



# Coram Deo

A Higher Things Conference in 2011

## Consumed by Addictions

What is Controlling You?

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- Pastor of Trinity West Chicago, IL since 1996
- Mentor during Seminary showed me a Lutheran perspective to the 12 Step program of A.A.
- Married to Elizabeth for almost 25 years
- Father for Sarah (1st HT conference) and Rebekah

# Sorry I was too busy to finish my presentation

- Playing FarmVille...
- Sounds familiar?



# Consumed by Addictions

- We usually think of alcohol and drugs when we think of addictions. But what happens when porn, Facebook, relationships, gambling, risky behavior, or anything else that takes over and interferes with our lives. It isn't easy to say no and walk away, nor can you on your own. We'll hear how Jesus gives the freedom so that **we** won't be entrapped.
- Everyone will face this sometime in their life.

# Addiction

- Not just for substances: drugs
- Gambling, Porn, Sex, Internet, Texting, Gaming, and almost any thing else that you cannot escape from.
- What can't you escape from....

# Do you...

- Feel you get away with something (guilt)
- Find that your addiction draws you away from people
- Enter risky situations because of it
- Doing it when you didn't intend
- Preoccupied thinking about it during school or during the pastor's sermon, or this HT Breakaway
- Need fix before facing problems
- Loose track of time, missed chores or homework, or not complete a presentation for Higher Things
- Tried to quit, but couldn't
- Have you ever, lied about your fix

# If so then...

- Something is consuming you and entrapping you.

# Sinful Condition

- Romans 7:5 (ESV)

5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.

- Isaiah 57:20 (ESV)

20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea;  
for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt.

# My Will Power

- My will power and determination alone will fail to remove the addiction.
- Our struggles are all in vain, and we find ourselves worse off than before.

# Stopping the flesh is not something we can do

- Colossians 2:20-23 (ESV) 20If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— 21 "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" 22( referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, **but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.**

# Success?

- The moment we feel that we can succeed and obtain victory over sinful nature by our own strength is that moment we are no longer following Christ, but following our own self.
- If we can get rid of sin on our own, then we don't need Christ.

# Name It!

- Addictions is a spiritual battle. A battle against our sinful nature which is opposed to Christ and wanting to enslave us in sin.
- If we don't see it as a spiritual battle, we won't fight it as a spiritual battle and we will lose.
- Thanks be to God who give us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

# The Internal Struggle

- Psalm 42:2 (ESV) My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

The soul thirsts for God, but the flesh doesn't.

# Looking for Something

- Can we be content with Christ?
- Our sinful nature says no! Which results in us trying to fill the void in our lives with things of the world.
- Matthew 13:22 (ESV) As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

# Pain

- Why pain? Because of sin. But what do we do with the pain (physical and emotional) in our lives?
- We feel guilty and shame.
- Self-medicate with the addiction?

# Self-medication

- Addictions occur emotionally because there is a pain in our life that we want relief.
- The addiction will provide a temporary relief, but not a permanent one.
- So the cycle repeats its self, needing more and more to settle the pain.

# Physical Addictions

- Beside the emotional aspect of addictions, they may be a physical side effect of the addiction.
- There may be a release of endorphins in the body which will act as a pain reliever.
- Bottom line: the addiction can be consuming and covering a lot within a person.

# Handling the Pain

- Psalm 69:29 (ESV)
- 29But I am afflicted and in pain;
- **let your salvation,** O God, set me on high!

# Pain Draws us to?

- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (ESV)
- 7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, **a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.** 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." **Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.** 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

# We need Intervention

- Psalm 51:10 (ESV) 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

# Learning from A.A.

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol-that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Ok, the Power greater than ourselves is Christ Jesus.



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- Life with God...freedom from sin
- To live life even here and now, without the slavery of addictions
- To live and fulfill your vocation. Your station in life.

# The Suffering Christ

- Isaiah 53:3 (ESV) 3 He was despised and rejected by men; **a man of sorrows**, and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

# Going where God blesses

- Where does God promise to bless?
- God come to us via His Word and Sacraments!
- Prayer
- Confession

# God's Word

- Ephesians 6:11-17 (ESV)
- 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, **which is the word of God,**

# Remember Your Baptism

- If you live in repentance, therefore, you are walking in baptism, which not only announces this new life but also produces, begins, and exercises it. In baptism we are given the grace, Spirit, and strength to suppress the old creature so that the new may come forth and grow strong. Large Catechism

# Luther Large Catechism

Therefore the Lord's Supper is given as a daily food and sustenance so that our faith may be refreshed and strengthened and that it may not succumb in the struggle but become stronger and stronger. For the new life should be one that continually develops and progresses. But it has to suffer a great deal of opposition. The devil is a furious enemy; when he sees that we resist him and attack the old creature, and when he cannot rout us by force, he sneaks and skulks about at every turn, trying all kinds of tricks, and does not stop until he has finally worn us out so that we either renounce our faith or lose heart and become indifferent or impatient. For times like these, when our heart feels too sorely pressed, this comfort of the Lord's Supper is given to bring us new strength and refreshment.

# Prayer

- AA step 7: Humbly ask Him (Christ) to remove our shortcomings.
- Psalm 50:15 (ESV)
- 15and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."

# Morning Prayer

- In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

# Lord's Prayer

- The Seventh Petition but deliver us from evil
- For because the devil is not only a liar but a murderer as well, he incessantly seeks our life and vents his anger by causing accidents and injury to our bodies. He crushes some and drives others to insanity; some he drowns in water, and many he hounds to suicide or other dreadful catastrophes. Therefore, there is nothing for us to do on earth but to pray without ceasing against this archenemy.  
Large Catechism

# Confession

- An acknowledgment of a Fault Heals It. Johann Gerhard
- AA step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- Here your pastor will have gracious and encouraging words in Christ's absolution.

# A Way to Endure

- Romans 5:1 (ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

# A Way to Endure

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)
- 13No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

# Freed in Christ

- Romans 8:15 (ESV)
- 15For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"