



DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS, Part 2

Broken Chains

July 15, 2023

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

John 10:10 (NKJV) • “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

Romans 6:16-23 (NIV) • “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Isaiah 61:1 (NIV) • “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.”

Revelation 3:21 (NIV) • “To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

Welfare Ministry, p. 248 • “There is everywhere a work to be done for those who through intemperance have fallen. In the midst of churches, religious institutions, and professedly Christian homes, many of the youth are choosing the path to destruction. Through intemperate habits they bring upon themselves disease, and through greed to obtain money for sinful indulgence they fall into dishonest practices. Health and character are ruined. Aliens from God, outcasts from society, these poor souls feel that they are without hope either for this life or for the life to come. The hearts of the parents are broken. Men speak of these erring ones as hopeless, but not so does God regard them. He understands all the circumstances that have made them what they are, and he looks upon them with pity. This is a class that demand help. Never give them occasion to say, ‘no man cares for my soul.’ ”

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS, Part 2"

Last week's lesson dealt with identifying addictions and being aware of the warning signs. The information in this week's lesson is geared toward helping those who have addictions, or who would like to understand and help a friend or family member with an addiction. The focus is on practical, Christ-centered advice and suggestions that can help people break the chains of addiction.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS, Part 2"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Recognize that addicts are powerless over their addictions without God's help.
2. Ask for God's power in dealing with any addictive behavior in their own lives.
3. Know how to offer help to a friend or family member struggling with addiction.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) weight set; (Activity B) none.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • Bibles, poster board, old magazines (optional), markers, scissors, glue.

2 BRIDGING

A. THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Allow 10 minutes at the beginning of class for students to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief high-

lighted this week.

3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimfaith.net)
- >> Service projects reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Ask a friend who lifts weights to lend you a set of weights that would be well beyond the ability of the average earliteen to lift. Bring them to class and place them at the front of the room.

Get set • Choose a volunteer from the class to come up and try to lift the weight. (Note: if you have bodybuilders in your group, don't choose one of them unless you're absolutely certain the weight is well beyond their ability to lift!)

Go • After the volunteer has tried and failed to lift the weight, **Ask:** **What would it take for them to lift this weight? Can you think of a way they can get it off the ground?** Keep it going until someone suggests getting help. Allow the volunteer to ask a friend (or two, if necessary) to help lift the weight.

Debriefing • **Say:** **Our North American culture places a lot of importance on being**

strong, doing things on your own, being independent. But there are some things we can't handle alone. **Ask:** Is it ever difficult to ask for help? In what way could lifting this weight be like a person dealing with an addiction? What kind of help can people ask for in that situation? (Help from God through prayer, support from friends and family, help of a counselor or support group, etc.)

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Set your group up to do a "trust fall" in which group members stand in two rows facing each other with their arms interlocked, and one person falls backward into the arms of the group.

Get set • Ask for a volunteer to try falling backward. Remind the rest of the group that this exercise is an illustration of trust and it's important to be there for each other and support the person who's falling.

Go • Have the volunteer fall back and let the others catch them. Repeat with other volunteers if more are willing to try. (Note: while falling backward from a standing position into the arms of others is fairly safe if you have at least six people catching, the sometimes-used variant of the "trust fall" in which the volunteer stands on a chair or table and falls backward is NOT recommended, as the risk of injury is significant.)

Debriefing • **Say:** Many people rely on support groups to help them get over an addiction. **Ask:** What does this activity illustrate about how a support group can help? What might cause a group not to work? How important is it for others in the group to have been through the same experiences? Why is it sometimes hard to trust other people in a group?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

Imagine that you've been walking in the woods for a long time and you don't exactly know how to get back to the main road to find your way home. You don't have a compass or a map. But you do have a cell phone. Night is coming on, and you're getting a little frightened. Does it make more sense to insist, "I'm not lost! If I just keep going, I'll find my way!" or to call someone and say, "I'm lost. Let me describe to you where I am, and maybe you can send someone in to get me"? What are the risks of each choice?

