

May 18, 2003

**Week Twenty-nine: "Understanding Chemical Addiction"**

**Day One: Small Group Guide**

**Read: Proverbs 23:29-35 (p. 718)**

**Read: Commentary (p. 719)**

**Reflect:** It has been said that every person has at least one person in their circle of family or friends who struggles with chemical addiction. Who do you know who is chemically addicted? What effect has this had on your life? On their life?

**Dig:** What is the scripture's view of alcohol? To get a full picture, look up these texts and summarize what they teach:

Psalm 104: 14-15 (p. 660)

Ecclesiastes 9:7-8 (p. 740)

Ephesians 5:18 (p. 1361)

Galatians 5:19-21 (p. 1352)

Where in this text do you see some of the classic signs of chemical dependence?

(increased tolerance, denial, addiction)

How does our culture promote alcohol?

**Apply:** Turn to page 1521 in your Freedom in Christ Bible and read the prayer in bold print entitled "Substance Abuse". If you have never had any temptation in this area, pray this prayer for someone in your circle of friends/family.

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**Day Two: "Overcoming Addiction"**

**Read: Titus 3 (p. 1411)**

**Read: Commentary (p. 1413)**

**Reflect:** Has using will-power worked for you in your life to help you quit bad habits? Why or why not?

**Dig:** Step one of the 12 Step Program says: "I admit that I am powerless over a life-controlling problem, and that my life is unmanageable."

Look up these Bible passages to see if this is a biblical truth:

Romans 7:18-19 (p. 1288)

Romans 3:9-10, 23 (p. 1282)

Titus 3:3 (p. 1413)

What do Ephesians 5:18 (p. 1361) and Galatians 5:16 (p. 1352) teach you about how the Bible urges those caught in addiction to get free?

**Apply:** What is it that has an addictive quality (you use it to avoid reality, to help you momentarily feel better)? Admit this to God, admit your helplessness and ask him in his mercy to fill you with the Holy Spirit.

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### **Day Three: "The Overcomer's Covenant"**

**Read: Revelation 21:6-8 (p. 1501)**

**Read: Commentary (p. 1502)**

**Reflect:** What personal difficulty or habitual sin have you overcome in your life? How did you manage to overcome?

**Dig:** According to this text in Revelation 21, Who is this appeal given to? (see verse 6)

What is the reward of the overcomer? (see verse 7)

What sort of people will not get any eternal inheritance? (see verse 8)

Why is verse 6 so important as a condition for the rest of the flow of thought?

According to this verse is there a hell, and if there is, who goes there?

**Apply:** With your habitual sins in mind, read aloud the "Overcomer's Covenant" on page 1502.

Conclude with a short prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy.

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**Day Four: "Discipline Yourself for Godliness"**

**Read: Daniel 1 (p. 961)**

**Read: Commentary (p. 961)**

**Reflect:** Grace is said to be "amazing." In your experience, how has God's mercy, love or blessing been "amazing"?

**Dig:** What made the discipline of Daniel and his three friends relatively easy?

Notice the name change (verse 6-7) and also notice what the author does with names in the rest of the chapter. What does that tell you about identity? What does that tell you about how we ought to identify ourselves? (see 2 Corinthians 5:17 p. 1333)

How is what Daniel did a "grace-based discipline" rather than a "law-based discipline"?

**Apply:** Make a list of all the ways your life would get better if you dropped your habitual (addictive) sin. Now ask God for the power to live in the discipline of godliness.

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**Day Five: "Accountability"**

**Read: 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 (p. 1383)**

**Read: Commentary (p. 1384)**

**Reflect:** Who have you known who has demanded respect and accountability but did not receive it? Why did they not receive it?

On the other hand, who have you known who demanded respect and accountability from you and they received it? Why did you give it to them?

**Dig:** What can you learn about being a good parent from verses 11-12?

What is noteworthy about the order of the words that Paul uses to describe a good father?

What does it mean to live a life "worthy of God"? (see also Ephesians 4:1-4 p. 1359, 1 Thess. 4:1-8 p. 1385)

**Apply:** What can you do in your life and what can we do in our church to make it a safe place for grace, a place where addicts can be held accountable?