

Section Two - The Dis-eased Heart

A wounded heart that has not been taught the ways of God can easily fall into sin.

Sin

To sin is to simply break God's law.

sin is the transgression of the law. [1 John 3:4]

Sin is an act of disobedience and God has made a way for our sins to be forgiven which is fantastic but He wants to do something even more amazing.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [1 John 1:9]

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. [1 John 1:7]

In the last scripture the word sin is also used to describe the corrupted nature within us. This worldly nature is what addicts us to sinning and God wants to wash our nature clean of it.

Washed

If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. [John 13:8]

Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it [Eph 5:25-26]

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. [2 Cor 7:1]

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: [1 Pet 1:22]

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. [Psa 51:10]

From these scriptures we see that when we commit a sin (selfish unloving behaviour) our heart also becomes polluted with sin (selfish unloving attitudes). Sin also opens the door to another principle that works together with it. In the scriptures it is called death.

Death

Death first entered the world through the first man Adam when he sinned, since then everyone has come under the influence of this fatal disease.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: [Rom 5:12]

Consider what happened when Adam committed the first sin and death entered him.

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil ... And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. [Gen 2:9&16-17]

We know that Adam ate the forbidden fruit, and because it is impossible for God to lie Adam therefore died on that day. However his body and spirit carried on functioning though, so what died? We can see from this there is an additional meaning to the word death in the scriptures to those already used in everyday English.

The tree called 'The Knowledge of Good and Evil' was no less than 'The Tree of Death'. Both the trees of Life and Death were available to Adam but he tragically chose the fruit that grew on the Tree of Death. Fear comes from knowing that you have done evil so as Adam swallowed the fruit, he was filled with the fear that comes from death. Death within caused Adam to be frightened of God and he tried to hide from Him. It is extreme folly for us to hide from God as only He is the source of the life that we need so that we can be released from this death.

We can see this additional meaning of the word death in the following scriptures:

He that loveth not *his* brother abideth (lives) in death. [1 John 3:14]

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. [2 Cor 7:10]

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. [John 5:24]

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. [Rom 8:1-2]

Fear

The following scripture gives further details of how death addicts us to sin.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death (death's fear) were all their lifetime subject to bondage. [Heb 2:14-15]

This scripture says we are in bondage due to the fear of death but this is not the fear of dying but the fear that comes from death within us or death's fear.

Pain

When motivated by fear we do things to avoid the pain it causes. The fear that death produces is not the same as the fear experienced when something makes a loud bang close to us. Death's fear produces ungodly emotional pain that is called torment in the following scripture. Often the way this ungodly emotional pain influences us can be so subtle we can be unaware we are under its influence at all.

fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. [1 John 4:18]

Our sinful behaviour is simply our attempts to minimise our ungodly emotional pain that comes from death at work within us.

It is far easier to fight an enemy that we know about. We need to realise that fear and the torment it causes is at the root of all our enemies' attempts to get us off track.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. [2 Tim 1:7]

Fear is at the root of our weakness to live righteously and it creates in us an unsound mind. An unsound mind will come to illogical conclusions that have been inspired by our faulted coping mechanisms as they try to deal with our ungodly emotional pain. It is truth that sets us free therefore fear and an unsound mind brings us into bondage.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. [Rom 8:15]

The main strategy of the enemy of your soul is to get you addicted to placating the emotional pain caused by your ungodly fears.

Addictions

It is hardly surprising that one of the best descriptions of addiction can be found in the scriptures. The following scripture gives a detailed description of somebody who is living in the flesh (selfishly) and therefore still under the influence of the law of sin that is the law of death.

... but I am carnal (selfish) sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? [Rom 7:14-24]

Note that in this passage we see a Hebrew way of thinking and that is not commonly found in English speaking cultures. In the book of Romans the whole person body and spirit is often referred to as members, flesh or body in a similar way that the word soul in the Old Testament is used to refer to a complete person as well as just his inner man. Some passages in the book of Romans do not make much sense until you realise that they use words, that we refer to our body with in everyday English, to refer to our inner man too. It is the selfish nature of our inner man that sins, our bodies do what our inner man allows. Our bodies do not tell us what to do.

When we are addicted to something it becomes our first love there will be little love left for any one else. Any other relationship will be an intrusion and in competition with it. All our ungodly emotional pain and bonding will blind us to what is really happening. To seek change there needs to be a wake up call that things do not have to be like this and that through Jesus they can change. All He is waiting for is for us to respond in the right way.

Addictive Mind Set

Most people struggle to manage their inner pain alone unless their problems become major. By studying those with major addiction problems we can see what is going on more clearly. We can then check out and see whether any of those issues are affecting us in a less dramatic way.

