

INFECTED AND ADDICTED

By: Phillip Hayes

*And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
[Luke 21:29-35]*

We hear much about the end time these days. The Bible book stores are full of books written about the subject. Many ministers have built their entire ministry about the end time and prophecy.

Most of what we read and hear concerns the individual minister's view about the rapture of the church, the Antichrist and the Mark of the Beast. Others focus on how to survive during the times of tribulation. Millions have been spent on storing up for these times. Dried food and survival packages are advertised on several Christian ministers programs. Voices! Many voices pointing in different directions!

Amazingly the truth is in plain sight before everyone. In our opening scripture Jesus let us know exactly what we should do in the last days. He warned that there would be a snare (a trap) that would be set for everyone that lived on the face of the whole earth. He did not want His people to be unawares of this trap that was to come.

Let's look at what He said concerning the time just prior to His second coming. First, He let us know there would be a generation that would see all the things Jesus foretold of. Everything would be fulfilled in this one generation! Then He begins to warn this last generation what they should be careful of. For this generation to be aware of the trap, they would have to guard their hearts against surfeiting, drunkenness and the CARES OF THIS LIFE! Surfeiting means a glut or glutinous person. Drunkenness is obvious but you can also be drunk on the things of this world! The cares of this life sums it all up! Prosperity and materialism is the trap that is set!

The Apostle warned of this very same thing. *"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But*

thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” [1Timothy 6:3-12]

I believe prosperity is a sound Bible doctrine. But like all truths found in the Bible, they can be perverted. The Apostle Paul warns there are people that preach material gain is godliness. In other words, material gain is the evidence you are a child of God. He tells us to withdraw ourselves from these kind of people. Paul is very clear that we brought nothing into this world and we will certainly not take anything out! We should be content with food and clothing! Nothing more! Paul also calls these things a snare, a trap!

When I compare the scriptures we have just read to the messages being preached today concerning the end I find most are missing the real issue. That issue my friends is the cares of this life. The majority of Christians today have become infected with the cares of this life and are now addicted to the world! If you are addicted to the world it makes no difference if you believe in a rapture that will take you out of the world before tribulation begins, or if you believe you will go through tribulations. You have fallen into the snare of the devil.

There is a spark that ignites every addiction many of which are very common to man. I call this spark an infection.

Let's review a few common addictions: smoking, drinking, and drugs. Now look at these three. No one suddenly becomes addicted to either of these. There must be that first puff on a cigarette. Someone offered you one and you tried it. It was horrible! But after awhile, you tried it again, and then again. Then you were hooked! A lifetime of smoking because of one innocent puff! You see, there

was a chemical introduced to your body in that first puff. You became infected! Then you became addicted. It's the same with alcohol or drugs. A spark of interest must first come, then the infection, then the addiction!

I believe this to be true with all addictions! There are other addictions that are common to man but mostly overlooked such as entertainment. Movies, television, sports, video games, the internet and pornography. There are people that cannot go one day without some form of entertainment! I realize some forms of entertainment are innocent. However, no matter how innocent the entertainment may be; if it takes away from quality time with your loved ones, Bible reading and prayer you are addicted. There are Christians that are extremely addicted to games. I have a Facebook page for our ministry. There is not a day that passes that I am not bombarded by Christians wanting me to play some stupid game with them. This goes on every day by the same people! I have to wonder, don't these people have anything else to do with their time? "Idleness" is one of the sins of Sodom! Christians are addicted to television. Soap operas and such dominate the thought patterns of these folks. They will watch and actually come to tears over who was caught with someone else's wife on their favorite show! You have fallen into the snare of the devil! You are addicted!

Many churches in America close their doors on Super Bowl Sunday because they know everyone will be home watching the game! One church in our town has a Super Bowl Party when game day comes! When some Christians are not watching their favorite sports event, or watching a movie, or watching their favorite TV show, they are surfing the internet. They go from internet site to site looking for something. I really don't know what they're looking for but I can assume it has nothing to do with God. A wife of one brother in the Lord I know told me that her husband stays

up until three or four in the morning searching the internet. Some Christians spend hours on Facebook gossiping and back biting. They are infected and have become addicted!

If you think pornography is something that goes on in a small dark theater somewhere you are terribly mistaken. If you have an internet connection pornography is a click away and many have become infected and addicted to porn! I warn you, you may think your husband or wife is searching the net for innocent information when they may already be infected with a spirit of pornography. You may also think your son or daughter is studying for their next exam, but they could be addicted to porn. A few years ago a man came up to me for prayer and confessed he was so addicted to pornography, he had to see it every day! Where did he go to fulfill his lust: the internet!

Just recently an entire school was shocked by young school girls texting sexually explicit messages and naked photos of themselves to other students. Most of these girls were not even in their teens! They have been infected and are addicted to sexual perversion. Their depravity could have very well began in their own homes through the internet, movies and television. No wonder our country is in trouble! Our society is out of control!

There are more infections than these mentioned! We have become gluttons! Surfeiting is to be a glut! Overeating has resulted in Americans being the most obese people in the world. This is another sin of Sodom: "fullness of bread"! I know folks don't want to hear this, But these are the very things Jesus warned us about! Here is what Proverbs says about overeating and drunkenness: *"And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh". [Proverbs 23:2; 19; 20].*

Americans and specifically American Christians are the most materialistic people on the face of the planet. We have become addicted to shopping for something different, something new. We now have pre-black Fridays, Black Fridays, After Black Fridays, Black Saturdays and on and on it goes. People are not content! They want bigger, fancier, more, and more! Many are addicted with materialism. This infection has resulted into compulsive shopping. People don't need it, they buy it anyway. It doesn't matter if they don't have the money. They have credit cards! Some wives hide what they owe from their husbands and husbands likewise. Television programs have been developed called "Horders" displaying the results of these compulsive shoppers. The trap is there for all to see! It is called the CARES OF THIS LIFE! Have you been infected? Are you addicted?

