

Addictions? Generational Curses? How to Break Free with Allen Parr & Bobby Conway

(August 14, 2026)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, we often talk about being free in Christ, but what does that really mean? Is that just free from condemnation? What about being free from maybe some addiction or some psychological issues we might have, because sanctification, the idea that we're becoming more and more like Christ, can be a mystery.

How does this actually happen? We know justification, becoming forgiven, can happen in a second, but sanctification is a lifelong process, and it appears that sometimes we're not very good at it. What are we doing wrong? What can we do better? Well, I've got two friends here who are experts in this.

They've lived it. They've written about it. They've studied it, and we're going to have a conversation about it. It's my friend Allen Parr and my equally good friend Bobby Conway. Both of these guys have their degrees from Dallas Theological Seminary and other places.

In fact, Allen, you've got a brand new book on this that really deals with some of these issues on how to break free. From some of the struggles that we have as Christians, what's the name of the book? Why'd you write it?

ALLEN:

Yeah, so the name of the book is first of all, I'm glad to be here with you and my seminary brother Bobby Conway, Dr. Bobby Conway. So glad to be here. But the name of the book is "Breaking Through How Ordinary Believers Experience Extraordinary Freedom," and one of the reasons why I wrote the book is because from my personal experience, I felt like I lived a majority of my Christian life forgiven but not free.



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I knew that I was forgiven. I knew that I was going to heaven. I had full assurance that I was a Christian, but my lifestyle and the things that I was dealing with, I wasn't free in Christ.

I felt bound. I felt chained. I felt like I was dealing with strongholds in my life, and as a result, all of those things really held me back from walking in the purpose that God had for me, from using my spiritual gifts, from being free in Christ to serve the Lord to my fullest capacity, and now at a different stage in life, not in a perfect place, but I feel like I'm free from many of the things that held me bound. I felt like I wanted to write a book to help people understand, first of all, how to identify these things in their lives, but also more importantly, how to break free so they can walk in freedom as well.

FRANK:

Now Bobby, you've kind of had the same road you've been down. Tell people here kind of your history. I mean, you were a pastor. You were, then you got out of the pastorate. Now you're back being a pastor. You're the one-minute apologist, but you've had struggles as well. Tell people about them.

BOBBY:

Yeah, lots of struggles. I mean, my entryway into Christianity was being a part of Celebrate Recovery at Saddleback Church with Rick Warren, which was where it originated.

And it was all about breaking free from addictions and strongholds. Because a lot of what happens in our Christian life is we experience forgiveness, we're justified, like you said, declared righteous, but then when it comes to, you know, working out this sanctification life, it's really challenging, and we don't know how that is to look in our life and what it's to, you know, be that we're to take on to be the kind of person that God has for us.

So I feel like for me, identity has been a huge thing. Really embracing the Christian identity in my life, understanding what that means, walking in transparency, authenticity, and you know avoiding the lies because there's so many lies that we tell ourselves, that we believe about ourselves, that create these insecurities and competition, and all these ways that we end up acting out to fill that hole in our life.

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And I think what Allen's writing about is so crucial because it can help set us free if we'll pay attention to the message within pages.

FRANK:

You call them soul chains in the book. What do you mean by that? And give us a couple of them.

ALLEN:

Yeah, so soul chain. I didn't want to use the simple cliché term strongholds. I wanted to think about a term that really captures the heart of what I was thinking. And soul chain, if we can visualize that, that's just a chain that's not a physical chain around our bodies, but it's something that's wrapped around our soul. And so, in the book, I talk about six different types of soul chains.

And within each type, there are all kinds of different ones. So, the categories would be there's mental soul chains, there are emotional soul chains, there are relational soul chains, things that we deal with in our relationships, there are sexual soul chains, psychological soul, or excuse me, spiritual soul chains, and then generational soul chains.

And so, with each one of those, there's all sorts of different ones. For instance, in the emotional soul chain category. I'm sure we could all rattle them off. There's shame, there's fear, there's anxiety, there's doubt, there's depression, there's low self-image. All of these things are just within one of those six categories.

FRANK:

Right.

ALLEN:

And when we walk in that, or let's just say unforgiveness, anger, bitterness, all of those things are emotional soul chains and many of us have just gotten comfortable living our lives with a limp, just living our lives with these things, trying to make the best of our life.

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As if this is a permanent fixture, and assuming that well, this is how I am, this is how I'm always going to be. I'm just going to have to kind of navigate and maneuver this thing. When I believe the Word of God truly says we can be free, and that's what this book is all about.

FRANK:

Well, let's pick an emotion, the secondary emotion, anger, for example. Yeah, I'm an impatient person, so I can get angry very quickly. Like you know, I stand in front of the microwave going, hurry up! Come on! Let's go! [Laughter] You know, I'm with you on that. Driving, you know, what's this person going the speed limit? What's going on here? You know, or below the speed limit. That's even worse.