Debriefing • **Say:** We often don't like to admit we have a problem. We are taught to be independent and find solutions for ourselves, so we try to find our way out on our own, even though we know we're just getting deeper and deeper into trouble. Sometimes we even resist calling on God for help. **Ask:** For a person who is "lost" in the maze of an addiction, what kind of help might they reach out for? How would you respond if a friend with an addiction reached out to you for help?

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

As we found out last week, "addiction" can mean a lot of different things. But the one thing every addiction has in common is that it's a form of slavery. A person who's addicted is not free. Their life is out of control because the need for the behavior, substance, or relationship to which they are addicted is stronger than common sense, good advice, or the desire to follow God's will.

Addictions are destructive to everybody, but as God's citizens in this world we need to be especially careful to let God free us from addictions. We can't carry out God's work if we're slaves to an addiction. The good news is that God wants to set us free. (Could an addiction

be considered an idol? Could an addiction be like putting something before God?)

The first step is to admit that we have a problem. Addicts often fool themselves by saying, “It’s not that bad. I can handle it!” The truth is no one can “handle” an addiction. Quitting is the only way—and it’s not an easy way. However, God promises power, and there is human help available too. But nobody can help an addicted person until they’ve admitted they need help.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Remind the class of Becky’s story from last week. **Say:** **At 15 Becky was convinced she didn’t have a problem with alcohol. By the time she was in her 20s her problem had become much worse. What do you think finally brought her to the point at which she was able to say, “I think I’m an alcoholic”?**

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

How can you help a friend or family member with an addiction? If the key is that the addicted person admit that they have a problem, that means you can’t fix someone else’s problem for them. That person has to make the decision to change on their own. But you can be honest with someone about what you see in their life. Not being honest can just extend the time it takes for the addicted person to face their problem. Then you can be supportive when that person makes the decision to change.

Pose the following scenarios:

- A. You hang out with Reena quite a bit, even though you know she’s got a reputation as a “party animal.” She’s already told you she doesn’t believe it’s wrong to drink. She knows you believe differently. Lately, though, you’re worried about Reena. She’s drinking a lot more heavily, and not just

at parties. You know that she drinks after school when her parents aren’t home, and sometimes she even drinks in the mornings before she gets to school. You and several friends agree that Reena has a problem, but nobody wants to say anything to her about it. What’s the best thing a caring Christian friend can do? What Bible text might be helpful to Reena—or to you? (Look at the texts given in the student lesson, but also consider other possibilities.)

- B. Your older brother comes home from college for vacation, and he seems different. He’s always in a bad mood and getting into arguments with your parents. One day, on a long bike ride together, he tells you what’s been happening with him. He started using drugs with some friends at college. First, it was just once in a while, for a laugh, but now he’s using almost every day while he’s at school. He says, “Since I’ve been home and I haven’t been able to get high, I’ve realized how hooked I am. I’m scared, and I want to quit, but I don’t know how. I’m telling you so that you won’t make the same mistake I did.” What’s the best help or advice you can give your brother? (Encourage him to talk to your parents so they can help him get the help he needs.) What Bible text might be encouraging to your brother?
- C. Your friend Dave likes to play video lottery machines. “It’s no big deal; it’s just a game,” he tells you. But lately he seems to be spending a lot of time at it, and you just found out that he stole \$50 from his parents so he could gamble it on the machines. Does Dave need help? Is he addicted? What can you do for him? Can you think of a Bible text that relates to Dave’s situation?

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Give each class member one sheet of poster paper and provide pencils, markers, old maga-

zines, scissors, and glue. Ask students to read through the Bible verses in this week's student lesson as well as the additional ones provided in the teacher's guide. **Say:** **Choose one verse that you find meaningful for helping to overcome an addiction. On the poster board, write out that verse (or a part of the verse) with the Bible reference, and then illustrate it in any way you want, using your own artwork or a collage of magazine pictures to make an attractive, eye-catching poster that would be encouraging to someone struggling with addiction.** Students can choose a different Bible verse if they know of one that's appropriate but is not included in the lesson materials.

