

Addictions: From a Banquet in a Grave to God's Banquet

Addictions are on the increase - most every era in history could make that observation. This session will review the essential teachings from Scripture that guide our care for those who feel enslaved.

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I. Introduction

- A. What are addictions? Destructive desires, controlling desires, lusts (Eph 4:18-19), a covenant with death, refuge in lies (Is 28:15), a banquet in the grave
- B. *Why* are we addicts?
- C. Why is the problem increasing?

II. God speaks broadly and deeply to addicts

- A. Human beings live within boundaries
- B. Human beings resist boundaries. We say “yes” when “no” is clearly best: tests and temptations in the garden
 - 1. A test from God – life is about allegiances. It is either/or. This is normal training for royal children (Pr 17:3).
 - 2. Temptation from the Devil – a perfectly timed invitation to question God and change allegiances. This temptation is not our personal sin.
 - 3. Temptation from within us – lusts, coveting, desire awoken (1 John 2:16). This *is* sin.
- C. Boundaries express before-God realities.
 - 1. Addictions are voluntary slavery
 - a. Voluntary = temptations, desire, grumbling and complaining (Nu14:11), life in the shadows, lies, worship
 - b. Slavery = MORE, we want to go back to Egypt, we become less than human (Pr 26:11), we become like what we worship

2. Excesses—evidence that we have turned away from the Lord—lead to shame and other etchings of death

D. Jesus enters the wilderness

1. Someone is being taken out to the wilderness. How will he do? (Heb 4:15)
2. Jesus takes his record and our failures to the cross. His resurrection verifies the pleasure and approval of the Father. Jesus now invites us all to place our allegiances in him, and to his Kingdom people he pronounces an end to condemnation, shame, Satan's stranglehold, and sin's grip. (Gal 5:24, Gal 6:14)
5. As if this wasn't enough, Jesus, at his inauguration, gives us the Spirit

E. "Today"

1. God calls our attention to today, not yesterday, not even tomorrow, if we are worried about tomorrow, but today.
2. Let's come out of the darkness. Speak honestly.
3. Why say "no"? Why bother with self-control (1 Cor 7:5)? We need a liturgy.
4. Let's turn to Jesus when life hurts
5. Let's face the regrets, pain and hard relationships
6. Let's erect wise boundaries, by faith
7. Let's express what we believe and who we believe in every day
8. How can I help?

Suggested Readings:

A Banquet in the Grave, Ed Welch

Sexual Sanity for Men, David White