

1 **Understanding Addiction**

WORKSHOP 2
CHAPTERS 1-4

2 **Who is An Addict?**

- A bad person? A person “not saved?” NO! However the behavior is bad. That cannot be denied.
- An addict is a person who takes the lure that “feeling good” and “numbing pain” can be accomplished through the use of readily available substances.
- They are typically dealing with emotional and spiritual conflict
- The “bait” of that “feel good” moment or the numbing of pain leads to unthinkable and unfathomable consequences

3 **Christianity and Addiction**

- Medical versus spiritual – who rules?
- Difference between the behaviors of addiction and the person behind it. We must learn to fight for the person, while attack the addiction itself.
- God’s authority to fix addiction – is it possible?

4 **Misconceptions about Addiction**

- It’s a brain disorder alone
- It’s a spiritual problem alone
- The addict should be able to stop
- It’s someone else’s fault
- The addict doesn’t love the family
- The addict isn’t really a Christian

5 **Where Does Addiction Stem from?**

- Physical (brain)
- Mental (thoughts)
- Emotions (feelings)
- Will (choices)
- Spiritual (beliefs)

6 **Physical Body & Addiction**

- God created the human body with magnificent features and processes
- The physical side of addiction is real, but it doesn’t contradict God – it reveals life apart from Him
- Neurotransmitters and addiction
- Dopamine deficiency
- Physical dependency
- Our hope is not in fixing the flesh – but in the altercation that comes from the Spirit of God. However, the physical realities do exist.

7 **Soul**

- We are made in the image of God
- The soul is the inner life – will, mind and emotions
- These are features of God in us
- Science traces this function to the flesh (connect to chemical, brain, etc.) and focuses on solution there
- Bible links this function to the Spirit and focuses solution on Him

8 **Will**

- Decision maker is the gate we allow things in or keep things out (choices).
- When will is driven by an unhealthy system, it will be programmed or desire to allow the wrong things in, and keep the right choices out.
- At first addiction was meant to help or serve the person using (made a choice to use); but in addiction, the will is in bondage to addiction – the body, mind, emotions and will literally serves addiction
- Addiction is a form of enslavement – it holds a person back from receiving the freedom God created them to live – to be who God intended them to be
- An addict loses the choice to stop - this is called bondage

9 **The Mind**

- Mind is not the brain – Bible teaches us about the mind
- Mind is connected to brain – hardware versus software
- Mind is a database that collects data and processes it on instant recall - based on beliefs that are acquired
- This is positive for life functions, negative when the mind is polluted by lies
- Strongholds are lies that become truth automatically
- Mind is the area of focus in God's Word – the place of "renewal"

10 **Emotions**

- Feelings are the method God gave us to express – they are good when operating as designed
- Emotions are indicators of something deeper
- What we think directly affects how we feel
- Pain is meant to express a problem that needs to be resolved, therefore pain can promote positive change
- Emotions of pleasure and pain get distorted and twisted in addiction, and emotions are bypassed illegitimately
- Emotional growth is stunted in an addict as a result

11 **Spiritual Battlefield**

- Addiction is rooted in the satanic realm – a by-product of the enemy's strategy: to kill, steal and destroy
- Addiction is a lure – a temptation to receive comfort and pleasure apart from God
- Three enemies: the flesh, the world and Satan
- When addiction becomes bondage, the will serves it
- Spiritual solution will seek to transfer the will into the power of God
- People can gain sobriety without Jesus, but as we will learn later, there is no true freedom or transformation without Him. He is the healer of the heart.

12 **Workshop Application**

- Go to Addiction and Behaviors Chapter 1
- Review your answers (or write them in)
- On separate paper write some good features about the person you love minus the behaviors addiction disclosed
- What is happening "in between" the addiction and the person God created the person to be?

13 **Workshop Application**

Application:

- War can be brutal. There are opportunities to defeat the enemy, and there are opportunities to be hurt. Risks are involved. And outcomes are not guaranteed. Do you want to engage in the war using God's weapons?
- Are you prepared to surrender the methods you have used to combat addiction in trade-off for God's point of view? What do you fear the most?
- How big is your God today?

To encourage:

Yes, addiction is fierce, nasty and overwhelming. But God is more fierce with a pure, holy affection for the entire family's well being. And He is on the Winning Team. Right now, transferring to His system is the most important role you have. Focus on meditating on Him, believing He reigns over it and allowing Him to be placed in charge.