

SUICIDE

DRUGS

SEX

GAMBLING

ALCOHOL

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

ADDICT

PORNOGRAPHY

written by:

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*Defeating
Satan's
Stronghold
on Our Lives*

**5 Tools of Victory
for Men & Women!**



APRIL 1987

Contents

Mission Statement & Values

Dedication

Other Books by Michael Bianchi

Purpose

Preface

Chapter One: Introduction: When, How, Why did Suicides & Addictions Start?

Chapter Two: Satan's Great Weapons

Chapter Three: Defining Suicide and Addictions

Chapter Four: The Consequences of Suicide and Addictions

Chapter Five: Why Does God have to be Involved?

Chapter Six: Defeating Satan: Tool #1 - Skip the Tribulation

Chapter Seven: Defeating Satan: Tool #2 - The Ten Commandments

Chapter Eight: Defeating Satan: Tool #3 - The Lord's Prayer

Chapter Nine: Defeating Satan: Tool #4 - The Fruits of the Spirit

Chapter Ten: What Does a Godly Lifestyle Look Like?

Chapter Eleven: Victory over Satan: Tool #5

Chapter Twelve: Final Thoughts

Bibliography & Publishing Information

Mission Statement & Values

Mission Statement

To break satan's stronghold on suicide, pornography, substance abuse, and other addictions. Help men and women to achieve victory over satan's temptations in these areas.

To best accomplish this we will depend on God's Word and the victory Jesus Christ accomplished over satan's influence.

We will draw people to Jesus by the positive impact of this Ministry.

Values*

Honor God in everything we do.
Build relationships based on trust and respect.
Maintain integrity and excellence in programs and services.
Practice responsible stewardship.

*(adopted from the book *Lead Like Jesus*)

Dedication

I dedicate this book to:

The Holy Trinity, the One True God who manifests
Himself to mankind in the form of
God, The Father; and God, The Son Jesus Christ;
and God, The Holy Spirit

All people who struggle with satan's stronghold on their lives.

The brave warriors of Jesus Christ who lead the
fight against Suicide and Addictions.

Other Books by Michael Bianchi

Effective & Enduring Leadership – We Will Be Great!
8 Volume Series on Christian Leadership

Defeating Satan's Stronghold on Sex and Other Addictions

Purpose

This book is not intended to replace any counseling, intervention, or recovery program.

Its purpose is to be used as a complement to intervention and recovery programs and provide practical tools for people to achieve victory over satan's stronghold in their lives and in society.

Some counseling, intervention, and recovery programs have good and helpful spiritual content. This book simply takes people deeper into a relationship with God that provides spiritual tools readers can use to help defeat satan every day for the rest of their lives.

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

This book works well in conjunction with intervention and recovery programs, post intervention/recovery, and for general use by those who wish to overcome the temptations and influence of satan in their daily lives.

Preface

"These days it seems like much of sin is getting a pass. In fact, "sin" is hardly considered sin anymore. What used to be spoken of in hushed tones is now broadcast into millions of homes every night. What was once decried as ruinous to a person's life is now celebrated as yet another option. If John Newman was writing "Amazing Grace" today, he'd have naysayers suggesting he change that line about grace saving "a wretch like me."

A wretch? The truth is, sin has lost its wretchedness reputation. It has been dumbed down to accommodate those who find pleasure in it. And yet--and this is the tragedy--sin hasn't lost one ounce of its power to destroy lives. Daily we see the devastation of sin, though a few are willing to acknowledge it these days.

The good news is that, although sin is still as destructive as ever, the cross is as powerful as ever. Nothing can diminish what Jesus did at Calvary for us. We have at our disposal an antidote to the sin in our lives and the sin in our culture.

Though you've sinned, as have I, we can take comfort in the resolute fact that the penalty for our sins has been fully paid. "Amazing grace" is truly Christ, the godly, dying for you and me, the ungodly."

~James Merritt in his book, *"52 Weeks with Jesus"*

Chapter One: Introduction

When, How, Why did Suicides and Addictions Start?

Suicide, Pornography, and unhealthy Addictions permeate every part of society around the world. Why does mankind struggle so much with things so unhealthy? Even the church struggles with such disorders by its leaders and members.

SUICIDE

Suicide dates back to ancient Egypt and there were 5 recorded suicides in the Bible. In ancient and Biblical times suicides often occurred by sword, by poison, and by hanging. Reasons were varied of course, but the suicides recorded in the Bible were mainly to avoid receiving an imminent and torturous death at the hand of an enemy. The exception to this was Judas Iscariot who hanged himself out of despair for what he had done to Jesus Christ.

PORNOGRAPY AND SEX RELATED SIN

Sex Related Sin (SRS) started soon after the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden. It has been with us almost since God created humans. How it began was due to the deceitful influence of satan, which we still struggle to overcome today. Why did it happen? Because people were, and still are, too weak to resist the evil temptations of satan by themselves.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE or SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

Substance abuse, now commonly called Substance Use Disorder or SUD, has been with us almost since God created mankind. It appears that it became a problem virtually as soon as mankind discovered alcohol, herbs, and other substances which alter how we 'feel'. Alcohol abuse was perhaps the earliest form of SUD and is recorded in the Bible as early as Genesis 9. Why did/does mankind give in to satan's temptations with alcohol and drugs and other addictions? Perhaps a major reason is that many do not have a strong relationship with God and perhaps many who are Christians are weak in their faith. Many yield to the temptation of substance abuse to escape the stresses, pain, and responsibilities of their world. Temporary mental relief may be found in SUD, but the reality is that substance abuse only compounds the problems that participants experience.

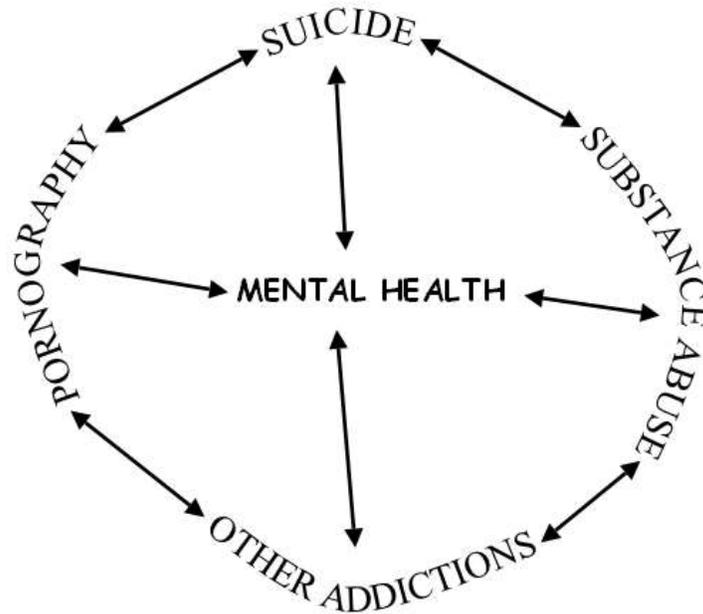
The abuse of illegal drugs and alcohol costs upwards of \$750 billion a year in the USA alone.

THE INTERTWINING

Sadly, satan has craftily intertwined these addictions and disorders with each other and then also injected mental health struggles and disorders into the middle. Anyone directly involved with Suicide or Pornography or Substance Abuse is struggling with mental health issues at a minimum and may be experiencing a full-blown disorder. Those indirectly involved may also be struggling with mental health

issues or are on the very edge. It is unfortunate, but we cannot separate mental health issues from Suicide, Pornography, and Substance Abuse. 'The Intertwining' may sound like a horror movie and, sadly, for many people caught up in satan's stronghold, it can be like that.

THE INTERTWINING



****this drawing may seem to be 'out-of-kilter', but when we are involved in these situations our lives become 'out-of-kilter'****

As you read through this book, you will find that I frequently quote statistics and studies mainly from the United States and that's only because those were readily available to me. However, Suicides and Addictions are truly a world-wide epidemic and we can take the information for the United States and compound it several times over for the rest of the world.

"Mental, spiritual, and physical growth is a must for any person who wants to stay healthy and strong."⁵

This book provides 5 legitimate tools to be used in Defeating Satan's Stronghold on our lives. The first 4 tools are preparatory in nature to give us the foundation we need to defy the temptations of satan. Tool #5 provides us with real-world, real-time actions that can give us victory over satan's influence. It is important for us to master tools 1-4 before tool #5 can be most effective in our lives and gives us victory over satan on a daily basis. We can't just read this book once and expect to have full control over satan's influence in our lives. Read it several times until you have mastered ALL 5 tools and then refer back to it often.

Chapter Two: Satan's Great Weapons

We all have 'weapons' that we use to get what we want in life. Often, one person is better at using their 'weapons' than another. Satan quickly mastered weapons to use against mankind virtually as soon as God created humans. Sadly, these weapons are just as effective against people today as they were thousands of years ago.



Satan's first weapon, unbelief, was used to entice Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. He planted seeds of doubt about God's Word in the minds of Eve and Adam and they succumbed to his temptation. Being the crafty devil he is, Satan then parlayed unbelief to trap mankind into his other great 'weapons'. Through the years Satan has exploited his other weapons to create more addictions for people such as tobacco, social media, sports, work, family, ministry, and more.

Psalm 78, beginning in verse 9, talks about how the people of Israel turned against God over and over again and were punished for doing so. Satan fanned the fires of unbelief in the people and they did not learn from previous experience and suffered the consequences of their sinfulness. Verse 22 says, *"for they did not believe God or trust him to care for them."* The Bible is full of story after story after story of God rescuing mankind only to have us fall back into repeated unbelief and sin.

