

Issued: [Date]
Approved: [Date]

Criminal Offender

Policy and Procedure

Phone • [www._____](#) Address _____

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- House Check form

Policy

Introduction

It is the desire of [Church] to let God love us and love others through us. One tangible way to do this is to ensure our campus is free from various forms of threat, discrimination, or harassment. As such, we have developed policies and procedures to address specific areas related to our employees, volunteers, and congregation as well as those with criminal convictions who desire to participate in various [CHURCH] ministries.

Scope

This policy covers employees, volunteers, and groups who provide services to [Church]. While [CHURCH] strives to keep the campus free from all forms of threat, discrimination and harassment, it is [CHURCH]'s desire to provide an environment in which all individuals are treated in a Christ-like manner. When appropriate, it is the desire of the church to come alongside individuals and partner with them to work through the issue(s) at hand.

The purpose of this policy is that [CHURCH] will have a resource in place to address any issues that may arise with regards to ministry participation of Offenders. In addition to this policy an Advisory Team was formed to provide expertise and input surrounding these issues.

This policy covers as a resource to address issues that may arise at [CHURCH] concerning crimes against children and individuals registered on the Sexual Offender Registration Program. It is also intended to cover issues that may arise on the [CHURCH] campus regarding persons convicted of felony, drug, or violent crimes or first time offenders.

Policy Statement

1. [CHURCH] and the MPW's intention in creating this policy and procedure is to reflect God's goodness in extending grace at the same time we are trying to create a comfortable, safe, and harassment-free environment so that all employees, volunteers, and church members can enjoy their experience while on the [CHURCH] campus and fulfill their potential in Christ.
2. Consistent with this commitment, it is the policy of [CHURCH] to provide a place where each individual is treated with the respect and kindness that would be pleasing to our Lord. Given the possibility that persons who have been convicted of criminal conduct may seek employment at [CHURCH], volunteer their services, or otherwise be active on campus, [CHURCH] will address issues that may arise using the procedure outlined on the following pages. It is our desire to keep the campus safe from potential dangers that could be brought on by sex offenders, felons, drug abusers, and those who have committed violent crimes. In addition, our desire is to provide appropriate opportunities for corporate worship, learning, and participation.
3. [CHURCH] staff members, volunteers, and leaders are placed in a position of the highest public trust, even above that granted to some other public safety professionals. It is the policy of [CHURCH] to assure that those who are representing the church in any capacity are worthy of this extraordinary trust. It is well accepted in the United States that persons who have been convicted of criminal conduct may not serve as police officers. In light of the high degree of trust placed on churches, we are often held to a similar, if not higher,

standard. For this reason, [CHURCH] has a duty to exclude individuals from a position of trust who pose a risk to public health and safety by virtue of conviction of certain crimes.

4. Each issue will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and determinations made based on [CHURCH]'s written procedure.
5. It is important to maintain a positive Christ-like and professional demeanor at all times when addressing these issues.

Point of Contact

Should you have any questions, or require clarification of the policies and procedures listed, please contact Human Resources at [Phone].

Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to aid in the implementation of [CHURCH] policy.

I. Discovery Process

[CHURCH] could discover an Offender serving in a ministry capacity through one or more means. Discovery could come by way of database search, fingerprinting, notification by law enforcement, word of mouth, personal experience, self-disclosure, observation, and others.

Convicted Offender(s)

The mere presence of an Offender at congregation wide prayer meetings, church service, or any worship event open to the general public (such as concerts and contracted events) is not deemed a threat and is excluded from this policy.

Once an Offender has been identified as being active on campus, or if a known Offender is participating in ministry or volunteer positions, or if a known Offender desires to participate in a ministry, it is the policy of [CHURCH] to adhere to the following steps and/or course of action:

- Human Resources should be notified immediately to address the issue and determine the immediate level of risk that the offender poses to the church and/or school.
- When appropriate, the Offender's county would be contacted and background information would be requested. Information would include level of risk, conditions of probation/parole, date of offense, and other criminal history.
- All facts, concerns, level of risk, and conditions will be reviewed by Human Resources as outlined in Section II of this procedure. A course of action will be determined.

Upon receiving knowledge of a convicted offender on campus or attending [CHURCH] activities, [CHURCH] will submit information concerning offender(s) to local law enforcement to review conditions and measure compliance with the conditions placed on the offender. [CHURCH] will work with the reviewing authority to work within the guidelines set forth. It is understood that the reviewing authority has a continuing obligation to maintain compliance of the convicted offender.

New Offender(s)

If a person without prior convictions is found to be committing a crime on campus the witness should report them immediately to the Roseville police department and [CHURCH]'s Human Resources Department. Individual(s) will be barred from campus, pending investigation, until the matter is resolved and reviewed by the Executive team (E-Team).

II. Review Process

For purposes of this document, a determination of whether a person is an Offender shall have been made by a court of law. It is not the intention or responsibility of [CHURCH]'s advisory team to make this determination.

All issues on this topic should first be brought to the Human Resources representative for decision on ministry participation based on the procedure set forth in this document. Should a decision not be able to be made at that level, the issue would be elevated for review with the Executive Pastor. Any issues needing resolution beyond this level will be brought before an Advisory Team for final review and recommendations for decision. The Executive Pastor will partner with Human Resources and together will be responsible for reviewing the Advisory

Team's recommendations and determine the final decision. This could be done via face-to-face meeting or conference call.

