

Co-Dependency

Feeling **Responsible** for
Other People's **Problems**

ALWAYS
makes things
WORSE!

Style of writing!

I love bullet points!

Don't talk me to death.

Give me your bottom line first and then make your explanation brief.
That is why:

- My table of contents gives the main subjects!
- The Intro. briefly answers each question in the booklet.
- The chapters are brief studies, filling in each point.

Table of Contents

1. I was a **Gnat in the Face of God!**
2. The **Real Reason I Don't Try Too hard to Help!**
3. **Strong Bible Verses on Whom we Serve!**
4. **Leaders give Expectations Up Front!**



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Intro – Overview

1. I was a Gnat in the Face of God!

The **Hardest Moment** of my **Christian** Life. (*Expanded study in chap. 1 – pg. 1*)

2. The Real Reason I Don't Try Too Hard to Help!

The Second Half of what God said to me! (*Expanded study in chap. 2 – pg. 3*)

3. Strong Bible Verses on Whom we Serve!

Such strong verses! (*Expanded study in chap. 3 – pg. 5*)

4. Leaders give Expectations Up Front!

Never Assume that people know your Expectations. (*Expanded study in chap. 4 – pg. 7*)

Chap. 1

I was a Gnat in the Face of God!**My Most Painful and Personal Story!**

I became a Christian at 19 years old.

Within 2 years all five of my siblings and both of my parents became Christians.

For the next 19 years, my entire family looked to me for spiritual leadership.

Our biggest problem was that my dad's temper remained horrible after he became a Christian.

Almost every month, for 19 years, I was needed at my parents' home to try to help when my dad was exploding in anger. His tantrums could last 3-5 hours.

During that time, he would scream, rant and threaten everyone. His temper was against each of my siblings at different times as well as against multiple strangers and business partners.

These were exhausting, horrible times and I put hundreds of hours into trying to help my dad and to resolve his arguments with everyone.

At 38 years old, we had a horrible incident where my dad blew up against my 5-year-old son for no reason and threatened to beat my son as he used to beat me.

During his tantrum, he shoved his finger into my precious gentle wife's face, pushing her back for no reason other than she was nearby.

That was the brick that broke my back.

At that point I removed myself from my dad. That separation lasted six years.

For the first two years of that separation, I tackled three projects.

1. I went to two different counselors monthly.
2. I reported to my Elders on the state of my soul weekly.
3. I carefully wrote down every act of major abuse that my dad had ever done to me as a child.

That document took me two years to write and wound up being 18 pages long. The more I wrote, the more the burdens of my childhood became lighter.

Life Changing Experience with God

After those two years, I was finally calm enough to hear from God. I was in prayer, and I prayed one of the best prayers ever. I said:

*“Lord, please **show** me what you are
trying to **teach** me **through all** of this!”*

I honestly did not expect to hear anything. To my surprise the Lord immediately spoke to my spirit. He said to me:

*“John,
for **19 years** I have been **trying to discipline** your **dad**, but you
constantly blocked my **discipline** by **rescuing** your dad.”*

*“For **19 years** you have been a **Gnat** in my **Face!**”*

This was the first time I ever understood that

I made things **WORSE**

when I **Tried Too Hard**

to **Help** people who did

NOT want to **CHANGE!**

This is the sin of Co-Dependency.

The Real Reason I Don't Try Too Hard to Help

Continuing My Story from Chapter 1

When the Lord told me that I had been a “*Gnat in His Face*” for 19 years, blocking HIS correction of my dad, I could see it, as in a picture. I saw the hand of the Lord coming to correct my dad.

Each time, though, I came swooping in to rescue my dad from his own actions. I was like a Gnat buzzing in the face of the Lord keeping him from correcting my dad with the consequences of his own actions.

After the Lord said this to me, I was brokenhearted and said to the Lord:

*“Lord, I put **HUNDREDS of HOURS** into helping my dad.
In **every** case, I made the situation **worse**.”*

It wasn’t exactly a question. It was more like a cry of pain before my Lord. However, the Lord was not done correcting me. He spoke to me a second time.

*“I **never called** you to minister to your dad.*

*If you read my Word, you will see that my main **pattern**
is to **separate** extended family
so that **each new nuclear family** can form their **own identity**.*

*In your **self-righteousness**, you **assumed** that you were to minister
to your dad, **without ever asking me**.”*

Then the Lord said the words to me that forever **crushed** my **deceptions**. He said:

*“**Every Single** hour that you **WASTED** in rescuing your dad,
I had a **humble, hungry** person who would have been **changed** for
Eternity if you had given them **just One Hour**.*

*You were so **busy** with your **self-righteous ministry** that you did
not have **emotional margins** for **those hungry souls**.”*

In my heart, I could see HUNDREDS of humble, hungry souls for whom ONE HOUR of my serving them would have changed them for eternity. In my pain, I asked the Lord one more question. I asked:

*“Lord, **what happened** to all those humble, hungry people?*

*They were **ready** to **change**, and I was **so enamored** with my **self-righteous rescuing** of my dad that I **didn’t have enough emotional energy** left over to help them.*

*What **happened** to those **humble, hungry** people Lord?*

I will never forget how the Lord responded to me about those humble people whom I had not served. He said to me:

*“You **may never ask** that question!”*

I am crying as I write this, even though that happened almost 30 years ago. I will never forget the pain of **NOT** being available to people who **Wanted** to **Change**, because I wasted my energy on people who did **NOT** want to Change.

Now I FULLY understood the sin of being Co-Dependent.

My life forever changed in that moment. That happened almost 30 years ago, and my life has been different every day since then.