It is incredible to me that we humans don't learn from history and past experience, especially Biblical teachings. This demonstrates just how powerful Satan's weapon of unbelief is. An example in my own life was when, on Thanksgiving night in 1964, our car was struck head on by a drunk driver. Two people died that night and several others were injured. While my mother didn't die that night, she was thrown through the windshield of our car and never recovered from her injuries. Later as a teenager and young adult I began drinking and partying ... drinking quite a bit. Now tell me, after my experience of being hit head on by a drunk driver, just how stupid was I? I would say very stupid, wouldn't you? And I "knew" better. After all, I had been attending church more or less all my life. This is a great example of not learning from past experience and unbelief in God's teachings. Even though we didn't know it at the time, I believe it shows how strong Satan's grip was on that drunk driver and on myself, too. Satan causes us to believe God's Word doesn't apply to us and that history won't repeat itself in our lives (or not even consider it at all) ... and often we pay the price for this unbelief and this unbelief keeps us at a distance from God. Satan has us pursuing worldly happiness when true happiness can only be found in an intimate relationship with God.

Today, Satan uses printed and social media, the news, and even our educational institutions to plant seeds of unbelief in our minds about God. We are bombarded by anti-Christian television and movies and even made to feel guilty and persecuted if we do express belief in God. This is in our "free" America and persecution of Christians is much worse in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, Satan's grip on unbelief is as strong as it's ever been.

Satan's other great weapons are sex related sin (SRS) and Alcohol and Drug Abuse. As discussed in Chapter One, satan began using these weapons against us not long after man's fall from the grace of God in the Garden of Eden and has permeated society world-wide ever since and they are stronger at this time than they ever have been. Today, we literally cannot participate in any form of media without being exposed to the temptations of SRS and pornography. It is even penetrating our schools at the lowest grade levels through "children's books and stories".

"There are around 42 million porn websites, which totals around 370 million pages of porn."

Today, SRS is promoted daily on television shows and in the movies, and if you watch the popular *Dr. Phil* show, you will see that almost every episode features some kind of SRS and/or other addiction that is messing up people's lives. Movies and live theater encourage sex related sin and even some 'churches' are surrendering under the onslaught of SRS and public pressure to consider it 'normal' behavior. The damage to society is massive and daily we see people's lives torn apart or destroyed because of it.

When satan craftily intertwines mental issues with Suicidal thoughts and Substance Abuse and Pornography, we have truly life threatening situations that need to be addressed through counseling, therapy, intervention, and/or treatment. Further, the value of spiritual support cannot be underestimated in terms of aiding people struggling in these areas.

Why aren't we learning? Is it because of satan's stronghold on human emotions and desires? I would say the answer is a definite 'yes' as people seek pleasure in worldly lust and material things and ignore or stubbornly refuse to turn to Godly living because they believe they will lose the 'pleasure' in their lives, even though the consequences are almost always devastating. In the end, Satan is the only one who benefits and derives pleasure from Sex Related Sin, Suicide, Substance Abuse, and other addictions.

Chapter Three: Defining Suicide & Addictions

SUICIDE

The CDC defines Suicide as “*death caused by injuring oneself with the intent to die. A suicide attempt is when someone harms themselves with any intent to end their life, but they do not die as a result of their actions.*”

People at high risk of Suicide include (according to the CDC):

- Who have experienced violence, child abuse, bullying, or sexual violence.
- Age groups 10-14 and 25-34. (other sources indicate the elderly are also high risk)
- American Indian/Alaska Natives and White ethnicities.
- Veterans, people who live in rural areas, people who work in mining/construction.
- People who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

According to the CDC, in 2020 in the USA:

- 46,000 people died by Suicide.
- 1 Suicide death every 11 minutes. (World-wide estimates 1 Suicide death every 40 seconds)
- 12.2 million adults seriously thought about Suicide.
- 3.2 million adults make a plan for Suicide.
- 1.2 million adults attempted Suicide.

On a recent flight from Dallas to Houston, I sat next to a young college student and she confessed that FOUR of her friends had committed suicide!

The book, *Understanding and Counseling the Suicidal Person*, reports:

- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in the age group 15-19.
- On some college campuses, suicide is the leading cause of death.

What causes people to take their lives? The best description is psychological pain, or psychache. Edwin Schneidman, the founder of the American Association of Suicidology, gave this description: Psychache is the hurt, anguish or ache that takes hold in the mind. It is intrinsically psychological – the pain of excessively felt shame, guilt, fear, anxiety, loneliness, angst, dread of growing old or dying badly. When psychache occurs, its introspective reality is undeniable. Suicide happens when the psychache is deemed unbearable and death is actively sought to stop the unceasing flow of painful consciousness. Suicide is a tragic drama in the mind.⁶

PORNOGRAPHY & SEX RELATED SIN (SRS)

thefreedictionary.com defines Pornography as: “*The representation in books, magazines, photographs, films, and other media of scenes of sexual behavior that are erotic or lewd and are designed to arouse sexual interest.*” dictionary.law.com defines Pornography as: “*pictures and/or writings of sexual activity intended solely to excite lascivious feelings of a particularly blatant and aberrational kind, such as acts involving children, animals, orgies, and all types of sexual intercourse.*”

SRS can be defined as any sexual relationship, thought, fantasy, or action that is outside of normal marital sex between a man and a woman. It can be further described as involving any type of sexual expression outside the boundaries of a Biblically defined marriage relationship. Examples include having sex with someone other than your spouse, having multiple spouses, pornography, thoughts and fantasies outside the boundaries of biblically defined marriage, sexual harassment, and sex trafficking.

What sex related sin does the Bible prohibit?

“You must never have sexual relations with a close relative,”
~ Leviticus 18:6-20.

“But now I see that the prophets of Jerusalem are even worse! They commit adultery and love dishonesty. They encourage those who are doing evil so that no one

turns away from their sins. These prophets are as wicked as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah once were.” ~ Jeremiah 23:14

“For these men have done terrible things among my people. They have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives ...” ~ Jeremiah 29:23

“Don’t you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never!” ~ 1 Corinthians 6:15

“Now Eli was very old, but he was aware of what his sons were doing to the people of Israel. He knew, for instance, that his sons were seducing the young women who assisted at the entrance of the Tabernacle.” ~ 1 Samuel 2:22

“Meanwhile, Jacob’s sons had come in from the field as soon as they heard what had happened. They were shocked and furious that their sister had been raped. Shechem had done a disgraceful thing against Jacob’s family, something that should never be done.” ~ Genesis 34:7

“Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals. They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed. They live under God’s curse.” ~ 2 Peter 2:13-14

“But I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads My servants to be sexually immoral Even though I have given her time to repent of her immorality, she is unwilling. Behold, I will cast her onto a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her will suffer great tribulation unless they repent of her deeds. Then I will strike her children dead,” ~ Revelation 2:20-23



Pornography use increases the marital infidelity rate by more than 300%.

Yes, the above examples are from the Bible. The problem with asking for non-Christian thought is that many or most non-Christians may accept these activities as common or even acceptable attributes of society in spite of the overwhelming evidence of the damage they do to individuals, families, and civilization as a whole.

Of course, pornography and other current forms of SRS were not present or available in Biblical times and therefore not mentioned in the Bible. What is emphasized in the Bible is the sanctity of marriage. Hebrews 13:4 reinforces God's commitment to marriage, "Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery." Any form of Sex Related Sin is immoral and destructive and not acceptable in marriage and non-marriage relationships.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE – SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD)

The NIH defines SUD as: "a mental disorder that affects a person's brain and behavior, leading to a person's inability to control their use of substances such as legal or illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications." The NIH goes on to say: "Researchers have found that about half of individuals who experience a SUD during their lives will also experience a co-occurring mental disorder and vice versa."

Abuse of drugs and alcohol is a worldwide epidemic that is destroying marriages, relationships, and our youth. Further, its indirect consequences damage society in untold ways. The cost of SUD in the workplace is staggering with estimates running as high as \$3.73 trillion annually just in the USA. These costs are manifest in lost productivity and absenteeism, turnover and recruitment costs, workplace accidents, health care expenses, and disability and workers' compensation. As a result, further costs are incurred in teamwork, company morale, and interpersonal work relationships.

Alcohol abuse was first recorded in the Bible in Genesis 9 when Noah became drunk with the wine from his vineyard. Genesis 9:21 says, "One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent." Abuse of cannabis and opium and other drugs also dates back for centuries. The abuse of drugs as we know them today was virtually non-existent during Biblical times, however the Bible did address the abuse of alcohol, and therefore the abuse of drugs. Proverbs 23:29-35 gives a pretty damning indictment of Substance Abuse as it says: "29-Who has anguish? Who has sorrow? Who is always fighting? Who is always complaining? Who has unnecessary bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? 30-It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new drinks. 31-Don't gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. 32-For in the end it bites like a poisonous snake; it stings like a viper. 33-You will see hallucinations, and you will say crazy things. 34-You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. 35-And you will say, "They hit me, but I didn't feel it. I didn't even know it when they beat me up. When will I wake up so I can look for another drink?" Verse 29 gives us some strong reasons to avoid Substance Abuse as it says those involved are in anguish, have sorrow, always fighting and complaining. Who wants to be friends with such people? Certainly not God, do you?

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will love you to

DEATH

People of all ages and walks of life are affected by Substance Abuse and mental health disorders. These illnesses are common, recurrent, and often serious, but they are treatable and many people do recover. Mental disorders involve changes in thinking, mood, and/or behavior. These disorders can affect how we relate to others and make choices. The coexistence of both a mental health and a substance use disorder is referred to as co-occurring disorders. (see Intertwining in the previous chapter) Co-occurring substance abuse problems and mental health issues are more common than many people realize. Approximately 45% of people struggling with SUD also struggle with serious mental health issues. There is hope for people who suffer from these illnesses. They can regain quality of life by seeking professional help and treatment and spiritual support. At least part of the struggle is a spiritual one and having a lifestyle with engaging Christian interaction can be very beneficial.

GAMBLING ADDICTION

addictioncenter.com says the following about Gambling Addiction:

“Gambling addiction is the uncontrollable urge to continue gambling despite the toll it takes on one’s life. Gambling is addictive because it stimulates the brain’s reward system much like drugs or alcohol can. In fact, gambling addiction is the most common impulse control disorder worldwide.



