

8. Weapons of Self Destruction.

Bloodlines – Series

Ps. Unia Kiima – 29nd October 2017

Sermon Notes



We're going through a series called Bloodline: Winning Freedom For My Family. Most of us are also going through this experience together in our small groups. The apostle Paul warned us in Ephesians 4:27 that we should not give the enemy a foothold. Through this experience, we are identifying seven major doors where the enemy has gained a foothold in our families, and then through prayer, we are kicking him out and we're closing those doors. We have learnt to close several doors so far; the door of pride, the door of lies about ourselves and God, the door of alternative gods, the door of bitterness, the door of bondages and curses and the door of rebellion. *Share a Simama story so far?* Today, we want to look at the last doorway; doorway number 7.

Addiction:

Have you ever noticed that nobody ever wakes up one day and says something like... "Man, my life is going so great, I'm just bored with that. I am sick and tired of being blessed by God, am sick and tired of having this great marriage and I'm really tired of being a great parent and tired of living a life purpose where I am making a tremendous difference. So today, I think I am going to mess up my life up so I want to do something stupid, okay! Perhaps, maybe I can take a drink of alcohol, and one day if I am lucky, I can become so addicted to the substance in this bottle, that it could cost me my marriage... ho, ho, ho, that would be so great! Or, maybe it could cost me my job or so much more!" Nobody ever sets out and says, "Hmm, that sounds like a good plan." Nobody says, "Hey, I think I'm going to go out with some buddies, and we'll place a little bet. Maybe bet on Arsenal or Gor Mahia and then one day I'm so in debt that I won't be able to meet my family obligations" Yet, wouldn't you agree that this happens all the time and people end up there all of the time, right?

What are addictions?

To put it simply, an addiction is the dependence on a substance or pattern of behavior to meet a legitimate inner need.

There are generally two types of addiction.

Substance addiction, where one becomes dependent on chemicals to meet their need. Examples include alcohol, drugs (could either be illegal e.g. cocaine or marijuana or legal e.g. nicotine or could be prescription drugs – e.g. certain painkillers or antidepressants), sugar and caffeine in coffee, tea, and cola drinks (many soft drinks contain large amounts of addictive sugar and caffeine)

Behavioral addiction where one becomes dependent on doing a certain behavior repetitively to calm their feelings or help them feel good about themselves. Many times these behaviors increase the level of adrenalin and other hormones in the body providing a 'rush' to the person. Such behaviors include gambling, overworking, shopping, internet use, watching TV, crime and sex.

What causes addictions:

External factors.

For instance, someone may innocently take a prescribed medication only to realize later that they got hooked to it. Or a child could be introduced by a parent to drinking before they understand what they are doing. However, most addictions come about because of

Internal factors i.e. a person trying to meet a legitimate inner need. There are many different such needs. Some want to fit in – they're extremely self-consciousness or timid and looking for a way to be accepted by others. Others want to calm their stress or anxiety at work or generally about life. For some it is the need to forget trauma, or to manage pain or loneliness.

For some it's a desire to prove to themselves that they can do what they want, or even to punish authority figures who don't want them to act a certain way. For some it's the need to be in control – for example, many people use sex with multiple partners to gain control. They may have been hurt or even sexually abused and because they felt weak and helpless at the time, they swore never to be vulnerable again. Each sexual encounter helps them feel in charge of their lives and relationships. And they find they can't stop doing it.

Regardless of the type of addiction,

The addiction cycle is the same.

The cycle begins with a rush - an emotional or physical 'high' or feeling of well-being, when the person first experiences the stimulant. After a little while, this high declines, often resulting in an emotional low – a hangover or guilt and remorse.

The next stage is desire - the person is left with a longing to try the experience again, so as to recreate the high. If they succumb, the experience is repeated.

Over time, they develop a habit. As they continue though, their body develops tolerance so that more and more stimulation is required each time to reach the same high.