There is another infection and addiction we should be aware of also. It is a religious infection. Millions if not billions are infected by it! Some are given over to brutal and horrendous acts against humanity and they call it a godly thing. We see this infection in many religions including the Muslim religion. But Roman Catholicism was just as brutal in times past. A religious spirit can also be manifested in various other ways. Religious people know they should fast, but instead of fasting, they invented what is called a Daniel Fast. This way they can eat as much as they want and call it a fast! This is an insult to the prophet Daniel. The word fast means: *to shut the mouth*. It should be clear, if your mouth is shut, it would be hard to put anything in it! Many want to dress in a particularly religious way. They want everyone to SEE how religious they are. The Pharisees were an example of this and Jesus revealed they were full of iniquity on the inside. We see it today in men and women with flowing gowns or a white collar. Others decorate themselves with a golden cross around their neck or with

modern Jewish attire such as prayer shawls and skull caps. Some men wear beards as an example of holiness while women fashion their hair in what some call a Pentecostal bun. Others decorate their vehicles with pictures of Jesus and Bible verses. This outward display of religion is a sure sign of a religious infection that has brought many into bondage. Many use these outward religious things to hide what is really on the inside. Believe me, you don't need any of these outward displays to prove you are a Christian. People will know you are a Christian by your manner of life.

In the areas of addictions we have covered the common spark of infection is demoniac. It comes from the devil! Think about it. Each one points to someone that has lost control of their flesh, their emotions. If you don't control your flesh – Your flesh will control you!

The devil wants to possess your thoughts so he can control you. Once Satan has control of you, you are now out of control. Your fleshly desires is where it is at and God is far, far away.

He begins with an innocent spark. "JUST TRY IT" Satan's mode of operation has never changed. Look at how he seduced Eve: *"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."* [Genesis 3:6]

Now, look what the Apostle Paul revealed about the Satan. *"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."* [2Corinthians 11:3] Subtlety: means trickery! Satan tricked Eve. How? He showed her something that appealed to her. She saw that was GOOD! It was PLEASANT to the eyes. It was something that would enrich her (it would make her wise)! It all looked great to Eve! It made sense to her! Satan

tricked Eve using her own fleshly lusts! He is doing the very same thing today. It was a snare then, it is a snare today!

Once the snare is laid, and the addiction has been ignited you are now infected by the one thing most Christians try to avoid and that is summed up in one word:

LUST

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death: Do not err, my beloved brethren." [James 1:14-16]

"The devil made me do it!" That excuse will not work my friend! The devil CANNOT make you do anything! He can and will entice you, tempt you and try his level best to trick you into believing a lie, but he CANNOT make you do anything. The tempter will come! Yes he will! But when he comes with his temptation, you will be drawn away by your own lusts! You will be held accountable and making such excuses as the devil did it will not work when you appear in judgment. James said when lust is conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. Our only hope is to walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

The Apostle also warned about this trap that is set: *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." [1John 2:15-17]*

What and who do you love my friend? Do you realize your addictions will tell on you? What you are addicted to is what you really love! Yes it is! I know this truth hurts, but we must awaken to what is motivating us. What drives you!

What do you earnestly look forward to? The next football game? The next movie? The next game with your friend? Another search of the internet? What you will eat for dinner? What's driving you? Most times it is your flesh!

Let me say without any doubt, you can escape the lusts of your flesh! Yes you can! I know you have faith. You are a believer. But you have fallen into a trap. You are infected. You are addicted. But, you can escape whatever addiction you are in. You can add to your faith!

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." [2Peter 1:3-10]

Thank God! We can partake of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust! That's the trap! We can also add so many great things to our faith: Virtue; Knowledge; Temperance; Patience; Godliness; Brotherly kindness and Charity. Peter said if we did these things, WE WOULD NEVER FALL!

Having revealed the horrible trap Satan has set and acknowledging that many of us have succumbed to some of

his temptations. I believe we can all be free of his clutches and walk in the spirit. I want to add, there is an infection and an addiction we should all desire and that is to be infected and addicted to Jesus Christ, His Word, His Church, Prayer and the Work of the Lord. I know the spark that will begin our journey is acknowledging that greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world. Then the Holy Ghost will infect us and the addiction will begin.

We need to return to our first love! *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."* [Revelation 2:4]

Isn't that really the bottom line? When you started out with the Lord, you loved Him with all your heart. You still say you do, but deep down, you know you don't have the same commitment you once had. Think back! You couldn't wait for church to start. You were in every prayer meeting. You prayed constantly. Jesus was on your mind night and day. You woke up praying and thanking God for Jesus. Christian songs and hymns were all you wanted to hear. The Word of God was alive to you. You read your Bible constantly. While on the job, you had your little pocket New Testament you read at break time. Church was your life! You were madly in love with Jesus! There was no time for television, movies or ball games. You just didn't have time for all these worldly events. You were infected and addicted to Jesus!

Think about your level of dedication then and now. What is the most important thing in your life now as opposed to when you first started out with the Lord? Examine yourself!

Get back my friend! Come out from among the world. Escape the snare of the end time. Time is running out! I want to Fall in love with Jesus again and I hope you do also!