Human Resources shall be responsible to form an Advisory Team, prepare agendas, keep minutes, and schedule team meetings. The Advisory Team's mission is to investigate and recommend the best course of action on a case-by-case basis. The Advisory Team may consist of:

- [CHURCH] Executive Pastor – Spiritual Guidance
 - [CHURCH] Human Resources – Safeguarding [CHURCH]'s interest
 - Probation Officer and/or Parole Agent – Representing Offender
 - Police Department Representative – Enforcement of Law
 - [CHURCH] Supervisory Staff (As Appropriate) – Additional feedback and insight
- Optional team members:
- Judge – Legal Counsel
 - Advocate for Family Abuse Unit – Humanitarian

[CHURCH]'s Advisory Team role is to provide a knowledgeable hedge of protection for [CHURCH]. However, it is understood that the local law enforcement unit(s) will have the most direct responsibility for protecting the church and school's community.

Law enforcement will also be responsible to contact individuals outside of the church that should be informed about the presence of a convicted offender. It is the police agency that is ultimately responsible for what action is taken or not taken in regards to the community. However, it is [CHURCH]'s ultimate responsibility in what action is taken in regards to ministry participation of an Offender.

It will be an ongoing goal of [CHURCH] Human Resources and the Advisory Team to review the effectiveness of existing systems and to examine additional ways to strengthen the ability to protect children and other vulnerable groups.

III. Preventative Measures

[CHURCH]'s Human Resources Department will perform periodic checks that are intended to continually keep [CHURCH] aware and advised of potential problems and maintain control of any current issues.

- Fingerprinting – It is becoming increasingly important to verify the backgrounds of people who work and serve on our campus and in our ministries. It is [CHURCH]'s expectation that each person who applies for employment or offers to volunteer will be of upstanding character. We want to be certain that we are providing the most secure environment possible to our congregation, staff, and children. Part of our due diligence toward this regard is to request background information via LiveScan on each person who is employed by [CHURCH] and/or volunteers in leadership ministries, positions of trust, or ministries involving children.
- Megan's Law Website – [CHURCH]'s Human Resources Department will conduct, on a quarterly basis, a search on the Megan's Law website (www.meganslaw.ca.gov) as a good faith effort to identify any person(s) convicted of crimes against a minor and/or sexually violent crimes against anyone. The information obtained from this search will be compared

against [CHURCH]'s attender's database to identify any potential offender(s) that may be coming on campus. The search will be conducted by zip code and shall include the church and surrounding area zip codes. It is the responsibility of outside agencies to determine where offender(s) reside. It is not the responsibility, or intention, of [CHURCH] to go beyond [CHURCH] campus related issues.

- Confidential Database – [CHURCH]'s Human Resources Department will maintain a confidential database of Registered Offenders identified on Megan's Law Website that may be coming on campus. Database will include name, address, description, identifiable marks, and list of convicted offenses.
- Restraining Orders – [CHURCH] will keep on file, in a secured location, copies of any restraining orders that have been provided for information purposes. Appropriate personnel will be advised of details outlined on the order(s).
- Campus Observation – Should someone observe and report suspicious conduct to human resources and/or their ministry leader an incident report should be taken and followed up as appropriate.
- Safety – No [CHURCH] Staff, volunteer, member, or guest is to take any action that would jeopardize his or her own safety. No person shall knowingly be instructed to do anything that is likely to jeopardize his or her safety.
- Incident Report and Tracking – Human Resources will maintain a log of incidents and resulting actions.

IV. Training

[CHURCH] has a course of action in place to help maintain public safety and is prepared to respond in case of an emergency. A complete Emergency Response Plan is available for reference in the Welcome Center. In addition, we are committed to provide training to staff and volunteers which would allow them to respond to different scenarios. The following practices are in place to endeavor the safety of our visitors, congregation, staff, and volunteers:

- A. Crowd Monitoring – [CHURCH] utilizes the services of staff and volunteers in various locations throughout the campus (ushers, greeters, parking assistants, etc.). These individuals shall be trained to observe and monitor crowds. They are trained in the following areas:
 - Identify potential offenders on campus
 - Recognize unusual or out-of-place behavior
 - Monitor suspicious activity
 - Report issues in a speedy and unobtrusive way (i.e. codes)
 - Assist in crowd control
- B. Communication – staff and volunteers in key locations are equipped with communication devices (radio, cell phones, etc) to allow for immediate communication to a central reporting location as well as key locations on campus. Should the need arise for additional points of contact, the Guest Services Lead may assign staff and/or volunteers to monitor specifically assigned rooms and areas of the building.
- C. Suspicious activity – designated staff and volunteers will be contacted by the Guest Services Lead to establish clear communications on the activity to be monitored. The Guest Services Lead will coordinate all decisions as appropriate. At all times while

monitoring suspicious activity the individual should remain calm and not draw attention to the activity in question.

- D. Observance of an Unlawful Act – staff and volunteers who observe or are notified of an Unlawful Act in progress should follow the same action as C above.
- E. Use of a Chaperone System – Please refer to section VII for further details.

V. Outline for Course of Action

Discovery of individuals within the ranks of [CHURCH] convicted of any crimes shall cause initiation of a review by the Human Resources and/or the Advisory Team. Such individuals may be denied or limited in opportunities/approvals to serve after consideration of the following factors:

- The seriousness of the crime/offense.
- How much time has elapsed since the crime/offense was committed.
- Whether the crime/offense involved violence to, or abuse of, another person.
- Probation/parole conditions and requirements
- Whether the crime/offense involved a minor or a person of diminished capacity.
- Whether the individual's actions and conduct since the crime/offense occurred are consistent with the holding of a position of public trust. This determination may also include interviews of the family, friends and acquaintances of the individual.

After consideration of the above factors the Offender may be granted (on a case-by-case basis) the permission to serve and/or [Church]less to [CHURCH]'s campus and ministry participation in a limited capacity. This limited permission will be specific as to which areas the individual may have access to and exactly in which capacity they may serve or be on the [CHURCH] campus. The following three levels of restriction for ministry participation are intended as a guideline for the course of action to follow in accordance with the crimes that were committed by the Offender.

