

Why You're Addicted to Spending

"I need to buy a new pair of shoes," I whispered to my friend, Laura.

After several negative events in my life, the most recent had been the final straw. I was feeling discouraged, sad and angry. But I knew that shopping would make me feel better. Or at least I thought it would make me feel better.

The dangerous thing about shopping is that it can make you feel good, just as eating chocolate can cause a lift in your emotions. However, this is a temporary feeling. A compulsive shopper experiences this emotional lift over and over until they crave it. Eventually, shopping becomes addictive and causes problems in personal finances, which can lead to marriage problems and other relational breakdowns.

This is how shopping becomes compulsive, and before we know it, we cannot stop spending money even when we want to. Maybe you are compulsive in small ways. Maybe you have to shop at certain times, for specific items, or during crisis situations.

Coping with Compulsive Spending There are several ways to control your compulsive spending.

- Get rid of your credit cards and use cash only
- Keep track of all your spending and try to figure out why you spend when you do
- Avoid temptation
- Understand the real reasons behind why you shop

Why You Spend The problem with plans to cope with compulsive

spending is that it doesn't deal with root of the problem. Compulsive spending is an addiction. Like all addictions, they are so hard to break free from because they seem to have a life of their own.

Addictions help to dull pain, usually emotional pain. Whether it's drug abuse, pornography, or shopping, an addict finds temporary relief from pain by indulging in the addiction.

Jesus, the Bondage Breaker Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (see Matthew 28:16). His power can break bondages. Jesus is our bondage breaker. Jesus is the only one who can truly free us from the addiction of compulsive shopping. If you don't deal with the root of the problem, you will just replace this addiction with another addiction.

Freedom comes to those who trust in Christ and allow Him to bring deliverance from the addiction to compulsive shopping.

"For freedom Christ freed us. Stand fast therefore and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

Tell Yourself the Truth To begin to walk in freedom, start by telling yourself the truth. For Katie, she sat down and realized that she was believing the following lies:

- Shopping makes me feel better
- I can't stop this behavior
- There is no way out

But Katie decided that those things were not true. So instead, after spending some time in the Word of God, she began to realize that the following things were true:

- Shopping does not make me feel any better, it is just a distraction
- Jesus can help me overcome this behavior

- There is a better way to find comfort when I am discouraged, sad, or angry
- God can give me a way out whenever I am tempted to shop compulsively

Once this truth gets down into your spirit, you can stand on the truth and resist the lies of the enemy. Next time you are tempted to shop compulsively, stand firm in Christ and fight with the truth. Let Jesus comfort you, instead of stuffing your shopping cart full. Don't just control your compulsive spending, get to the root of the problem and experience freedom from Christ.

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