

# Addiction Recovery and Relapse Strategies

*A Theoretical and Biblical Guide*

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# Addiction Is -

- Emotional, Physical, and Spiritual bondage
- While men call it a disease, the Bible uses the term “sin” because it begins with behaviors that are:
  - Risk taking that ignores the warnings of God, and of others who understand the problems (pastors, parents, those of are experienced)
  - Responses to temptations or cravings that are harmful in nature (not all cravings are harmful)
  - Acts of disobedience (every abuser generally has been admonished of the dangers beforehand)

# Its Not About The Choice of Substance

- There is a tendency toward a “false” argument that some forms of addiction are “safer” than others
- Alcohol and marijuana are legalized because they are “measured” or “compared” to other substances
- *But addiction is addiction – “use but don’t abuse” is not a safe way of thinking*
- The root of the problem is not the choice of substance but the choice of behaviors

# How Did You Get Here?

- Experimentation: Social use. I can take it or leave it. I have no problems.
- Situational misuse: Drugs and alcohol make me a better man in certain situations.
- Problem use: I use to cope with everyday life issues, and I am having problems.
- Dependence: I continue to use despite knowing the negative consequences, loss of control, blackouts, tolerance and withdrawal, lots of problems.

# Recovery is Reversing the Process

- Transitional: I have a problem, but I can control it.
- Stabilization: I can't control drugs/alcohol, and I need to learn how to not use.
- Early Recovery: Change playmates, playgrounds, and playthings.
- Middle Recovery: Balance.
- Late Recovery: Deal with unresolved childhood issues.
- Maintenance: Continue to nurture bio-psycho-social and spiritual growth.



# Alcohol and Drugs in Scripture

- **Proverbs 20:1 (NLT)**

<sup>1</sup> Wine produces mockers; alcohol leads to brawls. Those led astray by drink cannot be wise.

## **Isaiah 5:11 (NLT)**

<sup>11</sup> What sorrow for those who get up early in the morning looking for a drink of alcohol and spend long evenings drinking wine to make themselves flaming drunk.

# Addiction Is -

- Sin and Slavery go hand in hand / “Addiction” is simply another word referring to the inability to live free from “emotional, physical, or spiritual abuses”
- Abuse can include verbal, physical, or mental abuse that comes from the behaviors of others on us or from our own self-abuse
- Others include people, angels, (demons or spirits), or substances

# Addiction Is -

- **Romans 6:12-14 (NLT)**

<sup>12</sup> Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires.

<sup>13</sup> Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.

<sup>14</sup> Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.



# Addiction Is -

## **Romans 6:15-20 (NLT)**

<sup>15</sup> Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! <sup>16</sup> Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. <sup>17</sup> Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you.

<sup>18</sup> Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living. <sup>19</sup> Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy. <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the obligation to do right.

# Addiction Is -

**Romans 7:14-25 (NLT)** <sup>14</sup> for I am all too human, a slave to sin.

<sup>15</sup> I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.. <sup>17</sup> So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. <sup>18</sup> And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. <sup>19</sup> I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

<sup>20</sup> But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. <sup>21</sup> I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. <sup>22</sup> I love God's law with all my heart. <sup>23</sup> But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.

<sup>24</sup> Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? <sup>25</sup> Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

# Scriptures About Addiction

## **1 John 2:16 (KJV)**

<sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

## **1 Corinthians 15:33 (NLT)**

<sup>33</sup> Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character." (Our road to addiction is usually accompanied by our association with others) – Recovery requires changing partnerships

# Scriptures About Addiction

## 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NLT)

<sup>9</sup> Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves.

Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality,

<sup>10</sup> or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.

<sup>11</sup> Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.



# Scriptures About Addiction

## Galatians 5:19-21 (NLT)

<sup>19</sup> When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures,

<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division,

<sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.



# Scriptures About Addiction

## James 4:1-7 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you?

<sup>2</sup> You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it.

<sup>3</sup> And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

<sup>4</sup> You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God.

<sup>7</sup> So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

# Addiction and Sin Come From

- Friendship with the world
- Lack of friendship with God and his people
- Choosing “things” (You want what you don’t have) over God
- We “give in” to temptation rather than “give up” to God

## **Matthew 26:41 (NLT)**

<sup>41</sup> Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

# **RECOVERY AND AVOIDING RELAPSE**

# If Addiction and Sin Come From

- Friendship with the world
- Lack of friendship with God and his people
- Choosing “things” (You want what you don’t have) over God
- We “give in” to temptation rather than “give up” to God

*Addiction is not about the substance,  
it is about the behavior*

Then How Do Stop  
Addiction or Enter  
Into Recovery?