The defining element of a gambling addiction is that people become completely absorbed in specific gambling activities and then pursue them in a compulsive manner, despite the potential negative consequences. Those suffering from a gambling addiction often describe a sense of loss of control in which they believe they are incapable of avoiding or stopping gambling.

Common signs of gambling addiction include:

- Needing to gamble with increasing amounts of money*
- Unsuccessfully attempting to control, cut back, or stop*
- Feeling restless or irritable when unable to gamble*
- Gambling to escape problems or relieve negative emotions*
- Attempting to get back lost money by gambling more*
- Jeopardizing important relationships or opportunities because of gambling*
- Resorting to theft or fraud to get gambling money*

Unlike casual gamblers, people addicted to gambling cannot simply stop when losing or set a loss limit; they are compelled to keep playing to try to recover their money. In many cases, the person loses more than intended, feels bad about the amount of money lost, and then tries to recoup the losses by gambling even more, which consequently leads to even more money lost. This destructive cycle leads to many negative consequences and can have a serious impact on an individual’s physical, emotional, and financial health.”

Chapter Four: The Consequences of Suicide and Addictions

PORNOGRAPHY & SEX RELATED SIN (SRS)

I'm most concerned about the effect of pornography on underage children. In an American Bar Association article titled *How Pornography Harms Children: The Advocate's Role*, Allison Baxter reports, "According to Dr. (Sharon) Cooper, pornography normalizes sexual harm by portraying a lack of emotional relationship between consensual partners, unprotected sexual contact, and, in some instances, violence and rape." This is dangerous territory. It is dangerous to our children and dangerous to our society as these kids become adults. Statistics show that two children are sex trafficked every 60 seconds and 10 will be stolen and enslaved every five minutes. A staggering statistic announced on NBC's "Today" show revealed that every 30 seconds someone falls victim to sex trafficking. According to UNICEF, more than a million children are trafficked each year. Sadly, the fact is that several generations of children have grown up under this very environment and society is paying a heavy price for it now. This is a major reason why pornography must be 100% outlawed.

*"Human trafficking is a \$150 billion a year industry. 81% of trafficking victims are trafficked for sexual purposes." ~
freedomk9project.com*

Really? One may ask. How does participating in Pornography in the privacy of their home affect other people in their lives? For one, it is well established that pornography destroys marriage relationships and, at a minimum, causes emotional damage to children in those marriages. Let's assume a person is single, how can it be harmful if they participate in the privacy of their home and no one else knows about it? First of all, it distorts a persons' view of society in general and it skews what the participant thinks he or she knows about relationships toward the dark side of sin. If a person believes that what they are seeing in pornography is normal behavior, then they will be more likely to seek such activities outside their private lives resulting in damaged relationships and, in many cases, mental health problems and destroyed lives. This doesn't even take into account the damage done to the lives of the other participants in Pornography.

The Christian Post, ran a story on February 7, 2020, titled; *Utah bill to require warning labels on porn, describing ill effects on mind, self-esteem*, by Brandon Showalter, highlighting the effects on individuals, children, and society as a result of SRS. "The idea is we've already found that ... exposing minors to pornography can be extremely damaging, ..." said Rep. Jim Banks, Indiana ..."

As many as 93.2% of boys and 62.1% of girls first see porn before they turn 18.

According to the research done to support the above article SRS has the following effects:

- addictive sexual behavior
- low self esteem
- other ill effects

impairment of brain development
impairment of emotional development
impairment of the ability to maintain intimate relationships
improper objectification of others
sexual violence toward others
other numerous harms
extremely damaging
children struggling with porn addiction

Ask yourself, how many of those effects of SRS are positive for individuals, children, and society? Which of those effects would you wish upon your children or your loved ones or yourself?

Following are excerpts from another story in the Christian Post which touches on some of the problems we are experiencing with SRS (sex related sin): "**Christine Caine: We can end sex trafficking overnight if people stop watching porn, 'Game of Thrones'**" By Leah MarieAnn Klett, Christian Post Reporter | Friday, May 31, 2019

"To date, Montana, Utah, South Dakota, Kansas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, Idaho, Florida, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Virginia have formally recognized porn as a public health crisis."

According to this article sex related sin has the following effects on people:

sex trafficking
public health crisis
toxic sexual behaviors
emotional illnesses
mental illnesses
medical illnesses
difficulty forming or maintaining intimate relationships
normalization of violence
sexualization of children

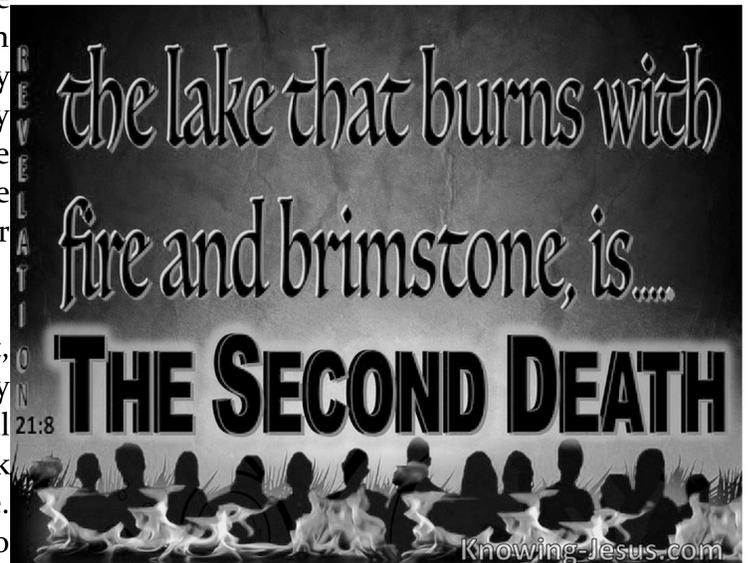
Again I ask you, how many of those effects of SRS are positive for individuals, children, and society? Which of those effects would you wish upon your children or your loved ones or yourself?

"In my opinion, the most powerful tool, which Satan has in the destruction of the Biblical family model, is his propagation of pornography." ~ Rev. Nolan J Harkness, CP VOICES

I firmly believe that pornography should be 100% illegal and I believe that we need much stronger punishment for those caught breaking the law when it comes to sex related transgressions. Unfortunately though, society is generally sinful in nature and far too often people caught in sexual lawlessness receive only a slap on the hand and then they're back into their morally decrepit world. However, they have not escaped justice! What mankind fails to understand over and over again is that God's eternal justice will be much more severe and final than anything they experience on earth. Let's examine some Bible verses concerning the consequences of SRS: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, Revelation 21:8, Romans 6:20-21, Romans 6:16, James 4:4-5.

I don't know about you, but spending eternity in a fiery lake of burning sulfur is not my idea of a great retirement! Let's just face facts. A life addicted to Sex Related Sin can only end up in "eternal doom". Is that really worth temporary pleasure? Is it really "pleasure" or is it simply morally deprived addiction? Do you wish to live your life beyond earth in eternal doom and torture or would a life of eternal rest and peace be a better choice? Yes, you do have a choice.

The Bible has never been disproved. In fact, it has only been proven true over and over again by historical records and writings, archeological findings, and yes, even by science. No other book has affected mankind so dramatically as the Bible. Its precepts and principles are eternal and apply to each and every one of us. Do you seriously desire to be an enemy of God?



Still not convinced? Read this real-world, real-time story of the consequence of SRS; "A U.K. woman died from suffocation when she strangled herself for an online creep who paid her to perform "dangerous and degrading" webcam sex acts while he watched from home, a coroner ruled Wednesday." ~ by Ebony Bowden, New York Post, 2019. Do you think this "online creep" will escape justice? Even if this person escapes punishment here on earth, do you really think God is just going to look the other way? I'll tell you this, that person better pray that someone is selling ice cubes in hell or they better repent and humble themselves before God before it is too late. It is so sad to think that this one incident is not just an isolated one. Similar transgressions are happening many times every day throughout society, throughout the world.

"It (SRS) is right at this moment destroying more churches, more pastors, more marriages, more people's lives, more relationships than any one thing has ever done simultaneously in history," ~ Josh McDowell

SUICIDE

The following information comes from the CDC:

"Suicide and suicide attempts cause serious emotional, physical, and economic impacts. People who attempt suicide and survive may experience serious injuries that can have long-term effects on their health. They may also experience depression and other mental health concerns. Suicide and suicide attempts affect the health and well-being of friends, loved ones, co-workers, and the community. When people die by suicide, their surviving family and friends may experience shock, anger, guilt, symptoms of depression or anxiety, and may even experience thoughts of suicide themselves. The financial toll of suicide on society is also costly. In 2019, suicide and nonfatal self-harm cost the nation nearly \$490 billion in medical costs, work loss costs, value of statistical life, and quality of life costs."

