sin: their lives, their minds, their bodies. And they wonder what's wrong.

Proverbs 1:1 starts out and tells you how you can avoid this; here is the very first thing: "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel." A lot of these are David's proverbs that Solomon put out. But Solomon, as we have covered, is an example of going against everything that he was taught. So, why should we be surprised if people in the Church become like people in the world? *Solomon did, and led the way!*

Verse 2: "To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding." Of course, that's what everyone wants; *to be smart, to be intelligent, to be wise!*

Verse 3: "To receive the instruction of wisdom, righteousness, and judgment, and equity; to give prudence to the simple..." (vs 3-4). In other words, to give you the thinking capacity to understand right and wrong, good and evil, blessing and cursing.

"...knowledge and discretion to the young man [or woman]" (v 4). Let's see if you're smart or not. It doesn't matter what your age is.

Verse 5: "A wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsel." Doesn't that sound an awful lot like Matt. 13 that we read? *Yes, indeed!* What you need to understand is this: the Word of God agrees with itself over and over and over again; it doesn't contradict itself.

Verse 6: "To understand a proverb and its interpretation, the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.... [Here is how you begin life]: ...**The fear**

of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge...." (vs 6-7). What does that mean? *That is to give you a conscience and a sense of right and wrong!* It begins with the fear of the Lord.

Proverbs 9:10: "**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...**" It doesn't matter what your IQ may say on an SAT test, because many wise men are fools when it comes to understanding God's way.

"...and the knowledge of the Holy *is* understanding" (v 10). In other words, to understand the Word of God gives you understanding so you can live and cope in this world and not be drug down, and that's not in the way of a pun, but to be dragged into things because you do not have the will power to resist. You have to have the will power to resist and *the beginning of that will power is the fear of the Lord*. And everything that Satan does is to whittle away at your conscience; to drag you further, and further, and further down into the cesspool of sin to where you have no conscience at all! *Then he's got you!* Have you ever talked to a person who has no conscience? *It is difficult, indeed! Pitiful! Sorrowful!* But the only way that they can come out of it, is to begin to know right and wrong. Start at the beginning again. That's why it says here, "**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge....**"

Proverbs 1:7 "...*but* fools despise wisdom and instruction." What are you? A fool? *or* Wise? How the Proverbs make it righteousness or sin, goodness or evil, all the way through.

Verse 8: "My son, hear the instruction of your father... [this is how we know that this is from David to Solomon] ...and forsake not the law of your mother." What's the first thing that teenagers are known to do? *Reject the instruction of their parents, and rebel against them!* Isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!*

I know, and you know, and every person alive knows that when you were a teenager and you got out on your own that you did things that your mom and dad never knew about and you never told them. Hopefully, you have been able to repent of them. That's the pull of human nature. The way that you overcome the pull of human nature is to understand that God gave you fathers and mothers to teach you the right way. Today, there are very few that teach the right way, for they themselves have been compromised in the generation preceding you.

Now, here is what's going to happen. You want everything to go right in your life as a young person? *Then listen to the instruction of your father, and the law of your mother!*

Verse 9: “For they *shall be* an ornament of grace to your head and chains of honor... [of decoration and honor] ...around your neck.” That means

- it’s going to give you strength.
- it’s going to give you the ability to say, ‘no!’
- it is going to give you **the ability to *not* get involved in transgressing the laws of God**

—to get involved in drugs, or sex, or music.

Friends and Peer Pressure

Now then, let’s talk about *friends and peer pressure* because all teenagers, young people have been made to believe through the educational system through television, through movies, through everything else that they have to conform to the teenagers, and have something made special for them, because after all, ‘we’re different’! And, of course, your parents don’t know what it’s like to be a teen; never thinking that their parents were young once.

When you grow up in a family, you look at your father and mother, they’re already grown up—right? You don’t think of them as being little at one time. This is how Satan has divided it, ‘Oh don’t listen to your parents; they’re old fashioned. We have new modern things. You need this; you need that; you need the other thing. Listen to this music; watch that video program; get involved in this video game.’ And most video games are almost pure Satanism and occultism. Have your own cell phone so you can talk to your friends. Get your music and blast it into your ears—***so Satan can totally occupy your mind all the time***—and have friends that agree with you.

Verse 10: “My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.” It’s your choice! Same way if you are an adult and you’re addicted to pornography and you go online and turn it on, and you sneak around and don’t let your wife know, don’t let anyone else know until your life is already captured and nearly destroyed! Same way with women. There are 30-million women hooked on porn—online porn—and probably that many men or more. So, we are dealing with close to a third of the population of America, hooked on porn one way or the other, then comes drugs, then comes gambling, then comes all of these other things.

Verse 11: “If they say, ‘Come with us...’” Let’s form a club. That goes clear up into adult life—doesn’t it? Don’t they have secret societies? Secret clubs? *Yes!*

“...let us lie in wait for blood...” (v 11). This is gang related. Do we have problems with gangs? *Yes!*

“...we will watch secretly for the innocent without cause” (v 11). Do they have crimes in the cities based on that? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 12: “Let us swallow them up alive as the grave, and whole, as those who go down into the pit. we shall find all precious substance; we shall fill our houses *with* plunder; cast in your lot among us, and let us have one purse” (vs 12-14).

Now in the good little old wonderful town of Hollister, California, they just recently broke up a crime ring, organized by two adult women. They had teenagers that would go out and in the daytime break into homes and steal things: steal cars, drive around and watch where a car is running, let one of them out, jump in the car and drive away POOF! your car is gone! Go in the house and steal things, and then they had the audacity—they shouldn’t have done this because when they did this, they really got the people upset—to go into a house and guess what they found, nine Labrador blonde puppies worth hundreds of dollars, so they stole them. That got them! They were still nursing from their mother and they were about five to six weeks old. That’s how they got caught, peddling this. They went into the house, and they found the house full of all these stolen goods that the police in Hollister had been chasing down all of these things for months! That’s to say nothing of the other thing: There was even a ***gang shooting*** in Hollister!