ALLEN:

Yes.

FRANK:

So, because anger for me is when I really think about it, it's like somebody's interfering with what Frank wants to do.

ALLEN:

Yeah.

FRANK:

You know, and how dare they?

ALLEN:

Yeah.

FRANK:

How do we get beyond that? What's a with that kind of chain around us that you know, you're in my way. Get out of my way. How do we avoid that unrighteous anger? There's righteous anger, but unrighteous anger. What do we do?

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ALLEN:

You want to chime in?

BOBBY:

Well, I mean, honestly, I think one of the things, I'm the same way. Like, there's a restaurant called the House of Taipei. It's a Chinese restaurant, and my kids used to joke, "Dad's so type A that his favorite restaurant's the House of Taipei" right?

I mean, I find myself like if I'm in a restaurant and there's long lines and nobody will communicate with me, I'm getting antsy and when I get on a freeway, don't they realize that it's all about me that I've, you know, now entered the freeway? Please move over. So I get that feeling, but the way God works in us is if we need to become a patient person, then He's going to put us in situations like traffic jams.

FRANK:

Right.

BOBBY:

To reveal that. And so the fruit comes through resistance, and that's the problem with the hyper charismatic church.

They're always looking for the next sensational God experience, but it's grit, it's consistency, it's hard work, it's discipline, it's evaluation, it's looking into our heart, asking why are we this way? What do I feel? What's it like to experience me as a person when I act this way?

And then taking it before the Lord and repenting of it. Those are just some of the appli- appli- who knows how to say it? Applicable ways that I try to deal with it.

ALLEN:

Yeah, well, I'm glad you mentioned that because I talk about that in the book that oftentimes we have unfortunately approached this concept of freedom or deliverance as if it's a one-time thing or, hey, I've got to go to a church, I've got to go to get somebody to lay hands on me, and

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if I do, all my chains will be, you know, broken off, I'll be free, this addiction, you know, this spirit demon, demon spirit will be cast out.

BOBBY:

That's right.

ALLEN:

And once again, I think there's a place for some of that, but you know, I feel like for most of the rest of us, you know, who don't have that experience, it's a process, right? God gives us tools in the Word of God, like community, like accountability, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, you know, being self-aware and those types of things.

And it is a process, and we need to make sure that we understand that it's not something oftentimes that's going to happen right away. These are things that we need to work through over time.

BOBBY:

Yeah, one of the chains that Allen's been trying to deal with is, you know, he's confused for being Denzel Washington, and he's really trying to remove himself from that shadow.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's right.

ALLEN:

My man, my man. Somebody will get that. That's from...

BOBBY:

Good looking dude right here.

FRANK:

Well, it is it is, especially in America, we're an instant gratification society, right? But here's Jesus who has a sinless nature, still learning obedience through suffering.

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If he's going to learn obedience through suffering, and he doesn't have a sinful nature, what about us? We think that we're going to pray and God's just going to heal everything, and then we're going to go merrily on our way. But that's not the way life works. It's going to be discipline.

And Paul had a thorn in the flesh that I want to ask you guys after the break because we're coming up to a break here. Why didn't God just take away that thorn in the flesh? Why, why did Paul keep talking about how suffering can produce patience and patience perseverance and perseverance character and character hope?

It seems like we need difficulty in this life to become more like Jesus. I'm talking to my friends Allen Parr and Bobby Conway here on the American Family Radio Network. This is I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. I'm Frank Turek. We're going to talk about ways you can break through some of these soul chains that Allen is talking about that we all experience in our lives of trying to become more like Jesus because he wants to be, he wants us to be conformed to the image of his son, says Paul in Romans 8. We'll talk more about it right after the break. Don't go anywhere.

Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network and other stations around the country. Today I'm talking to Allen Parr and Bobby Conway. We're talking about this process we go through as Christians to become more like Jesus. Technically, it's called sanctification, and it can be messy.

It can be complicated, and it can be sometimes frustrating. We want to be more like Jesus, and sometimes our behavior doesn't change. And you know, why is that? And why do we get addicted? How does that happen? You know, I heard John Mark Comer say this, read it somewhere.

He said this: that addiction is slow suicide by pleasure. I thought that was a very wise insight. Paul had some sort of thorn in the flesh. We don't know if it was an addiction or not, but there was something that was holding him back.

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How do we deal with issues like addiction and the frustration we have that we're not becoming like Jesus as fast as we want to? Allen, let me start there.

ALLEN:

Well, you know, one of the things that I talk about is that I think sometimes we approach this concept of addiction maybe not in a complete way.