At some point they cross the line into dependence. At this point, they need the substance or behavior in order to feel normal. After this point, if they try to stop, they will react physically or psychologically in what we call withdrawal. At this point, the person is in bondage - controlled by the addiction. If they're a Christian, they are in the sin-confess-sin cycle

You see the reality is, when someone is addicted they can intellectually know, "I shouldn't be doing this," but the addiction continues to control and dominate them. For example, someone may have a problem with overeating, and intellectually they can say, "This is not good, this is bad for my body, I shouldn't do this," as they take more bites; why? Or someone who overspends can be at the mall writing a check saying, "I know this is going to bounce, I shouldn't do this, I'm in several debts," and go ahead and hand the check over, knowing the whole time, "I shouldn't do this!" why? Or Someone can be a workaholic, and intellectually say, "I need to get home, my family needs me, this is too much, I shouldn't be doing this!" and the whole time she is saying this, she continues to work; why? Its because we are mastered and we have become slaves to something else.

You may be dealing with an addiction;

- Does your family and friends say that you have a problem?
- Do you continue even though you are hurting people?
- Do you arrange your schedule around "it"?
- Can you go a week without it?
- Is it leading you to isolation, hurting your relationships?
- Are you trying to keep it a secret?

The greatest danger with addictions is that they are weapons of self-destruction.

They have the power to sabotage your purpose, so that you will never accomplish the purpose for which God created you. One of the most tragic examples of a person who sabotaged his purpose in the bible is King Solomon. Please turn with me to 1Kings 11 and let's read his story.

King Solomon and his addiction to women.

1 Kings 11: 1-13.

Most successful kings in the region. Right from birth, there was something special about him, and 2 Sam12:24 tells us that he was given a name by God through a prophet that meant 'loved by the Lord'. He grew up to be an exceptional and very gifted young man. Though only the 7th son, David picked him as the next king of Israel. Though brought up as a prince, he was surprisingly humble, and pleased God by asking for wisdom & discernment, rather than riches for himself. God not only gave him wisdom, but also gave him peace and economic prosperity. Solomon became known for many things.

In addition to building a beautiful temple for God. He also built many public works. He reinforced the defense system. He made international trade treaties with neighboring countries bringing about major economic growth. He was a brilliant diplomat, politician, strategist and administrator who made Israel the envy of many nations. He was also a celebrity: Famous people from all over the world wanted to be seen with him. He was not only rich, but also intelligent, charming and impressively handsome. If you read the first 10 chapters of 1Kgs, you would have to agree that; Solomon definitely had it made!

It seems Solomon's problem was foreign women. He married hundreds of them! No African king (or president) had anything on him! God had specifically warned against it, and it's not clear why Solomon decided to do it anyway. Perhaps he was under pressure to perform. After all, his predecessor had been the most famous and popular king in Israel's history & maybe there was pressure to match up. Perhaps it made him feel more powerful as a man – they say older men often pursue young women to prove they're still virile. But most likely it was because of a practical consideration; marrying foreign wives was common practice for kings in the day, because it helped to cement peace treaties and trade alliances.

Addiction cycle for Solomon:

1. Rush - he marries a forbidden beauty, the daughter of the king of one of the most powerful nations in the region, Egypt. Nothing happens to him. In fact, it makes him quite in control, as he now had powerful friends. He's wondering, 'what was the fuss about?'
2. Desire –Because he enjoyed excitement of flirting with the forbidden so much, Solomon decides to experiment again. A second then a third time. Each time, the resulting treaty actually seems to have worked, and rather than destroy him, he actually ends up with more money, power, control and sex. He still feels very much in control. Not bad! But now a barrier has been crossed.
3. Habit - The bible seems to be speaking sarcastically when it says that he 'held fast in love' to his hundreds of wives and girlfriends. He was certainly not in love with that many women. With time it seems, the behavior spiraled out of control. He couldn't stop himself! Think about it; if each wedding took 2 weeks to celebrate, he spent 27 years of his life getting married! This is before we even get to his girlfriends. By this time, his habit had distracted him in his work, destroyed his relationship with God etc. but he's in denial, probably blaming the women for the problems.
4. Dependence: The costs become obvious to all. The safety of his empire depends on maintaining good relations with his wives and so they have power over him. He watches helplessly as they insist that he not only build temples for them to worship their gods but that he accompanies them as they do so. He is clearly no longer in control. By the time Solomon realizes what he has done, it's too late, and the damage is done. The man who has one of the most incredible intellects ever, is wasting his precious gift in chasing women. The man with great potential, who could have been Israel's greatest king instead becomes the reason why Israel is divided into two and eventually destroyed by their enemies. His addiction is sabotaging his purpose.

