



A Quick Reference and Lesson Guide

Coping with Substance Abuse

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1 Scenarios and Assessment

Scenarios/Case Studies

A. Scenario #1

1. Bill and Tracy had a tumultuous marriage. Their constant fighting began take a toll on Luke and he soon began drinking to try and forget about his home life. His parents eventually divorced, however, Luke's drinking continued. He blamed himself for his parent's marriage failure and because his home environment effected other areas of his life, he continued to depend on alcohol to escape from reality.

B. Scenario #2

1. DJ began taking drugs in elementary school. His exposure came from of his mother's illicit relationships with men who were constantly in and out of their lives. As a result, he never felt loved or valued. Moving from house to house, he turned to the streets for acceptance. In return he poured out anger and shut people out. DJ wanted something more out of life, but was too mixed up in his altered reality to know what it was. Due his early drug exposure, using substances was the only way he knew how to deal with the pain.

C. Scenario #3

1. Christine had been in recovery for fifteen years. She finally made the decision to return home to rebuild her relationship with her family. However, the moment she walked through the door, she was reminded of the past she had worked so hard to get away from. When the barrage of memories became overwhelming, Christine slipped out of the house after everyone was asleep and found comfort in pain pills once again.

Definitions and Key Thoughts

A. Facts and Statistics

1. ****Special Note**** A mental illness involving chemical imbalance that may require medication is not a substance abuse condition
2. Addiction afflicts all ages, ethnicities, and social classes.
3. Alcoholism and alcohol abuse are among the most common, devastating, and costly problems in the US. Statistics report there is an estimated fifty thousand cases of alcohol overdose each year.
4. Crack cocaine is one of the most addictive drugs because of its strong, quick-onset high that lasts minutes leaving users wanting more.
5. Among all pot users, 40 percent take the drug twenty or more days a month and some states are legalizing it for recreational use.
6. Some addicts hooked on opioids such as OxyContin and Percocet turn to heroin when they lose access to prescription pills which is cheaper.
7. Drug specific facts
 - a) Marijuana

- (1) The most widely used drug. One hundred four million Americans have tried it by age twelve.
 - (2) Is known as the gateway drug and often after people begin to use it, they move on to harder drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, or heroin.
 - (3) Directly affects a person's memory, causes a mental fog, lack of coordinated movements, paranoia, high anxiety; prevents mental maturity and causes permanent damage to the reproductive system in men and women.
 - (4) Withdrawals are severe including anger, rage mood swings, and depression.
- b) Heroin (Opiates)
- (1) Destroys the ability to reason as opiate blocks pain messages from the brain to the body within the reward system. The person feels relaxed—experiencing a false sense of peace; not able to cope with life's reality on any level because they are in a mental stupor.
- c) Prescription drugs; sedatives and tranquilizers (barbiturates)
- (1) The most common way prescribed drugs are abused is by sharing medications.
 - (2) Produce central nervous system depression.
 - (3) Tranquilizers slow down the process of thinking as well as the body's systems.
 - (4) Millions of people are addicted to prescription drugs and withdrawal symptoms are mostly psychological but very severe.
 - (5) Sedatives are depressants and often times are used for sexual assaults. These barbiturates are used to knock someone out.
 - (6) GHB(Gamma-hydroxybutyric) DOWNERS and ROOFIES are medically known as Sedative Hypnotic Drugs or Date Rape.
- d) Cocaine
- (1) As cocaine tolerance develops, all other interests become secondary to recreating the initial rush; the euphoric feeling given by the drug.
 - (2) According to a recent study approximately, 10 percent of the population over the age of twelve has tried cocaine at least once, about 2 percent have tried crack cocaine and nearly 1 percent currently use cocaine.
 - (3) All forms of cocaine use can cause paranoia and hallucinations; psychological effects include agitation, hostility, panic and aggression, suicidal and homicidal tendencies.
- e) Amphetamine
- (1) Are stimulants that affect the central nervous system.
 - (2) Medically they are used to treat depression, obesity and other conditions.
 - (3) Its use will cause amphetamine psychosis, which is a mental disorder similar to paranoid schizophrenia.
 - (4) Can be made with bath salts which are very dangerous and common in the streets.
- f) Methamphetamine
- (1) Young adults are far more likely to use meth than other age groups.
 - (2) Recent research has shown methamphetamine may produce effects which last up to eight years after using the drug and cause permanent damage to the brain and body.

