

[Video] Fill up your life with drugs and booze. Keep coming back when they call you, and in the end you'll lose all that matters to you. Five easy steps to make an addict of you.

Satan's How to become addicted. Week 3

No one wakes up one day and says, "My life is going great, but I'm bored with that. I am sick and tired of being blessed by God and sick and tired of having this great marriage and I'm really tired of being a good parent.

So today, I think I am going to mess my life up! Maybe I'll start drinking alcohol, and one day if I am lucky, I can become so addicted to the stuff, that it could cost me my marriage... ho, ho, ho, that would be great! Or, maybe it could even cost me my job or everything that matters to me.

Nobody does that. Nobody says, "*You know, I think I'm going to start smoking cigarettes, and if I'm lucky, maybe I can work my way up to 1 ½-2-packs-a-day, by the time I am 58, I can get lung cancer!*" Ho, ho, ho, I can just feel the excitement!"

And, it will be so bad that I will be dead by the age of 60, because everybody knows I don't want to watch my grandkids grow up!"

No one ever says, I think I will make a little bet, just for fun you know. But then they lose and try to win back what they lost and bet even more or what is sometimes even worse, they win. Man that was great, I'll bet and get even more.

Years ago, a guy came to see me. He and his wife had come to me for marriage counseling so I knew him pretty well. And one of the things we had talked about was his love for **gambling**. But he said he had it under control and it wouldn't be a problem.

But then he bet some money on slot machines on a internet web site and he had won about \$2,000. As it turns out that was the worst thing that could have happened to him. He wanted to win even more and when he came to see me he was \$10,000 in the hole and his wife had just found out.

In the pursuit of more, his gambling addiction took over and one day, those who wanted more, end up losing everything that ever mattered to them. Nobody ever sets out to lose everything, "*Hmm, that sounds like a good plan.*" Yet, people end up there all of the time.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:12, *"Everything is permissible for me" - but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"-but I will not be mastered by anything.*

The Greek word that is translated as "**mastered**" means to be controlled by, or enslaved, to be under the power of something else. When someone is addicted, or mastered, or in bondage, they can know intellectually, "I shouldn't be doing this," but because they are under the power of something else, it continues to control and dominate them.

Someone who **overspends** can be at the mall writing a check thinking, *"I know this is going to bounce, I shouldn't do this, I'm already in debt,"* and go ahead and hand the check over, knowing the whole time, "I shouldn't do this!" Why? They are under the power of something else.

Someone can be a **workaholic**, can intellectually say, *"I need to get home, my family needs me, this is too much, I shouldn't be doing this!"* and the whole time she is saying this, she continues to work; why? We are 'mastered.' We are slaves to something else.

The question I have for you today is, "What has 'mastered' you?"

Something that is bigger than you, something that you think you could quit at anytime, but you haven't quit yet, something has control in your life. I will ask it again, what has 'mastered' you?

[Video] "I'm addicted to porn, I'm consumed by it; but, I hate it!" "After my surgery, I started taking pain medication; now, I can't function without it." "I started smoking pot, and then coke, and now I'm doing meth; I just need it to get through the day." "My wife hates that I dip all of the time. I hate to go behind her back; but, I just can't quit." "For some reason, I can't stop checking my email, facebook, or twitter; if I go 30 minutes without checking it, I start to panic." "It started with a few small bets; now, it's out of control. I'm so upside down I don't know what to do. Maybe I can bet my way out of this one." "Computer games make me feel alive, I play at least 8 hours a day, maybe more."

Again I ask, "What has 'mastered' you?" It could be some of those things we just looked at, it could be other things that most people say are really not that big of a deal; but, yet you are under the control, under the power of something else.

It could be something that really looks good. For example, there are people who are truly mastered by the idea of their appearance, they are obsessed with it, it is controlling them.

Years ago when we lived in California we had a mirror on the wall by our dining room table, and there were two different couples that we would have over, and we would be sitting at the table and these women couldn't keep their eyes off the mirror – it was almost comical how they kept checking themselves out in the mirror the whole time there were there.

Now, here's the deal: The outward visible addiction, whatever it is, is not the real problem; it's a symptom of the real problem.

The root of the problem in most cases is **idolatry**. We are allowing something besides God to control us. We have a false God that we feel like we need to function. Without this, we don't feel alive.

