

# **Beyond Addictions**

Free to live a new life in Christ Jesus



## **Introduction**

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Temptations are an appeal to meet righteous needs in an unrighteous way. ... God has a righteous way to meet the longing that your temptation has stirred.

Bill Thrasher, *A Journey to Victorious Praying*

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### **Beginning at the Beginning**

What is *Beyond Addictions*? More than anything it is a Bible study that applies scripture to the problem of addiction and leads you to the solution. Addiction is a common problem with Christians and it is an epidemic among non-Christians. At the time of this printing, statistics indicate that more than one half of all drug addiction is related to the improper use of prescription pain medication. Many of the people who have fallen to this type of addiction are suburban professionals. So addiction isn't restricted to the poor and homeless; it hits families on both sides of the tracks. This has long been the case with alcoholism too. It doesn't matter if you are addicted to cheap whiskey or expensive scotch, addiction is addiction and it will ruin your life.

Drugs and alcohol aren't the only problems; in fact, they probably aren't the biggest problems. Millions of Christian and non-Christian men are caught in the web of Internet pornography. They have bought the lie that "stolen waters are sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Proverbs 9:17). They are hiding their secret addiction to pictures on the computer just like a drug addict hides his stash in a buried coffee can. This scheme of Satan has probably ruined as many families and affected as many lives as drugs or alcohol. Addiction to porn is just a more subtle, quieter form of poison.

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## Going Beyond Addictions

We could talk about the problem all day but we want to focus on the solution. Praise God that we can get beyond the addiction through our relationship with Jesus Christ, as we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, and we allow new life in Jesus Christ to take hold of us.

**Throughout the course, we will focus on Jesus Christ.**

The more we are separated *unto* Jesus, the more we are separated *from* addictions, and the less likely we are to go back to them. So we are going to take some time to get to know Jesus Christ. As we draw closer to the Lord, we will also see how to overcome addictions and go beyond them to the abundant life that Christ promises in John 10:10.

**Good News!!! He has a plan for your life!!!**

The Bible has a lot to say about God's plan for us. It's a good plan, one you should consider following.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new (II Corinthians 5:17).

In other words, God is able to make you a new man or woman in Jesus Christ, not an improved one but a brand new one! You can experience real life; you can have a new outlook with real peace and hope. You can be clean, not just physically delivered from drugs but spiritually, mentally and emotionally clean. This may sound impossible right now but as you read the Bible verses this course is based upon you will see that it may actually understate the new work that God is able to do in your life.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it (I Corinthians 10:13).

This verse says that one of the keys to getting beyond addiction is to allow the Lord to meet you at the point of your weakness and deliver you rather than giving in to temptation and continuing to be bound up in sin. You may have been aware of this but still failed in your attempts to resist temptation. That is because you do not have the power within yourself to resist. Thank God that He enables you to resist temptation through the power of the Holy Spirit. So sin no longer has to rule over you!

Isaiah 53:6 describes the problem:

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way ....

## Introduction

In other words, we have turned away from God and His plan. We are like sheep that left the fold and strayed into the wilderness. Many of us had to learn to endure the hardness of survival alone or were captured by a harsh shepherd who promised relief but only brought us into bondage. If you are one of these sheep then you need to come home.

So, what is the solution? Can we return to Jesus? And how will this enable us to win the battle against addiction? As you continue reading, the answers to these questions will become clear.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).

You are not the product of shoddy workmanship. You have been created in Christ Jesus to do good works which He has already prepared for you to walk in. God has a plan and He wants you to be involved in it. A great part of the frustration that all of us have experienced may be a result of not following the plan that God has prepared.

### **God is thinking about you.**

In Jeremiah 29:11, God says,

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

God gives you hope for your future! In fact, He is the hope for your future! You may have thought that things looked pretty hopeless. You may think that God has forgotten all about you. His Word tells us that He still has a plan for your life; He hasn't forgotten you.

### **Prepare to have some of your old ways of thinking challenged.**

As we look directly into God's Word you will find that it is radically different from what the world teaches. For example, the Bible teaches:

- That all of your sins can be completely forgiven. (John 3:16-17, I John 1:7-9)
- That forgiveness, not vengeance is the way to be set free from the past (Romans 12:19, Ephesians 4:32, Hebrews 10:20)
- Christ-esteem is greater than self-esteem (Philippians 2:1-8)
- Being changed from the inside-out is better than allowing the habits of a sinful world to shape your thinking and behavior (Romans 12:1-2)
- We can find ourselves and the true meaning of life only by losing ourselves in Christ (Matthew 10:39)

## Going Beyond Addictions

There are sixteen scripture passages on the *Foundation Scriptures* page. Download them and print them. You will see these verses woven through the lessons in each chapter. Begin reading them now and ask the Lord to show you how they apply to you.

Here are four verses to think about as we get started.

**You are a new creation!**

**Therefore**, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. II Corinthians 5:17

**God is thinking about you!**

**For I know** the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11

**In giving us Himself, God has given us all that we need.**

**According as His divine power** has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue. II Peter 1:3

**Keep the faith until the end.**

**And let us** not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9