- Level 1 Action

Discovery of individuals active at [CHURCH] convicted of certain crimes which present an unreasonable risk to public health and safety will be addressed by the Executive Team on a case-by-case basis. These individuals would be deemed as posing an ongoing risk and threat to the safety and welfare of the staff, volunteers, and attenders at [CHURCH]. At this level these individuals would be denied the ability to work on staff or serve in a volunteer capacity. In addition, participation in worship services is limited.

An Offender who falls under the Level 1 category would be allowed on campus to attend worship services and must be with his/her assigned Chaperone at all times. See Chaperone Level 1 for details.

- Level 2 Action

Discovery of individuals active at [CHURCH] convicted of certain crimes may be granted permission to serve in [CHURCH] ministries only if the individual establishes that their service will not jeopardize public health and safety or that of [CHURCH] staff and volunteers.

Factors outlined above would be considered during the review process and in addition the table in section VI would be used as a guideline. At this level these individuals may be granted the ability to work, volunteer, or participate in ministries at [CHURCH] on a case-by-case basis. A Chaperone may be assigned as appropriate.

▪ **Level 3 Action**

Discovery of individuals active at [CHURCH] convicted of any crimes or offenses such as DUI, substance abuse, misdemeanors, pornography, etc. (but not including minor traffic violations), may be denied the ability to serve or continue to serve. After consideration of the determining factors a decision will be made using the table in section VI as a guideline. At this level these individuals may be granted the ability to work, volunteer, or participate in ministries at [CHURCH] on a case-by-case basis.

VI. Guidelines to Specific Actions based on Specific Offense(s)

Each individual is reviewed on case-by-case basis, based on time and life events. [CHURCH]'s aim to treat individuals equitable is to provide a set of guidelines for dealing with specific offenses. Following are specific actions / guidelines for specific offenses:

Offense / Conviction of	Category I Guidelines: Within 5 Years -Probation/Parole / Recent Offense	Category II Guidelines: Offense 5 -10 Years ago	Category III Guidelines: No Criminal Offense in last 10 yrs
Sexual / Physical Abuse of a Child	No serving in any ministry. Allowed on campus only with chaperone level 3. Life Group participation ok with chaperone level 3 present. Full disclosure to LG and probation / parole requirements being met.	No serving in children's or youth ministries. Pastoral or qualified Christian counseling required. Life Group participation ok with full disclosure. Possible use of chaperone Level 2 for on campus activity.	No serving in children's or youth ministries. Possible serving in other ministry with full disclosure. Life Group participation ok with full disclosure. Pastoral or qualified Christian counseling if necessary.
Sexual Misconduct with a Child			
Child Pornography			
Child Endangerment			
Kidnapping			
Robbery			
Arson			
Any Felony / Violent Crimes			
Sexual Offenses with other adult	No serving in any ministry. Allowed on campus only with chaperone level 2. Life group participation ok with chaperone level 2 present. Full disclosure to LG and probation/ parole requirements being met.	No serving in children's, youth, or single's ministries. Pastoral or qualified Christian counseling required. Life Group participation ok with full disclosure. Possible use of chaperone Level 2 for on campus activity.	No serving in children's, youth, or single's ministries. Possible serving in other ministry with full disclosure. Life Group participation ok with full disclosure. Pastoral or qualified Christian counseling if necessary.
Forcible Rape			

Non Violent Crimes	No serving in any ministry.	No serving in finance ministry or ministries with responsibility for [CHURCH] equipment or resources.	No serving in finance ministry or ministries with responsibility for [CHURCH] equipment or resources.
Grand Larceny	Allowed on campus only with chaperone Level 2. Life Group participation ok with full disclosure to LG.		
Burglary			
Embezzlement			
Insurance Fraud			
Misdemeanor Crimes			
Contributing to the delinquency of a minor	No serving in children's or youth ministries.	Possible service in children's or youth ministries with review of circumstances and full disclosure.	Possible service in children's or youth ministries with review of circumstances and full disclosure.
Domestic Violence	No serving in children's, youth, or singles ministries.	Possible service in children's, youth, or singles ministries with review of circumstances and full disclosure.	Possible service in children's, youth, or singles ministries with review of circumstances and full disclosure.
Driving under the Influence (DUI)	No service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity.	Possible service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity. Based on lifestyle since last DUI or incident. Full disclosure.	Possible service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity. Based on lifestyle since last DUI or incident. Full disclosure.
Substance Abuse / Possession / Selling	No service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity. Review for possible service in children's and youth ministries.	Possible service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity. Review for possible service in children's and youth ministries. Based on lifestyle since incident. Full disclosure.	Possible service in any ministry where service would be in a driving capacity. Review for possible service in children's and youth ministries. Based on lifestyle since incident. Full disclosure.

There may be instances where a person has not been convicted of legal wrong doing, but his/her actions might still be morally reprehensible.

The course of action to be implemented would be determined based on the findings during the discovery investigation and subsequent review. It is [CHURCH]'s desire to extend as much grace and forgiveness as possible while still keeping the appropriate protection measures as a priority. The Executive Pastor is the final decision maker as to how each case will be handled.

VII. The Chaperone System for Offenders

In some cases, as a condition of ministry participation or permission to be on campus, an Offender can be granted access to the [CHURCH] campus and assigned a "chaperone" for anytime they will be on campus.

A chaperone is a person in good standing designated by Human Resources, the E-Team, or the MPW Team and pre-approved to work as a chaperone.

Chaperone – Level 1

An Offender who falls under the Level 1 category would be allowed on campus only to attend church service. In order for this to be allowed all three of the following must be adhered to:

1. The Offender must be with his/her assigned Chaperone at all times while on campus. At no time can the Offender be away from the immediate supervision and visual range of his/her assigned Chaperone.
2. The Offender and his/her Chaperone would meet at a designated location off campus and commute to church service in one vehicle together.
3. The Offender and his/her Chaperone would arrive on campus and proceed directly to their seat in the auditorium. Upon completion of the service the Offender and his/or Chaperone would go directly to their vehicle and leave the campus together. Should the need arise to use restroom facilities, the Chaperone would accompany the Offender to the restroom. The Offender is not to engage in activities other than to worship and attend church service.

