

Group Leader Guide

What Would Jesus Say – part 7 “to the Addict”

Sermon Recap

What if the key to breaking free from whatever controls you starts with just three words: "I am powerless"? Pastor Chris reveals how addiction—whether to substances, perfectionism, or even the need to control everything—stems from our deepest human flaw: trying to play God. Through powerful personal stories, including his own brother's tragic overdose, Chris shows how admitting powerlessness isn't defeat but the doorway to God's transforming grace. Ready to stop pretending you have it all together and discover true freedom?

Ice Breaker

If you could live inside any TV show for a week, which one would you choose and why?

Discussion Questions

1. What from the sermon stood out to you? How were you challenged, motivated, or convicted from what you heard?
2. Pastor Chris shared that Jesus came to 'proclaim freedom for the prisoners' (Luke 4). What are some 'prisons' or forms of bondage that people struggle with today, and why do you think it's so hard for people to admit they need help breaking free?
 - a. Pastor Chris explained that addiction is a form of bondage, whether it's drugs, alcohol, food, shopping, or pornography. He emphasized that people desperately want to change but feel powerless to do so.
 - b. What area of your life feels the most 'out of control' right now, and what would it look like to bring that struggle into the light rather than trying to handle it alone?
3. The sermon mentioned that 'everyone needs recovery' because we all have hurts, hangups, or habits. Looking at Pastor Chris's list (grief, anger, perfectionism, fear, etc.), why do you think some struggles are seen as more acceptable than others in our culture?
 - a. Pastor Chris provided a list including grief, divorce, insecurity, gambling, guilt, abuse, perfectionism, overworking, overeating, lying, alcohol, drugs, anger, and many others, emphasizing that we all need recovery from something.
 - b. How has the fear of being judged kept you from seeking help or being honest about your own struggles, and what would change if you knew you were in a truly safe space?
4. Pastor Chris described how we 'try to play God' by attempting to control our image, problems, other people, and pain. Which of these four areas do you think is the most common struggle, and what does this controlling behavior actually cost us?
 - a. The sermon explained that trying to be God leads to four consequences: fear (of being found out), frustration (like playing whack-a-mole with problems), fatigue (from pretending we have it together), and failure.

- b. In your relationships, how has trying to control outcomes or other people's choices affected your peace and connection with them?
5. Romans 7:15 says, 'I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.' How does this verse help us understand that struggling with sin and bad habits is part of being human?
 - a. Pastor Chris used Paul's honest confession to show that even mature believers struggle with wanting to do right but finding themselves doing wrong, helping normalize the human experience of internal conflict.
 - b. When you find yourself repeatedly doing something you don't want to do, how do you typically respond to yourself - with harsh judgment or with the same grace you'd show a good friend?
6. The first principle of Celebrate Recovery is to 'realize you're not God and admit that you are powerless to control your tendency to do the wrong thing.' Why do you think admitting powerlessness is the starting point for recovery rather than trying harder or having more willpower?
 - a. Pastor Chris emphasized that admitting powerlessness opens the door to receiving God's grace and help from others, while continuing to rely on willpower alone keeps us stuck in cycles of failure.
 - b. What would it look like in your daily life to move from 'I can handle this myself' to 'I need God's help and support from others' in the areas where you're struggling most?

Prayer

- Share any personal prayer requests within the group.
- Ask God to help us admit our weaknesses and seek His strength.
- Pray for courage to confront any addictions or hangups we're facing.
- Request guidance in releasing the desire to control and trust in God's plan.