

The cross demands a surrendered heart: the work of Christ offers forgiveness and a new covenant that depends not on human performance but on the grace poured out. In light of this reality, Christian identity includes not only Jesus as Savior but also as Father who offers care and restoration. Addiction arises when something created usurps the sovereignty that belongs only to God; any habit, substance, or desire that governs one's life becomes an idol. Scripture identifies this problem of sovereignty as the root of the cycle of sin: temptation itself is not sin, but rather surrendering to it.

Addiction manifests in both chemical and behavioral forms: alcohol and drugs, but also shopping, work, social media, pornography, and any compulsion that absorbs attention and willpower. This attachment begins in the heart and is reflected in our eyes, priorities, and daily actions. Therefore, the spiritual battle requires more than managing symptoms: it requires a shift in our treasures and affections, a reorientation of the heart toward the eternal.

The biblical solution calls for identifying and removing idols, prioritizing the kingdom of God daily, and allowing the truth of Christ to transform desire. Storing up treasures in heaven, valuing the eternal over the temporal, and cultivating a life of communion with God changes the light of the body and liberates us from the power of addiction. Restoration occurs when the truth is received and practiced: intentional following, the community of believers, and discipleship sustain freedom.

The congregation receives a practical invitation: to write down their burdens, bring them to the altar, and begin the process of renunciation. The collective experience of freedom confirms that sincere surrender bears fruit and that the mission in the world grows when hearts are aligned with Christ. The final call demands daily action: to seek first the kingdom, to live with eternal purpose, and to trust in God's faithfulness as the community accompanies them on the path of restoration.

### Key Takeaways

#### 1. Addiction is a problem of mastery

Addiction is not merely a failure of will; it is a displacement of lordship: something or someone is claiming the allegiance that belongs to God. Recognizing this usurpation allows us to focus the struggle on the heart rather than the symptoms. Changing lordships requires replacing what governs our affections with the presence and authority of Christ. [49:13]

#### 2. Idols govern affection

Everything that occupies our inner affections will eventually direct our outward attention and daily decisions. Identifying what consumes our thoughts and energy reveals the true idol, even if it is dressed in innocent garb. Changing affections involves redirecting desire toward the eternal and practicing small renunciations that retrain the heart. [78:47]

#### 3. Always seek the kingdom first

Spiritual priority is not occasional; it should be the first decision of each day. Putting God first reorients priorities, reduces anxiety about the temporal, and transforms the use of time and resources. Consistency in seeking righteousness and fellowship with God deactivates patterns of dependency and produces increasing freedom. [96:31]

#### 4. The truth of Christ sets free.

Christian truth is not just doctrine; it acts as a liberating force when received and practiced. Exposure to and daily application of this truth breaks repetitive patterns and provides a new identity. True freedom arises from placing Christ as the authority, allowing his word to govern our desires, and living in a community that sustains transformation. [69:34]

#### Bible reading

Matthew 6:19-24 (KJV)

\*19 Lay up for yourselves not treasures on earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break in and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 The lamp of the body is the eye: if thine eye is good, thy whole body shall be full of light: 23 But if thine eye is evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If then the light which is in thee is darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will be devoted to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and riches.\*

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#### Observation questions

According to Matthew 6:21, what does the location of our treasure on our heart reveal?

What two types of lordship does Jesus contrast in Matthew 6:24?

How does the sermon describe addiction as a problem of mastery rather than just a failure of will? [49:13]

What examples of behavioral (non-chemical) addictions were mentioned? [47:50]

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#### Interpretation questions

Why does Jesus directly link the treasure of the heart with the ability to serve a master (vv. 21-24)?

Addiction is described as a displacement of loyalty that belongs to God. How does this explain how temptation becomes sin? [56:50]

How does the light of the body (the eye) affect the whole person according to Matthew 6:22-23, and what does this have to do with idols? [01:18:47]

If the solution is always the same (change the lordship), why do people insist on treating only the symptoms? [59:39]

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#### Application questions

What consumes your thoughts and daily energy? Identifying this reveals your true idol. [01:18:47]

Is there any habit, substance, or desire that rules your life? How have you seen this cruel “master” pull you away from your created purpose? [44:15]

Spiritual priority should be the first decision of each day. What does “seeking first the kingdom” practically look like in your morning routine? [01:36:31]

What small sacrifice could you practice this week to retrain your heart and refocus your affections on the eternal? [01:18:47]

The truth sets you free when you practice it. What practical step (writing down your burden, bringing it to the altar, joining a group) will you take to break a repetitive pattern? [44:40]

How can your community of believers intentionally support you on the path of restoration? [01:41:42]

In what area of your life do you need to trust in God's faithfulness instead of worrying about the temporary? [01:32:08]