But what does God say: ‘your choice.’ Peer pressure: ‘Oh, you aren’t macho if you don’t join us.’ Or like girls, and there are girl gangs and girl things, too, yes!

Verse 15: “My son, do not walk in the way with them! Keep back your foot from their path.” Don’t go with them!

Are you willing to stand alone for the Truth of God and to obey God? *or* To go along with sinners because you need friends? Are they your friends if they lead you into sin? *That’s what you need to ask!* We live in a respectable neighborhood. A respectable neighborhood today is no longer respectable. Dolores told me this morning—I didn’t hear it because I went to bed early—that there was a fist fight and a possible shooting across the street in front of our house. Good thing I was asleep. So, it’s reaching down; that’s what we read there in Jer. 6. Everyone is given over to evil! Amazing thing!

Verse 16: “For their feet run to evil and make haste to shed blood.... [that’s quoted in Rom. 3] ...Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird, but they lie in wait for their *own* blood...”

(vs 16-18). Sooner or later it's going to come back on them, after they have done evil to other people, of course.

"...they watch secretly for their *own* lives. So *are* the ways of everyone who gets gain by violence, who takes away the life of its owners" (vs 18-19). You can take and apply that to anything, and if you are involved in addiction, then you are involved in this way.

The rest of the chapter is really quite an important one because ***God has not left this world without the knowledge of basic right and wrong.*** He is not calling the world, but He has not left them without the basic knowledge of right and wrong, otherwise God could not hold them accountable for their behavior. Because 'where there is no law there is no sin,' but *there is law; therefore, there is sin!*

Verse 20: "Wisdom cries outside; she utters her voice in the streets; she cries in the chief place of gathering, in the openings of the gates; in the city she utters her words, *saying*, 'How long will you love simplicity, simple ones?....'" (vs 20-22). That means *stupid ones*. Will you love *stupidity*? In the Greek it is 'idiotes.' I don't know what it is in the Hebrew. But that's where we get the word *idiot* today. The Spanish Bible says, they are mocking what is right and thinking that nothing wrong will come upon them.

"...And will scorners delight in their scorning? And will fools hate knowledge?" (v 22).

Every time you do something wrong, you have a chance to change. You don't have to be hooked in it. Just like this cocaine addict was on his way to the man who sold it to him, the dealer, and it finally dawned on him that he better quit. So, he turned and stopped. ***Every time that evil comes along, you have a chance to turn and stop.***

Verse 23: "Turn back at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you." Everybody has a chance. If you don't, which is what this world is coming to, let me ask this:

- What are you going to do with your next chance to change and repent?
- What are you going to do the next time you want to take a drink?
- The next time you take a drug?
- The next time you go into a casino?
- The next time you go to online porn?
- The next time you go to online gambling?
- What are you going to do?
- What are you going to do the next time you want to commit adultery with your neighbor's wife or husband? W

- What are you going to do when all the kids want you to go with them?
- **What is your choice?**

When you reject God you reject choice, *you refuse Truth*, and then God says this, v 24: "Because I called, and you refused *to* hearken, I stretched out my hand, and no one paid attention; but you have despised all my counsel... [you counted it as nothing] ...and would have none of my reproof..." (vs 24-25).

You don't want any correction; you don't want anyone telling you what to do. When you reach that point, that you have

- no conscience
- no sense of right and wrong
- no sense of good and evil
- completely seared your conscience

—that you don't care for anyone but yourself and your addiction—and whatever it is that runs your life:

- whether you are young
- whether you are old
- whether you are in between

all of those things are there.

Verse 26: "I also will laugh at your calamity..." You're going to have a lot of trouble and it's coming! Happens in the way of accidents, bankruptcy, lying, cheating, stealing, sexually transmitted diseases, of which there are probably over a hundred different varieties.

"...I will mock when your fear comes; when your calamity comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when trouble and pain come upon you. [Why?] ...then they shall call upon me, but I will not answer..." (vs 26-28). That's one place you never want to get in your life, that you have disregarded God so much and have scorned everything of God so badly, that when you are in the deep pit of your troubles, ***God is not going to hear you because you won't repent!***

"...they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, they would have none of my counsel; they despised all my correction" (v 28-30). Your life is going to come upon you the way you laid it out.

Verse 31: "Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices. For the waywardness of the simple shall slay them, and the complacency of fools destroys them. But whoever hearkens to me shall dwell safely and shall be secure without fear of harm" (vs 31-33).

The Book of Proverbs *gives you the foundation where you can begin to sort out*

- right and wrong
- good and evil
- truth
- knowledge
- understanding

—and the way of God so you can get your life squared around. But *you have to choose, and you have to choose God's way.*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 13:10-17
- 2) 2 Timothy 3:1-8, 13
- 3) Jeremiah 6:13-19
- 4) Isaiah 5:20
- 5) Deuteronomy 30:11-20
- 6) Proverbs 14:12
- 7) Proverbs 23:7
- 8) Proverbs 4:14-17, 19
- 9) Proverbs 1:1-7
- 10) Proverbs 9:10
- 11) Proverbs 1: 7-33

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Jeremiah 23
- Psalm 111:10
- 2 Chronicles 35
- Revelation 12:9
- Romans 3

Also referenced:

Sermon: *Spirit of Sodom*

Books:

- *Brokenness, the Forgotten Factor of Prayer* by Mickey Bonner
- *War Over Christmas* by Juan Williams
- *Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian

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