

## In a jam?



There are times in life when we feel "jammed up." During a transit strike roads in our city often get clogged with cars. An accident or a stall has far reaching effects. One problem and miles and miles of standstill traffic result. Drivers seeking to be in the "fastest lane" often pull into the very lanes where there's trouble ahead because they cannot see where the problem actually is. As we travel along life's road, we do much the same as those misguided drivers. With our limited foresight we select the route that seems best—only to find that the temporary advance has led us into a course filled with delay and heartache. But how reassuring that we can look to One who is above every- thing, who knows the end from the beginning! This is why the writer of Proverbs could say, *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.* (Proverbs 3) When the Lord indicates a "stop" or a "change of lanes" or a "wait," we should gladly obey.

However, many of us seem more in the habit of running to whatever is familiar or what seems "the path of least resistance. We avoid hard things. We look for escapes. We build unhealthy patterns in our lives.

### ➤ **Some areas Dependency:**

- Abusive or Toxic Relationships
- Alcohol or drugs
- Approval dependency
- Codependent Relationships
- Control
- Food
- Gambling
- Gossip/Lying
- Hypochondria (addiction to illness)
- Money (overspending, hoarding)
- Personal power or control
- Rage/Hatred
- Religion
- Sex/Pornography
- Shopping
- Television/Internet
- Tobacco
- Work, Achievement, Success

Two friends conducted an experiment. One cut a length of cotton thread and knotted the ends together to make a loop. Then the second friend held up both index fingers. The thread was slipped over the fingers and the person broke them apart. The thread broke quite easily. Next they wound two strands together. These also broke, but it took more effort. However, a few strands wound together couldn't be broken without cutting into the person's skin.

Sinful habits are like that. It's been said, "Habits that begin as cobwebs sometimes end as cables." If repeated, they become more difficult to break. This applies to alcohol and drug abuse as well as worry and anger. They include the movement we often make from chemicals to food or to run to unhealthy relationships when we 'wake up' in recovery and feel lonely. Continuing to "act out" in these habits can lead us to feeling "jammed up" in life with confusion, worry, anger, fear, and resentment.

Jesus came not only to forgive our sins but also to break their hold over us. When we receive Him as Lord and Savior and ask Him for deliverance, He also asks something of us—a willingness, with His help, to form new habits: *Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.* (Romans 6). As we fellowship with believers, study the Bible, and obey it daily, God will help us develop godly attitudes, actions, and reactions to life.

Are you battling bad habits? Let God help you build new habits of righteousness. He'll break those stubborn sinful habits and make you free. *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.* (John 8).