Montana State University also provides the following information:

“Grief and Loss Stress Reactions

When a tragic loss occurs, you will experience normal reactions to the experience you've had. These reactions might include:

Physical Reactions:

*Fatigue Nightmares Changes in appetite Insomnia Exhaustion
Digestion problems Under-activity Hyperactivity Headaches*

Cognitive Reactions:

*Difficulty concentrating Flashbacks Isolation
Inability to attach importance to anything other than the incident
Difficulty solving problems Memory disturbance Difficulty making decisions*

Emotional Reactions:

*Fear Anxiety Anger Guilt Depression Irritability
Emotional numbing Feelings of helplessness Frustration with bureaucracy
Over-sensitivity Amnesia for the event Violent fantasies”*

SUBSTANCE ABUSE – SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD

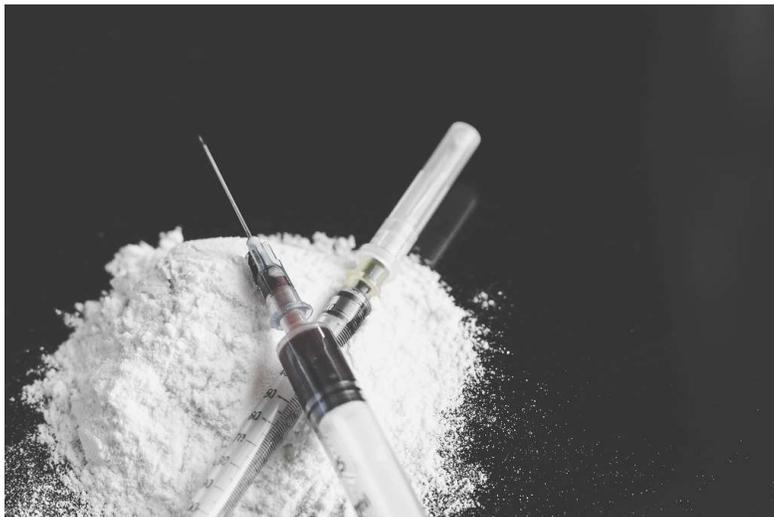
The NIH reports the following:

“People with addiction often have one or more associated health issues, which could include lung or heart disease, stroke, cancer, or mental health conditions. For example, it is now well-known that tobacco smoke can cause many cancers, methamphetamine can cause severe dental problems, known as meth mouth, and that opioids can lead to overdose and death. In addition, some drugs, such as inhalants, may damage or destroy nerve cells, either in the brain or the peripheral nervous system (the nervous system outside the brain and spinal cord). Drug use can also increase the risk of contracting infections. HIV and hepatitis C (a serious liver disease) can occur from sharing injection equipment or from unsafe practices such as condom-less sex. Infection of the heart and its valves (endocarditis) and skin infection (cellulitis) can occur after exposure to bacteria by injection drug use.

Drug use and other mental illness often co-exist. In some cases, mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, or schizophrenia may come before addiction. In other cases, drug use may trigger or worsen those mental health conditions, particularly in people with specific vulnerabilities.”

“The estimated cost of drug abuse in the United States—including illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco—is more than \$740 billion a year and growing, according to data reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Substance abuse in the U.S. costs society in increased healthcare costs, crime, and lost productivity.

Drug abuse costs the nation more than \$120 billion per year in lost productivity, according to The National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC). Included in that lost productivity are reduced labor participation, incarceration, premature mortality, hospitalization, and participation in treatment programs away from work.



The NDIC estimates that the annual cost of drug-related crime in the United States is more than \$61 billion... From 63% to 83% of all arrestees test positive for illicit substances at the time of their arrest, according to the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program...

The total costs to society for substance abuse goes beyond the financial costs. Other costs include: crime, unemployment, domestic abuse, divorce, and homelessness, deaths from overdose, and effects on unborn children.” ~ verywellmind.com

GAMBLING ADDICTION

Information from *medicalnewstoday.com*: *“A gambling addiction is a progressive addiction that can have many negative psychological, physical, and social repercussions. People who live with this addiction may experience depression, migraine, distress, intestinal disorders, and other anxiety-related problems. As with other addictions, the consequences of gambling can lead to feelings of despondency and helplessness. In some cases, this can lead to attempts at suicide. The rate of problem gambling has risen globally over the last few years.”*

skywoodrecovery.com reports: *“Approximately 10 million people in the United States live with a gambling addiction problem. Studies have shown that more than \$6 billion has been lost each year to gambling addictions. Some community gambling addiction dangers include: Increased rates of unemployment, Bankruptcy, Fraud and check forgery, Forced home sales, Increased alcohol and drug abuse, and Poor mental and physical health of individuals and families*

While the addicted person will definitely suffer during a gambling addiction, that person’s family will also face challenges. The stress that the problem gambler experiences may cause irritable behavior, secrecy, and arguments. Calls from creditors and bill collectors erode relationships. Financial strains impact all family members, and strained relationships make the experience difficult for even extended family members, friends, and colleagues. The children of gambling addicts also suffer in many ways, including:

Emotional neglect and abandonment (and even physical abandonment) when one parent is consumed in an addiction.

Stressed and irritable parents may lash out at children angrily, and even if they do not, these children can sense their parents’ tension.

Children of people with gambling addiction are at higher risk of experiencing their own addictions later in life.”

Chapter Five: Why Does God have to be Involved?

Some may be hesitant to get God involved? Why? Perhaps they have listened to non-Christians or maybe they had a negative experience at a church somewhere. Unfortunately, mankind is imperfect. Christians can struggle with relationships and people skills just like anyone else. Don't let a negative experience at church or with a Christian keep you from enjoying a great relationship with God and other Christians.

God needs to be involved because mankind has tried to figure out on his own what to do with and about Suicides and Addictions for generations with little to no significant success. In fact, these disorders are probably as bad or worse today as they have ever been in history. I believe we were making progress here in the USA until the early 1960's when a Supreme Court decision took God out of our schools and most of our government to satisfy a very small minority of people. Since that time Suicides, Addictions, and Mental Issues have exploded and society is paying a heavy price for it. Mankind has tried many avenues that don't include God such as passing weak laws, counseling, support groups, interventions, a plethora of self-help books, etc. What is the result? Suicides and Addictions continue to grow and be more than a thorn in the side of society. They are more like a cancer that is growing virtually unchecked and, more so than wars or catastrophic natural events, could be the downfall of mankind. These problems are Satan's trump cards and there is only one thing powerful enough to bring it to its knees ... faith in Jesus Christ with righteous living.

35% of downloads from the internet are pornographic.

Why does God need to be involved? The *International Journal of Psychiatry in Clinical Practice*, the *American Psychological Association*, and *webmd.com* report the following benefits of spiritual support for people struggling with Mental Health, Suicide and Addictions:

- * A higher sense of purpose, peace, hope, and meaning.
- * Better confidence, self-esteem, and self-control.
- * The experiences of life make better sense.
- * When unwell, they feel inner strength and have faster recoveries.
- * Have more support from their spiritual community.
- * Work at better relationships with themselves and others.
- * Gain a sense of hope from interactions with spiritual leaders.
- * Spirituality is extremely helpful in the treatment of mental health difficulties.
- * Higher spirituality was associated with fewer Suicides and Suicidal tendencies.
- * Spiritual well-being is an important factor in helping psychiatric patients.
- * Spiritual involvement and practice may be beneficial in reducing depression and suicide desire.
- * The largest study ever undertaken examining the relation between spirituality and mental health outcomes among people recovering from substance abuse revealed the following:
 - ** Higher levels of religious faith and spirituality were associated with positive mental health outcomes.
 - ** Patients had more optimism about life and a higher resilience to stress.
 - ** Patients experienced increased coping ability, greater perceived social support, lower levels of anxiety and overall life satisfaction.
 - ** Patients who placed great importance on prayer, belief in God, and a strong sense of faith experienced faster recoveries.

All of these benefits are a result of having belief and faith in God. Which of these benefits do you not want to have? This is why God needs to be involved. Are you ready to place your belief and faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

The Bible, in 1 John 2:15-17 explains that things of this world are temporary, *"Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever."* This passage gives us 2 positive things that will happen to us if we have faith in and please God. First, we will have the love of God in us. The love of God is genuine and ever-lasting. Second, we will live forever with peace and joy in Heaven. Contrast this with what happens if we live in sin. If we live in sin without repentance and renewal through faith in Jesus Christ, we will be condemned to ever-lasting torture in hell. No human could possibly survive such torture ... or want to.

Gary L. Selman in his book, *Arise Shine Be Encouraged* provides more light on why God needs to be involved, *"Belief in God's Word: (1) gives us the supernatural ability to pull off death-defying acts regardless of our circumstances (2) is the key that unlocks every lock, breaks every chain, and destroys every cell or stronghold (3) opens the window that allows us to escape (4) provides the rope we need to climb to safety ..."* Selman is telling us that through belief in God and His Word we receive the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to defy satan and the hope and assurance of eternal life in Heaven.

The NIH reports: *"The field of suicide prevention has been enriched by research on the association between spirituality and suicide. Our results confirmed the multifactorial nature of the relation between suicide risk and the various religious/spiritual dimensions, including religious/spiritual well-being and hope immanent."* This research study confirmed that spirituality has a positive impact on suicide prevention.

As mere humans, we are sinful in nature and have been so since the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 8:21 God expresses his disappointment in mankind, *"... everything they (mankind) think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood."* However, the book *Rare Leadership* shows us how God can heal us of our sinfulness, *"Interacting with a holy God made Isaiah aware of his own sinfulness and, interacting with a holy God healed and transformed him."*³ We must interact with God to be healed of our sins. This means expressing our belief and faith in God and asking Him to forgive our sins. Only then can we be transformed into His people who will live with Him forever in Heaven.

ccef.org talks about the positive influence a relationship with God can have on SRS and Pornography addiction: *"God can and does bring people out of their isolated, imaginary world of sexual addiction into the real world of authentic, loving relationships with God and people."*

"Misused, distorted, or ungodly sexuality has destroyed countless lives, broken many hearts, and ended many promising ministries." ~ drcarolministries.com

Why does God need to be involved? When we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit lives in us and it is up to us to call upon the Spirit to guide our lives. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength and wisdom and **power** to overcome satan's influence in our lives. Galatians 5:16-17 tells what happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, *"So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives."*

Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions." Our "sinful nature" is what satan preys upon to get us to submit to temptation and Addictions and even Suicide. We have to call upon the Holy Spirit to give us the power to resist and overcome satan's attacks on our lives. With the Holy Spirit our fighting chance of winning this battle is greatly enhanced.

behavioralhealth-centers.com reports: "Despite rampant skepticism about the influence of religion or spirituality on substance abuse and addiction, there is considerable evidence that they both play key roles in recovery and abstaining from future substance abuse. In fact, spirituality has been shown to be effective in improving a wide range of psychiatric conditions. Spirituality or religion can help a person find purpose in his or her life, fill a void, cope with mental distress and adhere more to morality."

