

The Law of Sowing and Reaping

February 20, 2021

Overcoming Bad Habits and Addictions — Part 2

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”—
Galatians 6:7-8 (NIV)

We reap what we sow. When we give in to lust and sin, it creates momentum in our lives to continue in that direction. As [Bill Gothard](#) has said, “The wages of sin is more sin.” If we do not change the course of our lives, ultimately our choices will lead us down a path to destruction.

Years ago, I made a decision that I would never drink alcohol again. Marcus was a big part of the reason that I made that decision. Marcus was a friend of mine. Because of his choices, Marcus had also become a slave to alcohol. He was not able to control his drinking. Alcohol controlled him.

Marcus had a good heart and good intentions, but sadly, despite all of our efforts, Marcus eventually lost everything that he valued in life. I watched helplessly as Marcus lost money, jobs, opportunities, and finally I watched him lose his family and his health. They were all sacrificed in his pursuit of alcohol.

What may have begun as seemingly harmless drinking with friends became an overpowering lust that demanded to be satisfied. When the choice was made to give in to that lust, it became a sin in his life that led to his own destruction.

I made the decision to never drink alcohol again, partly because I never want to influence anyone to follow that path that destroyed my friend.

Everything we do has consequences. When we surrender ourselves to cravings that lead us to do things that we know are wrong or bad for us, giving in to those cravings can eventually enslave us to bad habits and addictions. Then we are on a path to destruction, and without God's help, we may feel powerless to do anything to stop it.

“Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted from God; for God is incapable of being tempted by [what is] evil and He Himself tempts no one. But every person is tempted when he is drawn away, enticed and baited by his own evil desire (lust, passions). Then the evil desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is fully matured, brings forth death. Do not be misled, my beloved brethren.”—James 1:13-16 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)

Sin doesn't sit still. It is progressive. Bad habits and addictions are never satisfied to stay at a certain level. The cravings drive you deeper into shameful actions that you might never consider if you were free from these lusts.

When you first give in to temptation, there is a certain high, a pleasure that you feel from it. That's the hook. As you continue to indulge in the same actions, they will not bring the same level of pleasure as they did in the beginning, and so you are driven to do more and to go deeper into areas of these actions that might have been repulsive to you when you gave in to the first temptation. Paul describes that downward spiral in Romans 1:24-32. Here he is talking about sexual sin, but you could apply these principles to just about any bad habit or addiction.

²⁴ “Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their own hearts to [sexual] impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them [abandoning them to the degrading power of sin], ²⁵ **because [by choice] they exchanged the truth of God for a lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ “For this reason God gave them over to degrading and vile passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural [a function contrary to nature], ²⁷ and in the same way also the men turned away from the natural function of the woman and were consumed with their desire toward one another, men with men committing shameful acts and in return receiving in their own bodies the inevitable and appropriate penalty for their wrongdoing.

²⁸ “And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God or consider Him worth knowing [as their Creator], God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do things which are improper and repulsive, ²⁹ until they were filled

(permeated, saturated) with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice and mean-spiritedness. They are gossips [spreading rumors], ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors [of new forms] of evil, disobedient and disrespectful to parents, ³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful [without pity]. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree and His judgment, that those who do such things deserve death, yet they not only do them, but they even [enthusiastically] approve and tolerate others who practice them." (AMP)

This passage describes a pattern of downward progression from giving in to initial cravings to do wrong things that are bad for us, all the way until we become obsessed with these bad habits and addictions and they take over our lives. This looks like a discouraging scenario, but in these verses, we are also given clues that can help us reverse course and overcome bad habits, addictions, and the cravings that drive them.

Notice in verse 25 that as people choose to give in to lusts for bad things that truth is changed into a lie.

"because [by choice] they exchanged the truth of God for a lie"

Every bad habit and addiction is rooted in a lie. Often, once the lie is exposed and truth is restored, bad habits and addictions lose their power over us, and we can begin to turn our lives around and begin to live in freedom. If we choose to believe a lie that leads us into slavery to bad habits, we can also choose to reject the lie, replace it with truth, and choose to walk a path toward freedom!

And notice in verse 32 that when people make the choice to give themselves over to the desires that drive their bad habits and addictions, they tend to surround themselves with people who are bound by the same bad habits. This helps to drown out the voice of their conscience and give support and encouragement to their decision to follow the path they have chosen.

In the same way, we can find support and encouragement on a path to freedom from bad habits and addictions by surrounding ourselves with people who are following a good path in life that we would also like to follow. By choosing to be with people who have found freedom and will hold us accountable for our behavior

and support us on our own path to freedom, we can find hope that we can really live a life of complete freedom from bad habits and addictions!

When Bob Jones came back from his death experience on August 8, 1975, he said that he saw many people who had died at the same moment that he died, and they were on their way to hell for all eternity. He saw them literally bound by the gods that they had worshiped in this life. One man was encased in a whiskey bottle. Alcohol had been the god that he had served in life, and now he would spend eternity with it.

“Sinners are trapped by their own evil acts. They are held tight by the ropes of their sins. They will die because they refused to be corrected. Their sins will capture them because they were very foolish.”—Proverbs 5:22-23 (NIRV)

How do you want to die? Do you want to die bound to a bad habit or addiction that has never been able to satisfy you, and has robbed you of the life that you wish you had lived? Or do you want to die in freedom, having lived a life filled with purpose and meaning?

You are making that decision now.