

10/15/23

Welcome / Prayer

Lots going on in our world.

- We're to be shrewd as serpents/innocent...
- prudent see trouble coming...
- Sons of Isachar...
- THIS is the place in our church that we hit this: for 10-15m/Sunday school hour

Talked about most of it in years past, time to get your popcorn and watch the fireworks.

Meanwhile,

Perspective on the middle east war

This is not 1 military group against another, it is military / militant groups attacking innocents (women/children) both sides

It has been going on for many years

Taking sides & condemning the other side to a glassified parking lot is dangerous

Mark 3:17 James, the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder");

- Jesus - When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem
- Sent messengers ahead of Him in a Samaritan town
- They didn't receive him because He was headed toward Jerusalem
  - There was a bitter theological controversy whether the proper place of national worship was a mount in Samaria or Jerusalem (like the woman at the well talked about )
- [Lu 9:54](#) When His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"
- [55](#) But He turned and rebuked them, [; and said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; <sup>56</sup> for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

We, by looking at 1 video of massacred civilians by militant groups and ASSUMING the other side is sitting there picking daisies, and perpetuating the hate in the form of "Make a parking lot out of all them",

- shows we don't know the Holy Spirit like we think we do
- Invites a spirit of murder or blood lust to reside with us, giving the enemy a foothold
- The goalposts become established (make THEM a parking lot = devalue human life for which Christ gave His life),
- now the goalposts just need to be moved to whomever the media wants to be dead next

Don't be a sucker.

And the whole "Pray for Israel" thing??

Absolutely. Pray for EVERY nation that doesn't follow God. Pray for strength & protection for Palestinian Christians.

What do you tell God? Kill all the Palestinians so Israel can have all the land again because that's the Kingdom of God?

But if we are praying for Israel because after Christ's atoning sacrifice and merging of both groups into one, Israel (the people in that plot of land) are God's chosen people, then you have some serious theological flaws you'll need to work through.

And there is quite a bit to work through, it's not as simple as water baptism and that's not obvious to most people.

I did several videos about this in early 2020 that explain all of this.

They are available & necessary if you hope to have a grasp on what's really happening in the world.

Review – **discussed** Dopamine reward prediction error coding

- Green – unexpected, get dopamine on newly discovered reward (correct vending machine button)
- Blue – expected – already feeling better when you get the cue (see the machine), KNOWING you'll get the reward
- Red – same as blue only the wrong can comes out when you push #2 button on machine... (buzzer sounds!!) and you learn

It's the surprise factor that really gets you. That's why casinos / slot machines work on people.

- Side note: to me, slot machines are boring, playing cards / gambling is annoying! However, having weaknesses in other areas teaches me compassion for those who have addictions in this area.

We looked at Harvard based psychologist B.F. Skinner's research on "variable reward system" and showed how Instagram withholds "likes" from your posts so you get them in surprise (variable) bursts which really keep you coming back – *exactly* like B.F. Skinner explained in his tenure from 1950s to 1990s

We left off asking if habits spill over or not.

**Can** a habit in one area of your life spill over into another area of your life?

(can a habit in one thing affect your lives in other areas you weren't expecting?)

discuss...

(...can a habit spill over)

**From** the book *The Psychology of Habits*

The power of habits lies in their ability to create a ripple effect throughout our lives. When we develop a positive habit in one area, it often spills over into other aspects of our lives, leading to a domino effect of positive change. For example, committing to a daily exercise routine not only improves our physical health but also enhances our mental clarity, boosts our energy levels, and instills a sense of discipline and commitment.

Is a habit the same as an addiction? Is there a difference? Thoughts?

*Psychology of Habits* –

What is the difference between habit and addiction? Habits are a mechanical gateway to addiction ie a little wine after a meal every day becomes a concern when you don't have anymore wine one day

From Psychology Today <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/addiction/causes-addiction>

Neuroscience research supports the idea that addiction is a habit that becomes deeply entrenched and self-perpetuating, rewiring the circuitry of the brain as it is repeated. The repetition of a highly pleasurable experience—drugs, gambling—alters neurons; they adjust their wiring to become increasingly efficient at the experience. They prune away their capacity to respond to other inputs. It is a form of deeply engraved learning.

As drug use stops, **engaging in** other rewarding activities rewires the brain to find interest and pleasure in non-drug pursuits. (there's hope here!)

- This is a biblically based concept the secular people discovered
- We'll look at this toward the end so you see where they got this

Let me ask – do you have to be a born again Christian for God's Word, its concepts, it's guidance for living, the gifts He freely gives us – to benefit you?

**Matthew** 5: 44 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may prove yourselves to be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors, do they not do the same?

