

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

Today we want to talk about how to tear down those strongholds in your life.

Many of us have what we call baggage.

- When we make the decision to hand over our baggage to the Lord then we begin to walk in what we call the blessings of God.
- When we ignore God's laws, when we want to do just what we want, then we will eventually pay the price for that decision.

A Study was done about two individuals. Two contemporary men who lived in New York City. This was back in the 1800s. The study found the following "One of the men did not believe in God and promoted a life of free sex, no rules and no responsibilities. The second man was known for being disciplined. He became a pastor and led by a very strong example. He authored several books and preached to many people in his lifetime. The results of the values of these two men upon their descendants could not have been more different.

The first man had one thousand twenty-six descendants of whom three hundred were convicts. A hundred ninety were prostitutes. Twenty-seven were murderers. Five hundred ninety became addicted to alcohol or drugs. Up to the 1950s his descendants had cost the state of New York one point two million dollars.

By contrast, the second man had nine hundred twenty-nine descendants of whom four hundred thirty were ministers. Three hundred fourteen were war veterans. Seventy-five were authors. Eighty-six were college professors. Thirteen were college presidents. Seven were congressmen. Seven were governors. And one was Vice President of the United States of America.

The first man rejected God. The other man partnered with God. The second man was Jonathan Edwards. He made a difference with his life as his descendants followed his example.

As you reflect upon your life, what kind of heritage are you leaving?

- If your life were to be studied, if historians were to write a book about you, would you be considered a blessing to the generations that followed you?
- My question to you tonight is what are you passing on to the next generation?

There are spiritual laws that can't be broken.

- When we break them, we pay the price.
- There is a very heavy price.
- When we obey God's laws we walk in his blessing.
- I don't know about you, but I prefer to walk in God's blessing.

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

- I'd rather walk under God's law.

Exodus 20:1-6 talks about the real top ten list. With all due respect to David Letterman, he is not the author of the concept of the Top Ten list. God is the author of the Top Ten list. And he wrote down two of the most important, in his eyes, and they're found in...

Exodus 20:1-4 NIV. We begin in verse 1: *"I, God, spoke all these words. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. [Rule number one,] You shall have no other gods before me. [Rule number two,] You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in the heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters 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."*

Having Idols is the most dangerous and overlooked type of sin.

- Because this type of sin is something that we never ever talk about.
- An idol is something that we make for our self.
- Ye shall not bow down to them – meaning allow or causing yourself to become subject to them.
- We don't hear much about idols – because they are really not very understood by most Christians and many preachers.
- But it's the only sin that talks about the consequence of what happens to us if we break that law.
- That's why it's very important to God.
- That sin is idolatry.

The sin of idolatry is what is impacting this nation in a way that many of us are unaware.

We think that an idol is simply a small statue or something.

- But an Idol is anything that takes the place of God
- Our dependence on God
- Our worship of God
- Our giving to God
- Our love of God
- Our reverence to God

He wants to be first in our life.

He wants to be the one we pray to when we have something we require.

He wants to be the one we look to when we have a need in our life.

I struggled with this concept when I read this. I asked myself, how is it that God would punish children, innocent children, for the errors of their fathers?

- That doesn't seem just.
- And that just does not even sound like God actually.

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

But then I realized that God is not one who punishes children.

- It's the parents and society that punishes children.

God doesn't teach anyone to sin.

Who teaches children to sin?

- Their parents and society do.
- Why?
- Because children are like video cameras with legs.
- They go around recording everything that they see.

Children absorb our behavior. That is how that iniquity is passed from one generation to the next.

- A child will imitate the behaviors and lifestyles of their parents.
- This is not by chance.
- This is by design.
- God designed us in such a way that we learn how to exist by the behavioral patterns of our parents.

If a parent is righteous...

- He will pray
- He will worship God
- He will attend a house of worship
- He will support that house of worship with his time, his talent and his treasure.
- God will be his focus
- God will be at the center of his life.
- When he has a problem, he will trust the Lord with his problem.
- When he has stress, and worry and fear and anxiety, he will take it to the Lord in prayer.

But if that same man is an unrighteous man who care not care about God or his commandments, he will have an idol.

My father had a huge idol in our home.

- This idol was a mean idol.
- It caused my dad to abuse his children.
- It caused him to neglect his children.
- Do you know what that idols name was?
- It was alcoholism.

Beer was the thing that brought my dad comfort.

- It caused him to relax
- It made him forget his troubles
- It lied to him and allowed him to be someone he wasn't
- He didn't have problems as long as he was hammered.

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

Now mind you, God wanted to be the one who my dad would turn to when he had a problem in his life.

- God wanted to be the one who he would pray to when life got difficult.
- But instead of praying at an altar of God, my dad prayed at the altar of alcohol.

Alcohol, take my problems away.

- Alcohol take me feel better
- Alcohol make me feel better about myself and the wrong things that I am doing and the way I am treating my family.

See alcohol became an idol.

- Alcohol became a God.
- Something man made that took the place of what God wanted to be in his life.

You ask what does idolatry have to do with this?

- A lot of people tell me, I don't have any images in my house.
- I don't have these statues in my house.
- I don't have images or idols in my house.

But an idol is whatever we habitually seek in our time of need, instead of seeking God.