- It is called recovery because it is a “process” that reverses the behavior

# Facts About Relapse

- You usually relapse first on something other than your drug of choice (Behaviors)
- Relapse doesn't mean you failed—it means your recovery needs a tune-up.
- The saying “relapse is part of recovery” doesn't mean you get to use.
- Relapse is a process not an event. There is no such thing as a “slip”.



# Defining Recovery

- Recovery is a verb not a noun.
- Recovery is a process not an event.
- Most people who try to get clean fail.
- Recovery is difficult.
- Recovery is bio-psycho-social and spiritual.
- Recovery is “taking good care of yourself”.

# Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual-Cultural Biological

- Get proper amount of rest
- Eat a healthy diet
- Regular doctor visits
- Follow doctor's instructions
- Regular dentist visits
- Follow dentist's instructions
- Identify and manage stress
- Avoid nicotine
- Avoid excessive caffeine
- Avoid drugs and alcohol

# Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual-Cultural Psychological

- Become obedient to your covering (God, husband, pastors)
- Identify and manage feelings
- Identify and manage stress
- Identify core issues
- Intellectual challenge
- Avoid negativity
- Develop a sense of purpose and meaning
- Recognize cognitive distortions
- Nurture self-esteem

# Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual-Cultural

## Social

- Positive friends
- Healthy relationships
- Working with sponsor
- Having fun in recovery
- Sober support system
- Able to love and trust others
- Able to be lovable and trustworthy
- Healthy family relationships
- Giving something back to society
- Relationship with self

# Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual-Cultural

## Spiritual

- Prayer
- Meditation
- Reading your Bible
- Fellowship with spiritual people
- Attending spiritual services
- Morals and values
- Honesty in all your affairs
- Practice humility
- Communing with nature
- Donating time and money



# Scriptures About Recovery

## **James 4:7 (NLT)**

<sup>7</sup> So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**I Cor. 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

## **Philippians 4:13 (NLT)**

<sup>13</sup> For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

# Scriptures About Recovery

- **Matthew 26:41 (NLT)**

<sup>41</sup> Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

- **2 Corinthians 6:14 (KJV)**

<sup>14</sup> Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

# Scriptures About Recovery

- **Hebrews 13:17 (KJV)**

<sup>17</sup> Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

- **Hebrews 10:24-26 (KJV)**

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: <sup>25</sup> Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

## 1 John 2:1-2 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous.

<sup>2</sup> He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.

# WHAT IF I RELAPSE?

# Relapse Prevention

- The Biggest Relapse Warning Sign of All...

Addicts overestimate their recovery and underestimate the power of their addiction.



# Relapse Comes Gradually

- That gives you plenty of time to do something
- Stages of Relapse
  - Emotional (not thinking about using) –
    - Denial
    - Isolation
    - Irritability
    - Bottling up emotions
    - Poor diet and sleeping habits
    - “It is about poor self-care”

# Relapse Comes Gradually

- Get a good night's sleep
- Eat well
- Ask for help
- Share your feelings

## **James 5:16 (KJV)**

<sup>16</sup> Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

# Mental Relapse

- If you stay too long in emotional relapse because you did not follow the plan
- Occasional thoughts of using are normal
- Thinking about people, places, or things that were part of your using
- Minimizing past consequences
- Seeing old using friends
- Bargaining
- Lying to yourself and others
- Planning – looking for opportunities to relapse

# Prevention Strategies

- Change your thinking (what could you lose, your mind must return to right thinking)
- Distract yourself
  - Change scenery
  - Go for a walk
  - Don't give room for the devil
  - Tell yourself you will give yourself 30 minutes (most cravings don't last long)
  - Talk about your feelings with others

# Physical Relapse

- Are you taking care of yourself
- Are you resting enough
- Are you eating right
- Are you praying and studying your Bible
- Are you asking for help from God and your brothers and sisters

## **Galatians 6:1 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.



# Psalms 103

- Psalm 103:1-17 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

<sup>2</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

<sup>3</sup> Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

<sup>4</sup> Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

<sup>5</sup> Who satisfieth thy mouth with *good things*; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

<sup>7</sup> He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

<sup>9</sup> He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

<sup>10</sup> He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup> For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

<sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup> Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

<sup>14</sup> For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

<sup>15</sup> *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

<sup>16</sup> For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

<sup>17</sup> But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;