

# The Christian Arsenal

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## THE FIRST STEP TO FREEDOM The Road to Recovery

Dr. Ken Culver

### Part 2 of 9

INTRO: We're going to talk in this service about how to handle and how to overcome the hurts in your life, the habits that re messing up your life and the hang-ups that have caused pain in your life.

*"I have seen how they acted, but I will heal them. I will lead them and help them, and I will comfort those who mourn. I offer peace to all, near and far!"* Isaiah 57:18 (GNB)

- First, if you have been hurt God says, "I want to heal you."
- If you're confused, "I want to lead you."
- If you've ever felt you were helpless to change anything, "I want to help you change"
- If you've ever felt no one understands your problem, "I want to comfort you."
- If you feel anxious and worried and afraid, "I want to offer peace to you."

What do I need to recover from?

Overworking	Overeating	Alcohol/Drugs
Overspending	Grief	Guilt/Anger/Rage
Fear/Anxiety	Divorce	Abuse
Sexual addictions	Codependency	Insecurity
Perfectionism relationships	Hypochondria	Hurtful
Gambling	Lying	Procrastination

The need to control

Twenty million Americans are in a recovery group every week and there are 500,000 different recovery groups.

The first step to R.E.C.O.V.E.R.Y.:

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Realize I'm NOT GOD: I admit I'm powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing, and my life is unmanageable.

Do you ever stay up late when you know you need sleep?  
Do you ever eat or drink more calories than your body needs?  
Do you ever feel you ought to exercise but you don't?  
Do you ever know the right thing to do, but you don't do it?  
Do you ever know something is wrong, but you do it anyway?  
Have you ever known you should be unselfish, but you're selfish instead?  
Have you ever tried to control somebody or something and found it was uncontrollable?

If your answer is "yes" to any of these questions, welcome to the human race! We're all in need of recovery.

*"I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I can't! I do what I don't want to – what I hate! I know perfectly well what I'm doing is wrong ... but I can't help myself! It is sin inside me that is stronger than I am that makes me do these evil things." Rom 7:15 (TLB)*

## **I. THE CAUSE OF MY PROBLEM: MY SIN NATURE**

*"There is a way that seems right to man, but it ends in death." Proverbs 14:12*

How we "play" God:

By denying our humanity and by trying to control everything for selfish reasons.

We try to control:

- Our image

We play games, we wear masks, we pretend, we fake it, we want people to see certain sides of us and we hide the other parts, and we deny our weaknesses and we deny our feelings.

- Other people

Parents try to control kids.

Kids try to control parents.

Wives try to control husbands.

People try to control other people.

Tools we use to manipulate people:

- guilt
- fear
- praise
- silent treatment

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- anger
- rage

- Our problems

"I don't need any help and I certainly don't need counseling."

- Our pain

## II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF PLAYING GOD

### 1. FEAR

*[Adam]"I was afraid because I was naked so I hid."* Gen. 3:10

### 2. FRUSTATION

*"It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong ... something else deep within me ... is at war with my mind and wins the fight and makes me slave to sin. ..."* Romans 7:21,23 (TLB)

*"My dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration."* Ps. 32:3 (TLB)

### 3. FATIGUE

*"My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them."* Ps. 32:4-5 (TLB)

### 4. FAILURE

*"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you."* Prov. 28:13 (GNB)

Testimony: Dr. Jim Burnett

How do you react to stories like that? Two ways not to react:

1. My problem is not that bad. This is called denial. The question to ask: How bad does it have to get before you admit you need some help?
2. That's fine, but I can solve my problems; this series on recovery is for somebody else. The fact is if you could handle it, you would have, but you can't, so you won't. If you could have handled that problem, it wouldn't be a problem, you wouldn't still have it today.

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## III. THE CURE: ADMIT THAT I'M POWERLESS

The Bible says that in admitting my weakness I find strength. 2 Cor. 12:9

Admitting that I'm not God means I know I am:

Powerless to change: my past

Powerless to control: other people

Powerless to cope: with my harmful habits, behaviors, actions

*"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."* James 4:6

GRACE IS: The power God gives me to make the changes in my life that I want to make and He wants me to make – the power to change.