

Break Bad Habits

Jesus Gives Victory over Alcohol, Drugs and Immorality

Anchor command. “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” *Galatians 5:24*

Anchor story. A Prodigal Son. *Luke 15:11-32*

Anchor verse. “Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.” Acts 19:18-19

Learning goal. Know what Scripture teaches about breaking bad habits.

Growth goal. Appreciate the power of Christ to free victims from bad habits of the flesh.

Skill goal. Help people effectively to overcome bad habits and addictions.

Outcome goal. Many find victory in freedom in Christ, from bad habits and addictions.

Dear God, help us to understand and to experience our great freedom in Christ.

Basic Study

Learn from the story of the Prodigal Son, *Luke 15: 18 11-32*

- What did the younger son demanded his father a bit ahead of time? *Verses 11-12*
- What did the young son do with his money? *13-14*
- What happened next move this son to repent and return to his father? *15-19*
- What did the father do to celebrate his sons return? *20-24*
- What was the reaction of the older brother? *25-30*
- What was the father’s very gracious reply? *31-32*



Satan tempts all young folk to seek joy in wrong places.

During the week visit any believer or friend who needs to break a bad habit, and pray for their victory in Jesus name.

During worship

- Tell the story of the prodigal son, *Luke 15: 18 11-32*, and ask the above questions. Urge the believers to discuss the answers.
- Ask the children to present what they have prepared.
- Memorize together *Galatians 5:24*.

Advanced Study

1. Find in Mark 5:1-20 the power of God to free us from the power of evil.

- What did Jesus do to the man whom demons tormented?
- To where did Jesus send the man after he was freed from Satan?

2. Paul taught the Ephesians how God deals with the sins they committed in their lives.

- Please read Paul's letter to the Ephesians.
- Study the following six steps from Ephesians that help people through Jesus' power to find freedom from the sins they commit in their life.

Step 1. Trust the promises of our Holy God to bless us.

Find in **Ephesians 1:3-14** blessings that God has already given to us in Christ, such as:

- He has chosen us before the creation of the world and blessed us with all spiritual blessings.
- He has chosen us to be blameless, holy and forgiven of all our sins.
- He gives to us wisdom and understanding.
- His Holy Spirit has sealed us, to keep us safely in His hands until we are in heaven with Him.
- Help your flock to embrace God and give thanks to Him for these promises.



Worshiping and thanking God

Step 2. Ask for God's limitless grace that we receive by faith in Jesus.

Find in **Ephesians 2:1-10** the only way that people can receive God's grace and escape from their sin and its penalty.

- What must we do to be saved? (See verse 8)
- Through whom can we find the grace and kindness of God?

Step 3. Help one another to confess and correct their faults

Find in **Ephesians 3:10 and Ephesians 5:21** through whom God works in this world to provide believers with guidance and encouragement.

- Find in Ephesians 4:11-16 how God equips your entire flock to help each other grow.
- One addicted to alcohol, drugs or sexual sins needs a strong community to encourage him.
- One who abandons his vices needs a caring believer to help him sincerely confess the sins he commits in his life to Jesus.
- This 'care giver' helps the addict to agree on changes he needs to make in his life.
- The addict needs his family to confront his sin firmly in love, allowing no excuses.
- God uses friends to help an addict to be healed. They encourage him to make the changes needed in his life, and they help him to remember God's power when tempted by Satan. They are like Jehoiada, the priest who wisely counselled young king Joash in 2 Kings 12:2.
- An addict needs help from five sources:
 - 1) A group that he can ask in confidence for prayer,
 - 2) A loving counsellor,
 - 3) The Holy Spirit's power, which God gives to those who ask,
 - 4) His own determination to crucify his sinful nature and its deeds, as Gal.5:13-26 requires,
 - 5) His family's encouragement and honest discussion of his sin, like when David's people encouraged and confronted him in 1 Kings 1.

Step 4. Discern the root cause of the bad habit and focus on it until it is gone.

- Find in Ephesians 4:22-32 attitudes that cause sins and other attitudes that remove them.
- Find in James 3:13-4:3 the cause of much trouble in people's life.
- Deal with root attitudes that cause people's weakness, and not only the symptoms (bad results) of their attitudes.
- God frees our will from Satan and gives us the power to choose what is right.

Step 5. Attack our own bad habits bravely and decisively.

- Find in **Ephesians 5:3-14** a way to deal with sin in our life.
- Find the attitudes and sins that we expose to the light of Christ as we confess them.
- Find in James 5:13-16 how elders deal with those suffering from illness or sin.

Step 6. Wage aggressive warfare against Satan, his demon forces and their deception.

3. Find in Ephesians 6:10-18 how to find protection from the temptations of Satan.

- Let believers pray, confirm their plans and encourage one another in groups of two or three.
- Find what it means to wear each piece of the armour of God.
- Find in verse 18 how much we should pray to ward off evil attacks.
- Find in Mark 9:14-29 the power of prayer to heal.

4. Plan with co-workers additional things to do during the week.

- Train mature believers to counsel addicts, using the six steps.
- Counsel and pray with addicts in a small group. You may need to form a new group for this.

5. Plan with co-workers additional, optional activities for the upcoming worship time.

- **Pray** the prayer Paul said for the Ephesians in Ephesians 3:14-21.
- **Explain** the six steps to freedom from vices, above.
- **Praise** God because His Spirit changes us. Ask believers to tell testimonies of victory over vices.
- **Tell or act out** the story of the man freed from demons, Mark 5:1-20.
Prepare helpers to tell it. First, ask everyone to listen for what Jesus did for the man. Afterwards ask them what they discovered.

6. Dramatise victory over vice.

- a) **Mr. Deceived** pretends to be hung over from drunkenness; he tries to wipe dirt from his hands. He says that he regrets his weakness the night before.
- b) **Mr. Serpent** yells at him Satan's lies, such as, "You are worthless! God cannot save you now! You will never win over this temptation!" Laugh evilly.
- c) **Mr. Counsellor** brings a bowl of water and tells Mr. Deceived, "Jesus' blood will clean you."
- d) **Mr. Deceived** asks Jesus to wash away his sins and alcoholism. He washes his hands in the water and exclaims, "I am clean!"



7. To introduce the Lord's Supper read John 6:25-35.

- After Jesus fed 5,000 people, some people begged him for more, but he offered instead bread from heaven that gives eternal life.
- In the Lord's Supper, we are partakers of this bread, as 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 explains.

8. Those who teach children should read study #24 for children.