Here is some more scripture to strengthen your resolve against satan's attacks on your life:

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are." ~ 1 Peter 5:6-9

"Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm." ~ Ephesians 6:10-13

"I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms." ~ Ephesians 1:19-20

"If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure." ~ 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

"Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God." ~ Romans 6:12-13

"People for whom religion is considered important are less likely to have drinking problems." ~ behavioralhealth-centers.com

Pastor Rick White in his book, *They That Wait, Why God's Delays Are Not His Denials*, encourages us, "What we must remember is that all prayer must be viewed as warfare. The answer to your prayer may be delayed because the answer is so important that Hell has sent its principalities to withhold the blessings of God from your life. So what should you do if the answer to your prayer is delayed by spiritual warfare? Humble yourself before God set your heart and mind, and don't stop praying! Victories are won, not by the strongest or largest, but by those who just refuse to give up. You don't lose when you come in second, third or even last. You lose when you give up. I want you to know you have a heavenly father who started with you, and will finish with you. Whatever happens, you have got to finish! It is too soon to quit! Don't give up! Don't quit! It may look impossible right now, it may look dark right now, and weeping may last for the night, but hold on, joy comes in the morning."

Why does God need to be involved? Look at what Al Buck, the founder of Buck Knives Company, instilled into the company culture, "Now that you are family, you might like to know a little more about our organization. The fantastic growth of Buck Knives, Inc. was no accident. From the beginning, management determined to make God the Senior Partner. In a crisis, the problem was turned over to Him, and He hasn't failed to help us with the answer. Each product must reflect the integrity of management, including our Senior Partner. If sometimes we fail on our end, because we are human, we find it imperative to do our utmost to make it right. Of course, to us, besides being our Senior Partner, He is our Heavenly Father also, and it's a great blessing to us to have this security in these troubled times. If any of you are troubled or perplexed and looking for answers, may we invite you to look to Him, for God loves you. John 3:16." We are all troubled sometimes and we all fail from time to time. The answer will not be found in Suicide or Addictions, but by turning to our Heavenly Father and asking the Holy Spirit to give us strength and peace and guide us through our troubles.

Why does God need to be involved? Ask the famous rapper, Master P who recently lost his 29 year old daughter. In a Christian Post article dated May 31, 2022 by Jeannie Ortega Law, Master P says 'God' will get him through 'overwhelming grief' of losing his daughter. The 52-year-old dad continued, "Mental illness & substance abuse is a real issue that we can't be afraid to talk about. With God, we will get through this," Master P said and he has a message for everyone who grew up as he did, "Don't be afraid to grow and change," Master P added. "Where I come from, I come from the streets, I come from the struggle and pain. Without God, I wouldn't be here. So why not change and grow up and do right?" Wait a minute! What did Master P say? He said "why not change and grow up and do right?" That's exactly what God can do in all our lives. He can help us to change and grow up and do right. We just have to believe in Him.



The MOST important reason God needs to be involved is all about victory over satan. You see, Jesus already defeated satan long ago! Matthew 4:1-11 documents Jesus' victory over the temptations of satan. In verse 10 Jesus tells the devil, "**Get out of here, satan!**" Here, Jesus gives the foundation on which we too can achieve victory over satan. Satan's influence in the world led to Jesus' death on the cross. However, Christ's death on the cross back-fired on satan as the cross established THE way for all people to be set free of satan's influence. Hebrews 2:14-15 says, "Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying." 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 tells us of Jesus' greatest victory over satan, "But let me reveal to you a wonderful

secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.”

The Maxwell Leadership Bible talks about Colossians 2:10-15 as follows:

The Law of Victory: Jesus Defeats Death, Provides Weapons

Jesus not only provides us the weapons (or tools) we need for victory, (Col. 2:10-14), but He also disarms the enemy, thus assuring our success (2:15). Christ ensures us of victory by providing the resources (or tools) we need, by removing hindrances, by stripping the enemy of his own devices, and by publicly declaring victory.

Yes, we will have ultimate victory over satan! Through our faith and belief in Jesus Christ, we too will be resurrected or transformed into eternal beings to live in joy in Heaven. Revelation 20:10-15 describes how the devil and his accomplices and all who do not believe in Jesus will be thrown into the lake of fire to endure eternal torture. THIS is why God has to be involved. Through our heart-felt faith and belief in Him, He is the ONLY way to achieve victory over satan.

Chapter 6: Defeating Satan:

Tool #1 - Skip the Tribulation

What is the Tribulation and why should we skip it? Matthew gives us good insight via the words of Jesus. In chapter 24 verse 21 Matthew documents Jesus' words, ***“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.”*** What will happen to mankind during the Great Tribulation? Paul talks about these times in 2 Timothy 3:1-4, *“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”* Do Paul's words describe our society today? The Tribulation period lasts seven years, however the Great Tribulation is the final three and one half years and is filled with great calamity for mankind. If we wish to avoid this great calamity, we should seek to Skip the Tribulation!

James O. Davis in his book, *Signposts On The Road To Armageddon*, warns us about the Tribulation, *“You do not want to be here at the sound of the trumpet. It's going to be the saddest sound this world will ever hear. It will signal the time of unprecedented rule by powers of darkness and evil. For those left behind, it will be the saddest day of their lives. For those ready to go to heaven when Jesus returns, it will be the gladdest day of their lives. The Second Coming*



means happiness to those who are ready, but horror for those who are left. Once the church is taken away and the saints of old are raptured or resurrected, there will be seven years of terror, pestilence, famine, and destruction as the forces of evil battle against the nation of Israel. One may be deaf to the voice of Jesus now, but one will hear the trump of God then. It will signal the rule of Antichrist, idolatry, humanism, persecution, the worship of man, deception, death, and destruction. It will be the most terrible sound in the history of man ushering in the most terrible time the world has ever seen, because the church will be gone.”

Jesus tells us in Luke 21:36 to be ready for these events, ***“Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”*** and in Matthew 24:36 Jesus tells us why we should always be ready, ***“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*** If we don't know the timing of these events, it makes sense that we should always be ready for them.

How do we Skip the Tribulation? God's people will be spared the Tribulation and will be removed from the earth into Paradise via the Rapture immediately prior to the start of the Tribulation period. After the Rapture, those people who remain on earth will be those who have rejected God and have not received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

How can we be assured of our place in the Rapture? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 describes how God's church, both the living and the dead believers will be raised by Jesus at that time, *“We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who*

have died. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. So encourage each other with these words.” 1 Corinthians 15:50-55 speaks of the immortality of believers in Christ, “What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.”

The side effects of porn addiction are pretty much nothing but destructive.

So again, how do we assure our place in the Rapture and Skip the Tribulation?

It is simple really, God sent His Son to die for us so that our sins may be forgiven. In John 14:6 Jesus tells us that the way to the Father is through Him, “***I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***” God the Father is in Heaven and the only way to get into Heaven and to the Father is through Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:13-14 explains, “*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*” The famous passage in John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*” Acts 4:12 assures us that Christ is the only solution for our redemption, “*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*” To assure our place in the Rapture and Skip the Tribulation we must engage in a four-step process through prayer as follows:

- > Admit we are sinners.
- > Express our belief that Jesus died for our sins and ask forgiveness.
- > Believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead.
- > Acknowledge that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior.

If you know in your heart that you are ready to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, please join me in this prayer: “*Father in Heaven, I admit that I am a sinner, I repent of my sins and ask for Your forgiveness. I acknowledge that Your Son, Jesus Christ, died for my sins and was raised from the dead and now sits at Your right side. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. Father, I accept Your Son, Jesus Christ, as my Lord and Savior and I receive Your Holy Spirit into my life to empower me. I commit to live the rest of my life for Your purposes. AMEN!*”

If you prayed that prayer and sincerely mean it with all your heart, CONGRATULATIONS! You are now one of God's people and assured of your place in the Rapture and you will be spared ... YES you will get to Skip the Tribulation! 1 Peter 1:3-4 talks about the hope and inheritance we have as God's people, “*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,*” This experience is called 'salvation'. Your salvation experience is just the beginning of your Christian life on earth and eternity in Heaven. Because you meant the prayer above with all your heart you are now called to leave your old life of sin behind and start a new life seeking to live in a Christ-like and Christ-pleasing manner. How do you do this? I recommend the following steps:

- 1 If you're in counseling or an addiction intervention or recovery program ... Stick With It!
- 2 Attend a Bible teaching church every week.
- 3 Read and study about the Bible every day, if possible.
- 4 Get involved in small group Bible Study & Fellowship.
- 5 Read this book at least 3 times and refer back to it frequently.
- 6 Read my other books, *Effective & Enduring Leadership*, Volumes 1-8 at least 2 times.
- 7 Join an EEL Team as described in *Effective & Enduring Leadership*.
- 8 Don't give up! Satan won't give up and neither should we.

"I have decided to follow Jesus. The world behind me, the cross before me. No turning back, no turning back." ~ facebook.com/iamMs.Joanne

Please note that if you did not mean the above prayer with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."), then it was an empty prayer and not received by God. Your salvation is a life-changing event and not something to be taken lightly or just for your convenience. Romans 10:9 explains that we must believe in our heart, "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." I encourage you to begin the above eight steps immediately so that you may gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Christian and then, when you sincerely feel it in your heart, come back and pray this prayer again and continue your Christian life.

With our eternal futures in Heaven secured, we now have Tool #1 in defeating satan in our lives belief and faith in Jesus Christ! This is the foundational tool from which we can now build our defenses against satan by calling upon the power of the Holy Spirit to resist his attacks on our lives.

