

It's Hard to Stop a Habitual Sin
TTAHTD #16 | Proverbs 23
May 30, 2021

Scripture Reading | Proverbs 23:29-35

²⁹Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has conflicts? Who has complaints? Who has wounds for no reason? Who has red eyes? ³⁰Those who linger over wine; those who go looking for mixed wine. ³¹Don't gaze at wine because it is red, because it gleams in the cup and goes down smoothly. ³²In the end it bites like a snake and stings like a viper. ³³Your eyes will see strange things, and you will say absurd things. ³⁴You'll be like someone sleeping out at sea or lying down on the top of a ship's mast. ³⁵"They struck me, but I feel no pain! They beat me, but I didn't know it! When will I wake up? I'll look for another drink."

Pre-Sermon Remarks

- Next week: Sermon on the Mount!

PRAYER

Introduction | Feeling Stuck

- November 27, 2006 | MNF Seahawks vs. Packers "Snow Bowl" (Babineaux/Romo season)
 - Mike Turico "Record crowd here at Qwest Field tonight"
 - ALL NIGHT spent on I5, people were "stuck" everywhere
- Spiritually, emotionally - we don't like feeling "stuck"

No New Problem

Romans 7 ¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold as a slave under sin. ¹⁵For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not practice what I want to do, but I do what I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want to do, I agree with the law that it is good. ¹⁷So now I am no longer the one doing it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is no ability to do it. ¹⁹For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I practice the evil that I do not want to do. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, I am no longer the one that does it, but it is the sin that lives in me. ²¹So I discover this law: When I want to do what is good, evil is present with me. ²²For in my inner self I delight in God's law, ²³but I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body. ²⁴What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

- Common feeling: "why can't I stop doing this???"

Sins' Progression

James 1 ¹³No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God," since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn't tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. ¹⁵Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

Sin's Range

1. Common stumbles | James 3:2, 1 John 5:17
 - a. **James 3**² For we all stumble in many ways.
 - b. **1 John 5**¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, and [yet] there is sin that doesn't lead to death.
2. Defining pattern | 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
 - a. ⁹ Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be deceived: No sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, or men who have sex with men,¹⁰ no thieves, greedy people, drunkards, verbally abusive people, or swindlers will inherit God's kingdom.¹¹ And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
3. Fully enslaved | Proverbs 23

Enslaved by Food

¹ When you sit down to dine with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you,² and put a knife to your throat if you have a big appetite;³ don't desire his choice food, for that food is deceptive...²⁰ Don't associate with those who drink too much wine or with those who gorge themselves on meat.²¹ For the drunkard and the glutton will become poor, and grogginess will clothe them in rags.

Enslaved by Work

⁴ Don't wear yourself out to get rich; because you know better, stop!⁵ As soon as your eyes fly to it, it disappears, for it makes wings for itself and flies like an eagle to the sky.

Enslaved by Sex

²⁶ My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.²⁷ For a prostitute is a deep pit, and a wayward woman is a narrow well;²⁸ indeed, she sets an ambush like a robber and increases the number of unfaithful people.

Enslaved by Wine

²⁹ Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has conflicts? Who has complaints? Who has wounds for no reason? Who has red eyes?³⁰ Those who linger over wine; those who go looking for mixed wine.³¹ Don't gaze at wine because it is red, because it gleams in the cup and goes down smoothly.³² In the end it bites like a snake and stings like a viper.³³ Your eyes will see strange things, and you will say absurd things.³⁴ You'll be like someone sleeping out at sea or lying down on the top of a ship's mast.³⁵ "They struck me, but I feel no pain! They beat me, but I didn't know it! When will I wake up? I'll look for another drink."

Tragedy: All of these are good things! But good gifts from God make bad idols.

Raises an important question: sin or disease?

Mitch Hedberg Alcoholism is a disease, but it's the only one you can get yelled at for having.

**Old-fashioned/biblical term: drunkard*

Ed Welch Is there a difference between a drunkard and an alcoholic? Scientifically, no. There are no medical tests or brain scans that distinguish them, and their behaviors are identical. Both terms refer to those who have been repeatedly intoxicated and show a loss of self-control with alcohol...How do we reconcile the out-of-control nature of addictions and the apparently self-conscious, intentional nature of sin? The two seem incompatible with each other and categorically different. Therefore, we opt for the only model available: addictions are diseases. There seem to be no other choices. But the disease model doesn't fit as well as we might think. The cravings and desires at the core of the addictive experience are not quite the same as an invading virus. If you catch a virus, you have no choice. You don't want it, and you would be glad to be rid of it. Heavy drinking, however, doesn't just happen to us. Instead, the drinker feels there are payoffs— however temporary—to drunkenness.

Sin as Choice of Will

John 9 ⁴¹ “If you were blind,” Jesus told them, “you wouldn't have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

Sin as Enslavement

John 8 ³⁴ Jesus responded, “Truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.”

Ed Welch Sin is more than conscious choices. Like a cruel taskmaster, sin victimizes and controls us (John 8:34). It captures and overtakes (Gal. 6:1). In fact, there are times when we intend to do one thing but sin causes us to do things we don't want to do. Even though we may really want to change, it can seem like an overwhelming or impossible task to actually do so...In other words, sin feels exactly like a disease. It feels as if something outside ourselves has taken over. In fact, one of Scripture's images for sin is disease (e.g., Isa. 1:5-6)...[S]ince sin is a broad category that includes both self-conscious disobedience and victimizing slavery, find addiction on the side that emphasizes slavery.

Sin is a promise of freedom that takes freedom away

- Mexico mission

Freedom is Possible

- Interesting cultural trend: *This is just how I am, and you have to accept it*
 - Problem #1: Only for some behaviors (why not arson?)
 - Problem #2: Flies in the face of wisdom of the ages (including bible)
 - Problem #3: Fatalistic
- **1 Corinthians 10** ¹² So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall. ¹³ No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it.
 - Not *God won't give you more than you can handle...*

Breaking Free Requires Three Things

1. Behavior modification
2. Communal accountability
3. Heart transformation

****Reverse order**

Heart Transformation

Proverbs 23 ¹⁵ My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will indeed rejoice. ¹⁶ My innermost being will celebrate when your lips say what is right. ¹⁷ Don't let your heart envy sinners; instead, always fear the Lord. ¹⁸ For then you will have a future, and your hope will not be dashed.

- "Fear the Lord" = Surrender to God | **GOSPEL!!**

Freedom in Jesus

John 8 ³⁴ Jesus responded, "Truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ A slave does not remain in the household forever, but a son does remain forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.

Communal Accountability

1 John 1 ⁷ If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- Admit to self, to God...but to others? That is hard to do!

Changed Behavior

1 Corinthians 6 ¹² "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything.

- **Jim Cofield** Some defenses are good, like overly serving others. That's a lot better of a defense than over-drinking. But it's still a defense, when the Holy Spirit is here to heal the wounds that make us put up defenses in the first place.

Category 1: Necessary Disciplines

- Food: Fasting
- Work: Sabbath

Category 2: Optional Disciplines

- Alcohol: moderation, celebration, abstinence
 - Fasting during certain times
- Sex: marriage, celibacy
 - Temporary celibacy for marrieds | 1 Corinthians 7

1. Change is possible! Let's bring our "stuck-ness" to Jesus
2. Let's move toward people with the grace of Jesus: help, not judgment