

Lifting the LID

Bible Study exploring God's heart for mental health

Session 4: Under another's Control

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

Session Objective: This week we're going to have an introduction to the area of addiction and also look at the question of 'negative' control state in the life of a Christian. We are also looking at those who are caring for people with mental health challenges and how Jesus responds to two struggling parents.

Bible study – 2 Corinthians 12:7-11: Paul's Thorn in the Flesh

- a. What is Paul really suffering from?
- b. How does it publicly and privately impact him?
- c. Is it a physical – mental – spiritual problem?

Background: Paul is a giant in the Christian faith and history. However, there is a problem that he continually (daily) struggles with? Nowhere in the scriptures is it identified nor does he name the struggle that is consistent in his personal and public life. Could it be an addiction that is and does cause him a continuous battle to keep it under control?

Learn it Up – Intro to Addictions

What are the top addictions You know of?

1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

What is Addiction?

Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.

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Types of Addictions – See the handout - *Types of Addictions*

Common Effects of Addictions

- Inability to stop using
- Use despite health problems
- Obsessions
- Extreme Risk Taking
- Taking continued and large amounts
- Sacrifices
- Dropping hobbies and activities
- Secrecy/Solitude
- Denial
- Legal and Financial Issues
- Sleeplessness
- Appetite changes
- Withdrawal
- Increasing Tolerances
- Change in Appearances
- Physical damages and diseases

***Bible study* - Luke 7:11-15 and Luke 8:40-42 & 49-56:**

What about the family and caregivers?

- Before they meet Jesus, what do you imagine is going through the minds of the widow in Luke 7 and Jairus in Luke 8?
- Have you supported a loved one through serious illness?
- What was it like?
- What is Jesus' response to these two parents?

Notes: In these two short episodes, we see Jesus responding to parents in the distress of losing someone they love. On top of her raw grief, the widow of Nain must have also been thinking about her fragile future - without husband or son, she faced a future that was financially insecure and socially isolated. And those experiences are often shared by those who love people with mental health problems: If the person is unable to work, or if the caregivers needs to take time off, then there can be a real financial impact. And if the person doesn't want to leave the house or spend time with friends, then there will be a major social impact on the caregivers too.

Jairus leaves his daughter's side to beg Jesus for help. He's made the agonizing decision to leave his daughter in her dying moments to seek help. Tough choices

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are often part of the care experience - especially as caregivers are often torn between the demands of love and loyalty and their own well-being. How many people do we know that are going through similar challenges?

- ☐ The partner of someone with personal addiction of pornography
- ☐ A parent of someone who is self-harming
- ☐ The child of someone with drug addictions

With both of these parents, we see Jesus act with great understanding. We read that Jesus' heart goes out to the widow - He was moved and He got involved. How might we act to support those in our community who are struggling to support others with poor mental health.

“Call on Me in your day of trouble, I will deliver you, and I will honor you.” Psalm 50:15

Closing Prayer:

Almighty God,

We pray for those who give care to family members and friends living with mental illness and addictions. May they feel your loving hand and your sustaining and nurturing power. May they feel less frustrated and experience less guilt for very human feelings they may have about wanting to escape their tasks. May they find us eager to support them amid their difficult tasks. Be with and touch in a healing and sustaining way those who suffer mentally because addictions. They have made hard and negative life changing choices, but you can restore them and put them back in the walk with you. Deliver them Father or give them the strength to deal and cope with the problems. Amen

See the Additional Handouts to the Session:

Stats on Addictions in US

Types of Addictions

5 Key Verses in Helping in Addictions