

Five Easy Steps to Wreck Your Life Week 1

- Do you think adultery has become an accepted part of western culture today? Why or why not? |

You shall not commit adultery.

Exodus 20:14 (NIV)

- Have you or someone you know been affected by someone's involvement in an adulterous relationship? If so, how?

Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel, lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house

Proverbs 5:8-10 (NIV)

- One way to avoid adultery in your life is to radically reduce the risks. If you are married, what specific steps can you take to reduce the risks of adultery? If you are not married, what can you be doing now to help reduce the risk of adultery when you are married?
- How can your group help you in avoiding the risks of adultery? In your opinion, are things like accountability relationships effective in reducing the risks of adultery? Why or why not?

May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer — may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?

Proverbs 5:18-20 (NIV)

- There are five ways that you can passionately invest in your marriage: get transparent, get alone, get spiritual, get help and get naked. If you are married, what is one specific thing you could do to work on your marriage? If you are not married, what is one specific thing you could do to better prepare for a Christ centered marriage?

- Why is having a strong relationship with Christ both individually and together in a marriage the most important factor in building a strong and faithful marriage?

For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

Proverbs 5:3-5 (NIV)

- Another way to avoid adultery in your life is to visualize the destruction adultery can cause. In addition to tearing a marriage apart, what are some of the other negative effects of adultery?

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Hebrews 13:4 (NIV)

- Hebrews 13:4 teaches that *everyone* should honor marriage. Whether you are married or not, you should still work to keep “the marriage bed pure.” What does this mean to you?

if we are faithless, he will remain faithful...

2 Timothy 2:13 (NIV)

- How have you seen God's faithfulness in a situation where there was marital unfaithfulness?

Final thought: When people commit adultery, it leaves a path of destruction that goes far beyond broken marriages. Therefore, we should all strive to do all we can to reduce the risks of adultery and keep marriage pure. Pray for all of the marriages in your group that they will strive to work even harder to reduce the risks of adultery. Commit to God in prayer that each of you will strive to do your part help protect the purity of not only your marriage but the marriages of the others in your group and those that you know outside of your group.



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For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and Scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- What are some of the factors that make a good marriage work?

Explore

Read Proverbs 5:1-23

- Why did Solomon tell the reader to listen to his words? (5:1-2)
- What did Solomon say about the lips and speech of an adulteress? (5:3-4)
- Where do the steps of an adulteress lead? (5:5)
- What thought does an adulteress give to the long-term consequences of her way of life? (5:6)
- What did Solomon encourage us to do? (5:7-8)
- What happens to the person who does not stay away from the adulteress? (5:11-14)
- Where should a person seek sexual fulfillment? (5:15-20)
- What did Solomon say about intimacy in marriage? (5:16-17)
- What is one of the reasons a person should stay faithful to his or her spouse? (5:21)

Reflect

- Why do you think it is so easy for people to fall into sexual sin?
- How can adultery destroy a person's life?
- What does it mean to be captivated by your spouse's love?
- What can we do to avoid being enticed by adultery?
- How does the fact that your ways are in full view of the Lord make you feel?

Apply

- What steps can you take to guard against sexual temptation?

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1: Read Exodus 20:14. Pray for those that you know who have been affected by adultery. If you are married, pray that God will help protect your marriage.

Day 2: Read Proverbs 5:1-10. If you are married, pray and ask God to help you reduce the risks of adultery in your life. Commit to doing your part to make that happen. If you are single, pray that God will help keep you sexually pure.

Day 3: Read Proverbs 5:18-20. Commit to God in prayer that you will passionately invest in your marriage. If you are single, commit to God in prayer that you will remain sexually pure until marriage.

Day 4: Read Hebrews 13:4. If you are married, commit to God in prayer that you will keep your marriage bed pure. Ask for His assistance in doing so. If you are single, commit to God that you will keep the marriage bed pure before you are married and while you are married. Ask for His strength.