Debriefing • After giving everyone time to work on their posters, give each person an opportunity to show and talk about their posters (in a very large class, break up and do this in small groups). **Ask:** **Why did you choose this particular Bible verse? What positive message do you think it offers? How does your artwork help get that message across?**

Find an area in your church or church school where the posters can be put on display for a while.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Is it always best to "mind your own business" where other people's problems are concerned? When (if ever) does it become appropriate to interfere and tell someone, "I think you're doing wrong," or, "I think you have a problem"?
2. How are people likely to react if you say you think they might be addicted to something?
3. How would you react if someone told you they thought you were addicted to something? What does this reaction tell you?
4. The best addiction treatment facilities in the world (for drug and alcohol abuse) have a success rate of about 15 percent—that's how many patients are still addiction-free a year after leaving treatment. If God really has the power to set people free, why are

so few people successful in breaking the chains of addiction?

5. Why is it so important to admit that you have a problem and need help?
6. "People with addictions aren't responsible for their choices because they are under the power of the addiction." What do you think about this statement? Agree or disagree? If you disagree, how would you change the statement to reflect what you believe is true?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Addictions can be scary and powerful. But they don't have to rule our lives. God promises freedom from addictions, just as He offers freedom from every kind of sin. Finding freedom starts with admitting that you have a problem and that you need help. It continues with taking responsibility for your choices and choosing, one day at a time, to stay away from the addiction and fill your life with positive choices instead. That includes growing closer to God and spending time with Him as your source of strength. Whether you need to break free from an addiction, or offer help and support to a friend who needs it, remember that God does offer a way to break the chains of addiction.



STUDENT LESSON

DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS, Part 2

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Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 15, Baptism:** “By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 118, 119

BROKEN CHAINS

Back home for a visit with her family and her high school friends, Becky was feeling good. She was living in California now; she had a new job, and she had a new boyfriend, John. True, some things about her California life weren't so perfect (such as dropping out of college), but Becky felt that her life was finally headed in the right direction. When John dropped by to visit for a few days and to meet Becky's family, she felt even more sure that he was the one for her and that they'd soon end up married.

After John left, Becky went out partying with her old friends again. Since she'd come back home for her visit, every night had been a non-stop party. That Thursday night was no different. Becky and a friend started drinking and then went to a local bar for more drinks.

The next morning Becky was horrified to realize that she remembered nothing about the night before. *I've lost total control of who I am*, Becky realized.

Years of being the life of the party—going all the way back to junior high school—had led to this moment. Becky went into the house and saw her mother asleep on the couch. Becky's mom sat up as Becky came in and sat down in a nearby chair. Her eyes filling with tears, Becky blurted out, “Mom, I think I'm an alcoholic. Can you help me? What should I do?” (adapted from Becky Tirabassi and Gregg Lewis, *Just One Victory* [Campus Life Books, 1987]).

These are questions that many teens struggle with. They are searching for real answers. We will find real answers from God's Word as we study this week's lesson and read our daily Bible readings.

In Philippians 4:13, NKJV, we find that Christ is the answer.

We are reminded in 1 Corinthians 6:19, NKJV, that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and belong to God.

In Romans 12:1, 2, NKJV, we see that Christ invites us to surrender our bodies to Him and through Him we can live lives that are pleasing to Him.

God holds us responsible to keep our bodies healthy and our minds clear so we can discern right from wrong. Alcohol inhibits our brains from thinking clearly and being able to make good decisions. Proverbs 20:1, NKJV, says, “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.”

God promises to help us, to be with us, and to save us when we look to Him for help. Choose today to look to Christ and seek to become the men and women God has designed you to be—strong, healthy, wise, and understanding.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Philippians 4:13.
- » Remember there is nothing that you cannot handle when you have God on your side.
- » All recovery programs for alcoholics and drug addicts make a big point of the person being treated being able to say, “I’m an alcoholic” or, “I’m an addict.” Why do you think it’s so important for people to make that statement before they can get help? Think about a time you’ve had to admit that you had a problem and needed help (even if it wasn’t an addiction). Was it hard to say, “I’ve got a problem”? How did things change after you admitted you needed help? Or share some other experience you have had with addiction.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON BAPTISM

- » Read Acts 16:30-33; Acts 22:16.
- » The Holy Spirit was sent to convict us of sin, to help those who ask, and give us power to overcome. No matter what your sins are, if you come to Christ He will forgive you and help you.
- » What sins do you need to confess and ask for help to overcome?