I think we're guilty of dealing with the symptoms and not the source is what I talk about. Or to put it another way, we deal with the fruit and not the root, right? So we can pick any addiction, whether it's gambling, whether it's pornography, whether it's overeating.

Sex, you know, outside of marriage, and oftentimes we can look at it and say, "Okay, well, man, I gotta stop having sex outside of marriage, or I gotta stop looking at pornography." And we're dealing with, you know, the symptoms. Okay, well, maybe the symptom is lust, or I want to see this woman, or I want to, you know, have the pleasure of having all this, you know, winning the money when I'm gambling, or whatever it is.

And you know, we can start to kind of deal with those things. But what we have to do is we have to go underneath the surface and figure out what is the root that is driving that decision? What is the source that is creating these symptoms? So, for instance, you know, if I'm watching pornography or something like that, you know, it's not just oh I like to see naked women.

It could be that I have a low self-image. It could be that I feel neglected. I feel rejected. I feel lonely. You know, so it may it may be that my wife isn't meeting my needs physically.

I could be angry at her, and so we're not communicating. Like I'm speaking... Look, I'm not saying... I don't do this. I'm saying...

FRANK:

You're making excuses.

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ALLEN:

I'm speaking for people. I you know. Yeah. But it once again, we have to get to the root reason behind why it is that I'm addicted to this, as opposed to always focusing in on the action and what's happening on the surface.

FRANK:

And to get to the bottom of that, how do we do that? I mean, what are we doing within the church community to figure out what that is?

ALLEN:

Yeah, and I think one of the big things for this is community accountability, mentorship, and discipleship. I think we have gotten so far away from that because one of the things I talk about is you can know that something is a soul chain when you're dealing with it in secret, and so many people are wrestling with so many of these things in secret, and they're not humble enough oftentimes to share with someone else that they are not just struggling with something.

It's not just a bad habit. It's not just you know something that they're dealing with. It's a full-fledged all-out addiction that if they don't deal with it, it could destroy their marriage. It could destroy their relationship with their wife, their husband. Their children, their ministry, right?

So we have to get to the point where we are willing to be completely transparent and vulnerable and fully own the things that we're doing. If we don't get to that point, then we really aren't going to experience the healing. So you say, "How do we do it?" If we make ourselves accountable to somebody, what we're doing is we are allowing that other person to be able to see patterns and notice things in our lives that we might have blind spots into.

Right? So you know, let's just say the issue would be gambling or something like that. If I make myself accountable, someone can ask me, "Hey, you know, why did you do this? Why, how much money did you spend? Or does your wife know about this? How do you feel about this? But oftentimes, if we're just dealing with it in a secret way, then we're not getting any better.

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FRANK:

Bobby, a lot of times we want the quick fix on this. What happens if we get the quick?

BOBBY:

Well, I think it's great if we get the quick fix because you know God intervened and helped an addict get free. Boom. So the good news is the person's not drinking, but the bad news is that doesn't necessarily mean that the root of the problem's been fixed.

And so a lot of times I think people look at God in their character defects, and they want that instant miracle, but that's like kind of going into a gym and just because you showed up at the gym, hoping to walk out looking like Arnold Schwarzenegger.

You don't get in shape unless you show up, unless you work out, unless you have a plan and there's a proper way to go about it, so you don't injure yourself. And so I think that what happens is, is sanctification is a gritty process. It's hard. It means a lot of getting under the hood, a lot of evaluation, and we miss out on maybe the real miracle, the bigger miracle than the quick fix.

And that's learning to have self-awareness of who we are. What caused me to have these soul chains? How did I get them? What led me to be this way? How was it to experience me when I'm living in this? And when we learn how to think about these defects that we have, and then we become informed about who we are, our shadow, our brokenness, and we can present it to God.

And then, when that freedom starts to come, not only do we have freedom, but we have grit and we also have greater wisdom into what it looks like to experience slow transformation because change is usually not microwaved, it's marinated.

ALLEN:

Let me give a couple of examples practically, right? So let's just say you're in debt. You have a lot of debt that you that you owe, or let's just say you are trying to lose weight, right? Now if you just like you said you walked in the gym or you went through some, somebody, you went to a conference somebody laid hands on you and 100 pounds came off, right?

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BOBBY:

Yeah [Laughter]

ALLEN:

We would love that.

BOBBY:

I don't think Benny Hinn's done that one.

ALLEN:

Oh yeah, you know what? I know. I'd love to see that.

BOBBY:

Right bro?

ALLEN:

You know but would we appreciate that and how quick would we possibly be willing to go back into the bad habits that got us in that place of debt or excess weight If we know, oh well, God's just gonna bail me out next time.

All I've got to do is just get somebody to lay hands on me. But when you go through the process of paying off debt the Lord's way, pay off 50, 60,000 dollars, you're gonna think twice about going into debt again the next time because you've worked through and you can appreciate the "deliverance" financially.

