

## The Truth About Addiction

Think about this: There's two varieties of people who play a role in worldly, secular drug addiction treatment—the addict and the aid. The problem is they're both eating from the same tree. Let's explore further.

In the beginning God created two very different trees representing two very different ways of life (Read: Genesis 2:9). The tree of Life represents God's Life, God's Spirit, and a way of living dependent upon Him. The second tree was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [Don't miss the "good" part]. By eating of the second tree, the first man rejected God as the sole source of truth in favor of choosing independent of God what would be right and wrong for himself (See: Ro. 1:25). Thus, the first humanist was born. Man is now self-sufficient, self-reliant, self-dependent and has ever since served as his own point of reference for discovering the answers of life.

Now, back to the drug stuff. Here we have the addict and the therapist taking their respective roles in the "recovery process." The worldly, earthy counselor is eating from the tree of the knowledge of good. The addict is eating from the tree of the knowledge of evil. But it's the same tree because both are depending on their own resources for change. The "moral counselor" has been deceived and is reassuring the addict that his evil is not really evil but is a "sickness" and "disease." The therapist assures the addict that he has a good heart, and he too can live a better life, learning to do good. Thus, teaching the addict to change his worst behavior by using his best behavior becomes the focus. So, God comes along and asks rhetorically...*Can an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil* (Jer. 13:23).

Neither of these two players [counselor or addict] have realized there is another tree, the tree of Life, over there just waiting to be enjoyed. They're so busy trying to pick off the fruit [drug use] of the addict that they've totally overlooked the source from which that fruit is produced. When you want a different kind of tree, you don't start by plucking off one leaf at a time. You uproot the undesirable tree and plant a new one. Then the fruit [behavior] will naturally care for itself.

You see, God's design is to frustrate the strength of our human resources to the point we become willing for Him to plant His Seed of new life within us, and thus begin the growth of a totally new person! *Jesus replied that the time had come for him to return to his glory in heaven, and that "I must fall and die like a kernel of wheat that falls into the furrows of the earth. Unless I die I will be alone—a single seed. But my death will produce many new wheat kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives"* (John 12:23-24).

As we receive new life from God and begin enjoying Christ in us, the burden of change falls on His broad shoulders. Over time, we grow more confident that *He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us* (2 Corinthians 1:10).

From this grace perspective, addictive behavioral changes become easier as God reveals our new identity and our total incompatibility with the sin of addiction. *No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed [Christ] remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God* (1 John 3:9).

Maybe it seems too simple-minded, but what if the true and lasting solution to addiction is to start at the root? Crucify the addict with Christ, and then by faith believe he is daily *dead to sin, but [perfectly] alive to God in Christ Jesus?* (Ro. 6:11). Sin doesn't die. You die to sin. If you're struggling with addiction and you're not a Christian, there's someone who wants to kill you! No, not the devil... it's Jesus. *I [the addict] have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I [the addict] who lives, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live [new creation] in the body I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.* (Galatians 2:20)

If you're struggling with addiction, and you are a Christian, God wants you to believe and be certain that your old addicted life has died, your new life is now hidden in Christ, and Christ is alive in you. *For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory* (Col. 3:3-4)

*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized [immersed] into Christ Jesus have been baptized [immersed] into His death? Therefore we [the addict] have been [already] buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self [the addict] was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin [addiction]; for he who has died is freed from sin [addiction].* (Romans 6:3-7)

You see my friend, God has dealt a double blow at the cross. Jesus Christ not only removed your sins, but He went a step further and removed the sinner! Yea you will still battle with the flesh [old temptations to get high], but don't fail to see that Jesus has dealt with that too. *Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions [drugs] and desires [more drugs]* (Galatians 5:24).