

**Addiction: Seeking Freedom for Body and Soul
Evening Session**

An Introductory Scenario

1. Common Themes in the Experience of Addiction

- **Addiction feels like it's automatic, and therefore outside of a person's control.**
- **Addiction involves both body and soul.**
- **Addiction can have a behavior cycle to it; but regardless of the cycle, behavior must be understood as necessarily spiritual and physical.**
- **Addiction is evidenced in a spectrum of inner and outer behaviors.**
- **Addiction is often difficult to recognize from the outside.**

2. Relevant Themes in Scripture for the Experience of Addiction

- **An addicted person perceives he is under the control of an object, but he is actually under the control of his own desires.**

Definition: "Addiction is bondage to the rule of a substance, activity, or state of mind, which then becomes the center of life, defending itself from the truth so that even bad consequences don't bring repentance, and leading to further estrangement from God" (Ed Welch, *Addictions A Banquet in the Grave*).

- **Addiction is the patterned seeking of satisfaction from created things. This pattern is both the result of a sinful corruption and a consequence of sinful action repeated.**
- **Because we are stewards of our bodies and our souls, addiction is voluntary, though it cannot be classified as an immediate choice.**
- **Addiction takes place in context. In other words, an addicted person may have a number of factors in their experience that function as conditions for their response.**

3. Living by Faith When Experiencing Addiction

- **Help people understand what their addiction shows about how they are perceiving the object of their addiction, their own lives, their relationships, and especially God himself.**
- **Help people strategize how best to undermine the physiological, environmental, relational, and behavioral realities that reinforce the addictive cycle.**
- **Recognize that moving out of addiction is in part suffering, and offer the proper comfort and encouragement for their pain.**
- **Preventing addiction in yourself and your loved ones.**