- If that is truly an idol, that which fills that void in our heart in our time of need, then a glass or several glasses of wine on a regular basis can become an idol for the alcoholic.
- And porn can become an idol for the porn addict.
- Because it begins to fill a void that they seek instead of seeking God.
- Cocaine becomes an idol for the drug addict.
- For some of us perhaps our idol might be food.

You say is it sin or is it an idol if I only have a glass with my meal on rare occasions?

- Let me just say this, "You better be very careful when you are playing with fire."
- Because if it's what you have to have every evening in order to be able to sleep or rest or stand your life or your family, then yes it has become an idol.

Is it ok to take a vicoden if I have a toothache?

- Sure it is ok as long as your dentist has prescribed it to you.
- But if you're taking handfuls of these things on a weekly basis, not because you have a toothache, but because you have an addiction, then you have an idol in your life.

And that idol will keep you from a right relationship with God.

- It will destroy your marriage,
- Your family,
- Your life
- And worst of all, it will be an example to your kids that teaches them to live the same way and it will destroy them too.

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

We can make an idol out of anything.

- We can even make the family and our marriage into idols.
- Our children can become idols.
- I know mothers who base their self-esteem and their self worth on how well functioning their family is.
- Be careful that you are not finding your value as a person based upon how smart or good looking or how well your kids do in sports.
- Be careful that you don't let your family become an idol.

But I have come to tell you today that whatever issue you may be struggling with there's a way to break the cycle.

- There's a wonderful way to break the cycle.

Like I've said to you before, I come from a pretty dysfunctional family.

- My father was an abusive drunk.
- My parents divorced when I was 5
- My mother's 3rd husband, my step-father was the 3rd alcoholic she would marry.
- Our lives as kids was filled with neglect, abuse, hunger, poverty, shame and fear.

When you go back into our families heritage, it appears that ours was not the only family in the family tree with these same issues.

- Apparently this thing goes all the way back to the early roots of our family.
- Alcoholism goes all the way back 4 and 5 generations that we know of and probably further back than that if we could talk to those people.

Now I'm don't mean to harp solely on alcohol, I can only speak to that idol because it is the one I grew up around.

- But some of us have family idols that I haven't even mentioned here this evening, but you could tell us what they are couldn't you?!

But thank God that someone introduced me to a God who was bigger and stronger than the idols my parents grew up with.

- Thank the Lord that I found the God who is truly the Lord of Lords.

John 8:36 (KJV) If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

When this scripture went off in my life...It was like an atomic bomb, an atomic bomb in three dimensions.

- Because that not only affected Jim Smith, but it also affected who I was going to get married to, and who my children would be and how they would live and conduct their lives before God.
- And it also had an impact on past generations. Because that same man who

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

struggled with alcoholism and all the abuses that comes along with it eventually gave his heart to the Lord.

I'm extremely amazed by the power of God.

- I will tell you tonight that the only way to break the cycle, is to make Christ Lord of every area of your life.
- Christ must become Lord of *every* area of your life.

If you are struggling with a food addiction and maybe you're carrying an extra fifty pounds, you don't need to be on a diet.

- You need a paradigm transformation.
- You need to view food as fuel and change the way you view pleasure.
- See for some of us, we can only feel pleasure when we eat certain foods.

We need to re-define pleasure.

- The Bible calls this the mind of Christ.
- You need a transformation of the mind.

It may be over the way you view money.

- People have so much baggage when it comes to money.
- Some people say I don't have a problem with money.
- Someone said one time, "Money always talks to me. It says Good bye See you later!"
- If the only thing your money is saying is "Good bye", you might have an idol in your life.

Even the poorest of people can save money if they are not spending every last penny on idols and pleasures that do not truly satisfy.

We need to change the way we view these things.

- Break with those idols and make Christ be the Lord of every area of your life.
- Then we will be truly free.
- And we find the evidence of this in Acts 10:38 KJV. This is Jesus' declaration of his mission, his mission here on earth.
- **38** How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Friend, if you are stuck in survival mode, if you're just surviving life, there's no Bible verse that says that God has called us to survive life.

- He wants you to live.
- And the only way to live is to be free.
- **John 8:36 KJV** *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

And Jesus goes around doing good, healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God is with him.

He's here today.

- And he can do that miraculous work in your life.
- Open your heart to him.
- Break those chains inside.
- Break out of those idols in your life.
- Say, I want to be free.
- I want to be transformed.

And finally God will give us a tremendous gift, because we need this gift.

- These are the people around us, people who serve as our eyes.
- We need these people.
- We need people to pull us up instead of tear us down.

God desires that you experience people and have people in your life that will pull you up.

You are here today because of the grace of God.

- A drunk driver didn't kill you on the way, by the grace of God.
- You live, you breathe, you eat because of God's grace.
- God has not poured out wrath upon this nation because of his grace.
- Even upon all of humanity, because of his grace.
- We exist because of his grace.

That's what the Holy Spirit does.

If we obey God's law he promises a blessing for a thousand generations.

Friend, I've come to tell you tonight that God can do miraculous things in your life.

- You can start the blessing that goes for a thousand generations.
- You need to start your life all over again.
- You want to experience new life.
- Reconnect your life not only for the benefits that you will receive but the impact upon your family and your children.

1 Kings 15:11 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father. **12** And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

- If you want to stop the destructive patterns in your life you are going to have to find the idols that you or someone else has placed in you and you are going to have to remove them.

Luke 10:19

Power To Break the Destructive Patterns in Your Life

Behold, I give unto you **power** to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all **the power of the enemy**: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.