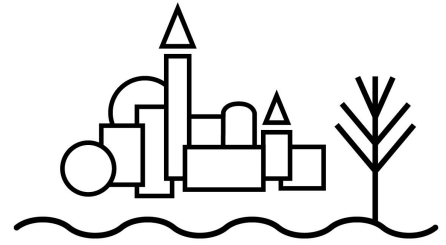


Connecting with My ADDICTED Neighbor

Luke 10:29-37



My neighbor Jim was a great Christian guy who loved to work; he was never home. He rarely ever took a vacation and when he did the briefcase went with him. Jim worked most nights, weekends, and holidays. Jim was a workaholic. Jim's addiction was a bit different than alcoholism or substance abuse since his habitual behavior was not due to chemical dependency. Jim took pride in his work. He regularly received promotions and bonuses. Everything seemed to be going well until one day everything came crashing down. "I was thirty-eight; I was recovering from surgery for stress related gastrointestinal problems. My life was crumbling under my feet; there was nothing I could do about it. I lost weight, couldn't eat.... I was a chain smoking caffeine drinking work junkie." Like drug addicts and other substance abusers, workaholics are sacrificing their families, their bodies, and their futures on the altar of an addiction to work (Collins 681).

Reflections: The Story

1. How has this story helped you begin to think about addiction in a different way?
2. What other seemingly good or permissive things or activities can become addictive?
3. Jim, like drug addicts, used his work to escape from his problems. What advice does 1 Peter 5:7 and Psalm 55:22 offer concerning handling our problems?

Reflections: The Neighbor

1. Addiction, being defined as any thinking or behavior that is habitual, repetitious, and very difficult or impossible to control regardless of the consequences, so is Jim an addict? How might you define addiction?
2. Jim was overwhelmed by life. It seems all he could see was what was directly in front of him. As followers of Christ what is a person to focus on? (Colossians 3:2)

A Call to Action

1. It is important we realize addiction is a disease; simply stopping the destructive behavior is often not an option. Addicts need help overcoming their burden. As Christians what are we to do with others' burdens? (Galatians 6:2)
2. If you have ever been in relationship with an addict, chances are you have been hurt by their actions. 1 Peter 4:8 gives us some wonderful advice, what is it?
3. Step one from Alcoholics Anonymous is, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable." How does this step help addicts begin their journey on the road to recovery?
4. What are some practical steps that you could take to help Jim along his journey?

Resources

1. Alcoholics Anonymous. *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1987. Print.
2. Collins, G. R. *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. 3rd ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007. Print.
3. Ishee, J. *Spirituality in Recovery: A 12 Step Approach*. Brentwood: John Ishee & Associates, 2005. Print.
4. Rohr, R. *Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011. Print.

Prayer

In You, Gracious God, the weak find strength, the fearful find courage, the burdened find a counsellor, the lonely find a friend, and we all find love. For these gifts, we give You praise. Make your will for our lives known to us so that with your help we may encourage others. Amen.

ABOUT THE WRITER:

Daniel Hopkins is married to his amazing wife Keisha and they have two sons, Hunter and Brody. He is a graduate of Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, Kentucky where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Christian Ministry. Daniel graduated from Memphis Theological Seminary with a M.Div in May of 2017. Addiction is something Daniel and his wife both have struggled with in the past. Daniel says of his experience – *“By the grace of God and the support of a strong Christian community, we won the fight against the things that plagued us. Our faith in Christ, love, spiritual healing, and healthy connection with others saved our lives. I hope you find this resource helpful.”*