

Journey To

LIFE

*"You have shown me the path of life."
Psalms 16:11*

ADVENTIST
recovery
MINISTRIES
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

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Editor's View

The Fundamental Question

We've all heard and understood that there are basic questions about life related to the meaning of life and the purpose of existence. For Christians, these questions are answered in the person of Jesus Christ who loved us enough to create us and to redeem us from our sins. However, as Job discovered, the human ability to hang onto these sometimes esoteric realities is challenged by pain and suffering of daily life. The fundamental question is not whether God is there, but is He there for me, not "Is God real?" but rather, "Is God real for me?"

Each of us must come to terms personally with the character of Christ. Is He who He says He is in His word? Revelation 14:7 commands us "Fear God, and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all of springs of water." This verse must be read in light of God's character which is love. How do those of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and who have made a decision to turn our will and lives over to Him interpret this verse? Too often our view of God's character is that He is waiting to judge us when we step out of line or make a mistake or sin. Riddled with guilt and self-condemnation,

we don't really believe "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

I believe that I powerful reality of the three angels' messages is not only that God judges us, but how we judge Him. It is the hour of "His judgment" that has come. As Sarah "judged Him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11), we also need to come to terms with God's faithfulness to His promises. The fundamental message that our addictions give God is that He is not strong enough or powerful enough to handle our lives, therefore, we believe that we need to manage our own lives.

When we have personally experienced Jesus healing touch and comfort in our addictive process, we will become settled in our hearts into the truth of who He is, we will be prepared for whatever the enemy has in store for us in the future. As the insightful article by Paul Coneff coveys below, Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44), and Jesus wants us to experience the truth about Jesus who sets us free. ■

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ARMin Mission and Vision

Our Mission:

Promote healing and freedom from harmful practices by providing resources and training to facilitate recovery.

Our Vision:

Healthy people growing in a relationship with Christ by using principles of God's Word and choosing healthful practices aimed at finding freedom from harmful habits and addictive behaviors.

Potential Objectives/Goals:

- Promote healing (individually and corporately) utilizing the healthy, balanced principles of God's Word
- Provide resources to churches and individuals in order to raise awareness and educate regarding the root of dysfunctions that create disunity within individuals, families, churches and communities through unresolved trials, troubles and tragedies
- Train individuals to facilitate ongoing support groups and mentoring in a safe, nurturing environment

We believe that as we heal from life's trials, troubles and tragedies, we become inspired and committed to reach out to others as a result of gratitude for our personal healing; to care for others because our lives are so enriched by Christ's forgiveness; and the blessing of the freedom we have experienced due to His unending grace and mercy. ■

The Healing Value of the 12 STEPS

Step 6 —

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character”

Biblical Comparison

“Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sins.”

— Psalms 51:2 (NIV)

Calendar

January 15, 2013 – Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) Free Webinar – Introducing the ministry and materials to be used during the Health Ministries Sabbath focusing on ARMin (see below). Register now at: www1.gotomeeting.com/register/119945881 or at www.adventistrecovery.org.

February 16, 2013 – During this 2013 Health Ministries Sabbath churches in NAD will focus on *Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin)*. We encourage each church to introduce the hope and healing for those hurting from addictions during this time. The NAD ARMin Office and board developed a resource for pastors and ARMin leaders to use with a sermon and other suggested materials. Watch the webinar above and download the materials at www.adventistrecovery.org starting Jan 15.

March 15-17, 2013 – Plan now to take the official NAD ARMin training at the next NAD Regional Health Summit in New York City on March 16-17 of 2013. To learn more and to register please go to www.NADHealthSummit.com and you will find info on how to register. This training will help leaders to understand principles of recovery how to use the new *Journey to Wholeness* resource for support groups at churches, schools, or other centers of influence (see resource info on page 3).



12 STEPS to Recovery STEP #6

Wanting deliverance from the bondage of your sin addiction is not the same as being actually ready for it! The selfish and ungodly patterns uncovered in your earlier examination represents a lifetime of ingrained beliefs, attitudes, habits, thought patterns words, emotions, and behaviors. This revelation revealed to you by the Holy Spirit, has been painful and uncomfortable. These old and uncomfortable patterns have been a part of your life ever since you can remember.

Your sin addiction seemed to define you as a person. How will you ever live without it? You may actually find it easier to continue in an unhappy, yet familiar way of life, than to face an unknown and uncertain future.

Truth Moment: The ungodly and destructive traits emanating from our sin addiction simply indicate how deeply rooted our sin is entrenched and how we desperately need Christ to root it out.

It is important to understand that your struggle with future challenges will not end after you have gained the victory over the sins you are now seeking to overcome. Ellen White writes, “We will often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because we make mistakes and are not perfect. Yet we are not to give up. God does not turn away from us even if we are overcome by the enemy. He does not leave us alone” (*Steps to Jesus*, p. 47). She also writes, “Character building is the work not of a day, nor a year, but a lifetime. The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle” (*True Revival: The Church’s Greatest Need*, p. 65).

Excerpted from *Big Problem Bigger Solution: 12 Steps to Overcoming Your Addiction to Sin* by Jerry Horton, available through LuLu Productions. Email: hortonj06@yahoo.com, used by permission of the author.

Since the age of 14 my life consisted of compulsive

masturbation, drugs, topless bars, prostitutes, extra marital affairs, excessive drinking, and Internet porn. But I thought I could still manage my life. When the woman of my dreams broke up with me my life came to a halt. Never before had I experienced this much emotional pain and depression, and even my beautiful children 10 and 12 at the time could not lift me out of my dark hole. At this time I realized that love addiction was my primary addiction and like all the other addictions just a way to medicate the pain of not having had a loving affectionate relationship with my alcoholic father as a child and having been raised by a narcissistic mother.

My life had become unmanageable, I needed help. I had been seeing a psychologist for seven years, it was not enough. I went to many SLAA (Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous) meetings and got a sponsor. The pain was severe. Believing that healing from love addiction could take years I couldn’t take the pain. I saw a psychiatrist, however, my body couldn’t handle two different meds. I needed the pain to go away. I was introduced to Paul Coneff with Straight to the Heart Ministries. I liked the approach so I booked a trip to Dallas. Paul visited and prayed with me each day. I cried for 4 days, experienced a lot of healing and God revealed to me that the cause of all my addictions was the message I received throughout my life “I am not good enough”.

After Dallas the pain slowly receded. I continued to pray with Paul on a weekly basis, saw my psychologist, attended 4-5 SLAA meetings weekly and worked the steps with my sponsor. God has taken over my life. I pray daily for guidance. Recently I started going to AA meetings. All my addictions have come to a halt. My life has started back up. I have freedom, a sense of happiness I never experienced before. The greatest gift: I am present around my children and I am finally the role model I need to be so they will have a better chance to live a non addictive life. ■

Anonymous



The Root and Fruit of Freedom From Addictions: Part 1

Why do we so often struggle with behaviors we know are wrong, just like the apostle Paul in Romans 7? And how can we finally break that pattern of sinning, asking forgiveness for our sins, yet falling right back into the same pattern?

To understand this pattern, let's go back to the very first sin recorded in the Bible—or the sin that laid the groundwork for all of *our* sins and addictions. Understanding why Eve took the forbidden fruit can help us understand why we sin; so we can start to find freedom from the pattern that so many of us experience in our lives—sinning, asking forgiveness, and sinning again, whether the sin is anger, pornography, food, drugs, gossip, cutting/self-harm, being controlling, codependent etc.

So why did Eve sin in the first place?

As anyone familiar with the story knows, Eve sinned because of the serpent, or Satan. More specifically, she sinned because she believed his lies. In other words, her sin was the visible, external “fruit” of a much deeper “root”—a false belief system from the “father of lies” (John 8:44). And the same “father of lies,” with the same fruit/root principle, are the same forces that still fuel our sins and addictions today.

To further illustrate, if we pick an apple from an apple tree with the roots still intact, will the apple tree produce more apples? Of course it will. *As long as it*

has a root, it will produce fruit. And the same is true with our addictions. If we only focus on our behaviors, those negative roots will continue to reproduce sinful “fruit.”

Take, for instance, Rick's pornography addiction, a problem 50% or more of men *in the church* struggle with. When Rick calls me and says he is looking for help with his addiction to pornography, I can share two principles with him with confidence, based on truths in God's Word.

First, I can tell him that pornography addiction is the “fruit” or sinful behavior in his life, not the root. Because of this, in order for Rick to find forgiveness *and* freedom from his addiction, we will first need to address his belief systems behind his behavior.

Second, I can share with him that these attacks come in the form of Satan whispering his lies to Rick in first person language, using statements such as, “I'm rejected, I'm not good enough, I'm alone” etc. As such, Rick does not realize these thoughts are not really his own, but Satan's. And as soon as these lies are rooted in his heart, they distort his identity as God's son. They invite Rick to provide for himself and protect himself in his own strength, turning away from the living God (Heb. 3:12) just as Adam and Eve did in the garden.

After Rick learns to believe he is unwanted, he is tempted to look at pornography so he can feel

continued on page 4

Resources

Health Ministries Sabbath

(Feb 16, 2013):

Download a sermon and other resources to be used on the ARMin emphasis Sabbath. Register for the webinar and download materials at www.adventistrecovery.org

Journey to Wholeness:



A series that can be used in support groups or small groups as a resource to

facilitate recovery of breaking away from harmful practices and strengthening an intimate relationship with God in the Journey to an abundant life. Facilitator guides and participant guides can be purchased in our online store at www.AdventistRecovery.org

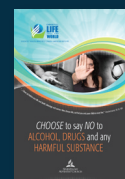
Journey to Life Newsletter:



This bi-monthly newsletter is available in English, Spanish, and soon in French as well. Print a free

pdf copy, download, or register to subscribe and receive it via email at www.AdventistRecovery.org

Choose Full Life Resources:



These are posters, calendars/bookmarks, booklets that can be used to share with others 10

Ways to Choose a Full Life embarking on a Journey to Recovery. For more information and to place an order please go to www.NADHealthMinistry.org and check out the online store. The Choose Full Life theme song is also available for download.

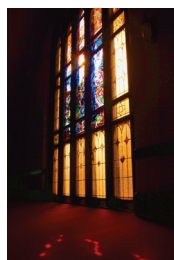
News

A new ARMin 12 step group for women has



been formed at the Village SDA Church in Berrien Springs, MI. The group meets at 7:00 pm on Thursday. If you are in the area, come by and experience the safety and welcome of a Journey to Wholeness group.

There will be an Awareness Sabbath on February 9, 2013 at the Roswell SDA church in Roswell, Georgia.



The Tryon SDA church has set up a Journey



to Wholeness group at a low income housing complex in North Carolina (Ashley Meadows) where folks from the church as well as some AA and NA members have agreed to meet once a week starting Dec 1, 2012. ■

Featured Article *continued from page 3*

wanted—and it works *for a short while*. But as he continues to look, he feels more shame and less wanted—and now Satan has set Rick up to repeat the negative cycle all over again.

Yet as Rick struggles to return to God's truth that has been "exchanged for a lie" (Rom. 1:25), I can also ask him a simple, yet important question: "Which is more successful: your sincerity, trying harder to do what you are already unable to do – or Jesus' purity with His victory He already gained 2,000 years ago?"

As the focus shifts to include the belief system behind the behavior, as well as receiving Jesus' forgiveness and Jesus' victory with Jesus' purity, the Holy Spirit can "renew our minds" and restore the truth in our hearts (Col. 1:24-27; 2:6-7; Romans 12:2).

But how do we apply this information to make it work in our lives? We know that information was not enough for the religious leaders. It wasn't even enough for Jesus' disciples, even though He told them He was headed to the cross to die for them time and time again. In Part II of "The Root and Fruit Of Freedom From Addictions," we will see how Jesus connects our story with His story and how those lies in our hearts can be replaced with Jesus' grace, Jesus' truth, Jesus' purity, and Jesus' victory. As we learn how to be "rooted and grounded in Christ," who is the "Root of David" (Eph. 3:17; Rev. 5:5), we can move from information to application to transformation (Romans 12:2). ■

*By Paul Coneff and Lindsey Gendke.
excerpted from their book "The Hidden Half of the Gospel: Connecting Our Story To Jesus' Story" to be released in the spring of 2013. Paul is the director of Straight 2 the Heart's non-profit prayer and discipleship ministry (www.straight2theheart.com).
Lindsey is a writer; living in Keene, Texas*

Director's Message



On behalf of ARMin I would like to thank each reader of the *Journey to Life* newsletter and ARMin leader for your support of this ministry in 2012.

God has opened many doors as we developed resources and training for this ministry. Our prayer for 2013 is that each church in NAD will have an ARMin support group for those hurting from addictive or harmful habits.

We would like to talk to you more about the ministry goals for 2013 and the Special ARMin emphasis Sabbath to be held on February 16, 2013. Resources were developed for pastors and leaders to download and use.

This is an opportunity to raise awareness about ARMin and minister a message of hope, healing and wholeness for members and community friends. You can learn more by registering for the free webinar we are holding on January 15 (see link under upcoming events).

May God impress your heart and lead you in 2013 to a full and abundant life in Him. ■

Katia Reinert

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