- (3) Many times meth preparation houses blow up because of the mixing of chemicals.
 - (4) Meth will damage the body in two years what alcohol will do in twenty.
- g) Inhalants
- (1) A diverse group of substances that include volatile solvents, gases, and nitrates that are sniffed, snorted, huffed or bagged to produce an intoxicating effect similar to alcohol.
 - (2) The highest incidence of use is among ten to twelve-year- old children with rates of use declining in age.
 - (3) Some common inhalants are paint thinner, fingernail polish remover, glues, gasoline, cigarette lighter fluid, and hydrocarbons found in aerosols.
 - (4) They cause memory impairment, attention deficits and diminished non-verbal intelligence. Deaths resulting from heart failure asphyxiation or aspiration have occurred.
- h) Alcohol
- (1) Is a toxic mood-altering drug and a depressant.
 - (2) Suicide is often alcohol-related; one of three suicides are committed while drinking alcohol or on drugs and it is the most commonly abused drug today.
 - (3) It damages liver cells, destroys proteins, and disrupts the body's balance of sugar water, high blood pressure, heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver malnutrition and death.
 - (4) Drinking while pregnant may cause S.I.D.s (sudden infant death) or the child may be born with FAS.
 - (5) A recent report states that 4.6 million teenagers are problem drinkers, 10.6 million adults are alcoholics.
- i) Nicotine
- (1) Cigarette smoking is a major factor in lung cancer, stroke, coronary heart disease, and causes malignancies in other parts of the body.
 - (2) Smoking during pregnancy accounts for 20-30 percent of low-birth weight babies, up to 14 percent of pre-term deliveries and 10 percent of all infant deaths.
 - (3) An estimated 4.5 million adolescents smoke with 2000 becoming established smokers every day. One third will die from a disease caused by smoking.

B. Facts about Addicts

1. Those coping with addiction are liable to relapse multiple times before they remain drug/alcohol-free.
2. The person coping with addiction may truly desire to quit, however, when a substance alters a balance of natural body chemicals, the body adjusts to this alteration by trying to reestablish the proper balance and the body becomes dependent on the external supply of the substance (May, 1988, pg. 24).
3. Addictions can exist for years completely outside of awareness. Only when the addictions are frustrated or are the cause of conflict, is the attachment noticed (May, 1988, pg.25).
4. Addiction and its associated mind tricks inevitably kidnap and distort one's attention and profoundly hinders one's capacity for love (May, 1988, pg. 29).

5. Addiction splits the will in two, one-part desiring freedom and the other desiring to continue in the addictive behavior (May, 1988, pg.42).
6. Repeated failures of trying to change the addictive behavior causes the greatest damage to the self-esteem of the addicted (May, 1988, pg.42).

C. Societal norms vs. Christian/Apostolic worldview

1. Society associates drugs and drinking as a way to cope with stress and other undesirable feelings. However, the Bible teaches that in times of distress God will deliver those who cry out to Him for help.
2. The world advocates the use of drugs and alcohol as a means of enjoyment and celebration, yet the Word of God teaches that we are not to be drunk with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit. Also, history has shown excess use of substances for any occasion never has a positive outcome.

D. DSM-5 definition of substance use disorder (American Psychiatric Association, pg. 483)

1. Although each substance has specific symptoms when it comes to withdrawals, the basic criteria according to the DSM-5 for substance abuse is outlined below:
 - a) Craving for the substance
 - b) Failure to control use when attempted despite desire to decrease intake
 - c) Continued use despite interference with major obligations or social functioning
 - d) Use of greater amounts over time (development of tolerance)
 - e) Daily activities revolve around substance.
 - f) Recurrent use despite continuous physical or psychological problems
 - g) Spending a great deal of time to obtain and use substance
 - h) Failure in abstaining from use despite inconvenience its causing

Assessment (Interview)

A. To determine degree of abuse

1. Questions to ask to evaluate severity of substance use to determine if a referral to a professional is needed (ANSWERS DETERMINE SIGNS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE)
 - a) When was the first time you used drugs (ask for specific name of drug) or consumed alcohol? How much did you use or consume?
 - b) How often did you engage in it?
 - c) When was the last time you used drugs (ask for specific name of drug) or alcohol? How much did you use or consume?
 - d) How often do you engage in using or consuming alcohol?
 - e) Has there been a period of time when you were able to stop using drugs or drinking? How long did it last?
 - (1) If there has been a “dry” period, what triggered the re-engagement?
 - f) Can you perform everyday tasks while under the influence of the substance? (If answer is yes, this suggests there is a high tolerance and referral to a professional is needed)
 - g) Do you find yourself needing a fix or a drink to feel “normal”?