You can appreciate the weight loss. You can appreciate those things. And there's also lessons in the journey.

BOBBY:

That's right.

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ALLEN:

It's not just the destination of, oh, I want to lose weight, I want to get out of debt, or I want to get out of this addiction. You know, it's what did I learn? How is God shaping and molding me and shaping my character, making me look more like Christ in the journey? And it's not just about getting to the destination.

FRANK:

And too often, as parents, we want to bail our kids out when they get into difficulty, and if we do that enough, it actually makes their character worse. Because they figure, well, if I do this again, dad's just going to bail me out anyway.

ALLEN:

Yeah.

FRANK:

And if you analogize that to God, if God keeps doing that for us, we're never going to become more like Jesus. So the scriptures over and over talk about perseverance and how that leads to character and character leads to hope. That's Romans 5.

And of course, James says that count it all joy when you fall into various trials. Does anybody really do that? Do we really count it all joy when we fall into various trials? We're like, God, get us out of this, right?

ALLEN:

Yeah.

BOBBY:

So can you imagine Apostle Paul at a small group, and you're like, "Does anyone have a prayer request?" And Paul's like, "Yeah, you know, that I might know him and his sufferings and become like him in his death." We'd be thinking, "What's with this dude, right?"

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FRANK:

Right, right.

ALLEN:

What kind of request is that? Yeah, yeah.

BOBBY:

Yeah, I can't relate to Paul.

FRANK:

But Bobby, you say you came through Celebrate Recovery, went to AA and all this. You came out of difficulty. What did the process do for you? Rather than just a quick fix like God, He heals Bobby, Bobby's now out of it. You had to go through a process. What did that do for you?

BOBBY:

Well, like for example, the first time I got clean, I did over 400 meetings in my first year of sobriety. I'm walking through the steps. The fourth step is taking a fearless... It's a fearless moral inventory of our character defects.

I wrote out 20 pages of my defects of sins, and then I would confess that to another person. And then I started reaching out to people horizontally that I offended. So I was forgiven, justified vertically with God.

But I, in my defects, caused a lot of pain to people in my horizontal relationships. And so I would begin to go to people. I mean, I remember ripping off a guy's Ugg boots that he actually ripped off and then took him the shoes back and got the cash.

And I called him like 10 years later and said, "Hey, you know those Ugg boots that you thought you lost? I actually ripped those off from you and got the money back on that." I was repenting before my parents. That cleansing process and showing an awareness of how my life and my choices and my soul chains impacted those around me.

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It provided relational restoration. It provided what Allen was saying. I don't want to return back to it because it's so painful. And so I do think that Celebrate Recovery, what they're doing, can be applied to everybody because all of us are in recovery. It's not just the addict. All of us got these soul chains.

FRANK:

What are some other soul chains you deal with in the book, Allen? Breaking through.

ALLEN:

Yeah. One of the ones that we deal with is shame. You know, I mean, I deal with so many of them, but shame. There's a lot of Christians walking around in shame.

FRANK:

In what sense?

ALLEN:

Shame.

FRANK:

Because we ought to be, yeah, we have shame when we do commit a sin.

ALLEN:

Sure.

FRANK:

But we know we're forgiven by Jesus.

ALLEN:

Right.

FRANK:

Well, what sense do you mean shame then?

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ALLEN:

Shame is when we begin to attach our failures and our flaws or things that have happened to us that were out of our control that weren't a failure.

We begin to get our identity in those things and the biggest thing is, when we get to the place where we believe the lie, because all of these soul chains, as I talk about in the book, they're all created and formed on a deception, a lie, like you had mentioned earlier. The enemy's job is to get us to believe something that is counter to what God has said.

So shame, the main one is, I'll never be fully known and fully loved. It's I, if someone, if I really let someone in and let them see who I really am, all of my flaws, my failures, things that have happened to me as a child, there's no way I'll be fully known and fully loved.

And that's why in this book I share all these stories of people that I've interviewed on my YouTube channel, friends, people like Joshua Broom, people like Brittany DeLamora, who was in the porn industry for years and years, and now they're married and having children and leading ministries and things like that.

I share countless stories of these people because I want people to see, as they're reading their story, wow, if this person could be in the porn industry for seven years, like Joshua Broom, he came out completely broken and just feeling as though, man, there's no way someone's going to love me. But yet, he met a woman named Hope and he's married and now he has four kids and he's leading a ministry. And so, if God can break that chain from him, then He can do the same for you.

FRANK:

And ladies and gentlemen, when Jesus died for us, He took every sin upon himself, so Satan will tell you, "Oh, you've done such evil.

