



# gracefellowship

Goliath *Must* Fall  
March 14, 2021  
Addiction Must Fall

There are a few things I think I should say from the very beginning today.

1. I feel very inadequate to talk about this topic and looked for ways out of it this week! I want to be very careful not to over simplify or make light of a very difficult aspect of life many of you face personally or have loved ones who deal with the giant we are talking about today.
2. I'm not a doctor or a counselor or a licensed anything to professionally speak about the giant we are going to stare down today.
3. In the story of David and Goliath we do not see this giant in a tangible way, I'll explain that a little more later, but I appreciate the direction that Louie took in this chapter of his book and hope that we can find ways to point to Jesus as face the final giant of this series.

If you have been reading the book throughout the series you already know what we are talking about today- we are talking about the giant of addiction.

## **The giant of addiction must fall.**

When we think of the giant of addiction our minds most readily go to some of the biggest, most apparent things: drugs, alcohol, and pornography. So, if those are not issues you struggle with then it may be easy to say that addiction isn't a giant in your life. But the reality is we are an addicted society.

## **An addiction is anything we can't live without.**

Some of us are addicted to technology. You feel lost if your phone isn't within reach at all times.

Some of us are addicted to food. It's your coping mechanism.

Some people get addicted to buying things. You call it retail therapy, but it's an addiction.

For some, pain becomes an addiction. You cut yourself or hurt yourself to feel something because you feel dead inside and worthless.

Others are addicted to gambling. The rush of the action and the hope of big money payouts is invigorating to you.

Here's one of the most wide-spread addictions we deal with: approval.

Like with most anything else in life, when we have addiction in our life we have to ask: What problem is occurring in my life that I feel the need to mask the pain or emptiness with addiction?

By the way, no one starts out doing something with the belief they will become addicted to it. A teenager who has a beer at a party never thinks, "This drink will lead me down a rabbit hole of addiction I'll battle my entire life." No one who takes a pain pill after surgery believes they will be addicted to prescription medications. In fact, if you are addicted to something you probably can't look back and trace the time when you moved from doing something recreationally or socially to all of a sudden it was needed to cope.

Addiction grabs us when we think we are in control. In fact, this giant wants you to believe you're in control. When my brother was in high school he was an all-state wrestler. He was good! He was so good, in fact, he could toy around with his opponents and let them think they were doing well and had a chance- until, bam! He would throw them on their back and pin them!

Addictions are a lot like that. They want you to believe you're in control. Because the longer you keep it around the deeper it gets embedded in your life. Suddenly one day you wake up and realize that you are no longer in control, but this thing controls you.

**The root of most addictions is pain. The cause is sin.**

(physical, emotional, spiritual pain)

**:: 1 Corinthians 6**

**12 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.**

Paul had to warn the Corinthians that just because they could do something didn't mean they should do it! And we are no different. Sin desires to master us. God told Cain way back in Genesis 3 that sin was crouching at his door and it desired to have him. God told Cain, "You must rule over it (sin)."

I understand that with addiction it isn't always as simple as just saying, "no." But walking in faith means we lean into the power of Jesus to help us put sinful desires to death.

Sin will always cause us to go further than we want to go, faster than we want to go. And here's the problem with addiction- it shows up and promises to make us feel better. It's a mask for our sins that leads us to deeper sins. We run to something that promises relief.

We say...

- This will take the edge off.
- This will bring me comfort.
- This will help me cope.

- This will numb the pain.
- This will bring me pleasure or joy.

And you know what- maybe it does for a little while. But then your addiction lets you down and you go even lower than before.

**For victory to come against this giant we have to look past the symptom and examine the cause.**

We need to invite Jesus to peel back the layers of our life and expose our hearts to His grace and truth so that we can understand where sin is at work to drive us to unhealthy things that can ruin our lives. What we need, when faced with chaos and feelings of inadequacy is to run to Jesus instead of toward things that harm us.

**Intimacy with Jesus is required to see the giant of addiction fall.**

Earlier I said that when we look at the story of David and Goliath we won't find a portion of the story dealing with addiction. In fact, in the whole Bible I'm only aware of one verse that specifically addresses addiction. Paul was writing to Titus when he told him to encourage people in the church not to be addicted to much wine. It's not that the Bible doesn't give us instruction in dealing with addiction, it's just not an emphasis of the narratives we follow in the story. So, in the story of David we don't have a person in the story who we can point to and say, "Look at how their addiction messed things up!"

Here's what we do see: a King who tells a shepherd boy that he is incapable of victory and needs covering so he can cope with the giant in front of him.

**:: 1 Samuel 17:32-33**

**32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."**

**33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth."**

We talked about this in line with the giant of rejection, but David is told 4 words that a lot of us struggle with and that push us toward giving in to our addictions: YOU ARE NOT ABLE...

David was just a young man- maybe in his teens or early 20s. He didn't have any military training; he didn't have any armor. By all accounts he was not going to be able to go to war against a giant like Goliath. So what does Saul come up with as an answer to the predicament? He tells David to cover up with his armor so he can cope with an enemy that was covered in armor from head to toe and wanted to kill David.