Isaiah 44:14: *“He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak...Some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it... He prays to it and says, "Save me; you are my god.”*

This passage is about a guy who cut down some trees and took the wood, and made a fire, he cooked some food, he kept himself warm; things you would do with wood in that day.

But then, he made an **idol** out of it and he started to worship it; which is what a lot of us do. **Entertainment** is not bad, but for some entertainment becomes a god. So, something neutral and common all of a sudden takes over.

Now, we might say, **“Is this guy stupid, or what?”** I mean, he takes a tree and says, *“Save me! You're my god!”* And yet, many of us act the same way. There is something in a bottle, *“Save me, I can't get through the day without you!”* There is a little pill; *“I need this, save me, oh my god!”*

We take something that could be neutral, or even good, but we make it an idol; we bow down and we worship it, can't do life without it. It goes on to say verse 18, *“Their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see.”* And they say, ‘I don't see a problem with this; uh, what's the problem?’ *“And their minds are closed so they cannot understand.”*

‘You are telling me I have a problem? Who are you? I don't have a problem, you're the one who has the problem, get out of my face, I don't have a problem! What are you talking about?’

Verses 19-20; *"No one stops to think, 'Half of it I used for fuel... Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?' He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, 'Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?'"* Is this thing not promising something that is not real or valid?"

Idolatry; In most of our addictions, here is what we are doing; we are seeking to find what only God can provide in something besides God Himself.

How might that play out? You are stressed, have a lot going on; *"the economy, my job, oh my goodness... I need peace, I need to relax."* So, what do you do? Well, [sigh] *"this helps me relax, this brings me peace."*

What are you doing? You are seeking what God wants to provide. The author of peace, who wants to give you a peace that surpasses all understanding and you are seeking to find what God provides in something besides God himself.

Let's say you don't feel alive unless you are **shopping**. So, what do you do? You go out and you shop and you are seeking to provide what God wants to provide. God, the Author of life, wants to make you feel alive.

The Author of creation is the One who wants to give you meaning and fulfillment in life. We are seeking to find what only God can provide in something besides God Himself; that is idolatry.

But, we are talking about **Satan's how to be addicted** today. So if you ever wake up one day and think, *"this life is getting old, I'm tired of being blessed, I'm tired of having a meaningful life; I am sick of it! My kids are all great and my marriage is going well and life is good, but I think I want to mess things up. I think I want to become a slave to something else."*

If you ever want to do that, pull out these notes; I am going to give you **Satan's Five Easy Steps to Become an Addict**. Are you ready?

Step Number 1: These are good, These are guaranteed. The first thing I encourage you to do when you want to become addicted, number 1 is **don't admit you have a problem**. No matter what, never ever admit you have a problem.

Jeremiah 3:13 God says; *"...acknowledge your guilt."* Don't do that!! God says, *"Admit that you rebelled against the Lord your God"* don't do that! *"And committed adultery against him by worshiping idols,"* by trying to fill some need from something other than God Himself.

Tell yourself you **can quit at any time**, even though you never have before; but, just make yourself think that! Then, when everybody who loves you and cares for you starts to tell you that you have a problem, shut them up! Shut them out!

Don't ever believe that those who care for you the most, can be objective at all about your life; you know better! If 20 people who love you tell you that you have a problem, just tell yourself they are all wrong and you alone are right! Never ever admit that you have a problem.

Step Number 2: Gratify your fleshly desires. When your body wants something, give in every time! Galatians 5:16-18, *"So I say, live by the Spirit... Paul says, "live by the spirit," don't do that; that is stupid, okay? "Live by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful, your fleshly nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the spirit, and the spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want."*

God is going to lead you in some direction, and your body is going to say, *"No, I want this!"* There is going to be a war! What you have to do is train your body that it always gets what it wants; just like a spoiled child.

Your body wants to look at something, look at it! Your body wants to smoke something, smoke it! Your body wants to buy something, buy it! Whatever your body wants, your body gets! Train yourself to always gratify that fleshly nature.

If you like drugs, make sure you have friends who can get it for you. You have to keep your supply open, because you are training your body to get whatever you want!

