



## Session #6 - Addiction Must Fall

### Orientation:

According to a 2016 poll:

- Seventy-eight percent of teens check their phones at least hourly. Sixty-nine percent of parents do so.
- Seventy-two percent of teens feel they must respond immediately to texts and social networking messages. Forty-eight percent of parents do so.
- Teens and parents admit to sleeping with their phones, using them during meals while others are present with them, and feeling anxiety when they are separated from their phones. More than half of the parents surveyed confessed to checking their phones while driving and said they very often or occasionally try to spend less time on their phones.

Fundamentally, half of the teens surveyed said they are addicted to their phones, and more than a quarter of parents admitted to addiction. To phones.

We can get addicted to anything that promises our brains the rewards they crave. "Scientists have shown our brains get a hit of dopamine—the chemical linked to happiness—when we hear our phones beep or ring." That little sound says we matter to someone. We are wanted. Needed.

That brain reward process works the same way when we're addicted to nicotine, alcohol, shopping, overeating, porn, or simply the approval of others. We can become addicted to anything we feel we can't do without, anything we turn to when life is chaotic or in a slump. In this session, we will examine the root causes of addiction and what it takes to get free from it.

We'll explore how feelings of vulnerability lead to addiction and how getting the problem out into the light can help us say good-bye to an addiction that has dogged us for years. We don't need to be controlled by our phones or anything else.

The giant is dead.

### **1 Corinthians 10:12-13 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup>Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. <sup>13</sup>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 10:12-13 (ESV)**



## Welcome to Session #6! Open it up!

1. When you think of the word *addiction*, what comes to mind?

2. Why is it so easy to get addicted to things like constantly checking your phone or watching social media for likes on your Facebook post?

3. Did you take part in any of last week's "Between Sessions" activities? Share your reflections. Any insights from engaging in these activities?

Read the Orientation from the website.

## Hearing it from the Word!

Listen for any fresh insights from a part of the David and Goliath story as read in **1 Samuel 17:38-50 (ESV)**.  
*<sup>38</sup> Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, <sup>39</sup> and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. <sup>40</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine. <sup>41</sup> And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. <sup>42</sup> And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. <sup>43</sup> And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field." <sup>45</sup> Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup> This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, <sup>47</sup> and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand." <sup>48</sup> When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. <sup>49</sup> And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. <sup>50</sup> So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David.*

## Explore it!

4. In groups of two or three: What was one thing that stood out to you from the Scripture, and why?

5. In groups of two or three: How did David respond when King Saul tried to give him armor? Why did David choose to go into battle without the king's equipment or weapons?

**Watch the video segment for session six, and jot down some notes using the comments below:**

- The giant of addiction has the power to wreck our lives. It runs through the neighborhoods of our world and snuffs out dreams.
- Jesus has done what was necessary to take down this giant. If addiction is part of our life, we have to believe that we can take a step today toward freedom.
- We are all addicted to *something*. All of us have a need to not feel exposed—to cover up our weakness. This leads to addiction, which can be a short-term cover for an exposed heart.
- When we experience rejection, or are overwhelmed, or even just bored with life, we look for ways to numb the pain. Like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, we retreat from the light into the shadows and try to find something to cover us up.

# PBCC LifeGroups: Goliath Must Fall



- After Saul agreed to let David fight the giant, he tried to cover up his reality (that he was young and inexperienced), and that God wasn't extraordinary enough to do the job through him.
- The enemy will try to convince you cover up and put on armor to hide the real you. But the real you is the only one whom God can use for His glory.
- The key is for us to be vulnerable and choose the path toward Christ. When we are honest with God about where we are, we realize that God's grace is sufficient for us in our weakness.
- Our giants don't come down in the dark but in the light. Freedom comes when we run in packs, shoulder to shoulder with people who know our true selves and can champion with us.

## Reflect on it in Group Discussion:

6. How could a person know if he or she is addicted to the approval of other people, as opposed to just liking people's approval?

7. The cause of addiction is *pain*. How should we deal with pain instead of numbing it with an addiction? Why is it so attractive to deal with it through an addiction instead?

8. What are some of the situations that tempt you to put on false armor to protect your vulnerability?

9. When we're feeling weak, we need to go to Jesus with our weakness. Why is that hard for many of us to do?

10. Why is it essential to tell trusted individuals about our addiction and get their support in breaking free?

11. How would you know if someone was a safe person to confide in about an addiction? What are the character qualities of a safe person?

