

MAGNOLIA MINDS: Something went wrong

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Many times, those who struggle with life's most difficult problems find an escape from their situation by turning to drugs or alcohol. Instead of finding hope in Jesus and placing their faith and trust in Him, some find their hope at the end of a needle, or at the bottom of a pill container, or at the bottom of a beer container.

The reason why we struggle with any addiction is because God created human beings to be dependent by nature. In the Garden of Eden, God created Adam and Eve to be dependent upon Him and each other. The Bible teaches that God willed for mankind to be in a dependent relationship in order to find life and blessing.

Something went terribly wrong in the Garden. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. As a result of their bad choice, sin entered the world, causing death and destruction. Because of one person's choice, sin effects all of humanity, including you (Rom. 3:23; 5:12).

Even though God willed for humanity to be in dependent relationships, relationships are cursed because of the fall (Genesis 3). As a result of sin, we struggle to get along with

one another. Humanity strives to be autonomous, seeking to satisfy and please "the self" rather than God. Therefore, despite our sin, human beings remain dependent creatures.

A person's sinful dependence turns to other things rather than God. The Bible calls this sinful dependence, idolatry. Anything that comes in between a person's relationship with the Lord is idolatry. Idolatry is loving someone or something else more than God, and it focuses on pleasing the self rather than pleasing God.

Idolatry is extremely dangerous! Why? First, idolatry is dangerous because it separates us from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Second, idolatry is dangerous because it takes something that is considered to be "good" and turns into a demand. For example, a person uses pain killers to help dull the pain of trauma. In this situation, pain killers are good. However, in a bad situation, a person has the potential to abuse pain killers.

Idolatry does not always manifest itself in the form of substance abuse. The manifestation of idolatry comes in many other forms: sleep, work, gambling, eating, pornography, pleasing others rather than God (fear of man), etc. Because God did not design us to "bow down" to idols, all pleasure that results from idolatrous behavior is short lived and does not honor God.

It is only pleasurable for the moment. It may feel good in the moment (a payoff in the form of a high), but the consequences can be long-lasting (damage to the body; jail time). Addiction occurs when an idolatrous lust captivates and ensnares a person by the idolatrous lusts of his or her heart.

What if you are struggling with an addiction right now? First, confess your addiction to God (1 John 1:9). Secondly, repent of your addiction (2 Cor. 7:10-11). Thirdly, put off the sinful deeds of the flesh (Eph. 4:22). Fourth, renew your mind

(Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). Fifth, put on the fruit of the Spirit that illustrates a repentant heart and become addicted to Jesus (Matt 3:18; Eph. 4:24, 5:18).

My prayer is that you become addicted to Jesus by having a relationship with Him (Eph. 5:18).

Is there any hope for freedom? The answer is yes! If you seek to know Jesus, then you will experience peace that only comes from Him. Therefore, a relationship with Jesus Christ is our only hope. Instead of recovery, a person needs transformation which occurs through a relationship with Jesus.

Ultimately, a person's goal cannot be sobriety, but salvation. The Apostle Paul tells us that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:13). Not only will you have salvation, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1).

A right relationship with Jesus will make sobriety not only possible, but a promise. However, this does not guarantee the removal of temptation. Rather, when temptations occur, God gives a person the strength and power to abstain from sinful pursuits (1 Cor. 10:13).

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