Chapter 7: Defeating Satan:

Tool #2 – The Ten Commandments

If only mankind would just obey the Ten Commandments; there would be no need to worry about Suicide or SRS or Substance Abuse or other addictions. In fact, there would be no wars and no need for jails and police and armies. But, that is utopia and not how the real world is. As established earlier in this book, mankind is sinful in nature and we require laws and discipline in order to survive. God gave us all the laws we need in the Ten Commandments. Unfortunately, much of mankind is not accepting of them and therefore we need jails and police and armies.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 shows that God expects us to be obedient to His commands, *“And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?”* The *Life Application Study Bible* talks about these verses, *“Often we ask, ‘What does God expect of me?’ Here Moses gives a summary that is simple and easy to remember. ... How often we complicate faith with man-made rules, regulations, and requirements. The Ten Commandments, the heart of God’s law, are just as applicable today as they were 3,000 years ago because they proclaim a lifestyle endorsed by God.”*

If you reread the verses in Deuteronomy in the previous paragraph you see that God expects us to fear (respect) Him, be obedient to Him, love Him, and serve Him with all our hearts and souls. The Bible goes on to say that doing these things is for our own good. I don’t know about you, but I think it is pretty smart to do things for my own good and not for my destruction.

In the New every one of the Ten Hebrews 4:9-11 confirms the from our work, *“So there is the people of God. For all rest have rested from their creating the world. So let us*



Testament, the Bible confirms Commandments. For example command that we are take rest *a special rest still waiting for who have entered into God’s labors, just as God did after do our best to enter that rest.”*

Here are the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20:

“I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. You must not have any other god but me.

We must only worship the one true God and serve Him first and foremost in our daily lives wherever we are and whatever the situation may be.

“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.

Today, other gods may be Pornography or Gambling or Drugs or Alcohol or food or sports or tobacco or alcohol or our kids or our spouse, etc. We should be careful to put God first and foremost in our lives. God takes priority in our lives over our country, our family, our work, and our social activities.

“You must not misuse the name of the LORD your God. The LORD will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name.

We must act and speak with integrity. We should be very careful about using the Lord's name in vain or in a way not pleasing to Him.

“Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

Scripture from Hebrews and Mark emphasize getting rest from our work. The New Testament clearly encourages people to take a rest from their work to re-energize and be in Fellowship with God and other Christians.

“Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

People should live by example, always showing respect for their parents and their elders.

“The Ten Commandments, the heart of God's law, are just as applicable today as they were 3,000 years ago because they proclaim a lifestyle endorsed by God.” ~ Life Application Study Bible

“You must not murder.

Obviously, people should not commit murder, but they should also guard their minds against anger and hatred and work hard to model self-control in everything they do.

“You must not commit adultery.

People should model integrity and that includes male-female relationships and they should demand no less from others.

“You must not steal.

People are not perfect, but they should strive to be as Christ-like as possible. Most of us have been guilty of physical or spiritual theft in the past. If we repent for our sins and ask for forgiveness, we will receive forgiveness from God. This is why Jesus spilled His blood on the cross ... so that we may be redeemed for our sins. We should not participate in physical or spiritual theft ... we should be encouragers and lights in a dark world.

“You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.

We should strive to be Godly people with good words coming from our mouths and our thoughts. People should not spread gossip or lies about others and they expect the same from their family and friends.

“You must not covet your neighbor's house. You must not covet your neighbor's wife, ..., or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”

People should be encouragers and celebrate the successes of others. We should not be jealous of the possessions or accomplishments of others. People should understand that earthly possessions and accomplishments are temporary and frequently become stumbling blocks to entering the eternal kingdom of Heaven. We need to learn to maintain focus on Heavenly rewards and not earthly pleasures.

Now we have Tool #2 in defeating satan in our lives. Being obedient to the Ten Commandments builds a shield between us and the temptations of the devil. I encourage us all to return here often and review about God's Ten Commandments because He gave them to us for our own good. The stronger we are in obeying the Ten Commandments, the stronger we will be in resisting satan's influence in our lives!

Tool #1: OUR FAITH AND BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST.

Tool #2: OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.



Chapter 8: Defeating Satan: Tool #3 – The Lord’s Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer is often misunderstood. Many people believe that this prayer *must* be recited exactly as it is recorded in whatever Bible translation they are using. Jesus gave us the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6 as a guide or template for communicating with God. In his introduction to the prayer in Matthew 6:9 Jesus said, **“Pray like this,”**. Note that Jesus used the word **LIKE**. The most common definition of “like” in this usage is “similar to”. Jesus is not saying to memorize and repeat exactly, he is giving us a framework for prayer that is simple and easy to use and doesn’t ramble on for 15 minutes. Here is the Lord’s Prayer as I say it every day:

*Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.
May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven. Give us today the
physical and spiritual food we need,
and forgive us our sins, as we
have forgiven those who sin against us.
And don’t let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.
Yours is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, forever AMEN!*

Please allow me to break it down so we will have a better understanding of how this prayer applies to our lives every day and will help us resist satan’s temptations in our lives.

“Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.”

Philippians 2:11 says, *“...and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

The Bible establishes God as our “Father” in several places. If we believe that God is our “Father” and place our faith in Him and keep His name holy, then we will be in a strong position to resist satan’s influence in our lives.

“May your Kingdom come soon.”

Matthew 3:2 says, *“Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”*

We are called to repent of our sins to enter into God’s Kingdom of Heaven. There will be a new Heaven and earth, a New Jerusalem (according to Revelation 3:12) and to enter the New Kingdom we are called to repent of our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

“May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the

way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

The above verses from Romans 12:1-2 give us excellent insight into God's will for us. We are not to copy the behavior and customs of this world. Instead we are to change the way we think and seek to live in a way that is acceptable to God.

"Give us today the physical and spiritual food we need..."

Proverbs 30:8 says, *"...give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread."*

God wants us to live comfortable lives materially here on earth. He does not want us to be poor, yet He admonishes us for seeking worldly riches. Our daily bread/food can include the food we have to eat, the 'wages' we earn, and daily exposure to God's Word.



"and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us."

We are called to forgive people's sins against us whether they are family members, friends, or whoever they may be. The Bible says that God will not forgive our sins if we don't forgive those who sin against us.

"And don't let us yield to temptation..."

James 1:13-15 talks about the real cause of temptation, *"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."*

We are to lean on the foundation and strength of God's Word to lead us around and through temptations and troubling situations and maintain focus on serving God and not the ways of the world.

"but rescue us from the evil one."

Ephesians 6:11 encourages us, *"Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."*

What is the "full armor of God"? It is God's Word and it is the Holy Spirit working in us and it is Fellowship with other Christians and God Himself through prayer. When we are tempted by satan or facing his evil schemes, we can find strength in reading and studying God's Word and in calling on the Holy Spirit for the power to resist the devil's attacks. Fellowship with other Christians also provides us strength in defeating satan's influence in our lives.

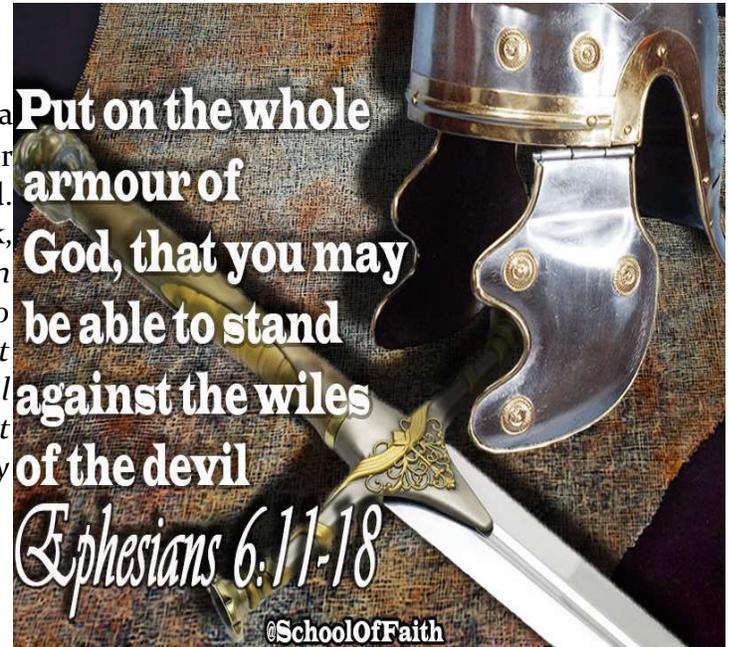
"Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

People often misconstrue, misuse, or abuse their authority. We come to believe that, because of our authority, we have our own 'kingdom' and we have the 'power', and others work to give us 'glory'. In reality this is self-centered and small-minded thinking that is characteristic of leaders with low self-esteem. Unfortunately, this is seen as much in ministry as it is in the secular work environment.

We are to understand that the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are God's and we should honor Him with all we do. Satan fears God and our defense against satan's influence is stronger when we honor God with all we do.

Daniel 9:20-23 shows that God does answer our prayers, *"I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill—while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed."* While we may not receive an immediate answer to our prayers or a visit from Gabriel, we can be assured that our heartfelt prayers are heard and will be answered according to God's will and His timing.

A good prayer life is essential to having a good defense against satan. Preemptive prayer prepares us for the challenges of life that lay ahead. Zig Ziglar calls this being 'prayed up'. The book, *Lead Like Jesus*, discusses preemptive prayer, *"In leading like Jesus, prayer should never be relegated to our last resort in times of deep distress. It is our most powerful, most immediately accessible, most useful resource for responding to the moment-to-moment challenges of both good and bad times. That is why preemptive prayer is important."*



Now we have Tool #3, prayer. It is for our benefit to be in prayer to God throughout our day. When we are 'prayed up' we have the strength and power to resist satan's temptations.

- Tool #1: OUR FAITH AND BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST.
- Tool #2: OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.
- Tool #3: PRAYER.

Chapter 9: Defeating Satan:

Tool #4 – The Fruits of the Spirit

Wow! We've come a long ways in a short time. We now have 3 powerful weapons we can depend on for strength against satan's attacks on our lives. First, we have secured our eternal place in Heaven with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Second, we have learned that obedience to the Ten Commandments gives us a shield against satan's influence in our lives, and third we have learned that having an effective prayer life gives us power over satan. In this chapter, we will finalize our defense against the devil by learning about living out the 9 Fruits of the Spirit in our everyday lives.