In many ways the roots of mental illnesses and addictions are the same so what is said below about addictive behaviour will in the main apply to those with mental health issues. By studying mental illness and addictive behaviour the long-term sufferer has

been seen to develop a mindset that is in fact quite astounding. We all like to think we are rational beings making sensible choices in our lives in reality this is just not so. Those who are not dealing with their emotional pain in a godly way will all have irrational thoughts, emotions and behaviour that cause them to be difficult to get along with.

When enduring severe emotional stress, possibly by being abused in some way, if it is too traumatic for us to cope with, as often happens in our early years, then fear and its pain can overwhelm us. If we do not have anyone to help us through this we grasp at anything to escape the pain. A person becomes an addict because at some time a chemical, activity or fantasy was indulged in to escape the reality of their often legitimate emotional pain. The illusion created by our indulgence pacifies our pain but it is a faulted defence mechanism that will eventually wear off. When it does so our emotional pain will demand another fix of illusion and so the addiction or mental health problem is born.

The illusion becomes so important otherwise our pain overwhelms us. We become a complete slave to the illusion and everyone else around will be expected to be its slave too. Because our pain has to be pacified anything we do to achieve this is seen as reasonable whether it is or not and it is here all the 'head games' start. Others challenge us about our unreasonable attitudes and behaviour but you are not able to see them as unreasonable. When your unreasonable behaviour is clearly displayed the depth of our denial grows and we start to blame others for our need to behave as we do. We act the victim and start to project our faults onto others. The closer others try and draw along side the more they disturb these splinter like faults and we push those we want to be close to away. If you are addicted to anything these mental processes will be at work in some measure in your head. The only way of complete escape and healing is to deal with all the ungodly emotional pain coming from the wounds in our heart.

Intimacy

Television series called soaps in particular become addictive because they give the illusion of supplying our need for intimate contact. They do this by allowing us to peer into the details of someone else's life without them being able to touch us leaving our emotional pains undisturbed. Our most intimate relationship, parents, spouse etc will be satisfying our God given need for intimacy but due to that intimacy this relationship will be disturbing our ungodly emotional pain the most. To be Set Free To Love requires we surrender all our pain to Him. If we refuse to face up to our pain and take responsibility for it we are left wallowing in a pit of pain and bad relationships.

Head Games

So if you are not perfect (That is everyone OK?) it is because elements of your thinking, emotions and behaviour are affected by an addiction or in other words a faulted ungodly self-protection mechanism. Every addict plays mind games (yes you do) first of all they try to pretend they have not got any problems and avoid facing them or deny the part they are playing in the stress and strife they cause in their intimate relationships. This can develop into playing the victim and shifting all the blame onto others and when fully developed they claim those they are abusing are abusing them. This is also frequently called projection or transference.

To some extent we will all have these mechanisms in our attitudes and behaviour (come on yes we do) and if you desire to let God purify you, you are going to have to face this terrifying truth (stop fighting just do it). It is humbling, requires ruthless honesty and also great courage to face up to all those things you normally do your best to stop your

conscience provoking you about but it is utter foolishness to run. You not only loose out on a better life yourself but also for those whose lives you come into close contact with and you say you love.

Recovery

So we see that pacifying the emotional pain that comes from the death within us becomes an addiction. And the remedy is so ridiculously simple many miss it.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. [Rom 6:12-13]

present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which* is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. [Rom 12:1-2]

The key here is in the words yield and present in these two verses for they are the same word in the original Greek. God's answer is simply that we present these issues to Him. Remember He is not a control freak He cannot deal with something that has not been given to Him. Most of the time we struggle on trying to live righteously through self-effort but we cannot because we are addicted to these things as powerfully as a heroin addict is to his fix.

Whenever we have a problem if we actually give it and ourselves to God He will then transform us and renew our way of thinking. It is often a process and it will not always produce immediate results but we will find it works very quickly. The reason many walk around in failure is because they do not actually talk to God beyond saying sorry and promising to try harder. That is not the answer God has provided it is the presenting and yielding of ourselves to Him that brings the breaking of our ungodly habits. It is through faith in Him not self-effort.

this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. [1 John 5:4]

As most of our pain involves relationships it will require a lot of forgiving. Then we need to actually, out loud is helpful, present and yield ourselves and all our problems to God in prayer so that by faith in Him we are transformed out of bondage into freedom.

It may not always be obvious but temptations are often simply fears prodding your unsundered emotional pain so that you will pacify the pain by surrendering to a self-indulgent course of action. We need to overcome and get all these ungodly ingrained habitual fears that we are addicted to cleansed from our nature by God's love.

It is unresolved ungodly emotional pain that has been hidden by the forgetfulness of time that lies behind many of our addictions whether to sin, drugs and even mental health problems.

We have ungodly fears due to our fallen nature but sometimes we give the evil one ground to hijack these fears and they can become a snare to us as discussed in the next section - The Ensnared Heart

As we surrender to God He will cleanse us from all sin and death. How to go about this is demonstrated in Section Five – The Restored Heart.