Step Number 3: Make sure you rationalize your behavior and make plenty of excuses. Luke 14 shows a great example of this when Jesus told a parable and said; *"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.'* *"Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'* *"Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'* Luke 14:18-20

You need to do this! Be creative! Whatever rationalization works for you, go with it! *"Well I'm just a **victim**, if you saw the way I was raised you would do this also. **Well, this isn't that bad!** I mean, look at what everyone else does; this is just my one little thing, you know? And besides, I deserve this, this keeps me from doing something worse and I can quit at any time!"* Whatever you do, rationalize it; and continue to make excuses!

Step Number 4: Always **keep your addiction a secret!** Don't let other people know! Proverbs 28:13 says, "*He who conceals his sin doesn't prosper.*" That is what you want, you don't want to prosper! "*But whoever confesses and renounces them, finds mercy.*"

That's stupid! Sin grows best in the dark; keep it in the dark! Don't let other Christians know about it. Christians, will do stupid stuff like; encourage you in the Lord, and lift you up in prayer! I mean, how **annoying** is that?

You can't let people hold you accountable and love you and support you! You've already have your support in your addiction! That's your strength! That's what you need! Keep it a secret.

Step Number 5: Depend on your own power, never God's! Can we pause for a moment? It is awkward to say the exact opposite of what I believe.

I have to stop, I can't be sarcastic anymore. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; "*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*"

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, our weapons are: Prayer and fasting, the Word of God, the shield of faith, these are spiritual weapons. "Our weapons, have divine power," the Greek word is 'dunamis' (doo'-nam-is); we get our word 'dynamite' from this, they have explosive power.

The weapons of God, have an explosive, miraculous power to demolish, or to tear down the false beliefs that hold us in bondage.

We are a **slave** to whatever has 'mastered' us. We believe this is the answer, but it is a lie. God's weapons have the power to explode those lies. So what do we do? Verse 5, "*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*"

Whenever the voice says, "*Don't admit that you have a problem,*" Instead we admit; "*I am weak, I am vulnerable, and when I am weak, scripture says, "Christ's strength is made perfect in my weakness."*" We take the lie and we replace it with truth.

Whenever our body says, "Gratify me, gratify the flesh!" We say, "No; I have crucified the flesh, I am crucified with Christ, I no longer live, it is Christ who lives in me. By faith I put to death all the desires of my earthly nature."

When you think, "Well, that is just the way you are, you can't overcome that, you can never change." **Instead you say**, "No, I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

We will keep it a **secret**, no! The bible says, Proverbs 28:13, "He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy." James 5:16, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

You can overcome this. The sad thing is, most of you won't; because you'll continue to do the Five Easy Steps. His grace is enough and you can have that, if you will find what you are looking for in Christ and not in something else.

David looked at **Goliath**, every one said; "He's too big to beat!" David said, "No, he's too big to miss!" He looked at the giant, he looked at God and said, "Who are you to come against the armies of the Living God?" And he took him down.

Here's what you do: You look at what has 'mastered' you and look at God. Look at what has 'mastered' you and say, "What are you to come against my God? What do you have that my God doesn't have?"

Look at the **bottle**, look at the **pill**, look at the **lustful image**, look at the **money**; look at it and say, "What do you have that my God can't give me? Who are you to come against the armies of the living God? No more! I will not settle for a cheap pathetic imitation of the real thing; God and God alone will be my master!"

Whatever I need I get from Him, and I will not let an imitation promise me something that is not real. So, here's the deal, you have a choice; you can continue in your sinful and idolatrous behavior, which is what many of you will do.

Or, you can **take the next difficult step**. I don't know what that's going to be for you, it could be confessing, it could be getting counseling, could be therapy; I don't know what it is.

But, you know what it is, it's going to be the thing you don't want to do. But you do it, and you look at that giant and say, "Who are you to control my life? I will not be controlled by anything but God; He alone meets every need that I have."

Lord, we ask that you would do what only you can do. I am aware that my words don't do much; but, I am also aware that the power of your Holy Spirit does, and so I ask you to work. I pray for those who need you, just as I do. I pray that your grace is enough. I pray that your Holy Spirit would speak to each person about what their next step should be. Lord, I know one step is repentance before you and confession. I pray that each person would take next step toward wholeness and life in Christ. Lord, forgive us for trying to find meaning in anything but you alone. We don't want to be slaves to anything except to the Lordship of Your Son, Jesus Christ.