

Dancing with the Scars

Addiction

Wynne Lankford

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Bumper Video: <https://vimeo.com/162840309> password (scars)

Welcome to Southside, thank you for joining us this weekend!

What a **powerful story from Dick Guizar**, a man who **found himself dealing with the scars of his childhood** by running to the **very thing that caused him and his family** so much pain.

In an attempt to **cope with his own pain**, he too began to drink and found himself addicted to alcohol.

He wasn't able to **break this cycle until he hit bottom** and admitted he had a problem.

This was when God changed his life, he became a pastor, served here in the state of Virginia and became a substance abuse therapist.

He just retired last year from 45 years of ministry! What a miracle of God's amazing Grace!

Do you see how God wants to take our scars and do miracles!

On Easter weekend we launched this series, entitled "**Dancing with the Scars**," one that weekend we celebrated Jesus' powerful resurrection miracle from the dead!

We noted that the **first action** Jesus did when presenting himself to His disciples was to **reveal his scars!** PEACE BE WITH YOU!

He was clearly communicating that –

His scars were a physical reminder of the price He paid to Heal our scars.

Just as prophesied about him: ***Isaiah 53:5 (NIV) ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.***

This week we are presenting the final message in our series, and today I want us to acknowledge that **not all scars come from outside sources.**

We have explored in this series how we can be ***hurt or abused by others***, we openly talked about ***how our emotions can go to extreme***, causing us to experience ***anxiety and depression***.

We noted that in ***life tragedy and loss happen***.

And explored how God can turn our losses into miracles bringing good out of bad situations that have happened to us.

In all of these scars of life, we have an advocate who ***carries the scars proving*** He alone has the **credentials to help** us with our scars, His name is JESUS.

He can ***heal the scars from internal physical imbalances or outside sources.***

But ***today we are going to talk about the ONE SCAR*** that can be brought on by our **OWN CHOICES**. This is **ADDICTION!**

There are **many types of addictions** beyond the typical known addictions of substance abuse with drugs and alcohol:

Listen to this conversation I had with Dick Guizar: Video
<https://vimeo.com/162831451> password (scars)

Measure of comfort to ease the pain!

We choose this behavior! We choose to bring the ***wounding that leads to scars of addiction***, these choices can ripple far beyond impacting only us!

We choose things to cope however these can turn into a crutch!

What is an addiction? Psychology today says:

Addiction is a condition that results when a **person ingests a substance** (e.g., alcohol, cocaine, nicotine) **or engages in an**

activity (e.g., gambling, sex, shopping or work) That can be pleasurable –

However, the continued use/act of which becomes compulsive behavior and interferes with ordinary life responsibilities, such as work, relationships, or health. This is an addiction!

Addicts may not be aware ***that their behavior interferes with life and causing problems*** for themselves and others.

For many, ***the choice of addiction is a slow fade***, of small coping choices and compromises leading to a trap.

We choose to ease our pain, find fulfilment or seek pleasure to the point we end up caving to a compulsive mechanism that eventually entraps us.

Then one day we wake up, look up and ***find ourselves MASTERED*** by something we never imagined.

No one wakes up one morning and says I want to be addicted to: ***shopping, pornography, video games, social media, entertainment, work, gambling, overeating, lying or narcotics and alcohol.***

Is shopping and sex bad? Are Video games and entertainment bad?

Is work bad? ***Well maybe? Depends on your boss!*** Is the internet and social media bad, is alcohol and narcotics bad?

I would say it is ***less about whether these are bad*** and more about ***how we approach them and or use them*** when coping with life.

Shopping is a wonderful thing until your compulsion to buy one more thing for the pleasure of the hunt is pushing you into debt, and you shop to ease your pain.

Avoiding pain is good, but learning to lie to avoid pain can create a compulsive behavior of deception that can become addictive. You constantly live in a lie!

The need for pain relief from back ache is not be bad, but when your stealing your friend's Percocet or OxyCotin to numb the pain you have a problem.

Sex is a beautiful gift from God, to be experienced in the boundary of marriage between a man and a woman.

But when the compulsion of entering this ***euphoric experience pushes you beyond the rails of God's boundary, leading to multiple partners, one night stands or hours of reading erotic novels and web surfing*** then there is a problem.

What this really comes down to is ***what***— or better stated: ***WHO IS MASTERING YOU!***

The apostle Paul said it this way when talking about the issue of sexuality.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NIV) ¹² "Everything is permissible for me"--but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"--but I will not be mastered by anything.

The principle Paul is trying to teach here is, ***just because something is available and you have the free will to engage it,*** doesn't mean it is good for you.

Jesus came and died so we might have the opportunity to receive ***power and the insight*** to live the way God created us to live.