Satan uses temptation to destroy us whereas God strengthens us against the devils schemes. James 1:12 encourages us, *"God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."* Note that the Bible says God blesses those who "endure" temptation, not surrender to temptation. Every temptation is an opportunity to do good. When faced with temptation we have to decide whether to surrender to it and satan or endure it and turn away from it towards God. When the Holy Spirit is in control of our lives, we take on more of the character of Jesus as we endure testing and temptation. The character of Jesus is found in the Fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23 tells us what the 9 Fruits of the Spirit are, *"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!"* How great life would be here on earth if we all sought to fulfill these 9 character traits of Jesus in our lives.

Fruit #1: Love

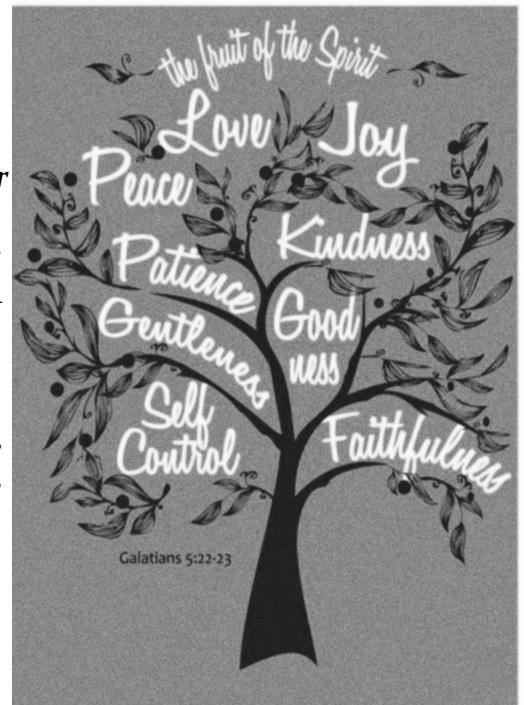
Bible Verses:

Matthew 22:37-39 is commonly called the *Great Commandment* and with good reason, ***"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"***

John 14:21, ***"Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."***

Thoughts:

The above verses are the words of Jesus himself. Are we getting the message that love is important to God? If it is important to God, then it must be important to us.



Take Action:

We can't mess around with this. We can't be luke-warm about it. We've got to jump in all the way. We must love God, love our neighbors, and obey His commandments. We just have to DO IT and then the rewards and emotions will follow. Godly love gives us a hedge of protection against satan.

Fruit #2: Joy

Bible Verses:

Romans 15:13, *"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."*

1 Peter 1:8-9, *"You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls."*

Proverbs 10:28, *"The hopes of the godly result in happiness (joy), but the expectations of the wicked come to nothing."*

Thoughts:

Even though we do not see God or Jesus at this time, we still place our hope in God and trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior for which we can celebrate with joy.

Take Action:

Okay, just how do we take action on "joy"? The fact that our eternal lives in Heaven are secured through our belief and faith in Jesus are enough in themselves to be filled with joy. Just think about it; Proverbs 10:28 above says that as godly people our hope results in joy, but the expectations of the wicked come to nothing. If you decide to take action and do wicked things, then your life will come to nothing other than eternal torture in hell. On the other hand, if you take action to live a godly life, you will experience the joy of living an awesome eternal life in Heaven. Now, which action will you take?

Fruit #3: Peace

Bible Verses:

John 16:33, *"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."*

Hebrews 12:14, *"Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord."*

Thoughts:

Jesus overcame the world and, while we will have trials and sorrows in this world, we too can overcome it through our faith and trust in Him.

Take Action:

Hebrews 12:14 above tells us what actions to take; live in peace with everyone and work at living a holy life. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus, we have the power to overcome the problems of this world and satan's temptations. This gives us Christians an inner peace that non-Christians do not have or understand.

Fruit #4: Patience

Bible Verses:

1 Timothy 1:16, *"But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life."*

Ephesians 4:2, *"Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love."*

Thoughts:

Some of us have been the worst of sinners, yet God has shown us mercy and great patience so that we have come to believe in Him and have eternal life. Likewise, we should be patient with others knowing that we are all sinners and none of us is perfect.

Take Action:

Satan hates patience, he hates mercy, he despises an humble and gentle spirit, and he hates love because these character traits strengthen us against his pathetic influence on our lives. So be patient with others, show others mercy, be humble and gentle, and love others as Christ loves us.

Fruit #5: Kindness

Bible Verses:

Titus 3:4-5, *"When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins ..."*

2 Corinthians 6:6, *"We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love."*

Thoughts:

God showed us kindness by saving us, not because of the good things we have done, but because of his mercy and love for us. Likewise, God expects us to show kindness to others because of the Holy Spirit that He sent to live in us.

Take Action:

Knowing that God has shown us great kindness, even though we don't deserve it, we should also show kindness to others in all circumstances. It is more difficult to fall into Satan's traps if we are being kind to each other.

Fruit #6: Goodness

Bible Verses:

Romans 12:9, *"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good."*

Galatians 6:9, *"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."*

Romans 12:21, *"Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good."*

Thoughts:

Being good is a good thing, not a sign of weakness. It is actually a sign of strength against the temptations of Satan. If we really love others and persist in doing good we will have victory over Satan and will reap a harvest of God's blessings.

Take Action:

Show true love to others and don't tire of doing good for others and we will be blessed by God and conquer evil in our lives.

Fruit #7: Faithfulness

Bible Verses:

1 Corinthians 10:13, *"The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure."*

1 John 1:9, *"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."*

Thoughts:

We are all subject to the temptations of satan, what is different is how we respond to his evilness. God tells us that He will not allow us to be tempted in a manner in which we are powerless to resist. God gives us the power to choose right or wrong in every situation. He is ready to forgive us and show us His mercy when we do fall. He is always faithful to us if we turn to Him in faith.

Take Action:

It is simple, be faithful to God all the time. When we are tempted by satan, we have the power to call upon the Holy Spirit to make the right decision and respond in a way that is faithful to God. If we fail, we have not lost God's faithfulness to us if we turn back to Him and confess our sin and ask for forgiveness.



Fruit #8: Gentleness

Bible Verses:

Philippians 4:5, *"Let everyone see that you are considerate (gentle) in all you do."*

Proverbs 15:1, *"A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare."*

Thoughts:

God wants us to be gentle in our spirit and to show that gentleness towards others.

Take Action:

In times of conflict or confrontation with others, it is best to step back and delay our response and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom in our response. Being gentle is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength against satan's influence in our lives. Strive to always be gentle towards others and show them the love of Christ.

Fruit #9: Self Control

Bible Verses:

2 Timothy 1:7, *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline (self control)."*

2 Peter 1:5-8, *"In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Thoughts:

God expects us to be in control of our emotions. We when allow our emotions to control us, we are falling into satan's trap. God has given us the power we need to show self control through the Holy Spirit. By maintaining our self control, we are more productive and useful for Jesus Christ in our daily lives.

Take Action:

Call upon the power of the Holy Spirit to help us exercise self control in tense situations and when we are tempted by satan. Let's work to be useful and productive people showing self control for Jesus every day.

Now, as Christians, we have 4 powerful tools that form a strong foundation for defeating satan's influence in our lives. First, we have the Holy Spirit who came to live in us when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Don't underestimate the significance of this. By calling on the power of the Holy Spirit alone we have the ability to defeat satan's influence in our lives. Second, by obeying the Ten Commandments, we live a lifestyle that rejects satan's temptations. Third, having a good prayer life keeps us in communication with God and changes our thoughts from evil things to healthy Godly thinking and actions. Fourth, by living out the Fruits of the Spirit in our daily lives we greatly reduce satan's ability to tempt us with evil thoughts and activities.

Tool #1: OUR FAITH AND BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST.

Tool #2: OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Tool #3: PRAYER.

Tool #4: LIVING THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.

Chapter 10: What Does a Godly Lifestyle Look Like?

To start off this chapter we need to apply what we've learned in chapters 6-9 and that is to learn to live every day for Jesus Christ. The following verses should be helpful:

Romans 13:12-14, "... remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires."

2 Corinthians 7:1, "... let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God."

"We perform at our best when we are healthy and strong in all areas of our life. Your ideas, your talents and gifts, and all the things God's given to you are diminished when you're not healthy."⁵

Can we ever achieve "complete holiness"? Certainly not on this side of Heaven, but that is why Jesus Christ died for us on the cross. So that we can become right with God after we have fallen short of His glory by confessing our sins and asking for His forgiveness. However, we are never to cease working toward complete holiness.

Ephesians 5 verses 21-26 and verse 33 give us great insight on how a husband and wife relationship should work, "... submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything. For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." If a husband and wife work together to comply with these verses from Ephesians and keep God at the center of their marriage, then they will have a Godly sexual relationship.

Now let's get to the nitty-gritty and the practical application of what we've learned in this book to our daily lives:

- 1- Marriage is ONLY acceptable between one man and one woman.
- 2- God created us as man and woman and we are not to mess with God's biological selection of our sex at birth.
- 3- Men are not to engage in sexual relationships with other men.
- 4- Women are not to engage in sexual relationships with other women.
- 5- Unmarried couples are not to engage in sexual relationships.
- 6- Sex is ONLY acceptable between one man and one woman who are in a committed marriage relationship with each other.
- 7- Participation in any form of pornography is NEVER acceptable.
- 8- Participation in any form of sexual deviancy is NEVER acceptable.

- 9- Remain faithful to your spouse or the person you are dating.
- 10- Participation in any form of human trafficking is NEVER acceptable.
- 11- Avoid Suicidal thoughts. Turn our thoughts to God. Pray.
- 12- Abusive use of alcohol or drugs of any kind is not acceptable.
- 13- Excessive Gambling is not acceptable.
- 14- Avoid any thoughts of evil desires.
- 15- Immediately confess our sins and ask for forgiveness and strength not to repeat.
- 16- ALWAYS place God in the center of all your relationships.