Day 5: Read 2 Timothy 2:13. Spend time in prayer thanking God for His faithfulness in your life and in the lives of those you know and love. Thank Him for his constant presence.

Five Easy Steps to Wreck Your Life—Week 2

- Describe a time when you were physically lost. What type of feelings did you have while you were lost? How did you ultimately find your way back on the right path or road?

But I'm afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:3 (NIV)

- Satan wants to destroy your relationship with God. In what ways does Satan consistently attack your relationship with God? Which attacks seem to be the most difficult for you to resist?

When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Matthew 13:19-23 (NIV)

- What are some of the thorns in your life that tend to choke out your faith in Christ?

We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

Hebrews 2:2 (NIV)

- Do you feel you are closer to God today than in the past? Why or why not?

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you...

Psalms 63:1 (NIV)

- Describe what your time with God looked like this past week.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding

Proverbs 3:5 (NIV)

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character

1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV)

- Why is having relationships with other Christ followers such a vital part of your relationship with Christ? How would you evaluate the overall quality of your current relationships?

but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

James 1:14-15 (NIV)

- What temptations have been a reoccurring theme in your life? What hurt and broken places in you may be causing the enemy to attack you in these areas? How do you think Christ may want to heal and restore you in these places?

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him

1 John 2:15 (NIV)

- How would you define the "world" for you? What things in the "world" distract you most often from your relationship with God?

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me..."

Isaiah 29:13 (NIV)

- There are a variety of ways to lose our focus on God including: neglecting time with God, blaming God, hanging around bad influences, giving into temptation, loving the world more than God, and if all else fails, faking it. What is the one area where you feel the most vulnerable right now? What do you sense God is wanting to do in that area of your life?

Final thought: Satan wants to destroy our faith and will many times use the five different ways to attack our relationship with God. With your group, pray that God will empower each of you to battle against Satan and his attacks.

Five Easy Steps to Wreck Your Life—Week 2

For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- What misconceptions do non-Christians have about Christianity?

Explore

Read Matthew 13:1-23

- What kind of stories did Jesus use to teach the crowds? (13:3)
- Into what various places did the seed fall? (13:4-5)
- Which seed ended up sprouting and bearing fruit? Why? (13:8)
- To whom did Jesus direct His story about the four soils? (13:9)
- How did Jesus defend His use of parables? (13:11-13)
- Why did Jesus say the disciples were blessed? (13:16-17)
- Whom did Jesus liken to seed along the path? Why? (13:19)
- According to Christ, who is like the seed sown on rocky soil? Why? (13:20-21)
- What kind of people were compared to seed sown among the thorns? Why? (13:22)
- Of whom is the fruitful seed a picture? How? (13:23)

Reflect

- How involved are you in "sowing the seed" of the good news?
- What kind of soil would you say you are at this point in your life?
- What circumstances have a tendency to scorch your faith and cause it to wither?

Apply

- What would make you more effective in sowing the seeds of the spirit of Christ over the next month? What might be a next step to make this happen?

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1: Read 2 Corinthians 11:13 and Hebrews 2:2. Ask God to strengthen your faith as you fight off Satan's daily attacks.

Day 2: Read Matthew 13:1-23. Ask God to show you specific promises in scripture that will strengthen your relationship with Him and defend against Satan's attacks.

Day 3: Read Psalm 63:1. Thank God for loving you unconditionally.

Day 4: Read James 1:14-15. Ask God to help you live in His strength and not your own when it comes to facing the temptations in your life.

Day 5: Read 1 Corinthians 15:33. Ask God for wisdom in the relationships in your life and to bring other Christ followers into your life that will encourage you as you encourage them.

Five Easy Steps to Wreck Your Life Week 3

- When life begins to feel like Kryptonite, sapping your strength or maybe it just gets a little bland and colorless, where do you go to escape? To a movie? TV? Sports? Starbucks? A relationship? A good novel? Facebook? Food? What do you experience emotionally in your place of escape?

"Everything is permissible for me"-but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"-but I will not be mastered by anything.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NIV)

- Do you think anything has ever mastered you? Do your best to be transparent here.

