

# A Dangerous Road

## 1 Corinthians 6:12

The numbers are staggering. A poll by the U. S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration revealed the following statistics: One in eight Americans has a significant problem with drugs or alcohol. Twenty-seven million Americans use drugs regularly or drink heavily, with over half of those needing immediate treatment. Almost 12 percent of young people use illicit drugs by age 18.

Prescription drugs reveal similar stats, with an estimated 17 percent of adults over 60 misusing prescribed medication. In some cities, the rate of death by prescription drug overdose has risen 20 percent in recent years, and emergency room visits because of overdose has nearly doubled.

Without a doubt, addiction is a pervasive problem in the United States, spanning every race, culture, and class of Americans. Yet one thing can likely be stated about each person represented in these stats: No one sets out to become an alcoholic or an addict. No one makes it his or her goal to fall under the bondage and personal destruction that addiction brings.

Sadly, the problems of addiction invade even the church. Yet we ought not be surprised. Two thousand years ago, the apostle Paul warned believers not to allow anything to put their lives in bondage. Listen to his wise words found in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

**Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered by anything.**

It's important to note that when Paul said "everything is permissible," he was contrasting Christianity with false religions of the day that defined themselves by a strict list of laws and rules. Redemption was attained by adhering to a rigid standard of laws governing superficial activities such as what a person ate. Not so with Christianity. Our salvation is based on faith in Christ and a commitment to His will for our lives. Then Paul added, "I will not be mastered by anything." It's wise advice. Following Christ brings the ultimate freedom: freedom from sin, judgment, and hopelessness. What tragedy to allow ourselves to become enslaved to anything. Addiction will only destroy our lives, sever our relationship with Christ, and derail His plan for us.

Are you suffering from an addiction of any kind today? You don't have to be mastered. There's freedom in Christ to live the life of purpose He planned for you from the beginning. Perhaps you're tempted by an addiction. Remember Paul's warning that such actions form a dangerous road. There's deliverance in the Lord, and the best choice is to commit to following Him from this day forward.

**Why do you think people become involved in addictions? Why are addictions dangerous to our physical well-being? Our relationship with Christ?**

**Have you ever struggled with a temptation toward an addiction of any kind? How can you prepare to overcome such a temptation the next time it confronts you?**