If we (mankind) stayed true to the 16 items listed above then we would be happier people and we would have a healthier society. We can have stronger marriages? We can have fewer sex crimes and infidelity? We can greatly reduce pornography or human trafficking? We can reduce Suicides and Addictions. We can live happier, more meaningful lives if we draw close to God.



This book, up to this point, has been more defensive in nature. We have focused on how to resist satan's influence and temptations in our lives. In the next chapter of this book I will give you a powerful every day tool to go on the offensive against satan's temptations and achieve VICTORY over his pathetic attempts to ruin our lives.

Chapter Eleven: VICTORY over Satan



To achieve complete and ultimate victory over satan we must break the habits that lead us into Suicide or any Addiction. Orison Swett Marden is quoted, *"The beginning of a habit is like an invisible thread, but every time we repeat the act we strengthen the strand, add to it another filament, until it becomes a great cable and binds us irrevocably, thought and act."*² Every time we give in to temptation, satan strengthens the cable against us. The good news that Marden may not understand is that we CAN break the 'great cable' he speaks of with God's help.

Tony Robbins, in his best-selling book, *Awaken the Giant Within*, discusses scientific research on how our brain develops habit patterns. *"If you'll just stop indulging in a particular behavior or emotion long enough, if you'll just interrupt your pattern of using the old (brain) pathway for a long enough period of time, the neural connection will weaken and atrophy. Thus the disempowering emotional pattern or behavior disappears with it. Remember: courage, unused, diminishes. Commitment, unexercised, wanes."*² This book gives us the tools we need to interrupt the patterns of Suicide and Addiction. Robbins goes on to talk about how to change our behavior. He says, *"... we must link unbearable and immediate sensations of pain to our old behavior, and incredible and immediate sensations of pleasure to a new one."*² Let's review chapter 4: The Consequences of Suicide and Addictions to understand and feel the pain of our old actions. Now, imagine the great pleasure we will experience by realization of just the first three Fruits of the Spirit, "Love, Joy, and Peace". What do you want? Pain or ... Love, Joy, and Peace?

Galatians 5:24-25 tells us what to do with our sinful nature, *"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."* Yes we can leave our sins, sinful desires, and addictive behaviors behind and get closure on that part of our lives. Think of your sins and your addictive behaviors and actually see yourself nailing them to the cross that Jesus is hanging from. Jesus is there to accept the punishment for OUR sinfulness. Through His sacrifice we can be forgiven and made new. Now, let's strive to live Christ-like lives asking the Holy Spirit for guidance in every part of our lives including dealing with satan's temptations. We can be free of our sinful and addictive past. I know this is somewhat repetitive, but it is important. Let's nail our addictions to the cross of Jesus asking for and knowing that He forgives us and let's move forward with our lives relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

You want a new start to life? Listen to what God is telling us in Revelation 21:5-7, *"And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children."*

Do you really want the blessings of God? We must be victorious over satan in order to become new and receive His blessings. Following is a powerful tool each of us can use to have victory over satan in our everyday lives.

STOP – TURN – WALK – PRAY

Stop – Drop – Roll

I'm sure you've heard that when your body or clothes catch fire to stop, drop, and roll. When we are tempted by Suicide and/or Addictions, we can do something similar.

STOP – TURN – WALK – PRAY

When we are tempted by Suicide or any Addiction here is a 4 step formula for defeating satan and achieving victory for God and for ourselves:

STOP: The first thing is to come to a dead **STOP**. **STOP** whatever evil you are doing, **STOP** whatever addiction you are looking at, **STOP** whatever evil you are thinking. If you can, stand up and throw your arms out in front of you with your hands up and, if you can, yell "**STOP**"!
Pray, *"Jesus, don't let me yield to this temptation!"*

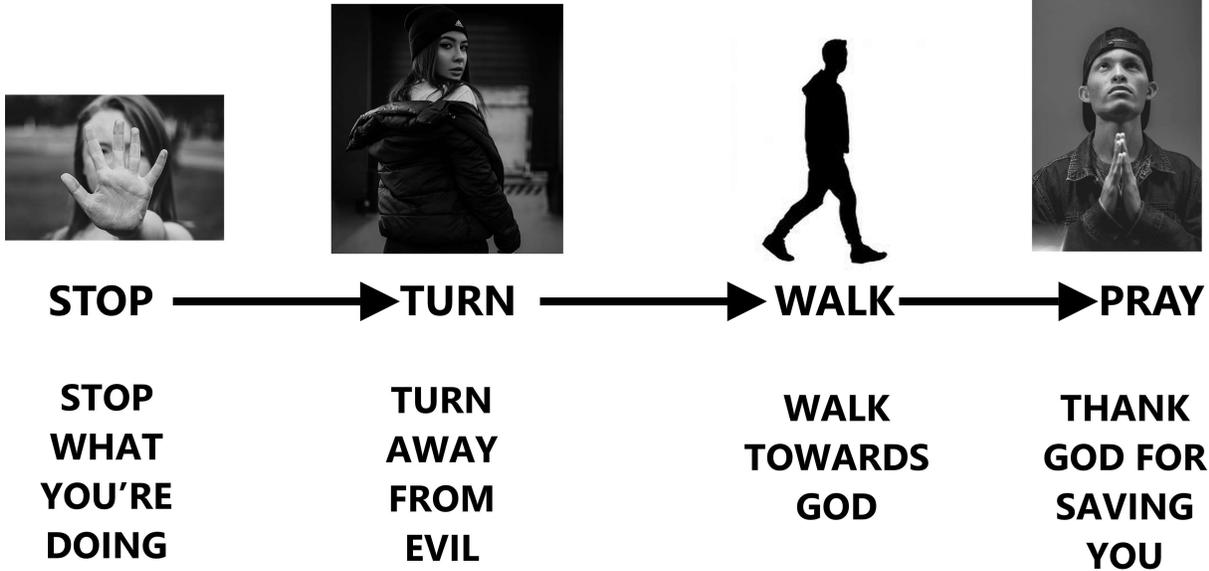
TURN: Next **TURN** away. Physically **TURN** your body away from what is tempting you.
Proverbs 3:7 says, *"... fear the LORD and turn away from evil."*
John 20:14, *"She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, ..."*
Pray, *"Jesus, rescue me from this evil!"*

WALK: Immediately begin to physically **WALK** away from the temptation. Visualize Jesus in front of you and you are **WALKING** towards Him!
1 Corinthians 6:18, *"Flee from sexual immorality."*
Jeremiah 15:19, *"If you return to me, I will restore you ..."*
James 4:8, *"Come close to God, and God will come close to you."*

PRAY: **PRAY** and thank God for the strength to **STOP, TURN, & WALK** away from temptation. **PRAY** for the people involved in the temptation. **PRAY** that God will bless and protect them and that their hearts will be right with God. **PRAY** and thank God for your life's blessings.

"Lord, thank you for being my Rock, my Fortress, and my shield of strength. Jesus, help me to have a willing spirit, a strong body and mind to resist every temptation. In you Jesus, in your grace, I win every battle, every time. Through the blood of Jesus and in the name of Jesus I pray. Amen." ~ Gary L. Selman in his book, *Arise Shine Be Encouraged*.

The Victory Over Satan Process



Remember

God does love the people involved in Suicide and all Addictions. He just hates the sin and he does not like harmful addictions of any kind. God does not want any hurt to come to us. He wants us to draw close to Him and repent for our sins. He wants us to love Him.

"Lord thank you for your Word of Truth and Grace. Jesus, your sacrifice on the cross settled the battle with Satan for all time. Satan, with Jesus on my side, you lose. I will not give up, cave in or quit no matter what. Through the blood of Jesus and in the name of Jesus I pray, amen." ~ prayer by Gary L. Selman in his book, Arise Shine Be Encouraged.

Chapter Twelve: Final Thoughts

Let's not underestimate our adversary or get overconfident with the tools in this book or any tools we have to fight satan with. This is a very serious matter, it is truly a life and death situation. If someone was holding a gun on you at point blank range, that would be a very serious life and death matter, right? Well, fighting with satan is even more deadly, so let's not take this lightly.

Unfortunately, satan is not a typical bully. He is smart and cunning and relentless in his desire and efforts to destroy us all. The devil knows he will spend eternity in the lake of fire in hell and he wants to take as many of us with him as he can.

Yes, this book can and will help us in our fight to achieve victory over satan, but we must keep these tools sharp and in good working condition in order to prevail. I encourage you to do the following to stay in "shape" so you may achieve victory over the devil:

- 1 If you're in counseling or an addiction intervention or recovery program ... Stick With It! The purpose of this book is not to replace those programs, but to complement them by giving you tools to use when outside those programs.
- 2 Attend a Bible teaching church every week.
- 3 Read and study about the Bible every day, if possible. I know we're busy and it may be hard to study the Bible every day, but make that your goal. I keep a Bible in the bathroom and read from it most every day as I'm sitting on my personal little throne. Then I try to read from a study Bible and discuss it with my wife every night before bed. It truly is more fulfilling than TV.
- 4 Get involved in small group Bible Study & Fellowship.
- 5 Read this book at least 3 times and refer back to it frequently re-reading the 5 tools chapters one at a time and incorporating them into your daily life.
- 6 Read my other books, *Effective & Enduring Leadership*, Volumes 1-8 at least 2 times.
- 7 Join an EEL Team as described in *Effective & Enduring Leadership*.
- 8 Don't give up! Satan won't give up and neither should we.

"Temptation is a part of life. Until we no longer have a body of sin we will be tempted to commit sin. But in reality, every temptation is an opportunity to overcome and to get victory over sin! With the word of God as our weapon we can always resist temptation!" ~ activechristianity.org.

"The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure." ~ 1 Corinthians 10:13. We just need to know how to use the tools God has given us, so let's review this book often and apply these 5 tools to our lives and achieve victory every day over satan. May God bless you with strength and confidence in our Lord Jesus and with Christ-like love for your fellow man and woman.

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written by:

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