Chaperone – Level 2

The Offender must be with his/her assigned chaperone at all times while on campus. At no time can the Offender be away from the immediate supervision and visual range of his/her assigned Chaperone.

Chaperone – Level 3

The Offender will be allowed on campus and be able to participate in [CHURCH] sponsored activities only with the direct supervision of his/her assigned chaperone.

In some cases this will be the only approved method for ministry participation. However, at no time should the Offender be granted access to any Children's ministry participation. The Offender will also be assigned an [CHURCH] pastor for pastoral counseling and to discover the issues at hand and possibly set additional boundary conditions.

Assignment of a Chaperone

A chaperone will be assigned to an Offender by Human Resources and/or an Executive Pastor in applicable situations. In most cases, the chaperone shall be of the same sex as the Offender. The Offender and the assigned chaperone will be advised at the time they are assigned as to the requirements and/or limitations set forth.

If no chaperone is available to be assigned to an Offender who wishes to be on campus they will not be granted the opportunity to be on campus until such time that a chaperone can be assigned.

If the Offender does not comply/cooperate with the conditions set forth by this chaperone system their ability to be on campus will be revoked.

Accountability

The Offender must agree to sign and adhere to [CHURCH]'s Covenant of Discipleship and accountability. The Offender agrees to house checks by [CHURCH] and that he/she will not use or possess pornography as further outlined in the agreement.

VIII. Independent Contractors

Independent Contractors (ICs) are required by [CHURCH] to supervise all contracted employees and subcontractors and to be responsible for the conduct for those persons while working on campus. ICs assume all responsibility for their actions, actions of their employees / representatives, and work performed. ICs are required to comply with [CHURCH]'s standards and requirements for background checks. [CHURCH] does not assume any responsibility for performing initial background checks or continual monitoring for any IC.

IX. Acknowledgements and Understanding

For purposes of this procedure the following are understood:

- The Megan's Law website is not a complete and comprehensive listing of every person who has ever committed any sex offense in United States, nor does it make information about every sex offender living in a particular state available on the Internet. In accordance with U.S. law, individuals who have been convicted, or whose case has been judged to be neglectful of what the law and/or duty requires, or found not guilty by reason of insanity for a sex offense must register under Megan's Law.
- With few exceptions, the registration requirement is a lifetime mandate. During annual registration, the registered sex offender is required to verify his or her name and address or temporary location. Failure to properly register may be a felony.
- No representation is being made that the listed individual(s) will commit any specific crime in the future, nor is any representation being made that if the individual commits an offense, that one of the listed offenses will be the offense committed.
- The information obtained by [CHURCH] and/or the Advisory Team shall not be used for any other purpose. We agree not to use the information contained/obtained through [CHURCH] and/or the advisory team to threaten, intimidate or harass another person. Whoever misuses the information may be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability.

X. Definitions

For purposes of these policies and procedures:

The term "Offender" shall be used throughout this document to define an individual who has been convicted of an offense in one or more criminal offenses.

The term "first time Offender" means and person(s) who have never been convicted of a criminal offense.

The term "Child" or "Children" shall be used throughout this document to define an individual who is under the age of 18 years old.

The term "criminal offense against a victim who is a minor" means any conviction of any criminal offense or attempted criminal offense committed against a minor or in which a minor was a stated victim.

The term “predatory” means an act directed at a person, or persons, with whom a relationship has been established or promoted for the primary purpose of victimization.

The term “Registered Sex Offender” means any person(s) required to register in [State] as sex offenders. This includes, by law, any persons convicted of specified sex crimes that are required to register as sex offenders with a local law enforcement agency.

The term “Registered Drug Offender” means any person(s) convicted of controlled substance offences that are required to register in the city which he/she reside. This includes, by law, any persons convicted of crimes that are required to register with a local law enforcement agency.

Misdemeanors are crimes punishable by no more than one year in jail and fines up to \$5,000.

Felony crimes are first heard in the district court where the crime occurred. Crimes are punishable by possible incarceration in state prison and fines up to \$10,000.

[CHURCH] Campus is defined as the property belonging to [Church] and School such as the buildings, temporary buildings, grounds, school, playgrounds, parking lot, etc.

Public Emergency Responders are defined as police officers, firemen, emergency medical personnel, etc.

Independent Contractors are defined as any person, group of persons, company, etc. that is paid to perform work and/or services for [CHURCH] that is not a direct employee of [CHURCH]. Independent Contractors shall not have the authority to bind [CHURCH] in any manner, and shall not represent himself/herself as an employee of [CHURCH].

Attachments

[Date]

[Church]

CRIME AND OFFENDER INCIDENT REPORT AND TRACKING

Date of Incident: _____

Copy of Report distributed to:

Human Resources Executive Pastor

Location: _____

Advisory Team Other _____

Offender: _____

Details and Description: (Documentation of Crime)

Details of Probation/Parole Requirements:

Follow up:

Date	Assigned to	Description of Task Assigned	Status / Update	Completed

- First Time Offender Convicted Offender
- Absolute Denial General Denial
- Assigned to Chaperone: _____
- Pastoral Counseling: _____

- Discretionary Denial
- Level 1 Level 2
- Timeframe: _____

Reason for requesting exception:

Reviewed by: HR Executive Pastor Advisory Team Other: _____

Specific details of capacity allowed to serve, if any:

Detail supporting Final Decision/Determination:

Approved Denied

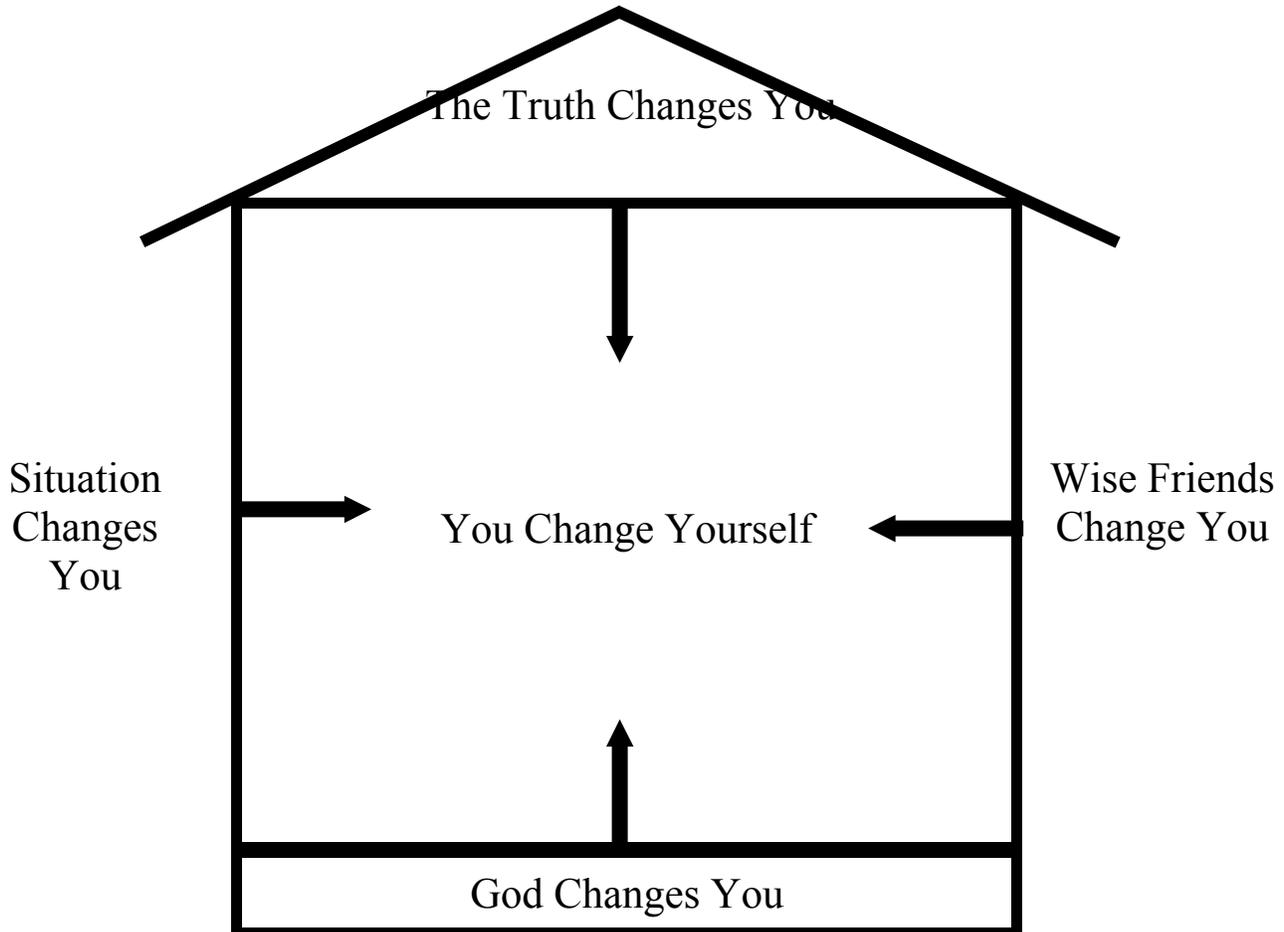
Authorized by:

Executive Pastor

Date

Five Sides of Change

By Dr. David Powlison, CCEF

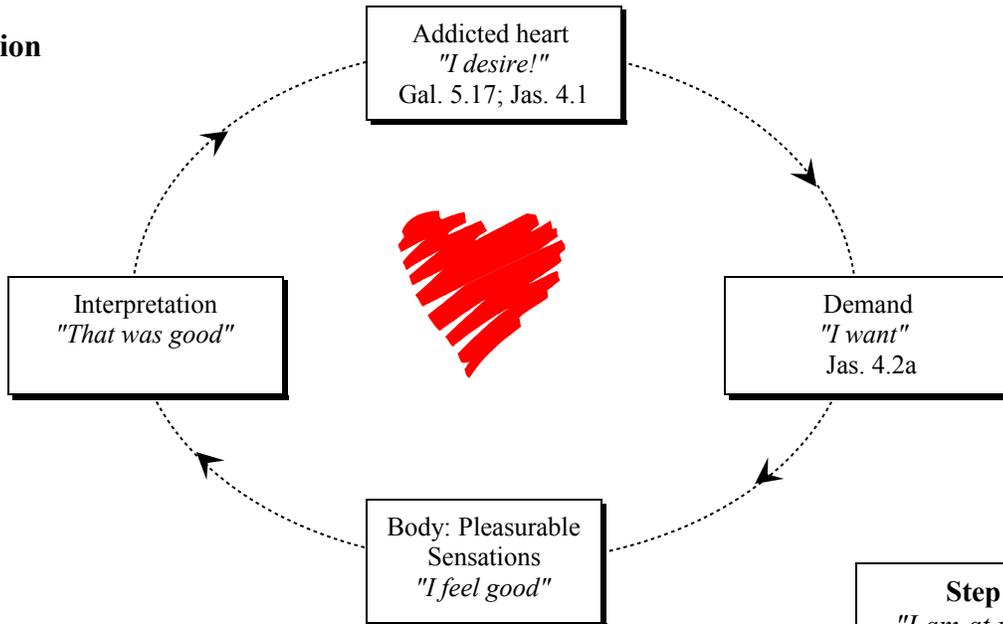


1. **God Changes You:** Rom. 1.16-17; Jn. 3.3,5; Ezk. 36.25-27; Phil. 2.13; 1.6; Eph. 2.1-10; Jn. 15.5; Gal. 5.22; Jas. 1.5; 1 Cor. 1.26-31; 1 Pet. 1.3-5
2. **The Truth Changes You:** Jn.17.17; Gal. 2.20; 2 Tim. 3.16-17; Ps. 1.2ff; 19.7ff; 119.9,11, 97-104; 2 Pet. 1.3-4; Tit. 2.11-14
3. **You Change Yourself:** Phil. 2.12; 3.10-14; Eph. 4.25--6.20; 1 Pet. 2.11; 2 Pet. 1.5-9; Ps. 51; 32; Ps.139.23-24; 1 Cor. 9.24-27; 2 Cor. 10.3-5
4. **Wise Friends Change You:** Acts 2.42; Heb. 3.12-13; 10.24-25; Jas. 5.19; Gal. 6.1f; Mt. 18.15ff; 1 Tim. 4.16ff; Prov. 13.20
5. **The Situation Changes You:** Ps. 119.67-71; Jas. 1.2ff; Rom. 5.3; 2 Cor. 1.9-12; 2 Cor. 12.7-10

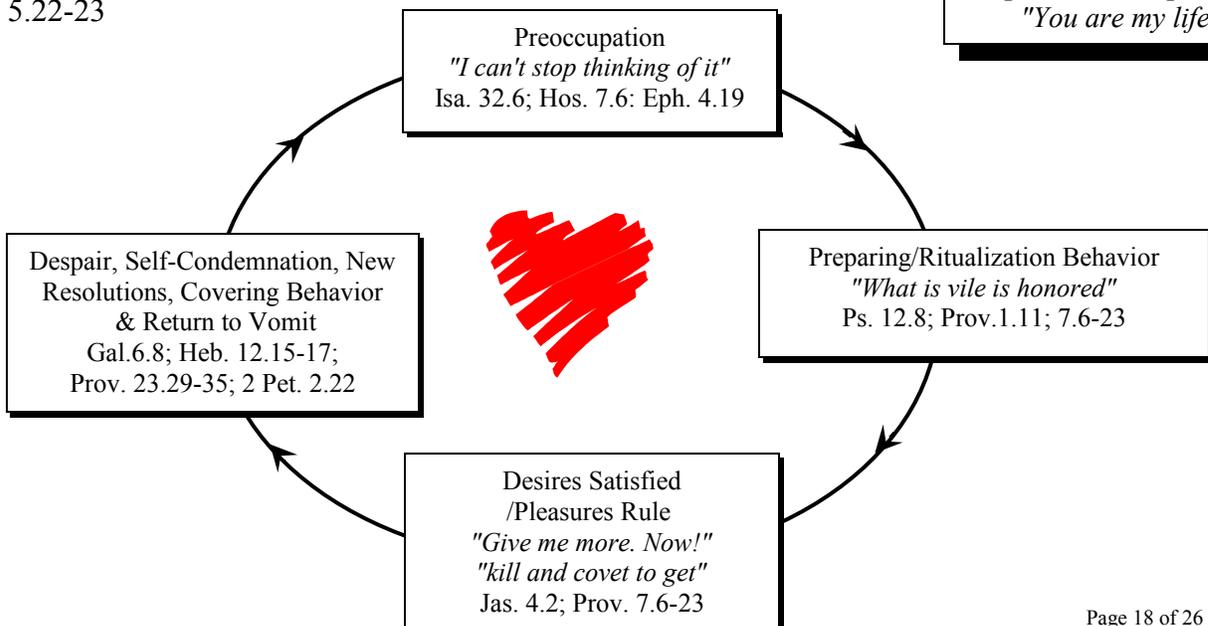
Cycle of Addictions/Ruling Cravings

But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:14-15.

Stage #1: Rebellion 1 Jn. 3.4



Stage #2: Bondage Prov. 5.22-23



- Step #1: Naive**
"I am at peace, not war"
- Step #2: Lingering**
"Very interesting"
- Step #3: Infatuation**
"You make me feel better, and in control."
- Step #4: Worship/idolatry**
"You are my life!"

God Speaks to the Addict/Craving/Habitual Sin¹

By [Pastor]

I. Being Fooled: "It doesn't look like sin"

- A. Addicts don't look like us nor like people we've met. Scripture is sufficiency challenged. This is a new case of which God has never spoken.
- B. Arguing Against Genetics - Studies demonstrate that 50% of twins separated at birth who were the product of a parent addicted to alcohol, develop the addiction.

Rebuttal: What do we make of this? The fact that 50% of the twins *didn't* develop the addiction proves there is nothing genetically determinative of certain behaviors. Predisposition? Yes. They may be more *prone* to a particularly temptation more than another person, but *not determinative*. Simply a bent.

C. Arguing Against Cliché: "One drink makes a drunk." "It's just a picture."

Rebuttal: There are all sorts of examples in every addict's life where because of no money, emergency or other reasons they have walked away.

D. Arguing against Experience: "Something in me has taken over me. I can't control it." Addictions seem bizarre to us because of their power to enslave a person, seemingly driving him to do whatever it takes to get the next "fix." All too often Christians have underestimated the power and depth of sin and sinfulness.

Rebuttal: 1] Develop a robust theology of sin.