He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak... Some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it... He prays to it and says, "Save me; you are my god." ... Their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. No one stops to think... "Half of it I used for fuel... Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?" He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?"

Isaiah 44:14-15, 17-20 (NIV)

- Why is it often easier to look for comfort and satisfaction in people, places and things rather than in God?

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Galatians 5:16-18 (NIV)

- Our addictions come out of those broken and wounded places in our lives. Is there one particular addiction that you battle repeatedly? If so, what is it? How might that battle be a result of a broken or wounded place in your life?
- If our addictions come out of our wounds and brokenness as human beings, it would make sense that healing in these places would be the answer to our battle with addictions. Can you heal these places yourself? If so, how? If not, who can?
- Why do you think our efforts to battle addictions with the weapons of "will power" and determination alone, almost always fail?

"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

Luke 14:18-20 (NIV)

Admitting to an addiction is one thing, but often the most difficult thing to do is recognize that we even have an addiction.

- Take a moment and ask yourself this difficult question: Think of the things that provide you with a sense of security, or comfort, or excitement, or relief in your life right now. Now, how easily could you let them go? Even the slightest hesitation in our answering this question might be cause for us to look closer at the "thing" to determine if it has taken root somewhere in our soul.

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)

- What is the difference between "renouncing" your sin and simply putting strategies in place to make it harder for you to sin?

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ .

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery...

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

- Is simply not acting on the desire that drives your addiction really freedom from addiction? Why or why not? What kind of freedom do you think Christ has given us.: Freedom from bad behavior or freedom from the destructive desires holding us captive? Explain.

Final thought: What is Christ offering you freedom from today? What kinds of things are holding those around you captive? The battle of our addictions is truly a battle for our relationship with God. The enemy has sold us a counterfeit and told us that it will satisfy us where God will not. As a group agree to see the battle for what it is and wage war with the divine weapons you've been given. Agree that there will be many battles in the war, but agree to fight them together and with the strength that comes only from God.



Five Easy Steps to Wreck Your Life Week 3

For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- What activities or pursuits are part of popular culture currently that seem to lead to addiction for many people?

Explore

Read 2 Peter 2:1-22

- What did Peter warn his readers that false prophets would attempt to do? (2:1)
- What did Peter say would happen when people followed false prophets? (2:2)
- What did God use as an example of what will happen to the ungodly? (2:6)
- What effect did living among immoral people have upon Lot? (2:7-8)
- How did Peter say the Lord would deal with the godly and the unrighteous? (2:9)
- How did the evil people of whom Peter wrote affect others? (2:18)
- What did such sinful men promise? (2:19)
- To what were sinful people slaves? (2:19)
- How did Peter say a person could escape the corruption of the world? (2:20)

Reflect

- How do you deal with the influence of immoral or rebellious people around you?
- When are you typically tempted to lapse back into some sinful activity or attitude? Why
- How can be become enslaved to a desire without even realizing it?

Apply

- Beginning today, is there a sinful desire that God wants to help you escape from?

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1: Read 1 Cor. 6:12. Ask God if there is something that has mastered you in some area of your life that you may be unaware of. Ask Him to continue to reveal the nature of the battle in this area of your life.

Day 2: Read Isaiah 44:14-20 and Jeremiah 3:13. Ask God if there is an area of your life where you don't trust Him. Ask Him for a deeper awareness of His love for you.

Day 3: Read Galatians 5:1-18. Ask God about an area of your life where you've struggled with addiction. Ask Him to show you the root desire driving that addiction. Ask for His healing and restoration in this area of desire.

Day 4: Read Luke 14:18-20 and Proverbs 28:13. Have an honest conversation with God about addictions you may battle. Tell Him what you are looking for in those addictions. Ask Him what He wants to offer you instead. Listen for His answer.

Day 5: Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. Ask God how He wants you to battle against the strongholds in your life. Ask for His strength in these battles, ask for understanding of how to accept it and use it.