- Don't rains fall on the just and the unjust? (contextually, this is *not* punishment)
- Doesn't the sun rise on the evil and the good?
- Aren't we to go the extra mile (blessing the bad guy)? Turn cheek? Pray for those who persecute?

- Psalm 145:9 the Lord is good to *some* and His mercies are over *some* of His works? No!, All, All!
- Acts 14, At Lystra, a man w/ lame feet listened to Paul's preaching, Paul told him to get up, he was healed
- The people said gods have come down among us as men
  - Paul found out that's what they were saying about him and (he / Barnabas) tore their robes
  - **16** "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; 17 and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

(...Psychology Today Article)

Conversely, negative habits can act as roadblocks on our path to personal growth. They can limit our potential, drain our energy, and reinforce self-destructive patterns.

- we discussed John Mayer, pornography, and → impotence, common to see over 500 girl parts before he gets up in the morning.
- We also discussed how habitual repeated pornography actually shrinks grey matter in the brain

**Next,** elements of how habits are formed/maintained and recognizing that the cue-routine-reward loop is key  
Let's go over this more in detail

#### CUE

- A cue is a signal that initiates a habit.
- It reminds the brain to perform a routine
- Can be Internal or External
  - External
    - time of the day
    - places
    - people
    - objects
  - Internal
    - emotions
    - thoughts
    - sensations

Give some examples of a cue

- Seeing your coffee cup a.m., "time to make coffee"
  - (Joe – "don't drink coffee")
- 11:50 a.m. at work or 4:50pm Friday afternoon

#### ROUTINE

- actions we perform in response to a cue
- Deeply engrained in neural pathways, like auto-pilot, can multitask on them
- Can be simple (tie shoes) or complex (check social media)
- Can work for us or against us depending on the nature of the habit

#### REWARD

- positive outcome we experience as result of performing the routine
- they reinforce the behavior – making it likely you'll do it again (this is the dopamine loop)
- Can be physical, emotional, psychological
- provides satisfaction, relief or pleasure

So behavioral patterns or habits have everything to do with what the mind does with information / stimuli around it.

Addictions are unchecked entrenched habits that physically rewire the brain, much like a system of pipes that deliver water in your house  
(you don't expect water to come out on your couch when you turn on the kitchen faucet)

So to break a habit, you interrupt the flow of this loop.

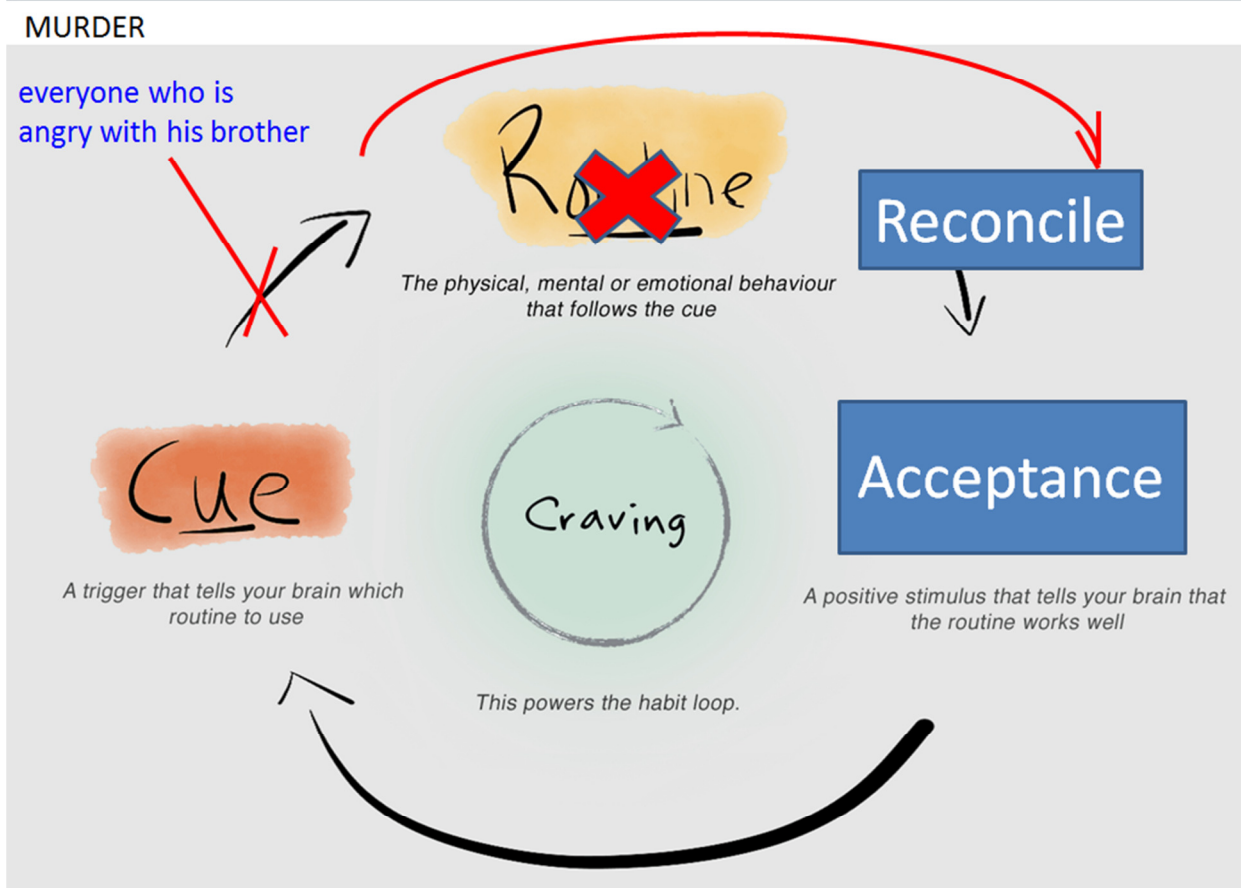
- (1) identify the cue,
- (2) interrupt the routine, and
- (3) imagine the reward.

Does the bible tell us anything about habits or does it encourage or instruct us in this area?  
discuss...

why, yes it does...

Specifically, let's look at the longest discourse of Jesus in the Gospels: the Sermon On The Mount

Matt 5: 21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' 22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. 23 "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.



The murder loop –

(1<sup>ST</sup> Pic loop)

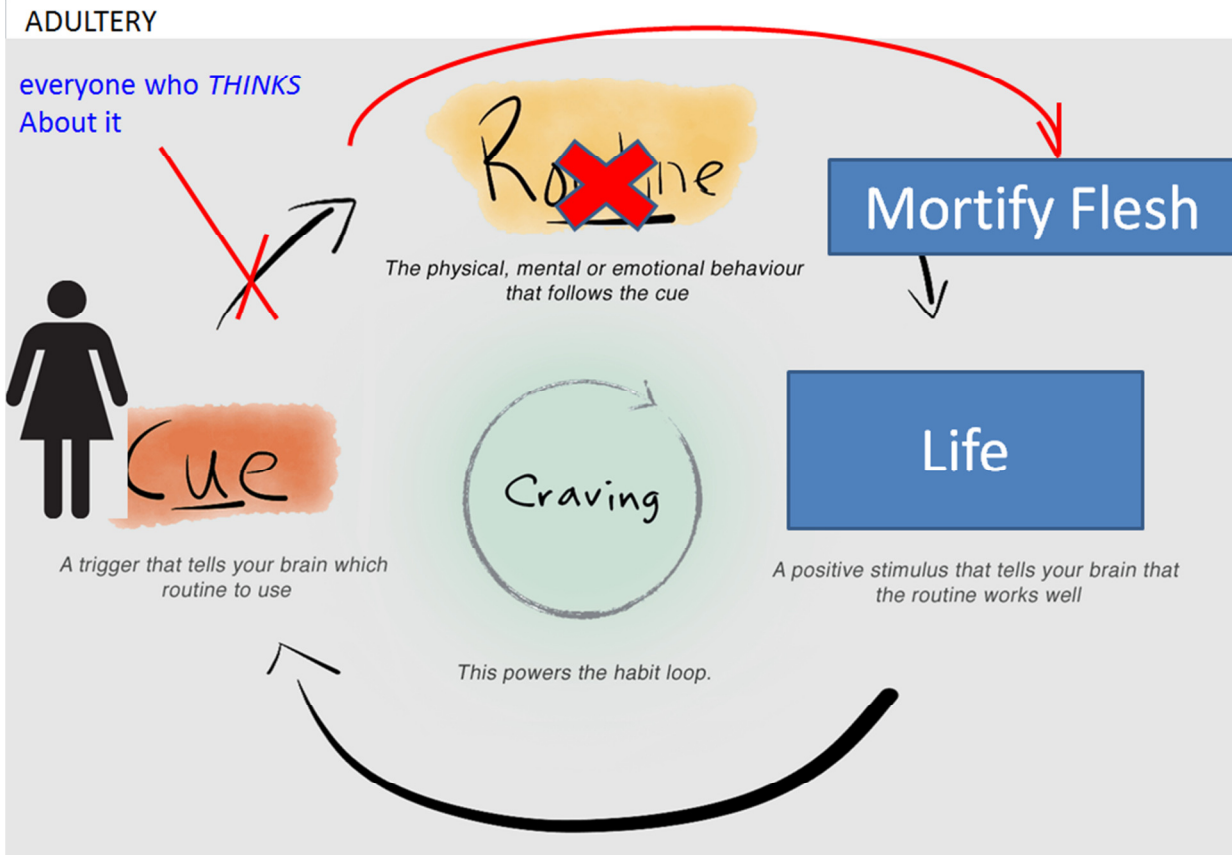
an outside stimulus is received from someone making you angry with them (or extreme, you want to kill them)

You can be told, "Don't do that" but that doesn't override your desire or we would never sin.