Addiction talks to us like this. You're not able to overcome me! You will never be

free of me. There will never be a day you will be able to give a testimony of victory about what I'm doing in your life.  
YOU ARE NOT ABLE...

But with Jesus there is hope! With Jesus nothing is impossible. With Jesus we don't have to cover our fears and anxiety and worry and sin with harmful things we believe help us cope. With Jesus we develop a relationship of intimacy that allows us to move forward in vulnerability.

So David steps out of King Saul's tent with no armor. He comes out with a sling shot. David steps out into the daylight in the power of God. He even tells Goliath when they come face to face, "You come at me with all these weapons, but I come at you in the power of the God of Israel!" (my paraphrase).

David is vulnerable and he is exposed, but that's when God does His best work! Sin thrives in the darkness. For us to win our battles against addiction we must bring them into the light. If you think that it's best for you to keep your addiction hidden you are lying to yourself and giving your addiction more power over you.

In the book, Louie writes this:

**"There are two routes you can take. Route one is our decision to lean into the negative side of vulnerability and feel unable and inadequate. Route two is our decision to lean into the person of Jesus. Whenever we feel vulnerable, we acknowledge our weaknesses and run to Jesus." – Louie Giglio**

It's the difference in looking for something to cover up and mask your pain or running to the cross and laying all your pain at the feet of Jesus and crying out for deliverance from the bondage of your addiction.

When sin first entered the world we learned a lot about how all of us would deal with sin in our lives from our first parents. Adam and Eve sinned against God by breaking His only rule- eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Then they hid. They covered themselves to try to limit their shame and they found a dark place to hide from God.

Your addiction may not be prescription meds or pornography or alcohol- maybe it is, but that isn't all we can be addicted to. The way you will find help to overcome addiction is by bringing it into the light of God's glory.

**:: Titus 2:11-14**

**11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.  
12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,  
13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,**

**14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.**

God's grace is the overcoming factor in seeing the giant of addiction fall. It isn't a matter of you being strong enough to resist the calling of your addiction. On your own you probably can't overcome those things that are ungodly, worldly passions. There isn't enough self-control on the planet to resist an addiction. You need the power of God's grace through the Holy Spirit helping you say "no" to those things.

We don't only need to bring these things before Jesus, we need the help of community to overcome addiction. Christian community brings prayer and encouragement as well as accountability and godly council.

**:: James 5:13-16**

**13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.**

**14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.**

**15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.**

**16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.**

Here's another thing I think we need to realize when it comes to addiction and community:

Addiction doesn't just steal away from your life, it steals from the lives of those who love you most. Those closest to you are already in the war with you as you deal with addiction. You might as well open up to them for help!

I read an interview this week of an actress named Kristen Johnson. Most of you wouldn't know her, she was in a show I enjoyed called 3<sup>rd</sup> Rock From the Sun. In the article about her history dealing with addiction she talked about how she and her sister struggled with addiction and recovery. Her sister died in August 2020 battling addiction.

"I understand what it is to be an addict and to love an addict. I really understand how painful it is to love an addict. I don't know which one is a greater hell."

– Kristen Johnson

Addiction steals not only from us, but from those we love. That's why it is important to open up to those in your life and get them to be part of the solution. You are not alone in your battles. As the body of Christ it is our desire to walk

together through all of life's hardships. One of the greatest lies the enemy wants you to believe is that you have to face your giants alone. That's what Goliath did to the Israelites in the story. Every day he would call for one man to come face him. And no one in their right mind would do it- so Goliath declared victory every day. But then David showed up to face Goliath and the giant fell to the ground dead.

So, you might say, "But David did it alone! He was out there by himself facing Goliath." Go back and read the story again from the beginning. Every time David talks about going out to battle against lions or bears or giants, he says The Lord enabled him to have victory. David never viewed himself as being alone. Christ is inside you and He is bigger than your addiction. But you will not do it alone.

- you may need rehab
- you may need professional counseling
- you definitely need accountability
- you need the gospel to speak into your life each and every day, reminding you continually that there is power in the blood of Jesus that can overcome all our sins.

When God saves us, He saves us to set us free from everything that has power over us. You may not experience instantaneous release from the issues you're struggling with, but freedom is available as you walk with Jesus and discover that hope only comes through Him.

Calls to Action:

1. If you are someone who has been down the road of addiction and you've found a certain level of victory in Christ, we would love to hear your story and have it told. You can let people know they aren't alone in the fight and that there are people who know what they are going through. Would you let me know if you're interested in telling your story of God changing your life?
2. If you are in the middle of fighting an addiction and need help, we want to walk with you through that. You may have kept this private for a long time and few people know you are battling addiction, but today you want to reach out and get the help you need, would you fill out the Connection Card around you and turn it in to us? Check "Other" and fill out the bubble at the bottom of the card/online form.
3. If you don't know Jesus as your Savior and can't imagine a power that can set you free from sin and self-destructive patterns of behavior, today can be the day you surrender to Jesus and turn from your sin, proclaiming Him as your King and joining His Kingdom.