To enjoy the gifts God has given us, in every area of life, this is God's desire for all of us.

But when we choose to be **mastered by something other than Jesus**, who longs to be our King, Lord, Chief, or Master – **then we will take matters into our own hands** and this can lead to disastrous consequences!

I remember when I was wrestling with decision to accept Jesus as my personal savior. I had ***a lot of destructive coping mechanism*** that I had chosen that enslaved me.

One of the coping mechanisms I chose was **smoking**. I was addicted to nicotine and smoking cigarettes.

During this time of life, I was miserable, because God was speaking to me about surrendering every area of my life to Him.

To allow Him to lead every area of my life.

I was at a place of brokenness, yet I was wrestling with what is known *as the cost of following Jesus.*

I was *incorrectly bargaining* with God about what I would have to stop doing in order to accept Jesus!

There was a particular day when I was wrestling with all of these issues when I said, **“I need a smoke.”**

I had come to the place where the routine in my day included my addiction to cigarettes, this had mastery over me.

This addiction compelled me to go out of the building and lite one up!

I took one puff of that cigarettes and I could hear the voice of God say, **“I wish you ran to me like you do that cigarette.”**

It was later that day that I read the verse written by Paul and I knew in that moment, something other than Jesus was my master!

I was a slave to the habits I had chosen to ease my hurts rather than running to the ONE who chose to be hurt for me!

Think about this for a minute, Jesus, the one who didn't deserve it, ***willingly chose to be wounded and scared for me,*** to heal all the hurts, and set me free from all the habits ***I willingly brought*** into my life.

Jesus is standing there saying, come on, Dance with me, ***you have scars, you have even chosen to inflict yourself with some of them*** but I have scars that can heal your scars.

Come to me, Peace be with you!

That is huge!

You might be saying **“well how do I know I have an addiction?”**
You can ask yourself the following questions to help you see who or what is really mastering you:

Think about a typical day / week

- 1. How many days do you engage in this behavior or substance? How many times per day?**
- 2. How often during the past year have you found that you can't stop this behavior or taking this substance or stop once you had started?**

3. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of a behavior of substance?
4. How often during the last year have you needed this behavior or substance in the morning to get yourself going?
5. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after engaging in this behavior / taking this substance?
6. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of a behavior or substance?
7. Have you or someone else been injured as a result of engaging in a behavior or taking a substance?
8. Has a relative or friend or a doctor been concerned about your use of a substance/behavior or suggested you cut down

These questions could reveal blind spots you may have in the area of what is really mastering you.

Maybe today you have **begun to realize maybe there is a behavior you are doing or substance you are using** to find pleasure or avoid pain.

Maybe you have entered into the arena of needing that activity or substance to make it through the day.

Maybe there is a budding addiction that is soothing some wound in your life.

What can you do about this?

I asked Dick Guizar this very question, let's hear that part of the conversation. (video <https://vimeo.com/162732533> password) (scars)

These steps are just a few of the steps that are referenced to in our Celebrate Recovery program.

Celebrate Recovery 12 Steps and Biblical Comparisons

1. We **admitted we were powerless** over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had become unmanageable.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. Romans 7:18

2. We came to believe that **a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Philippians 2:13

3. We made a decision to **turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God.**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Romans 12:1

4. We made a **searching and fearless moral inventory** of ourselves.

Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord. Lamentations 3:40

5. We **admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being** the exact nature of our wrongs.

Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16

6. We were entirely **ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. James 4:10

7. We **humbly asked Him to remove** all our shortcomings.
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

8. We made a **list of all persons we had harmed** and became **willing to make amends** to them all.

Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31

9. We **made direct amends** to such people whenever possible, **except when to do so would injure them or others.**

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24

10. We **continue to take personal inventory** and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 1 Corinthians 10:12

11. We sought through **prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God**, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and power to carry that out.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Colossians 3:16

12. Having had a **spiritual experience** as the result of these steps, we try **to carry this message to others** and practice these principles in all our affairs.

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore them gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Galatians 6:1

While these steps may seem simple they are really Huge movements of **confession, repentance, and accepting a work that only God has the power to do in our lives!**

When we confess He justifies, regenerates and adopts

When we surrender He fills us, purifies and empowers us, to be a witness.

This is why Jesus came, died and rose from the dead.

Jesus wants all of us to be **free from our hurt**, I believe Jesus desires deeply to **deal with all of our hang-ups**, even the habits we bring on our selves.

There is no doubt that Jesus can deliver you from any Habit that has you trapped.

He was scared to provide the POWER to ensure He could deliver on His promise.

The question that Jesus is asking all of us today is, **come to me, will you, Dance with me, see my scars I received them** so I can have the power to heal yours.

Will you dance with me!

Let's pray! Response Time