Many in our generation are addicted to porn. Back in the day, you'd have to work really hard to lay your hands on a pornographic magazine. Today, you can buy adult only DVDs for less than 1000/- or you can spend even less checking it out on the internet. Many are addicted to masturbation or to casual sex. In our quest for control or intimacy, we are sabotaging our ability to ever enjoy a mutually satisfying relationship. For some of us it's drugs or cigarettes, and we are destroying our bodies, and robbing ourselves of the health and longevity we need to achieve our purpose.

Others of us have more acceptable addictions. For some it's workaholicism. You've convinced yourself that you work hard because you like excellence, but the truth is that in your insecurity, you need to overwork in order to feel good about yourself. But it's destroying your relationships and killing your purpose. Even the most 'innocent' addictions bring their own problems. That person who's addicted to tea or Coke gets a headache every time they try to fast and hear from God. Compulsive shopping is squandering our kingdom resources and compulsive TV or internet use is stealing years from our youth, the time when we should be making a difference.

Truly, addictions are weapons of self-destruction!

But our God is able to deliver us. As the one who made us, He is the Great Physician. He knows all our body chemicals and all our psychological pathways. He is able to bring complete and sustainable healing to all our addictions. He says in 1Cor.10:13 *'No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it'*. Here is what He requires us to do to close the door from these weapons of self destruction...

1. **Acknowledge The Problem:** Surrender is we acknowledge there is a problem. And that we need God – we don't have what it takes to solve it. This takes humility but as James 4:10 says, 'humble yourself before the Lord and He will lift you up'. So come to God and confess that things are out of control. Don't wait until you have destroyed your purpose to come to this stage.

Seek Accountability: The bible calls the devil 'the accuser of our souls'. He loves to hold a secret over you. 'You'd better not share this; what will others think of you!' But James 5:16 says *'Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective'*. Sin grows best in the dark. Break the secret! Prov 28:13 says *"People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy"*. You need to share about the issue with someone who can walk with you and help you. It could be your Simama Partner, or perhaps a prayer counselor. Your accountability partner should be available so that any time you get tempted you give them a call and you work out a premeditated plan. If you've not yet taken Mizizi, please do so and surround yourself with friends who can help you. We say at Mavuno 'you'll never be great alone'. I want to assure you that you will not succeed if you try to walk this journey alone.

3. **Starve The Habit and relearn new habits:** You need to investigate what are the triggers that cause you to engage in the habit, so that you can know how to deal with them. For some people stress or loneliness gets them down the road again. For others it's when you feel anxious. Do whatever you can to avoid those situations. Matthew 5:29 says *'If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell'*. They say desperate times call for desperate measures! To some of us it means breaking that relationship, getting off whatsapp or FB, may be change your friends or this may mean quitting your job. It's better to enter another career than to destroy your purpose. Find other alternative coping mechanisms that help, like working out in the gym, reading the bible or visiting a friend. Recognize that even though God has healed you, the enemy could try and nail you through the same spot again, so you need to be on guard.

What has mastered you? Satan wants to steal, kill, and destroy and he uses the weapons of mass destruction called addictions. They say once an addict, always an addict. I don't believe that. I know God can heal you completely. But once he does, he says go and sin no more. Let me say in conclusion that as we draw to the end of this series, I believe that God has given many of us tools not just to set ourselves free but also to become sources of freedom for our families and our friends.

PRAY

For people who know they have allowed themselves to become bound to an addiction of any kind

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Dear Heavenly Father, You have told us to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and not to gratify the desires of the sinful nature (Rom.13:14). I acknowledge that I have given in to sinful desires which wage war against my soul (1Pet.2:11). Please reveal to my mind the ways that I have transgressed Your moral law and grieved the Holy Spirit. I have sinned against Your holy law and given the enemy an opportunity to destroy my purpose (Eph.4:27, Eph.2:10). I come before Your presence to acknowledge my sins and to seek Your forgiveness (1Jn.1:9) that I may be freed from the bondage of sin (Gal.5:1). I renounce my involvement in all sin, and claim through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ my forgiveness and cleansing. I cancel all ground that evil spirits have gained through my willful involvement in sin. I ask this in the wonderful name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen