

Biblical Counseling Center publishes eCounselor's Weekly guide, to encourage counselors and all believers in discipleship and daily growth.

### Addictions & Weeds

by Sherry Allchin M.A.

This morning I was pulling weeds from my flower garden. No, not "weed"; like teens get addicted to, but a sinful weed nevertheless! This particular weed I've always rooted out of my flower bed instinctively, knowing it had no place there. But this year, alas, I got careless. I noticed it a while ago, but it looked pretty, like ground cover between my geraniums and petunias, so I let it go. It grew and grew. It took over! Today I realized it was choking out some of the alyssum and petunias. I started frantically trying to get rid of the weed, but it was very well rooted into my garden! It had even overpowered one geranium, which I didn't think it was powerful enough to do. I will have to keep working at it for a while to get it all out!



#### Addictions are like Weeds

"It looked so harmless." "What will it hurt if I do it just this once?" "It won't hurt me." "I can get it under control anytime I want to." How often have we heard these statements from someone we love or from a counselee? Addictive behaviors begin looking harmless, but soon overtake our lives and begin to affect every sphere of life: job and finances, family and social relationships, spiritual life, physical health, emotional stability. Addictions eventually take over a life and destroy it (Gal 6:7-8).

#### Getting to the Roots of Addictions

If we just help the addict to change surface behaviors, the addictions just resurface in changed forms (from alcohol to drugs, or drugs to sex, or eating disorders to other compulsive behaviors). Until a person looks at and identifies the idols of the heart that led them into the addiction in the first place, they will not pull out roots and tear down the stronghold of addictive behaviors (2 Cor 10:5; Jas 1:13-15).

#### Grooming the Garden for Permanent Beauty

The work will never be done here on earth! Sanctification is a process that will go on from the moment we trust Christ until the day we die. So please understand we can never sit back and say the work is done and we can coast into Heaven! Just as I will have to continue to dig out those ugly weeds (did I ever really think they were pretty???) for the rest of the summer, we must continue to grow in killing the fleshly desires and grooming the God-honoring desires (Rom 6,7,8). We can, through Biblical change, mature into a beautiful life that glorifies God in every sphere that once was destroyed by weeds.

1. *The reasons why addictions "deceive" us is because of the time between sowing and reaping. Seeds sown grow slowly until they have taken firm control of an area of our lives.*
2. *Idols of the heart (Ezekiel 14) need to be recognized, repented of, and tore down to be free from the roots determined to take control and grow again.*
3. *Stay alert to be sure all the roots are destroyed. It will allow the other flowers and fruit in your spiritual life to grow strong and vibrant.*

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