There's no way God can ever forgive you." He's already forgiven. The question is, what are you going to do with that now? And we'll talk more about it after the break. You're listening to "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio

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Network and other stations around the country. The book that Allen Parr just wrote is called "Breaking Through." He's my guest, along with the great Bobby Conway.

We're going to be back in just a couple of minutes, so don't go anywhere.

AD:

Could you answer this question? Why doesn't God let everyone into heaven? Or do all religions get you to heaven? Well, Frank Turek can, and now you can. Watch him tackle the toughest questions from his latest college tour appearance.

See real students challenge Frank and watch how truth stands up under pressure. Subscribe to our Cross Examined YouTube channel right now to watch. That's Cross Examined two words on YouTube and sharpen your faith for the real world.

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, on September 1st, the first college campus of the year will be Western Carolina University. That's up in the mountains of North Carolina, not far from Asheville. If you're anywhere in that area, we'd love to see you. Otherwise, it will be live streamed, Lord willing, by the great Clint Boland, our video guy who comes with me everywhere.

But I hope to see you if you're anywhere near North Carolina and Western Carolina. That's September 1st, the first event of the year. That was the event, by the way, we did one week after Charlie was murdered last year. We had that scheduled and we decided to go ahead with it because we knew Charlie would want us to continue.

But we're going back there. Western Carolina University, September 1st. Also want to mention the brand new book, The War on Reality, coming out on September 8th. If you pre-order it, it will help us get it into secular bookstores, which is what we'd really like to see happen.

And if you go to thewaronreality.com, you can actually get chapter 10 on Marxism right now, which is one of my favorite chapters. It will help you understand why there is a war on reality, and you can also be part of a live Q&A Zoom session that my co-author Phoenix Hayes and I will

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do that you can be a part of live Q&A Zoom session within the first couple of weeks of the book release.

Today we're talking to Allen Parr and Bobby Conway. We're talking about sanctification. How do we become more like Jesus and some of the struggles that we all have in trying to do that. We talk about being free in Christ. What does that really mean, Allen? To be free in Christ. What does that mean?

ALLEN:

Yeah, you know, and I'm glad we're talking about that because I think that that term is thrown around within Christianity. Oh, I need to be free in Christ, or I need to be I need to break free or I need to you know whatever the, break the stronghold.

But a lot of times, nobody really defines what it looks like because, you know, we can have this idea that freedom means perfection, that I'll never struggle, I'll never have a thought of low self-image, I'll never have a lustful thought again, I'll never desire to get have a drink or smoke weed or whatever it is that you're dealing with, and that is not the picture I believe of freedom.

I think what when I look at it, the Bible talks about specifically with regards to sin, Paul says that we are not a slave to sin anymore, right? That we are we are free. We're living in freedom. And one of the things it looks like is being able to live out your calling to your full capacity.

And I know for me, for many years, I didn't feel like I was free because I didn't get married. Many of you know I didn't get married till I was 40 years old. And for a long time, I was wrestling while my friend, hey, he and I are very similar in age, but we're in totally different stages of life. Your oldest is what?

BOBBY:

27 and 25.

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ALLEN:

27 and 25. My oldest is 8 and 9. And we're two years apart. Yeah, right. Yeah. So, while you know while he we were in seminary, I mean he was married and having kids and I was struggling along. And so you know I look at that.

And for so many years, I lived beneath my purpose. I was teaching Bible studies at smaller churches, leading worship, but never could quite really get a feel for what it is that God had for me. And it wasn't until honestly 2015 when I met my wife, got married, and I felt like I started to kind of get past some of the chains and some of the things I was dealing with from my childhood and whatnot.

To where you know some of the things I was dealing with, it just, they weren't part of my life anymore and so then the freedom that looked like that looked like for me was I was able to be in ministry without always feeling guilty, without always feeling ashamed, or weighed down by my sin and guilt because that's the way I felt for years whenever I was leading worship but yet I was you know engaged in an inappropriate relationship with a girl the night before, or two days before, right?

Or you know, I had some sexual addiction or something like that. And so here I'm trying to serve in ministry and do all these things, but yet, I was weighed down, heavy. And honestly, I feel like that's one of the main reasons why, even though everything in me wanted to have a big platform, wanted to have a million people on YouTube or whatever it is and or be a pastor of a church.

I felt like that was one of the main reasons why I was held back. I have this saying that oftentimes God has to, our character needs to catch up to our calling, right?

FRANK:

Yeah.

ALLEN:

And oftentimes we can have this calling. Like I knew that when we were in seminary in 2000, 2004, I knew my calling.

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I knew I was called to teach the word and to shepherd people, but my character was just so far beneath that, that I felt like God was like, okay. Here's your calling, but your character is so far down here, and you don't have to be perfect. But I got to catch your character to get up to your calling, so then you can be free.

