

## **Deep End**

### Week #5: Addiction - Caught in the Middle

**Weekly Summary:** *How do you love an addict? How many dollars to you give? How many years do you invest? How many second chances do you offer? Only God's definition of true love will save you from a hard heart and an enabling spirit.*

#### REGINALD "THE FAT"

- ◆ Reginald destroyed himself by his **addiction**.
- ◆ Edward was his accomplice by **enabling** and **abandoning**.

#### A MESSAGE FOR THE EDWARDS AMONG US

- ◆ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 - Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

#### PASTOR BILL'S TRANSLATION

- ◆ "Love suffers indefinitely and is helpful regardless."

You're no **fool** to love this way. **Christ** did this for you.

- ◆ "Love does not get jealous when an addict needs attention, nor does it exalt one's self over another whose life is a mess. No. Love's not at all proud."

Give all your **attention** to this as **Christ** has done unto you.

- ◆ "Therefore, love doesn't manifest itself in tactlessness toward the addict, because those who love think nothing of themselves over another, nor allow any wrath to take root, nor do they dwell on the hurt."

- ◆ “Love doesn’t keep company with evil but invites the truth to move in instead.”

Risk your **relationship** for their soul, as **Christ** too risked himself.

All who abandon or enable the addict can only do so because they seek to sit on their own **throne**.

But if we apply ourselves to these things for the addicts among us, then, rest assured: “Love will never fail.”

### **Points To Ponder**

- 1) Which thoughts from 1 Corinthians 13 resonate with you the most as you consider a loved one who is flirting with or has been overcome by addiction?
- 2) How does it help you to remember that we are all addicts to sin before Christ and that he Himself had to work through all these issues too and resist the temptation to abandon and enable us regarding our sin?
- 3) What’s the next step for you as you seek to show true love to the addict(s) in your life? Is it praying to see more of Christ and his committed love to you? Is it praying for the strength to “play the fool?” Is it prayer for the ability to refrain from bitterness? Is it a prayer for the confidence to risk your relationship? Whatever it may be, pray about it and let Christ’s rule in your heart direct you to living a life of love for the addict.

**Homework: Romans 6:1-14**