- h) Have you been experiencing any blackouts, vomiting, incontinence, excessive sweating?
- i) Do you find yourself thinking about the next time you can score or consume alcohol? Do you plan your day around the next time you can engage in using drugs or consuming alcohol?
- j) Have you missed or failed to show up at important meetings or events due to being under the influence?
- k) Do you feel that your drug or alcohol use is an area for concern? If so, have you attempted to stop engaging but could not?
- l) ****Special Note**** If individual shows signs of needing specialized assistance please refer to a professional.

B. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

1. Find out about the person's background
 - a) What was life like for you growing up?
 - b) Did you have close relationship with someone in your family? Does the relationship still exist?
 - c) How was conflict handled in your family? How do you currently handle conflict? (This is to help determine coping skills or lack of coping skills to adverse situations.)
 - d) Have you experienced any trauma in your life (molestation, abuse, neglect, witness any acts of violence, or violence has been committed against the addicted)?
 - (1) If so, how have you been coping with it for all of these years?
 - (2) If not, what attracted you to drugs or alcohol?
2. Listen to the problem
 - a) What has brought you here today?
 - b) How would you describe your life/current situation?
 - c) What prompted you to begin using drugs or drinking alcohol (again)?
 - d) What does using drugs or drinking alcohol do for you?
 - e) What is your drug of choice?
 - f) Did you have easy access to it?
 - g) Has your drug use or drinking altered/affected your life in any way? How so?
 - h) Would you consider yourself being addicted to this drug or drinking habit? What reasons do you have for believing so or not?
3. Find out about motivation for coming for help
 - a) What is your primary reason for seeking help now?
 - b) Can you envision life without engaging in drugs or drinking?
 - c) If you continued using substances what do you think will happen?
 - (1) Make a list of pros and cons of substance abuse
 - (2) Highlight the negative effect the substance abuse is having in the addict's life
 - i. "You say that you take pride in providing for your family, yet, when you have money you spend it on drugs, does that add up to what you truly desire?"
4. Steps toward change

- a) What changes are you willing to make in your lifestyle?
- b) Are there any obstacles preventing you from making these changes?
- c) Encourage client to verbalize and list obstacles leading to substance-free life,
- d) Collaborate to come up with alternative coping mechanisms.
 - (1) List activities to engage in rather than turning to substances to numb emotions.
 - (2) Come up with stress-relieving activities.
- e) Do you have a support system? If so, who?
 - (1) Make a list of individuals to communicate with during difficult times.

C. RELAPSE ASSESSMENT

1. When was the last time you used drugs or drank alcohol?
 - a) How much was used or consumed?
2. What reason provoked you to engage?
3. Is there a specific circumstance(s) that is causing stress in your life?
 - a) Any important dates (death, birthdays, anniversaries).
 - b) Any situation that is prompting addict to become emotional and turn to substance.
4. How have you coped with it before (What did you do to alleviate the pain?)?
 - a) If engaged in an activity, ask if it was beneficial and in what ways.
 - b) If have been turning to substance to cope, ask if there is another way addict can cope with situation.
5. **Start with BULLET POINT #2 under GENERAL ASSESSMENT and continue to #4**

2

Critique and Counsel

Biblical Insight

A. Scriptural view on addiction.

1. The Bible does not explicitly address addiction, however, it is a form of bondage with a destructive force that has control over a person's mind, body and spirit and interferes with relationships.
2. "Know ye know, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16)
 - a) When one is under the control of a substance, it governs his or her life and forces him or her to commit sin by lying, cheating, stealing, manipulating, and sometimes using his or her body to obtain the substance. As a result, the addict becomes a slave to the substances. (John 8:34)