- » What are some steps that you can take today that

will help you in overcoming these sins?

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- » Unscramble and write out the following verse and reference on the lines below to find out what God says to His children.

write you 12 are I name’s your to His NKJV
because sake 1 children sins for John little you
2: forgiven

- » “Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 23).

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read Romans 10:13.
- » What happens to a person once they recognize that they have a problem—that they’re addicted? Well, they’ve already made the first important step, admitting that there is a problem. People can go for months or years denying they have a problem with alcohol, drugs, or any other addiction (to a substance, an activity, or a feeling). When you can finally say, “Yeah, this is a problem. Some things are out of control in my life, and I can’t fix it,” then you’re on the way. Compare Becky’s story from last week’s lesson to this week’s. As a teen, Becky was drinking till she passed out and had black-outs, yet she didn’t believe she had a problem. As a young adult, Becky was finally able to admit, “I’m an alcoholic.” For her, that was the start of getting help and a new life.

- » Alcoholics Anonymous and many other

addiction recovery programs say that the first step is to admit that you're powerless over your addiction and can't handle it without help from a Higher Power. This is the same first step we all need to take in becoming Christians—we admit we're powerless over sin in our lives and can't conquer it on our own. We need God. And once we admit that, changes can start happening.

Wednesday BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Look up the texts and fill in the blanks. If you don't have one of the Bibles used for this exercise, find it at www.biblegateway.com.

1. "But _____ be to God! He gives us the _____ through our _____ Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57, NIV).

2. "Every God-born person conquers the _____ ways. The _____ power that brings the world to its knees is our _____" (1 John 5:4, *The Message*).

3. "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who _____ us. For I am _____ that neither death nor life, neither _____ nor demons, neither the _____ nor the _____, nor any powers, neither height nor _____, nor anything else in all _____, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:37-39, NIV).

4. "The _____ does not come except to _____, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have _____, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10, NKJV).

5. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the _____ of God, that you present your _____ a _____ sacrifice, _____, _____ to God, which is your reasonable service. And do _____ be _____ to this world, but be _____ by the _____ of your _____, that you may _____ what is that _____ and _____ and _____ of God" (Romans 12:1, 2, NKJV).

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Romans 12:1, 2.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Saying, "I have an addiction and I'm powerless to quit on my own" doesn't mean there's no part for you to play. God can give us the power to overcome all kinds of addictions, but He uses our will.
- » For example, an alcoholic is kidding themselves if they say, "I can control my drinking. I'll have just one beer tonight, and not go any further." Most alcoholics will tell you that kind of thinking will end up with a hangover. But they do have the power to say, "I choose not to drink today. God, please give me the power to follow through on that choice."
- » In any situation, there are lots of choices we can make. We can choose, with God's help, to say no to the thing that tempts us. We can choose to build new habits, better habits. We may need to choose new friends who respect our choices and don't encourage our addictions. And we can choose to get help when we need it. That could mean sharing with a caring pastor or teacher, counselor, friend, family member, or joining a support group. God gives us other human beings to help us along the road.
- » Christ invites us to surrender our bodies to Him and through Him we can live lives that are pleasing to Him. God wants to see us free. He wants to see us succeed.

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 6:19.

- » Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and belong to God. We need to recognize the importance of taking care of our minds and bodies for a life of service here and a life spent with Christ for eternity.

- » Our lessons this week and last week have focused on addiction. Where do they connect with your life?

- » A. Maybe you've realized that you're addicted to something (a substance, an activity, or a feeling)—or that there's something in your life that's in danger of becoming an addiction. If this applies to you, you may be ready for a change. Write a letter to a Christian you trust, explaining what needs to change in your life so you

can break this addiction, what steps you plan to take, and what kind of help you need. Pray about your letter before sharing it with your friend/relative.

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- » B. Maybe addiction is not a problem for you, but you have a friend or family member who is addicted to something. You can't force them to realize they have a problem if they're not ready, but you can gently and lovingly point out that you see a problem. Write a letter telling this person why you're concerned about them. Let them know you're praying for them and you're willing to help them find help if they decide to. Pray about your letter before sharing it with them.
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