<i>Pelagian</i>	<i>Augustinian</i>
Act	Nature (Affects mind, will emotions)
Singular (Deliberate)	Habit (Ongoing, spontaneous)
Overt Behavior	Hidden in the Heart
Rebellion Only	Rebellion & Bondage

- ❖ Sin = Idolatry/worshiper-server, Rom. 1.18-32
- ❖ Sin = Master/slave, Rom. 6.1-23; Tit. 3.3; Rom. 7.14-25
- ❖ Sin = Lusts, cravings, wanting more, hungry, thirsty, never satisfied, 1 Jn. 2.15-17; Prov. 27.20; Hab. 2.4-5; Eccl. 5.10
- ❖ Sin = Addiction like Drunkenness [prototype]. Prov. 23.20; Rom. 13.13; 1 Cor. 5.11; 1 Cor 6.9-10; Gal. 5.19-21; Rom. 7.14-25

2] Develop a robust theology of the gospel.

- ❖ Salvation = God's power to radically transform the whole person from the inside out, Rom. 1.16
- ❖ God saves addicts, 1 Cor. 6.9-11; Lk. 4.18; Ps. 107.10-16
- ❖ God saves *chief* sinners, 1 Tim. 1.15-17; Rom. 7.14-25; me!

¹ We are considering in this paper addicts, cravers and cravings (strong overpowering desires) and habitual sins. Yet, we will use the word "addict" to simplify our discussion throughout.

- ❖ God delivers us not only from the guilt of sin but *the power* of sin, Rom. 6.1-23. *Sin shall not be your master!*

II. Setting Free the Captive!

A. Know the Lord!

1. Addiction is a *disorder of worship*. I serve my particular addiction, sin, because I deem it more worthy than God.

Addiction is a *disorder of pleasure*. I value the pleasure of the sin more than the pleasure of God.

Addiction is a *disorder of Lordship*. I desire the “approval” or affirmation receive from the sin, rather than God’s affirmation and approval. I fear the consequences of not serving the sin more than I fear the consequences of not serving God.

2. Know his Law: “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” Rom. 3.18

- a. Addicts have no fear of God. They may have a fear of his punishment, but they have not the deep reverence for God so that they want to please God, trust him and obey him. Hence, addicts trifle with God.

Ps. 10.11 He says to himself, “God has forgotten; he covers his face and never sees.”

- b. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Addicts are fools. They take risks other would not take. They do thing others would not do.

- c. “How does a man keep his way pure? By living according to your Word.”

Addicts, like fools, despise wisdom and discipline. They do not know God’s law. Yet, without God’s law, there will be little to impress the addict of how far they have fallen, how much they are in bondage to sin. See Ps. 119.9-11

3. Know His Gospel:

What is the worst sin? The unpardonable sin? *Unbelief*, Prov. 28.13

Fleeing to Christ by Robert Murray M'Cheyne

"I feel, when I have sinned, an immediate reluctance to go to Christ. I am ashamed to go. I feel as if it would do no good to go -- as if it were making Christ a minister of sin, to go straight from the swine-trough to the best robe -- and a thousand other excuses; but I am persuaded they are all lies, direct from hell.

"John argues the opposite way -- 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father'... I am sure there is neither peace nor safety from deeper sin, but in going directly to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is God's way of

peace and holiness. It is folly to the world and the be-clouded heart, but it is *the way*.

"I must never think a sin is too small to need immediate application to the blood of Christ. If I put away a good conscience, concerning faith I make shipwreck. I must never think my sins too great, too aggravated, too presumptuous ... to hinder me from fleeing to Christ. The weight of my sins should act like the weight of a clock, the heavier it is, it makes it go the faster."

- ❖ Our foundation is Christ's obedience, not our penance or repentance, Rom. 3.21-26; 1 Jn. 1.8-9 (He is just -- he must act according to *his promise not our performance!*)
- ❖ Faith Activates in Hopeless Experiences, Rom. 4.18-25.

Addicts have precursors to their acts. Anger, resentment, boredom, despair, rebellion ("No one's going to regulate my life. No one is going to tell me what to do.") build up and out of such arises the desire to "feel good" now. Hence, the quest to fulfill one's additive desire.

Addicts are men "with no room in their thoughts for God." Their faith is all unbelief. They need the promises of God. They need to hear the gospel of grace.

B. Know the Fight!

1. God has already begun the fight before you ever even thought to change, Rom. 5.6-8; 1 Jn. 3.8. You are fighting this alone. God has already begun to fight for you. You are entering in on God's battle against this enslaving sin.
2. Do Violence!
 - ❖ By buffeting the body, Mt. 5.27-30; 1 Cor. 9.24-27; Eccl. 7.1-6; Prov. 25.28
 - ❖ By dealing with sin at the level of the imagination, Jas. 1.13-15; 1Jn. 2.15-17
 - ❖ By learning to hate sin and love righteousness, Ps. 139.21-22; Ps. 36.2; 119.136, 158; 101.3-8
 - ❖ By reconciling with those you've offended, Mt. 5.23-24
 - ❖ By reconciling with those who've sinned against you, Mt. 18.10-32
 - ❖ By reconciling with the church, Mt. 18.15-20

C. Know Your *Old* Self

1. Drunkenness is Scripture's "paradigm" for all addiction, Prov. 23.19-21, 29-35

2. People In Habitual Sin Are Deceivers, Secretive, Liars.

Build a habit of truth-telling. "I'd rather you plea the 5th than lie to me. If you feel tempted to lie, tell me to change the subject."

Get the right for full disclosure with parole officer, therapists, etc. Work with them not against them. Their descriptions are usually good; it is just their prescriptions. Even then, they often have great common sense.

3. People In Habitual Sin Have Payoffs and Partners.

Look for multiple purposes (reasons).

Look for *clusters* of sin; anger, fear, worry, etc.

Work on the whole life, not just the one besetting and obvious sin. People in habitual sin *sin* everywhere, just in different ways.

4. People In Habitual Sin Have No Friends.

Get the addict to build a relational base.