- b) Yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit allows one to be freed from bondage (of addiction). However, when the addicted is in a compromising situation he or she must make the choice to not engage. (James 4:7; 1 Corinthians 10:13)
3. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down of strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:3–4).
 - a) It is part of human nature to try and combat the flesh with the tangible. Sometime the first defensive action to try to replace the “bad addiction” with a “good addiction.” However, there is no such thing as a “good addiction.” The only way to break the spirit of bondage is with the power of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 107:13–14). When we fight with flesh, we end committing sins
 - b) A stronghold occurs when a spiritual force hinders the transforming power of Christ. This force can only be broken when God is exalted. Everything must be held captive by the power of Christ (II Corinthians 10:5).
 - c) Sins must be confessed and repentance in order for change to take place.
 - (1) Discourage feelings of condemnation as this hinders reconciliation with God. If the addicted feels conviction, that is the Holy Spirit. (Proverbs 28:13; John 3:17)
4. “Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17).
 - a) Whomever is in Christ should no longer be in bondage and brought into subjection of the things of this world. There is freedom in Christ from all things because of the shedding of his blood. (John 8:36; Ephesians 1:7)
 - b) If the addicted is a believer, remind him or her of the power of the Holy Spirit. When baptism took place the old man was buried and the new man was resurrected. Therefore those who have the Holy Spirit have access to the power and authority of Christ.

If the addicted person is an unbeliever, share the benefits of becoming a believer and child of God. One of the highlights is that the Holy Spirit is able to work on our behalf and provide strength to overcome addiction.
5. Ask individual about thoughts on God’s view of his/her situation. **(Be alert for condemnation vs conviction.)**

Wise Counsel

- A. Empathize with the struggle of cycle, however, encourage addict to acknowledge they alone have the choice to make different decisions (take responsibility).
 1. Humanity has two natures; the flesh and the spirit. The flesh is against a lifestyle that is pleasing to God and is in constant conflict with the spirit. No one is exempt from this battle, but we must choose which one we will obey. (See Romans 7.)
 2. Emphasize the effect that people, places, and activities has on a person and the importance of surrounding oneself with Godly influences. (See Romans 8:5–8.)

- B. Help the addict to understand that willpower and self-resolve are not always enough to stop the problem. (This is what the Holy Spirit is for. Even AA recognizes there must be an acknowledgment and surrender to a higher power in order to succeed.)
1. The world advocates that we should rely on ourselves. God wants us to release our problems to Him. If there is a particular situation that is a trigger, encourage the addict to release the situation to God. He desires for us to live an abundant life in Christ and that is impossible to do under the control of substances.
 2. Behavior under the influence of substances is consistent with that which is not of God. The lifestyle God desires for us does not involve being controlled by flesh, which seeks to please itself and does so without weighing the consequences. The more the spirit of man is fed the more the sinful nature of the flesh starved (Galatians 5:16)
- C. Explain how sins from prior generations can be passed down affecting the present time.
1. Collaborate with addict to explore triggers for drug and/ or alcohol use. Discovering this will allow the addicted to identify patterns in their history to which they turned to substances as a coping mechanism.
- D. When this issue is beyond you, encourage appropriate professional help.
1. Primary Care Physicians
 2. Mental Health Professionals
 3. Drug and Alcoholic Specialist
 4. Collaborate on and come up with a list of community resources.

3

Application and Prayer

Application

A. Immediate Action Steps

1. Make restitution where you can.
2. Ask for forgiveness from people you hurt.
3. Work on paying back the value of things you have stolen.
4. Change the way you treat your family.
5. Repent and forsake past sins.
6. Talk to God every morning, be honest with Him.
7. Read your Bible every day.
8. Go to the altar every service. Let it be a meeting place with your friend, Jesus.
9. Be humble, destroy pride and independence

B. Continuous Action Steps

1. Work on reestablishing relationships with family members.

2. Ask to have Jesus change your heart and destiny.
 - a) Talk to God out loud-admit your weaknesses.
 - b) Resist bitterness.
 - c) Accept the influence of the of the Holy Spirit.
 - d) When you fall, repent, get back up.
 - e) Do not get comfortable; keep progressing.
 - f) Stay the course; be consistent.
3. Change your mind
 - a) Be responsible; make the right decisions.
 - b) Be a person of action; seize the moment.
 - c) Seek wisdom; listen to guidance from people you can trust.
 - d) Have a decided heart; ignore rejection.
 - e) Forgive; replace anger management with anger resolution.
 - f) Persist without exception.
4. Change your environment.
 - a) Change your friends, where you hang out, the music you listen to- “all things are made new.”
 - b) Change movies and video games with godly media (Phil 4:8).
 - c) Find a job-fill up dead time; enroll in a course of study.
 - d) Connect to the church; be in church and every worship service.
 - e) Volunteer for church activities.
 - f) Be faithful with commitments.
5. Learn to do good
 - a) Accept a mentor, let him or her monitor, submit.
 - b) Attend Bible studies.
 - c) Share what Jesus is doing for you today! Witness.
 - d) Keep a journal of the good things happening in your life.