So you're not preaching and leading worship and teaching with a guilt conscience all the time and weighed down with shame and despair. So I just think fear... Freedom is not perfection, but it is a sense of it's hard to explain, but it's a sense of I'm not weighed down by all these things anymore.

FRANK:

So how did you, how did you go break through that? To use the title of the book, how did you break through that idea that I need to have my character up to my gifting or my calling? How did you go about doing that?

ALLEN:

Well, one of the ways is accountability, community, and discipleship. Having men in my life that can look at my life and help me understand, first of all, what are the soul chains? Because before you can break something, you have to identify what it is. And for many, many years, I didn't realize what mine were. Mine went all the way back to childhood, oh very quickly, you know, I come from a family of a lot of divorces, right? So I'm, here I am going through these relationships for 15 years.

FRANK:

Thinking, I'm not going to get married. I don't want that to happen to me.

ALLEN:

And that's exactly what it was. I mean, three divorces on my dad's side, two on my mom's and two on my sister's, and that was all before I was 21 years old.

FRANK:

Wow.

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ALLEN:

You know, that's seven divorces in my immediate family.

FRANK:

Yeah.

ALLEN:

And so once again, dealing with the symptoms was, I was dating all these different girls, and you know in my mind I was like I'm just bad at relationships. I have a fear of commitment or whatever. I had to go deeper.

What is the source of this? What's the root of this? The root is that I have a fear of getting divorced. I have a fear that if I commit to a girl, that I'm going to end up like my family members, either divorced or unhappy. So I had to do that hard where I had to go to counseling, formal counseling, professional counseling.

And I also had to be exposed to other men that had good marriages that had, so that I could rewire my brain to actually realize, wait, marriage can be a good thing. Marriage isn't something I should run away from.

FRANK:

So were you were you thinking it was kind of generational?

ALLEN:

Absolutely.

FRANK:

Like it was kind of like a curse in your family, so to speak.

ALLEN:

Well, I knew theologically that it wasn't a curse. I mean, knew at that point it wasn't something that because this happened to my mom and dad, it will happen to me. Yeah, but I definitely felt

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it as a generational cycle, like okay man, you know, it's probably going to end up happening to me because of what I saw.

And every time I would date another girl, as soon as I saw one bad thing or something that I felt like was an issue, I would like find a way to get out of it. Because in my mind, if I ended up going through with it, then I would be miserable, and then misery leads to divorce, which leads to more misery.

FRANK:

Do you think that part of that could be psychologically that you're looking for perfection in a woman at that point, and if there's any faults, that's too big of a warning sign, like oh we could get divorced over this when you're never going to find anybody perfect.

ALLEN:

Right

FRANK:

Right? We're not perfect. How are we going to find a perfect spouse? We're not. And so the commitment, you couldn't... How did you get past that? I mean, you're married now. You're happily married. You got kids. How did you get past that?

ALLEN:

Being around, God graciously allowed me to be around lots of godly men and women, godly couples, that I didn't see growing up because not just my immediate family, but my whole family, aunts, uncles, cousins, everybody was divorced, multiple marriages all over the place.

But God allowed me to be immersed into a culture, churches, different people so my once again the deception I was talking about. The deception was marriage is misery and it leads to pain. God had to rewire that deception and that's just one example we have Christians all over the world who have the all kinds of deceptive thoughts that they've bought into that this must be true. That was one for me. One. I had many that I talk about in the book but how did I get through it?

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God showed me happy couples. God showed me how people work through relationships. God showed me couples that are very different, that maybe struggle with communication, that have different personality flaws. Because when I would date a girl and we had different personalities, I thought, well, this means we're not compatible.

But God had to show me through discipleship, through mentorship, through community, through church, that this is what a godly marriage looks like. And once I started seeing that, I started realizing that, oh, okay, well, maybe. I can have that for me, and once I started believing that, I met my wife, and 11 years later, it's been the best 11 years of my life.

FRANK:

I'm hearing that the future is more determined by your disciplines than anything else. Your habits, you know, you got into a habit of being around men who were godly, who could mentor you and bring you along. It was a deliberate process.

It's not a quick fix kind of thing. It's not just reading a book. It's actually changing your habits, rewiring your mind, renewing your mind, as Paul would say in Romans 12. Am I off base here, Bobby? What is the process you need to go through?

ALLEN:

And how did you experience freedom? Yeah.

BOBBY:

Well, I think I'm still working on that. Yeah.

FRANK:

We all, we all are, right? Yeah.

BOBBY:

I think one thing for me is to love virtue, and I think God's ways... One of the things that shifted so much in my teaching, in the last decade since the culture shift, is establishing the why behind things.

