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The Weight Room **Addiction**



UPCI
YOUTH MINISTRIES

PREVIEW

The point of today's lesson is not to get you to leave our club and cancel your Netflix subscription or delete every secular song on your playlist. This lesson is not intended to convict you; this lesson is intended to inform you. The point of today's lesson is for you to recognize different areas of our culture and shed light on how much power and influence these areas have over us.

PRAISE

My Strange Addiction is an American documentary television series that premiered on TLC on December 29, 2010. The series focused on people with unusual compulsive behaviors. These ranged from eating specific non-food items to ritualistic daily activities to bizarre personal fixations or beliefs. Here are some of the most bizarre addictions highlighted on the show (you can fact-check these):

- Nicole—addicted to eating drywall
- Kesha—addicted to eating toilet paper
- Adele—addicted to eating couch cushions
- Bertha—addicted to drinking nail polish

PARABLE

Let's be honest. Your screen-time statistics (this one hurts!), your internet history, or your coffee receipts may reveal addictions you never realized you had. Addiction is way more prevalent in your life and in the lives of those around you than you probably realize. (Read I Cor. 6:12.) Essentially, Paul's message to the church at Corinth was, "I have the right to do anything, but not everything is beneficial. I refuse to be mastered by anything." Hold the phone! I can do anything? Yep! Jesus paid the ultimate price for the debts of our past, present, and future sins, even the sins of addition. However, Paul immediately followed the "permission" with this meaningful caution: not everything is beneficial!

PRESENT

Truth #1: Jesus offers freedom from sin, but not freedom from the consequences of it. Individuals with a functional addiction to porn, drugs, alcohol, or social media can still experience the love and mercy of Jesus through salvation. However, they may not escape the physical consequences of a broken marriage, shallow relationships, or emotional instability.

(Read Gal. 5:1.) Paul challenges us, as readers, to stand firm in our faith since we have been freed from sin by Jesus, but he also cautions us not to allow ourselves to be entrapped once again by the sin from which we have just been set free.

Truth #2: You are either in control or being controlled.

Social media has a powerful influence on teenagers and young adults in today's society. While there is nothing inherently wrong with social media, you have to ask yourself: Is social media controlling me, or am I controlling it? Have you ever been bummed because you didn't get as many likes as you were hoping for? If your emotions change depending on your social media interactions or you can't go ten minutes without checking your social media accounts, there's a chance you aren't the one who is in control.

Truth #3: Victory can only be found in Jesus!

(Read Rom. 6:22.) God doesn't put rules and regulations in place to make us go moping and mourning through life. He wants us to obey His commands so He can lead us into new territories of freedom we have yet to explore!

PRACTICE

(Read Ps. 31:24.) Say this with me: "I am not alone." You are not alone in the battle. If you are struggling with an addiction, you don't have to fight alone. If you are needing help, get involved with a local church that will preach the name of Jesus and the power that His name brings. Find help through a recovery group or with mentors you can trust for accountability, encouragement, and prayer. You do not have to fight alone.

PRAY

Jesus, I thank You for every student attending our P7 Club today. I ask that You give us strength to overcome the addictions in our lives because they affect our relationship with ourselves, our relationship with others, and most important, our relationship with You. You said in Your Word that greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. You are greater than any addiction. You are greater than any struggle.

You came that we might have life and live it more abundantly. Give us strength to reach out and ask for help in those moments of struggle and weakness. Thank You for loving us enough to sacrifice Your life so we may live our lives free. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

PLUS

If time allows, expand the lesson with the following statements and discuss responses with P7 Club members:

If you, or anyone you know, are struggling with addictions, please do the following:

- Tell someone: We are never more vulnerable to the influence of darkness than when we are alone. Don't be afraid to tell someone you can trust about your struggle.
- Get help: Whatever your struggle is, there is a way to fight it. You need help to truly recover, so don't hesitate to get the support you need.
- Pray continually: Prayer can lift you out of darkness and into an abundant life. God is mighty to save you, and He can and will help you rebuild your life if you will seek Him.
- Help others: There is no greater way to encourage yourself, to get perspective, and to open up your heart in humility, than helping those in need.