

# Seeing Addiction Through a Biblical Lens

Mark E. Shaw, D. Min.

## Introduction:

Goal: Learn biblical insights for those enslaved to an "addiction" (also known as idolatry).

**I Corinthians 6:9-11:** *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

**Galatians 6:1-3:** *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. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.*

## A. Addiction Counseling

### 1. Defining Addiction Biblically

a. Sin/Idolatry: Isa. 44:9-20

**Ephesians 5:18:** And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit

- 1) Disordered \_\_\_\_\_; self-seeking rather than serving Christ
- 2) Focusing energy/time on something other than God for selfish gain involving \_\_\_\_\_: "the act of giving up something that you want to keep, especially in order to get or do something else or to help someone"<sup>1</sup>

b. A Biblical Re-definition of Sin in the Heart

→ "The persistent, \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts, words, and actions associated with excessive pleasure-seeking which are *known* by the user to be harmful and physically enslaving, sinful, and willful choices to disobey God (whether one acknowledges it or not)." – Shaw, 2012

### 2. Understanding Your Addicted Counselee using Proverbs 23:29-35

a. \_\_\_\_\_ in v. 29

<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster definition: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sacrifice>

- 1) **Who hath woe?** (recklessness; impending doom)
- 2) **Who hath sorrow?** (deep sadness; hurt, bitterness, anger leading to depression)
- 3) **Who hath contentions?** (relational problems)
- 4) **Who hath babbling?** (complaining, ungrateful)
- 5) **Who hath wounds without cause?** (physical; also spiritual, possible forgotten cause of initial pain)
- 6) **Who hath redness of eyes?** (physical; also spiritual, hopelessness)

b. Addictive Behaviors in v. 30

- 1) **They that tarry long at the wine;** (time invested in searching for wine and then drinking)
- 2) **They that go to seek mixed wine.** (seeking the hard liquor and other drugs)

c. Three Warnings about \_\_\_\_\_ Your Heart in v. 31

- 1) **Look not thou upon the wine when it is red**
- 2) **when it giveth his colour in the cup (aka “sparkles”)**
- 3) **when it moveth itself aright. (aka “goes down smoothly”)**

Homework: \_\_\_\_\_ (or Colour)- List the ways your pleasure of choice *sparkles* to you. What do you like about it? What does it give you? etc.

d. Dire \_\_\_\_\_ in v. 32

**At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.**

- 1) Homework: \_\_\_\_\_ List the ways your pleasure of choice has bitten (harmed) you. What consequences have come? Have you almost died? What is the future outcome likely to be (see Eph. 5:18; Prov. 14:12)?

e. \_\_\_\_\_ Perception in v. 33

**Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.**

- 1) Outlook changes, reality is twisted, and spoken words reveal wrong theology (i.e. “God is unfair”).
- 2) Note the sexual sin connection—often an attending sin with drugs & alcohol. (Gen. 9 & 19 Noah and Lot)

f. \_\_\_\_\_ in All Areas of Life in v. 34

***Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.***

- 1) Physical, emotional, and spiritual instability. James 1:8: double-minded man unstable in ALL his ways
- 2) Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde?

g. \_\_\_\_\_ to Choose to Continue to Sin Despite Consequences in v. 35

***They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.***

1. Not finding refuge in God but in this self-made safe place provided by the effects of alcohol and other drugs.
2. Cycle of “addiction” is volitional: “I seek it yet again...”

## B. Recommended Resources

1. *Freedom That Lasts* by Jim Berg.
2. *Addiction: A Banquet in the Grave & Crossroads: A Step-by-Step Guide Away from Addiction* by Ed Welch.
3. *A Walk of Repentance* workbook by Steve Gallagher.
4. Mark E. Shaw (14 total resources on “Addiction”—6 booklets and 8 books)

Written to the Addict/Counselee and used in this order:

- *Relapse: Biblical Prevention Strategies* workbook
- *Cross Talking: A Daily Gospel for Transforming Addicts* (devotional)
- *The Heart of Addiction* and *The Heart of Addiction Workbook (& Leader’s Guide)*
- **\*\*Eating Disorders** (special topic in addiction counseling)

Written to the Family:

- *Addiction-Proof Parenting* (prevention)
- *Divine Intervention: Hope and Help for Families of “Addicts”* (confronting the desire to enable & not trust God)
- *How Not to Raise an Addict* (booklet)

Specific issues in **booklet** form to the “Addict”:

- *Understanding Temptation*
- *Hope and Help for Sexual Temptation*
- *Hope and Help for Gambling*
- *Hope and Help for Video/Internet “Addiction”*
- *Hope and Help for Self-injury/Cutting*