1. I realized that feeling responsible for other people’s problems is **Wrong** & I will make the situation **WORSE**!

I do **NOT** have God’s permission to **INVEST** myself in anyone unless they are **willing** to **change** and grow more like Jesus.

I may **give** an **individual act** of serving, but I may **not INVEST** myself unless this person wants to **change** to be more like Jesus.

2. Even more, I realized that **every hour** that I **WASTE** on someone who does **NOT** want to change, means that I am **NOT AVAILABLE** for someone who **DOES** want to change.

Strong Bible Verses on Whom we Serve!

After God spoke to me, my eyes were opened. I saw Jesus words in Mt. 7.

*Mt. 7:6 Do **NOT** give **Dogs** what is **Sacred**.*

*Do **NOT** throw your **Pearls** to **Pigs**.*

If you do,

*they will **Trample Them Under** their **Feet**, and*

Turn and Tear You to Pieces.

Dogs & Pigs

You can give a wonderful, comfortable bath to both a dog and a pig.
You can HELP them become Clean!

Immediately after you are done HELPING them, they will return to the mud and filth. Dogs and Pigs do **NOT WANT** to **Change** and become clean.

Sacred Pearls

Your **Time** and **Emotional Energy** are your Sacred Pearls. (Mt. 13:45, Rev. 21:21)

Trample Them Under their Feet and Turn and Tear You to Pieces

Until you have been burned you don't realize how people will turn on you because you stopped helping them.

They did **NOT** change and did **Not Appreciate** all that you had done for them.

Eventually, you grew **weary** of helping people who do **NOT Change** and **You Stopped** giving and helping.

They **Immediately Attacked** you and **Tore You to Pieces**.

These **scars** are **God's Gift** to teach you wisdom.

Prov. 9:7-9

⁷ Whoever corrects a mocker invites **insults**;
 whoever rebukes the wicked incurs **abuse**.

⁸ Do **not** rebuke mockers or they will **hate** you;
 rebuke the **wise** and they will **love** you.

⁹ **Instruct** the wise and they will be **wiser still**;
teach the righteous and they will **add** to their **learning**.

This passage in Proverbs 9 gives such clear direction on how we are only to invest ourselves in those who want to change.

Gal. 6:2 & 5

v.2 **Bear One Another's Burdens**, and thus fulfil the law
 of the Christ. v. 5 For **Each** shall **Bear** his **OWN Burden**.

Gal. 6:2 & 5 are two fascinating verses. Basically, these verses teach us to **ONLY** help others as much as they are **WILLING** to **WORK HARD** to help themselves.

Takers want **You** to do **All** the **Work**.

They are drowning in Self-Pity and don't think they should have to bear their Own Burdens.

Giving People Freedom to Fail

Pain is the best teacher. When you give people freedom to fail, you are often giving them the best gift.

Ps. 119:67 **Before I was Afflicted I Went Astray**,
but Now I Obey your Word.

Leaders give Expectations Up Front!

Ultimately, Co-dependent people have to recognize that we **Lacked** good **Leadership**.

One of our most helpful booklets is the booklet titled “**Expectations**”.

There are literally **Thousands** of **Bible verses** that teach us the wisdom of **Clearly** giving **Expectations Up Front!**

There is a **One Time Opportunity**, **BEFORE** you try to help or serve anyone to graciously clarify Expectations.

Leaders also call this the setting of **Values**!

In every **Marriage** discussion, every **Parent / Child** discussion, every **Business** discussion, every **Ministry** opportunity and **every Tension** dialogue, it is important to **BEGIN** by clarifying Expectations.

When you tell a “Taker” what you expect of them **BEFORE** you **help** them in any way, they **quickly move on** to someone else.

Conclusion – What is Next?

If this booklet has helped you then I **loudly applaud you** for facing this painful subject.

Your **life** is going to get so much **Easier, Sweeter** and **More Fruitful** for Jesus. You will mark this season of being set free from being Co-Dependent as one of the most important transitions of your life.

I do have two recommendations to continue to move forward.

1. Study the concept of Expectations including our booklet on that important subject.
2. Have fun encouraging friends who laugh and tease you when you are tempted to “Try Too Hard” to help others.

We also have 100+ booklet studies coming out.

Here is a sample list of 10 of our booklets.

1. Bible Reading:

The Secrets to Sweetness in God's Word!

This study shows how a One Year Bible enables you to cover the entire Bible in one year. In addition, it shows how hunger-based reading is so different from performance-based reading.

2. The Blood of Jesus:

The Most Powerful Words Ever Spoken

This study teaches us to daily live with a clean heart and to keep short accounts when we stumble.

3. Bosses - What They Wish You Knew

This study gives us a bigger picture of the pressures and responsibilities that are carried by every boss.

4. Christianity – the ONLY Logical Religion

This study compares Christianity to all other religions and shows why only Christianity answers the hard questions.

5. Conflicts – How to Remove All Strife from My Life!

The Bible teaches that truth is a belt, and our perspective is a belt loop.

6. The Cross – The Story of the Last 24 Hours

This study combines all four gospels to examine the last 24 hours and what happened on the cross.

7. Grace – the Power to WANT to do Right!

This study teaches us to release God's Grace constantly so that God can change our hearts and give us HIS desires.

8. Marriage – 3 Bottom Lines!

Six times the Bible says that the purpose of Marriage is for the two to become one.

9. Science & the Bible – How They Agree

Many modern scientific breakthroughs were predicted and practiced in the Bible thousands of years ago.

10. Test Yourself:

Do your Life Goals bring you LIFE?

Finish the sentence “*I Want ...*” and see what you get.

Our goal is to provide

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