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Because it used to be that you just get up, hey, you know, wait until you're married. Well, why? Because in our culture today, people they're rejecting marriage, and I think part of the reason they're rejecting marriage is because they're so enslaved to the soul chain of their sexual desires that now they've lowered the moral standard and said, "Let's be polyamorous, let's not judge."

And the reason is not that they really think that marriage is wrong; they just don't think that they can be faithful to somebody because they've given themselves over to these soul ties that they have, and they're just bound up.

So when I'm teaching, I find myself saying, "Why would God ask us to wait until we're married? What if God wants us to not have regret, shame, consequences in our life, potential STDs, getting somebody pregnant?"

What if he wants us to know that loyalty, and faithfulness, and exercising self-control is a good thing? Because the values that so many people are championing today, they would never marry that person that has given themselves over to that kind of a life.

And so, I think we need to show people that virtue is beautiful, and we can help people to realize... Just think about it. If we would all follow God's biblical ethic on just sexuality, there never would have been an STD. There wouldn't be unwanted pregnancies.

There wouldn't be divorces over all of this stuff. Women would trust their husbands. There wouldn't be shame. Men would trust their wives. We wouldn't have guilt.

FRANK:

There wouldn't be sex trafficking.

BOBBY:

There wouldn't be sex trafficking. All of that, and so what we're doing instead is the desires...

ALLEN:

There wouldn't be pornography.

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BOBBY:

But the desire's so strong that we can't even relate to the truth and beauty of God's virtue. So we have to lower the standard to try to make it seem right.

FRANK:

We've got a lot more insights coming in our final segment with Allen Parr and Bobby Conway. Allen's book is called "Breaking Through." It'll help you understand what these soul chains are and how to get past them. So don't go anywhere. We'll be back right after the break. You're listening to "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" on the American Family Radio Network and other stations around the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, back in the 1940s, Billy Graham was in Modesto, California, with his ministry partners, and they realized there were three things that could sink them personally and/or their ministry: sex, money, and power.

The same three things that John talks about in 1 John 2 when he says, "Don't love the world, because all that's in the world is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life." So they came up with something called the Modesto Manifesto, which would keep them away from situations where they could get enslaved to sin or even just sin once and destroy themselves.

And maybe we could talk a little bit about that. Sex, money, and power. Those are the big three things that can derail us from our ministry and from our relationships, our families. One thing they did was they said they would never be in the presence of another woman who was not their wife alone.

They would always have somebody else there, and that even served Billy Graham very well. He would even have people go into his hotel rooms before he would go in. And at one point, one of his staff or security guys found a naked woman in his room, and somebody who was about to take pictures of it in the closet.

Can you imagine if he had gone in there alone? They would have sabotaged him, and so they would do that. They would also never handle the money, so they wouldn't have any trouble

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with money, and they wouldn't, in any way, feel compelled to inflate their importance, the power part of it.

If the police estimated the crowd was 10,000 at the crusade, they would report that. They wouldn't come up with their own numbers. So we try and live by the Modesto Manifesto. Do you think there's wisdom in that? And how do we stay out of situations that could cause us to fall into sin? Start with you, Allen.

ALLEN:

Absolutely, you know, I talk about that in the later part of the book where I talk about guarding your freedom, right? Because hey, okay, I'm free in Christ. But that doesn't mean that you can't ever relapse and go back, right? Because it's not like you get to a destination and you're like, okay, I'm here on you know...

So there's processes and things in place that you have to put so that you can guard this newfound freedom and promised freedom in Christ. And you know, so for me personally, I can say, you know, like for instance, for me, my wife has access to all of my social media accounts, right?

So if I'm chatting privately with a woman, she's gonna see that. She manages my Instagram. I've got a social media team on my you know, on my ministry that manages all of my accounts. My wife has my password to my phone to everything.

So making myself fully accountable, it's like okay no, I'm not going to be having something secret going on. So how do you do this? You gotta, you can't, you can't trust your own ability to be strong in a particular situation.

I'm not going to start engaging in private text messages and conversations with a woman and say, "Oh, I'm strong enough to handle this." No, you're probably not, because we've seen, I don't know if it's a rise or an influx, but we've seen so many pastors over the past even year or two, people that we respect very, very highly, and it seems like they're just dropping like flies, and it's all around this area of sexual integrity and things of that nature.

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So, I definitely think there's wisdom in you know making sure that you're not putting yourself in those type of situations.

FRANK:

Seventy plus years of ministry or more of the BGEA ministry, they've never had a real scandal. And I think part of that is their habits. They make sure they put themselves, they make sure they don't put themselves in situations where they could be compromised.

BOBBY:

Yeah, and that's what habits produce is virtue in our life, and virtue is beautiful. You know God says, "Be holy as I am holy." In Hebrews chapter 1, God the Father says of Jesus, "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond all of your companions." So in other words, Jesus was the happiest person to ever live, and the next verse says the why behind it. Because you loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.

