**Codependence**

**Secular Definition**: a person with an excessive emotional or psychological reliance on a partner, typically one who requires support on account of an illness or addiction

Contemporary use of this term has broadened to include any kind of destructive interpersonal relationship where one individual is excessively dependent on another

Psychology’s Definition of

Hope

Change

**A Biblical Perspective**

We are created as dependent creatures (Acts 17:24-25)

We chose to be independent, codependent or God-dependent

**Judah: A Biblical example of codependence**

Isaiah 30:1-5

How does God name their sin?

How does it express itself behaviorally?

What heart attitude has produced this behavior?

**How do they add sin to sin?**

All sin is rooted in pride—I want what I want when I want it

In independence I believe I am best able to get what I want when I want it

In codependence I believe others are best able to give me what I want when I want it

God dependence requires submission and obedience which comes from humility—I want what God wants when He wants it

Verses 6-14

Turning to anyone other than God will cost you much and gain you nothing.

Anyone other than God is powerless to help you

The consequences of this choice will utterly destroy you

Verses. 15-18

What instruction does God give to bring about change? (v. 15)

Who is God in the midst of the rebellion of codependency? (v. 18)

Verses 19-22

How does God draw His people to repentance? (v. 20)

What are the proofs that their repentance is genuine? (vv. 20-22)

Verses 23-26

God will bless His repentant people

**What is idolatry?**

Ezekiel 14:1-8

**As part of self-confrontation, place a x** **next to the items / issues that you think might be current or potential ‘idols’ in your life**

Performance, especially for significant others: You try to please in order to get or to keep acceptance or approval.

Performance of self (perfectionism): You try to perform to standards that you have set. Becoming a Pharisee is a danger. When you meet the standard, you feel good; when you don’t, you feel bad.

Performance of others: You make a list of what others should do.

Good health: This shouldn’t be your goal, except to glorify God.

Love of money: You take a promotion just to get more money.

Success: What’s a good day to you? What made it a good day in your mind?

Fairness: Life has to be fair (Ps. 73)! “I’ve been trying to please God; others aren’t even trying, yet they prosper.” This can cause you to almost forsake the faith (Ps. 73:2).

Hurt-free/pain-free life: “I don’t want to deal with problems. There shouldn’t be any difficulties.

Christian marriage and home: “I want people to look at our marriage and think we have the best marriage in the world.”

Physical appearance.  
Being respected/admired.  
Being self-sufficient/independent.  
A material thing—for example, car, house, jewelry.  
Athletic abilities/achievements.  
Hobbies—sports, reading, whatever.  
An ideal—for example, pro-life movement, peace movement, political party. Success/position/power.  
Worldly pleasures—for example, drugs, alcohol, food, sex.  
Being in control.  
Meeting goals/achievements.  
A child or children.  
Getting married.  
Having your “needs” met.  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Now write the top five current or potential idols from your checklist onto this heart:

“Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.” Jonah 2:8 (NIV)

Source: https://graceky.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Identifying-Personal-Idols-1.pdf

**“Codependence” in Marriage**

If a husband is in sinful rebellion, a wife must not follow into sin by enabling it or helping him to hide it.

This would be what culture would identify as a codependent response.

By doing this, how is she adding sin to sin through rebellion of her own?

She finds her identity and security in him and in their relationship and is willing to overlook his sin for her own gain.

**The Role of the Church**

Physical or sexual abuse of any family member requires confrontation from the church, a safe haven for those being victimized and the involvement of legal authorities in the case of crimes.

Emotional or mental abuse of the wife requires a godly response of confrontation by the wife, by witnesses and the church if repentance is not forthcoming (Matt. 18:15-20.

I Peter 3:1-6 should direct her daily responses.

**A Biblical Understanding of Change**

Confess sin—I John 1:9

Repent—Isaiah 30:19-26

Commit to God-dependence—Psalm 62:5-8

**A Choice for “Codependent” Counselees:**

Jeremiah 17:5-8