Colossians 2: 20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

(2<sup>nd</sup> pic loop)

- Jesus interrupts the CUE with 'whoever is angry with his brother'
- Gives you a NEW routine
- And your reward of acceptance is given



## Adultery

CUE

Matthew 5: 27 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';

BREAK CYCLE AT CUE

28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

NEW ROUTINE/REWARD

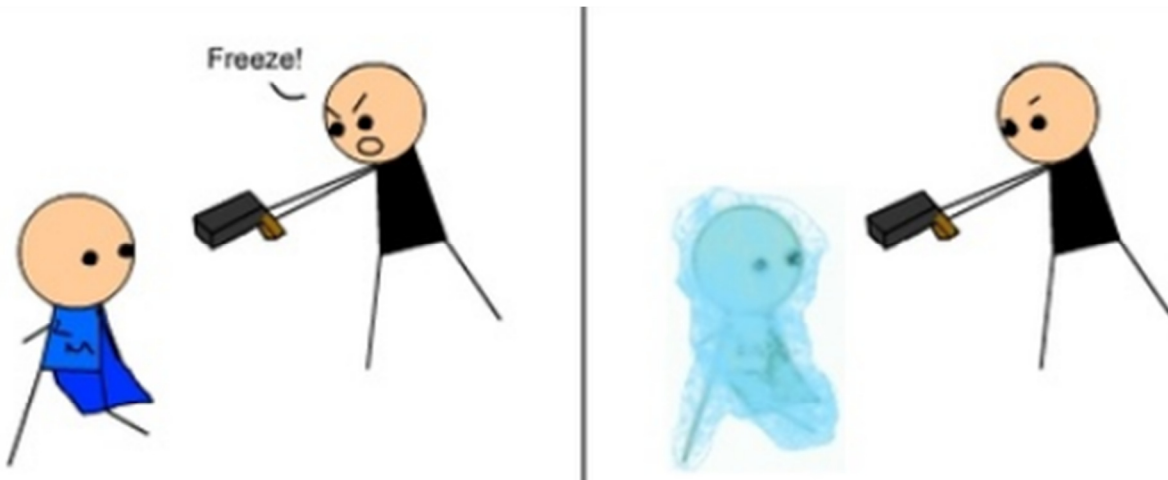
29 "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 "If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.

(joke: sorry for the illustration, hope it doesn't cause men to stumble)

- So the cue appears – much like when Christ was tempted –
- Your brain walks you through the routine on autopilot. Jesus interrupts it here, *thinking* about it

- Then gives you the new routine/habit to establish, mortification of the flesh

Detour time again, don't forget where we left off!



Those (back to text Adultery slide) of you literalists-only i.e. EVERYTHING is literal in the bible... Hahaha.

- How can one's hand make himself stumble literally?
- If the body gets "thrown" into the grave, why / how is it that Jesus says it gets thrown into Hell? Is a 6' hole where Hell is?
- If that's true, what about Christians who die and get buried in the same 6' hole? Are they in Hell too?
- What's going on here – eye/pluck out, hand/cut off? (discuss)

You might think this is silly talk but people all over are \* wrapped up \* in literalism to the death, spouting off what they don't understand.

They're not 'bad' people, they're just untaught

Albert Barnes says it like this: (LITERAL slide)

The Hebrews, like others, were accustomed to represent the affections of the mind by the members or parts of the body

- Romans 7:23 (NASB) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.
- Ro 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;
  - how do I believe with a muscle that pumps blood?
  - How does a muscle believe?

Relevant examples to Jesus' instruction on adultery:

- Ec 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might;
  - Is he talking about a blind man? How can a hand find its way to do anything?
  - NLT says: Whatever you do, do well
  - The idea is **EXECUTION**. The hand = execution
- Matthew 20:15 (NASB) 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?'
  - The workers were mad. They stared w/ their physical eye but inwardly there was **INTENTION** to complain. (eye = intention)
  - What's the intention of staring at a sexually attractive person not your spouse? Does it feed your fire? What's the outcome?