Focused Prayer

- A. Begin by thanking/applauding individual/family member(s) for having courage to seek help and support.
- B. Address in prayer the struggles that have been addressed in the meeting.
 1. Read David’s prayer of repentance together Psalm 51.
 2. Jesus, I am coming to you for help, for I cannot help myself. Jesus, I am a sinner, but You said You still love me. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. You said that if I confess my sins, You are faithful to forgive me and that You would cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Jesus break the hold that alcohol/drugs has over me, and set me free. Forgive me for the way I have hurt my family. Help me restore my relationship with them. Jesus, may Your Holy Spirit come into my heart and soul, fill that empty place with your Spirit. Clean out my life; clean out my heart. Give me peace in Jesus name. Amen.

- C. Acknowledge individual/family member(s) is/are striving to live for God and do things God's way.

4 Recommended Resources

A. General Resources

1. May, G. (1988). *Addiction and grace: Love and spirituality in the healing of addictions*. New York, NY: HarperCollins
2. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th ed. (2013). American Psychiatric Association.
3. Mahaney, C. 2006. *The joy of recovery*: Book, devotional guide and workbook. Retrieved from http://s3.amazonaws.com/mychurchwebsite/c701/12_steps_to_recovery.pdf
4. Molsbee, R.G. (2001). *Grounding the light of anger*. Life Source Molsbee Media*
5. National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens (NIDA). Retrieved from <https://teens.drugabuse.gov>

B. Resources for Ministers

1. Anderson, N. (2000). *The bondage breaker: Overcoming negative thoughts, irrational feelings, habitual sins*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers
2. Baker, J. (2012). *Celebrate recovery*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan
 - a) Participant's Guide 1: Stepping Out of Denial into God's Grace
 - b) Participant's Guide 2: Taking an Honest and Spiritual Inventory
 - c) Participant's Guide 3: Getting Right with God, Yourself and Others
 - d) Participant's Guide 4: Growing in Christ-While Helping Others
3. Bevere, J. (2004). *The Bait of Satan*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House
4. Getz, G. (2004). *The measure of man*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books
5. McGready, M.R. (1991). *God's lost children: The shocking story of America's homeless kids*. Covenant House*
6. Portland Police, The faces of Meth. Retrieved from <http://fav-meth-head-of-the-day.com/faces-of-meth/>

C. Teaching Programs and Material

1. A.C.T.S. (Alcohol/Chemical Treatment Series)
2. Life in Focus Education-Yvette Wright, Director Portland Pentecostal Church, 9775SE Mt. Scott Blvd. Portland, OR 97266 lifeinfocuspdx@gmail.com
3. Apostolic Families Ministries-David Reynolds apostolicfamilies@gmail.com – www.apostolicfamily.org
4. Life in Focus Education

5. Anger Management Classes. Grounding the Lightning of Anger by Robert G. Mosley, Ph.D
6. Instructional power points from:
 - a) Rev. Brent Williams, 3940 Dogwood Ave, S.E., Albany, OR 97321, 541-730-7374, actsofalbany@gmail.com
7. Instructional Material from:
 - a) John Floe, Preventative Services Coordinator, Sutter-Yuba Mental Health Services, 1965 Live Oak Blvd, Yuba City, CA. 9599, 503-674-1885 ext. 114, www.sutter.networkofcare.org



“The Breaking of Bondage”

By Nicole D. Jones, BA, MACC

Focus: Describe how addiction is a spiritual issue in relation to bondage. Discuss the consequences of bondage and how one can be delivered. The steps of recovery and how the church can help the addict.

Lesson Text:

Romans 6:15-19

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

Focus Verse:

**Use of this material does not qualify the user as a "mental health professional" and should be communicated as such. It is important to refer individuals for professional help if the need arises beyond the scope of this quick-reference guide.*

Galatians 5:1(NKJV)

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

The world has associated celebration with being under the influence of a substance. This implies to have a good time one must drink or engage in illegal drug use to enjoy oneself.