## Apply it to your life...Living from Victory

(Each participant will need a small, smooth stone to grasp in a palm and a few permanent markers to share.)

Throughout the six weeks of this study, we have examined giants that can torment and demoralize us and keep us from victory in Christ. This week, we discussed addictions; we've also discussed anger, rejection, and fear, and that subtle giant comfort.

In keeping with the story of David and Goliath, take a smooth stone—David's weapon of victory—and with a marker write on one side the words "Goliath Must Fall." On the other side, write the giant you most struggle with these days and desire to bring down. (You may choose to add this at a later time.)

Keep the stone in a visible place as an ongoing reminder of your commitment, and more importantly God's power, to defeat this Goliath in your life so you can give God the glory!

**To go deeper, check out the church website under the LifeGroups tab for ASK resources.**

## Pray within your group...

Everyone prays silently for the person on his or her left that they will be able to run to Jesus with any area of addiction and experience victory in his or her life. Pray Ephesians 6:10-18 together. Don't forget to pray for each other!!



## Going Deeper #6 ~ ASK ~ Ask, Seek, Knock!

If you found this study helpful, share it with others.

### Ask: Examine Your Life.

The first step in dealing with an addiction is admitting to yourself that you've lost control over it. It has control over you. Maybe you feel like your favorite stress-reliever is harmless and it isn't interfering with the rest of your life. Maybe you're right. But maybe you're blind to the harm because you depend on this thing or activity to feel okay.

So, get a sheet of paper and write about the last time you indulged in your stress-reliever:

- ✓ Where did it take you?
- ✓ How much time did you spend? How much money?
- ✓ How did you feel beforehand and afterward?
- ✓ How does it affect key relationships in your life?
- ✓ How do you feel about it now? What would you like to do differently next time?
- ✓ Do you have the power in yourself to do it differently?
- ✓ If you don't want to do this exercise, why not? Is there anything that you might be avoiding?

After reflecting on this information, jot down a few notes to share with your group during the next meeting.

### Seek Worship: Exalt the Real God.

An idol is anything other than God that we treat as absolutely necessary to our well-being. Addiction is essentially idolatry. "A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living." One of the ways to dethrone an idol in your life is to worship the real God!

You can worship God today in numerous ways. One way is to sing to Him. Choose a recent song on an old hymn that speaks to your soul about God's greatness. Go to a private place and sing this song aloud to God. If you need to go where one will hear you, try your car. As you sing, ask God to tell you if your favorite stress-reliever is an idol. Ask him to convict your heart with the truth.

If you're not a singer, read aloud this passage from Isaiah 40:18-23:

*<sup>18</sup> To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? <sup>19</sup> An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. <sup>20</sup> He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. <sup>21</sup> Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? <sup>22</sup> It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; <sup>23</sup> who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.*

Ask yourself, "How is God greater than my addiction? How is He bigger and more powerful? How is He more reliable? How is He more ultimately real? How is He more true, good, and beautiful?" Tell Him out loud how He is greater. Spend some time worshipping Him for being greater than any idol.

### Knock and Proclaim: Discuss with a Friend.

Sometime this week, go out to coffee with a friend or another group member and talk about our culture's version of freedom versus the biblical promise of freedom in Christ. Some items you can discuss include:

- What's the difference between being free to do anything we want and being free to refrain from these things that can enslave us?
- What are some of the benefits of living a free-in-Christ lifestyle?
- What keeps us from living such a lifestyle all the time?

Share some examples—both from Scripture and your lives. And consider whether you might want to hold yourselves accountable to each other about making choices that lead to freedom. Be open and truthful with each other as you share. From *Goliath Must Fall* (226-227):

*"If there's something that is choking the breath out of our lives, then God wants that stronghold broken. That is what deliverance is all about. Yet deliverance is about more than our freedom. God alone does the work to free us, but in setting us free the aim is that much glory is given to God. ... Jesus wants to take down our giants so we can walk free and have the life that He wants us to live. And He wants to do that so His name can be exalted above every other name in our world. That's the reason that surpasses all other reasons. It's so people around us look at our lives and say, "Your God is truly God." Our freedom and God's glory are inextricably woven together."*

Write down any key points or questions you want to share with your group or a friend sometime soon.