Teach them how to befriend and serve others.

5. People In Habitual Sin Have Ritual Habits Leading To Sin. Thus,

- ❖ identify your rituals, preparations, and plans to sin, Prov. 7.6ff

- ❖ break your rituals, your patterns, disrupt your habits

- ❖ identify people, places, situations where you have sinned and which now are associated with your sin. Break off all associations. Redefine them biblically. Where the "bar" was a place to see friends (but really get drunk), now call it that—the place I get drunk, the sewer of sin, Leviathan.

6. People In Habitual Sin Identify More With Sin Than With God. "I am an alcoholic. I am a sex addict. I am a kleptomaniac." This too is a lie. The truth is better and worse. Better: You are a moral being, made in God's image, and have been given a promise and hope for change. As a new believer, you are a son or daughter of God. You have a new Lord, a new master. Worse: it isn't disease, its punishable sin! Gal. 5.7-8; 1 Cor. 6.9-11.

D. Know Your New Self!

1. People in habitual sin need to know their new selves. We are justified, sanctified, and the sons and daughters of God. 1 Cor. 6.11 with v.9-10.

2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 4.4-7; Rom. 8.13-17; Eph. 2.4-10 with v.1-3

2. This knowledge is more than knowledge of our identity -- it is knowledge of God's identity. It is a knowledge of God's new *relationship to us and ours to God*.

God is our new source, our new resource, our new provider, our new refuge, our new strength, our new deliverer, and our new ever-present help in times of trouble. 1 Cor. 1.25-31; Ps. 46; 91; 142.5-7; Mt. 6.25-33; 1 Pet. 5.6-7; Ps. 23; 2 Cor. 6.11-7.1.

3. Rom. 6.11ff. Speaks of our New Slavery! We've died to sin and are alive to God in Christ.

Rom. 6.11-14 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 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. 14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

. . . 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

House Check of Mr. John Doe

Date: _____ Time: _____ Examined by: _____

1. Living Room:
 - Book shelves
 - Sofa (under and between pillows)
 - Closets

2. Kitchen:
 - Cabinets
 - Countertops & Sink
 - Refrigerator

3. Bedroom:
 - Bed and under mattress, between sheets, etc.
 - Closets
 - Dresser

4. Bathroom:
 - Bathtub & sink
 - Cabinet
 - Shelves

5. Miscellaneous:
 - Garbage Can
 - Car (seats and trunk)

Name of Examiner (Pastor/Elder/Deacon/Counselor)

Date

General Comments:

**Covenant of Discipleship and Accountability
Between John Doe and [Church]**
Month, Day, Year

To assist John Doe in rebuilding his life, becoming a productive member of our community, and living a life that is honoring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the pastoral leadership team of [Church] hereby enter into the following covenant with John.

43039. The Pastoral team will watch over John as a member of the flock, teaching, correcting, supporting, encouraging, and praying for him so that he will grow in godliness and live a life that honors God (see 1 Thes. 5:14; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Pet. 5:2).
43040. John will submit himself to the spiritual leadership of the Pastoral team, obeying them and submitting to their authority (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thes. 5:12-13). Among other things, he will:
- a. Participate regularly in the weekly worship service;
 - b. Participate in regular discipling under the oversight of the Pastoral team or a designated man/woman, which may include Bible study, prayer, journaling, and participation in a men's/woman's accountability group;
 - c. Meeting regularly with an assigned pastoral staff member or other MPW member for counseling and encouragement;
 - d. Work with the Pastoral team to establish godly life disciplines in all areas of his personal life.
43041. To honor the terms of John's parole and protect him from false accusations, John will scrupulously avoid having any contact with a minor child without the immediate presence of another adult. He will remain in the continual presence of adults during all church activities and whenever children are present. He will not be directly involved in any ministry involving minors.
4. Moreover, in keeping with the court order dated _____, 20__, as issued by Judge _____:
- a. John will not use or possess pornography, erotica, x-rated materials, videos, adult books that promote sexual immorality of any kind, particularly incest. Neither will John frequent any establishment where such materials are a chief item of sale or enter any adult book stores, topless bars or massage parlors.
 - b. Nor will John have any contact whatsoever with his victims(s) and / or their families of this criminal case by any means or in any manner: in person, by telephone, writing, email, regular mail, or through a third party. John must also stay at least 1500 feet away from the victims and their families for the duration of his sentence.
 - c. John will comply with all other conditions² imposed by the court or his treatment program as presently administered under the care of _____ <name of Counselor and/or program here > _____.

² Among the other conditions imposed by the court are: maintaining employment, no possession of firearms, no frequenting of bars; no use of illegal drugs; the necessity to get permission to travel out of his assigned district, etc. See a copy of *Conditions of Probation and Parole*.

5. John may, at his own discretion, enjoy fellowship with families in the church that do not have minor children. He will not accept invitations for fellowship with families with minor children until he has met the following requirements:
 - a. First, he must make sure that an Executive Pastor has talked with the parents to inform them of John's limitations and how to properly minister to him.
 - b. Second, he must notify his Counselor of his intentions to fellowship with that family and his whereabouts during that time. This can be done simply by way of leaving a message at his Counselor's answering service.
6. John authorizes the Pastoral team to inform current and future friends and members of the church about his past, and to describe his current walk with the Lord.
7. John authorizes his parole officer, professional counselor, the pastoral staff and MPWs of this church to talk openly and candidly with one another and to disclose to one another any and all information, insights, or concerns they have regarding John.
8. John willingly agrees to give permission to any of the pastoral staff, MPWs to make spot checks on his home in order to hold him accountable to the terms of this covenant. These checks will seek to determine whether John is keeping his home clean and orderly and whether or not he is in possession of prohibited materials as specified above in this covenant (see #4.a).

John Doe

Date

Executive Pastor, for [Church]

Date