

Addictions

- I. addiction: A formal giving over or delivery by sentence of court. Hence, a surrender, or dedication of any one to a master. The state of being (self-) addicted or given to a habit or pursuit; devotion.
- II. Scripture uses the expression “given to” which means “inclined, disposed or addiction” and implies a subordination to the power of someone or something. **ROM 1:28**.
- III. Addictions may be good or bad; thus the need for discernment.
 - A. Scripture speaks of evil addictions. **TIT 1:7; ACT 17:16; JER 6:13; ISA 47:8; ECC 8:8; PRO 23:2; 24:21**.
 - B. Scripture also speaks of good addictions. **PSA 119:112; ROM 12:13; 1CO 16:15**.
 - C. We are either under the mastery of sin or of righteousness. **ROM 6:16-18**.
- IV. As blood-bought children of God, we are called to *freedom*, not bondage. **GAL 5:1**.
 - A. “Given to” in **TIT 2:3** is *douloo* (SRN G1402) which means “to enslave (literally or figuratively): bring into (be under) bondage, X given, become (make) servant.” It is rendered “servant(s)” or “bondage” in every other occurrence.
 - B. When we are “given to” some person, pursuit or interest, we become the property of the same. We should be very discerning as to whom or what we would give ourselves.
 1. By nature, we were once “...serving divers lusts...” (**TIT 3:3**).
 2. Those who are servants to lusts have many masters.
 3. Conversion implies mastery, victory, liberty. To still be under the control of a fleshly lust after conversion demands greater faith and works. **JAM 1:22-25**.
 - C. God gave us to Christ in election. We rightfully give ourselves to Christ in service. He is our only proper Master and Controller.
 - D. Saints should by grace be controlling/ruling/mastering their relationships or desires.
 - E. Even *the spirits of the prophets were to be subject to the prophets*: they were not to have free rein in the church. **1CO 14:32**.
 - F. An inability to control an impulse or desire is a sign of addiction or obsession.
 - G. Where is the grace in the likes of those described in **2PE 2:14**?
 - H. Where is the grace in the likes of a Balaam?
 1. Balaam “...loved the wages of unrighteousness” (**2PE 2:15**). This was an ungodly love, as are many of sinners’ loves/affections.
 2. He was apparently driven to the point of obsession in his goal. He was an early study in obsessive-compulsive disorder or addiction. **2PE 2:16**.
 - a. forbid: To command (a person or persons) not to do, have, use, or indulge in (something), or not to enter (a place); to prohibit.
 - b. madness: Mental disease, insanity; now applied esp. to insanity characterized by wild excitement or extravagant delusions; mania.
 - c. Balaam’s bondage to his desire was so strong that it seized control of his ability to think rationally.
 - d. People who are fighting against God by stubbornly pursuing their own agenda while trying to be outwardly righteous open themselves up to mental instability.
- V. Temperance is a vital part of the practice of our faith. **ACT 24:24-25; 2PE 1:5-6; 1CO 9:25-27**.
 - A. temperance: The practice or habit of restraining oneself in provocation, passion, desire,

etc.; rational self-restraint.

- B. Beware of being brought under the power of even lawful things. **1CO 6:12.**
 - 1. One of Satan's greatest devices is to get us to push our liberties out of bounds. He loves to push us to overdo our liberty so it becomes sin:
 - a. Physical rest becomes laziness.
 - b. Ability to profit becomes avarice and greed.
 - c. Enjoyment of life becomes intemperance.
 - d. The delights of wine become alcoholism.
 - e. Family tranquility becomes idolatrous.
 - f. Friendships or relationships become controlling emotional dependencies.
 - g. Entertainments become the *summum bonum* of existence.
 - h. Being informed becomes an obsession for news. **ACT 17:21.**
 - 2. "Licitus perimus omnes" — *These lawful things undo us.*
- C. Scripture warns against *surfeiting*, which is "feeding to excess, sickening or disordering by overfeeding, filling or supplying to excess." See **LUK 21:34.**
 - 1. Discern between eating for strength and eating for excess. **ECC 10:17.**
 - 2. Better to eat to live than live to eat.
- D. Excesses rob men of wealth, health and peace. **PRO 23:20-21, 29-30.**

VI. Consider these steps for overcoming addictions.

- A. Don't resent the shame you feel over an undisciplined area of your life. **ZEP 3:5; JER 3:3; PRO 12:1; 2CO 7:10.**
- B. Assume responsibility for your addiction and do not shift blame. **JOB 31:33; PRO 28:13.**
 - 1. Secular recovery therapy understands the need for the addict to first admit he is addicted.
 - 2. The children of light should be at least this wise.
- C. Believe that change is possible. **PHIL 4:13; 1CO 10:13; ROM 12:2.**
- D. Do not put off dealing with the addiction problem because of hardship. **PRO 26:13-14.**
- E. Reconcile yourself to the fact that there will be a battle and endure the hardness. **2TI 2:3; 1CO 13:7.**
- F. Accept that your addiction may have created conditions from which there may be no rapid recovery or recovery at all. You may have to settle for pressing forward under handicap.
- G. Don't limit your performance to your feelings. Your life is either the command-oriented life of love or the feeling-oriented life of lust. **JOH 14:21; GEN 3:6; EPH 2:3.**
- H. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, not in yourself. **JOH 15:5; PSA 44:4-8.**
- I. Pray. **HEB 4:16; ROM 10:13.**
- J. Take in Bible doctrine. **PSA 119:45, 50; 1JO 2:14.**
- K. Seek the help of Christian friends. **GAL 6:2; HEB 12:12-13.**
- L. Replace evil addictions with good addictions. **EPH 4:22-32; 5:18.**
- M. Dare to tell God: "No more!" **JOB 34:32.**