

Baggage Part 4: The Bag That Won't Let Go

(Hebrews 12:1 NLT) Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.

(Romans 7:15 NLT) "I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate."

- ✓ **It becomes a part of your identity.**
- ✓ **You feel increasingly hopeless.**
- ✓ **You become defensive.**
- ✓ **You become a slave.**
- ✓ **You begin to lose your life.**

(Romans 6:12-14 NLT) "Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God... Sin is no longer your master... Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace."

Breaking Free

(Genesis 4:7 NASB) If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.

1. Can the excuses.

(Luke 14:18-20 NIV) "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'"

(Philippians 4:13 NKJV) "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

2. Cut the ties.

(1 Corinthians 15:33-34 NIV) "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.' Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning..."

(James 4:7 NIV) "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

3. Fill the void.

(Ephesians 5:18 NIV) "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."

✓ God's Word.

(Hebrews 4:12 NLT) For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

✓ Prayer.

(Hebrews 4:15-16 NLT) "(Jesus) understands our weaknesses, for He faced all of the same temptations we do, yet He did not sin. So let us come boldly to our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and grace to help us when we need it."

✓ An accountability partner.

(Proverbs 28:13 NIV) "He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

(James 5:16 NIV) "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

✓ Ministry.

(Romans 12:21 NIV) "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."