

Addictions - the past

John VanSloten Jan. 23, 2005

[SIMPSONS CLIP – Duffless 12:47-14:50]

Welcome... today continue addictions - look at Q - where it all began... When I met with Dr. Jim Pender, "This all started long before the substance/ process abuse made the scene."

Referring to - families we come from... Basic thinking is - 1. We first learned how to behave the way we do via our upbringing... via our families of origin (also genetic factors as well... hard to undo genes!)

2. In order to understand why we act the way we act - understand those familial influences... understand... and in some cases let go of them (especially the negative ones)! LONG PAUSE...

Last week - unsettling connection between addiction and 'idolatry' - in a sense both offer substitute for God... things, substances, processes, ways of thinking, whatever - things we use to satisfy a need in us... a yearning, a desire for wholeness- in lieu of God!... before going to God... or along side of God

Interestingly this connection to idolatry - also applies in terms of the 'family of origin' issue... Second Commandment - "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters

PAUSE... Saying today - want to change... talk about it... w/friend... counselor... most NB with God... God who was there (mystery of that, when could have stepped in)... God who cares immensely (then and now)... God who heals.

God who says... "Relax your grip (control)... Let go... I've got more important things for you to do!"

Then, noticing the tone of his voice (so much for you... like a perfectly attentive Father... Mom who'd do anything for you... give her life for you...) you let go... You make a decision and you QUIT that behaviour...

And the moment you make that move - discover that the void is terrifying!... emptiness so disorienting! Everything inside - run back addiction... or replace it quick... PAUSE... but the key (G.MAY) - hold steady in that new place... don't succumb to fear/unknown... And look around a bit... LONG PAUSE

Landscape totally unfamiliar...feeling vulnerable/naked but there's something right about where you are... not sure what it is at first... PAUSE... realize you're naked before God!... if you can stand steady long enough - learn a few things about Him/Self...

1. God really is gracious – despite all your flaws, brokenness (esp. as naked

below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Deuteronomy 5:7-10

- referring to literal idols here (stone or wood images) but NB truth - the bad patterns you live out - be passed on your kids!... - or from kid's perspective- "bad patterns you've got - picked up from family!" (either in replication - vows to never be that way!)

So if you want to disengage - need to know where you came from... unpack your past... understand dysfunctional dynamics - this can be tough... something rather avoid (-I mean... that's what led to addiction!... why would I want to go back there?)

Yet, it's only as you do - gain understanding - leads to freedom... "How do we best gain that understanding?" PAUSE... first thought stories... (relate to... real life) - via Bible? [DAVID-Absalom, Solomon]

[Thomas King's tales w/image for each 1. Dad drink Son... 2. Gambler 3. TV 4. teen]... Tom to offer a few general principles on how to engage past...

Ok, heard King David's story... King, Thomas's stories PAUSE... what about your story?... Where did it - have influence in terms of your addictive tendency to 'control'... 'attempt to please others'... 'work'... 'sexual addiction'... 'substance abuse'?... PAUSE

before his perfection) - immense love for you... so quick to understand you... forgive you... restore you...

2. Way he does that - telling you - deep desire driving your addictive tendencies - really a desire for him! "You're looking for me." (Its like the void is begging the question... confusion pointing to the Answer!)

3. When want control - really want a Father in control... security ("I will never leave you")... significance/respect "you matter/belong to me!"

"I am what you're looking for... all you need to do is accept my love... free... a gift of God... by my Spirit - teach you what freedom is all about!" PAUSE...

It's a totally free gift from God (begets incredulity in us!)

PAUSE... but I wonder - perfect match - void left when we drop an addictive tendency... "Totally taken care of by God - when all we've ever done is try to solve selves"... "Totally free - when all ever based identity on is merit/earning respect!"... "Totally mind boggling Grace - filling this totally lost/empty place"

[SLOW] Meeting us there - gently transforming our desires- taking them off of the things/processes we've attached them to - and re-attaching them back onto himself... in that place bringing new life... "showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments..."

Christ came to make all things new - Includes you!

Wants to take you back beyond family of origin... back into the arms of God your

LONG PAUSE... if you want the freedom
- need to defuse the source!... [TIME -
Hanging on mom's leg - Now want to
control!]... PAUSE... [Circumstances -
Father not there as teen... always
working!]... [sexual abuse - family friend/
member]... [Way-- mom drank] -trying to
control husbands addiction] [Fam's
glittering image of perfection-
maintained]

And they were often things - never talked
about... (We shot, shoveled and shut up!)
...Addictions expert John Freels - 1. first
you don't talk about it (denial)
2. then you lose your ability to trust (in
family and in your perception of reality)
3. Then you move to numb/change
feelings/fill void that brokenness begot

Father...

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