

How Jesus Will Fix Our Deadly Addictions

We live in a broken world that is filled with many addictions that effect men and women in negative ways. Albert Mohler highlighted the addiction of sports gambling in his daily briefing on 2-11-2026. This is a growing addiction among teenage boys and young men. Mohler quotes from Danny Funt's recent book "Everybody Loses: The Tumultuous Rise of American Sports Gambling". This jaw-dropping book pulls back the curtain on the alluring yet perilous world of American sports gambling. Built around explosive interviews it reveals the troubling methods that are being used to bleed gamblers dry.

This addiction just illustrates the brokenness of humans and the need to be transformed.

"In a perceptive new Wall Street Journal article, former Sen. Ben Sasse reminds us: "America works only if we remember that government is the source neither of our rights nor the meaning in our lives." Given that Mr. Sasse is dying of pancreatic cancer, his wisdom resonates with particular urgency. He is right: If our hope lies within us, we have no real hope. But if we will use the discouragements of the news and our culture to turn from ourselves to our redeeming Lord, he will do in us what we cannot do in ourselves.

While "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick" (Jeremiah 17:9), our Maker will give us a spiritual heart transplant: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you" (Ezekiel 36:26). When we trust Christ as our Lord, we "become children of God" (John 1:12) and a "new creation" as "the old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

However, if you're like Paul (and me), you still struggle with temptation: (Romans 7:19). The good news is that there is no sin we must commit (1 Corinthians 10:13). But we must reprogram our mind and heart to accomplish this victory. " This is what we find in Romans 12:1-2. "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. God used Paul to tell us that God's salvation must be applied to our lives, His mercy should motivate us to surrender to His will, reject, refuse, and resist the temptations of the world, and let God's Holy Spirit, His Holy Word, and His Holy people transform our thinking which changes our attitudes, aspirations, and actions.

In a recent Wisdom for Each Day devotional, Billy Graham likened our minds to computers that are programmed at the factory. Unfortunately, much of what programs us comes from our fallen culture and corrupts us. Dr. Graham therefore advised that "we need to reprogram our mind and heart; we need to replace the bad things that have taken root there with good and true things." The key is the word "replace."

Years ago, New York Times columnist David Brooks wrote an important article titled "How People Change." He cited a "trove of research suggesting that it's best to tackle negative behaviors by redirecting attention toward different, positive ones." Erasmus (c. 1469-1536) had similar advice, encouraging us to use temptation as an opportunity to trust more fully in God's power to defeat it. He noted that Satan hates nothing so much as for evil to be used for good.

In practical terms: When we see something in the news that discourages us, pray for those involved. Ask Jesus to make himself real to them. Pray for God to use his people to make a difference where they have influence. Ask the Spirit to replace our fear with the "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding," knowing that it "will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). When we face temptation, pray for the strength and wisdom to replace sin with godliness. Identify a positive action that would benefit us and others. Then ask Jesus to make himself real to us as he empowers us to be "more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

The key is both simple and profound: "Beholding the glory of the Lord, [we] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Corinthians 3:18). How fully will you be "transformed" into your Father's image today? John Owen (1516-1683) wrote "Be killing sin, or it will be killing you".

Bill Russell, "Let God's grace transform your mind and win the victory over all life killing addictions."

(This article comes from thoughts from Albert Mohler, Jim Denson, and Billy Graham)

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*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **TRUE**,
whosoever things are **HONEST**,
whosoever things are **JUST**,
whosoever things are **PURE**,
whosoever things are **LOVELY**,
whosoever things are of **GOOD REPORT**;
if there be any **VIRTUE**,
and if there be any **PRAISE**,
think on these things.*

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

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