

ALCS 21V Chapel

Flourishing Desires

Redirecting Compulsive Desires in a Land of Addiction

Presented by Mr. Curtis White on September 20, 2018

It is an honor to partner with you as we help our students learn how to live godly lives in the 21st century. As always, we encourage you to cover this discussion in prayer before you begin talking with your student.

God is filled with desire and passion; we are made in His image. He's calling us to be more like Himself and wants to help us cultivate good desires into the plans He has for our lives!

LIST OF DESIRES:

- riches
- fame and honor
- health
- joy/contentment
- family/community
- safety
- vengeance
- wonder/beauty
- exploration
- love/acceptance
- immortality
- good food
- autonomy and ownership
- power
- intimacy

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are some of your deepest desires?
- Are these desires compulsive or cultivated? How can you tell? Do you feel more like you're in control of your desires or like your desires are controlling you?
- What are some factors that turn your desires into compulsive behaviors? (Boredom, loneliness, isolation, frustration, worry, unresolved conflict, stress, hopelessness, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, distance from God)
- How have your desires been shaped by your family, friends, school, culture, or experiences? Do they agree with the Bible or conflict?

- What does a compulsive desire look like?
- What does a cultivated desire look like? How could a desire be cultivated even if it's not met in the way you want? (Example: how can you cultivate your desire for intimacy in the midst of singleness or family struggles? How can you cultivate your desire for autonomy while still living in your parents' house?)
- What can you do if you've already developed compulsive habits?
- Can you identify the roots behind your compulsive behaviors? Where is God in the midst of those roots?
 - For example, maybe boredom and fatigue are the root of your desire for more food. God wants to help us find a meaningful life and to create boundaries in our schedule to keep our physical bodies healthy and strong.
- How can we know what God wants us to do with our desires? How can we grow to want what God wants for us?
- Mr. White ended with the reminders to work hard, play hard, and pray hard. What could that look like in your life? How could your community (family, friends, teachers, classmates) help you as you strive to work hard, play hard, and pray hard?

NEXT STEPS:

Consider boundaries: you might think about and talk about the boundaries that might be appropriate to put in place for the technology in your home.

- Does your child have access to unmonitored Internet?
- Do they always have technology with them?
- Are the boundaries you have working?
- Have you had any conversations about this in your home? Perhaps your whole family could talk about what healthy boundaries around your technology could be like? (Are there any tech-free times or places, for example.)

Discuss the benefits of tech: you might also want to have conversations about the benefits of technology which could set a positive direction to grow in the use and understanding of technology. Consider questions such as . . . what good things can you do with technology? What light can be found online? How could technology be used to grow what's good, true, beautiful, and rich in your home? Could tech be used to draw us closer together as a family or to friends or even to God?

A Note about Approach: while it may be helpful to state your expectations for Internet use clearly to your child, consider that as only a start of the many conversations you could have. Are you also talking about how you may have handled failures in the past? Are you talking with them about what they could do (and what your response would be) if/when they misuse their technology? Simply putting rules in place may create secrecy instead of inviting transparency.

Ultimately, any added software or monitoring program that you may use on a child's device can be circumvented by motivated individuals. The symptoms find their roots in our hearts, not online. Monitoring or accountability software should be thought of only as a tool not as a solution to these problems. The way we deal with failure and train our desires for good (with God's help) matter more than the tools we use to help place boundaries around our technology.

That being said, some tools that others use to help control compulsive behavior are:

- [K9 Web filter](#)
- [Covenant Eyes](#) (accountability and/or filtering)
- [Conquer Series filter and software](#)

Web filters will try to keep inappropriate images/content from being displayed. Accountability software simply reports Internet use on monitored programs to others in order to attempt to remove anonymity and secrecy.

Questions? Feel free to contact us with questions or concerns at 21v@mcs-wi.com.