

GOSPEL GROWTH | LUKUS COUNTERMAN | JANUARY 19, 2020

UNDERSTANDING ADDICTION AS A SIN, A SICKNESS, OR BOTH

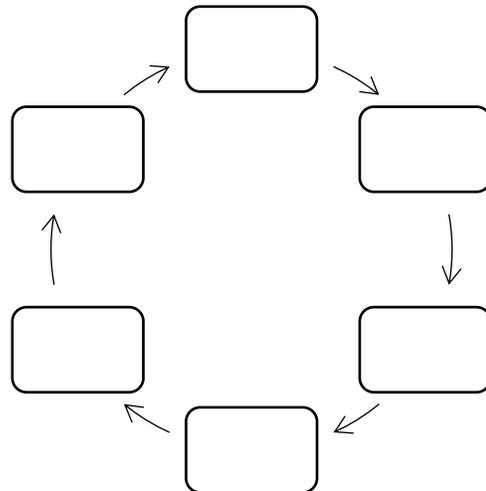
TRUTH STATEMENTS

A truth statement is an exercise whereby in the process of putting off an addiction and putting on Christ-honoring behaviors, a person can be renewed in the mind (Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:5-10).

- **I am not defined by my past, my failures, my fears, or my addiction; I'm defined by Christ.** (2Corinthians 5:17) *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is anew creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."*
- **In my battle with addictive habits I need to both work and surrender.** (Philippians 2:12-13) *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling... For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."*
- **I can change because God is changing me.** (Phil. 3:18-21) *"Many... walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."*

THE ADDICTIVE CYCLE

Most people don't sincerely desire or set out to become addicts and have their lives completely destroyed as a result of their abuse of substances or the behaviors they're engaging in. Yet many end up in that place of isolation and brokenness, and the journey down is a long and empty road that can be illustrated by the **addictive cycle**. Here's how the cycle works:



SUBSTANCE ABUSE ADDICTIONS

"Chemical dependency" is often used interchangeably with other terms such as "substance abuse," or "drug addiction." **The common feature is an addiction to some mood-altering _____** wherein the addict is unable to stop the behavior in spite of significant health-related, economic, legal, vocational, social, and/or spiritual consequences.

BEHAVIORAL ADDICTIONS

These are non-substance related and often include _____ acts that are repeated over a sustained period of time.

PROCESS ADDICTIONS

Process addictions are similar to behavioral addictions and the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. **Some features of process addictions include personality orientation, internal beliefs, and unmet _____ and relational needs.**

ADDICTION AS A SIN, A SICKNESS, OR BOTH

There are various models that seek to explain the complexities of addiction. And it's important for us to discuss them because "**definition drives care.**"

- The disease model
- The genetic model
- The biological model
- The choice model or moral model
- The personality model
- The coping/social learning model
- The Sociocultural model
- The Spiritual model

A CHRISTIAN AND ADDICTION

The apostle Paul understood the battle that rages in a person who feels like a slave to sin, an addict of sorts. He wrote (Rom. 7:14-25). I think there is great hope in the last line of the text "*Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Christ is the addict's greatest deliverer.

- From the perspective of a _____, we must acknowledge that there are neurological and physiological components connected to addiction.
- From the perspective of a _____, while many addictions can be traced back to a choice (perhaps a clearly sinful choice), the current problem that plagues many addicts is more complex.

I believe that addressing the problem of addiction requires a multi-faceted approach. Maybe you could explain the intersection this way: addictions happen at the crossroads of our heart orientation and the innumerable shaping influences on our lives.

- It seems like sin and shaping influences can develop into an _____ and a neglected addiction over time can morph into a _____ or sickness of sorts.
- Sin is sly – it victimizes and controls us (John 8:34), it captures and overtakes us (Gal. 6:1), it causes us to do things we don't want to do (Rom. 7:15, 17). In other words, sin feels exactly like a disease – almost as if something outside ourselves has taken over (Isaiah 1:5-6). **Addiction, slavery, or disease may include actual physical dysfunction, and there may have been sociocultural, or emotional/personality contributing factors.** But the problem goes much deeper than that - it is an infection of the heart.