Unfortunately, this has led to more youth and young adults participating in drug and alcohol use. What most of them do not understand where drugs are concerned is that once they ingest enough to become high, they will never reach that initial point again. Therefore, they engage in it more frequently, in greater amounts creating a higher tolerance. Unknowingly they have attached themselves to that drug. Substance abuse is a form of bondage because the addict has lost the power to stop using or drinking despite negative consequences. These negative consequences include, but is not limited to damage of reputation, inability to function properly, loss of possessions (house, car, etc), loss of relationships, which lead to emotional disturbance and unfortunately the ultimate consequence is sometimes death. Spiritually it disconnects the person from God because they are no more a servant of Christ; they are serving and are dependent on the substance. Every time the addict participates in drug use or takes another drink, he or she is serving the substance. Substance abuse is a search to fill and empty void in the soul that is always there apart from God. A discouraging aspect about working with those addicted is that many who go into treatment, relapse.

Substance use has also been associated with the attempt to relive one from emotional pain. The term “drowning in my sorrows” refers to consuming a large quantity of alcohol to the point that one forgets his or her current problems. Research states that alcoholism and alcohol abuse are among the most common, devastating, and costly problems in the United States. Substance abuse has become an epidemic in our world. Of the 2.5 million drug-related emergency room visits in 2011, half was for illegal drugs and the other half was for misuse of medication. A third of the patients had taken two or more substances or drugs and alcohol. These statistics show the amount of emotional suffering and misconception of celebration the world is experiencing. As people continue to rely on themselves to numb their pain, they will turn to substances for relief. The more they abuse substances, the deeper they are going to become enslaved in sin. Addiction is primarily a spiritual issue. We do recognize that emotional hurts and abuse leave the person vulnerable to the use of chemicals for a temporary reprieve and the physical and emotional must be addressed, for we are body, soul and spirit-yet we attest that the root of the problem is spiritual.

Consequences of bondage and deliverance**Ephesians 4:22-24 (NKJV)**

“That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

In Meriam-Webster’s dictionary one of the definitions of yoke is defined as “an arched device formerly laid on the neck of a defeated person.” Another definition describes it as an “oppressive

agency.” The word “yoke” denotes a meaning of slavery and servitude. Therefore, the neck of whomever the “yoke” is placed upon, they are a servant to someone. In addition the substances and alcohol serve as the yoke around the addict’s neck. The addict craves the artificial effects (getting high) doing whatever it takes to get more despite its natural effects (hallucinations, mood swings, liver and kidney disease) and even death; he is willing to risk it all. To be weighed down and pulled around by godlessness is to live in a state of oppression. God desires His children to live in the freedom of Christ.

Paul exhorts to stand the liberty that Christ has given. Physically, to the addict this freedom is not being enslaved to drugs and alcohol. Not being under the influence the addict can live the life God called him or her to. He or she no longer has to search for drugs to numb his or her pain or drink alcohol to forget about problems. Spiritually, he or she is not led by the spirit of oppression that keeps the addict under the subjection of addiction. He or she can now turn to Christ who died to set humans free from such spirits. The Holy Spirit is the only agent of change that is able to not only to deliver, but cleanse the heart, mind and soul of the addict.

Being transformed into the likeness of Christ implicates a way of thinking and behaving that leads to righteous living. This is how God intended for mankind to live.

How can the church help?

1. Preaching results in the healing of the broken hearted. The result will be miracles of deliverance of those bound. When we preach the gospel, there will be opening of physical and spiritual eyes. Jesus gives us the authority and the ability to set at liberty those who are physically and emotionally bruised. The church must be a sanctuary for the hurting. The very structure of the church provides a caring atmosphere to meet physical, emotional, and social needs—only after we have met the spiritual. Others work on the ‘fruit’—let us target the ‘root’
2. Even after conversion there is much discipleship and teaching to be done for many come with no “depth of soil,’ no life principles, no character, and no foundation to build upon. It is the place of the church to add to the soil. (Part of the parable of the soil Matthew 13:5-6.)
 - a) Others are working on the symptoms; let us focus on the cause
3. The story of the man asking for alms from Peter and John (Acts 3:3-7)
 - a) What did Peter and John have that others did not have” the man was looking for a ‘hand-out’, but what the disciples had was the anointing of the Holy Ghost and the name of Jesus. Let us give what others do not have. Let us fill the spiritual void.
4. Within the church
 - a) Preach and teach compassion for all sinners and practice it
 - b) Pray for those with a burden for the unsaved
 - c) Train workers to participate in
 - (1) Prison ministry, jails, detention and juvenile centers
 - d) Teach and train life and character principles
5. Within the community and beyond

- a) Compassion ministry to the poor
- b) Organize outreach programs
- c) Survey community for support resources
- d) Have phone numbers of community resources available
- e) Set up a clothes closet and food pantry

John 10:10 (KJV)

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.