Jesus would have had more joy than anybody because he didn't have regret, shame, guilt, and the consequences of transgression. He loved virtue and he had habits. Early in the morning, Mark 1:35 says, "While it was still dark, Jesus went off to a solitary place where he prayed." And so, I do think that we need formative structures in our life, boundaries in our life, and that's so much of what God's doing.

The Bible's just filled with warnings. Like sometimes people read the prophets and they think, man, these prophets are just horrible. I mean, they're harsh. But I had a seminary professor, Dr. Ronald Allen, who said, "Those are actually messengers of God's mercy."

God's constantly warning, Cain, be careful. Sin is crouching at the door." And so God, when we think about these soul ties and everything, what the Bible has to say about our emotional well-being, God really cares about us having a good emotional life, and He knows that these soul chains will rob us of that peace and create anxiety and paranoia and cover-up and doubt and denial.

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Think about what God says about our emotional life. Be angry and do not sin. Do not worry about tomorrow. Be anxious for nothing. You know the Bible, fear not. So God's saying, don't be fearful. Don't walk in anxiety. Don't live in worry.

So that's the kind of emotional stability that He wants us to have. But it comes when we love virtue, and virtue comes through habituation.

ALLEN:

One thing that you mentioned is establishing those rhythms and those patterns in our lives, and I think that that is huge. When I think back on the times in my life where I was bound, really bound.

It's embarrassing to say this now, but I would get up and I would preach on Sunday morning and teach a Bible study on Wednesday, and then my Bible would sit on my shelf for five days until I knew I had to preach again, and then I'd kind of clean myself up. I kind of clean myself up, you know, two days before I had to preach, get my sermon ready, you know, and then get up.

But like now, there's such a big difference. I get up every morning for the most part, spend time with the Lord. I go walk around my neighborhood for an hour and listening to worship music. I'm praying. I spend time fasting every so often. So, getting those rhythms in place when you have those type of spiritual rhythms in your life, meeting with other men, you know praying with my wife, those types of things, it's a whole lot harder for some of those negative things to kind of come into our lives and take root when we have so many positive spiritual rhythms that are set up.

FRANK:

So much of what we think about sanctification is often don't do this, don't do that. It's no, no, no, no, no, no. But isn't it better to concentrate on who Jesus is and what He's done for us?

Because He says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." And there's other passages on this. How do we create a life of, for lack of a better term, awe of Jesus, awe of God? To say, not only do I love God, I love Jesus, I love the Holy Trinity, but because of that, I want to follow. I want to follow. How do we cultivate that?

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ALLEN:

The verse that comes to mind is Romans 12:1. In view of the mercies of God, present yourself and present your bodies as a living sacrifice. I love that. Paul is saying, in view of all the 11 chapters that I just told you about the salvation that I achieved for you. You know, what Jesus did on the cross and all these things. In view of that, then your natural response, what he says, what your reasonable act of worship is to present yourself.

So yes, when we, we can give all the steps and strategies and AA, you know, tips and all that stuff, but at the end of the day, it really comes down to, do I really love Jesus, and do I appreciate all that He's done for me in forgiveness?

And do I want to keep taking advantage of that? Do I want to keep just presuming upon His grace and say, "Oh, He'll forgive me," which is what I did for years, right? Or do I want to get to a place where I say, "Lord, thank you so much for what you've done, and I don't want you to be displeased with me because I'm just assuming that you'll forgive me every time. Which you will, but... And then you have to deal with the consequences of that too.

BOBBY:

Yeah, you know, I've I taught a class once called "Jesus and the Moral Philosophers" at Bible College, and my leading question after I would teach each of the different moral philosophers, as I said for a thought experiment, imagine what 7 billion people in the world would look like.

That's how many people were living in the world at the time. If we all had to live Machiavellian's worldview, or if all 7 billion people had to live Nietzsche's Worldview, and or Buddha's worldview. What kind of a world would that produce? And then I said, after talking about Jesus, what kind of a world would it create if we all lived for Jesus?

It would look a lot like heaven on earth, because Jesus gives us the ingredients like for relationship. How many times in my own marriage do I remember the gospel and the glad gratitude that's comes into my own life?

When I consider that he died for her and he died for me, and therefore I can love her unconditionally, or I can forgive, like this is a worldview that offers us relational freedom with

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people when we really meditate on it. And the Bible says God's kindness leads us to repentance.

Jesus said in John 14, "If you love me, you will obey my commandments." There's people that will obey his commandments and they don't love him, and there's other people that say they love him, but they don't obey his commandments. So it's, relationship should lead into rule keeping. If you just do rule keeping for rule keeping's sake, you'll hate God.

But if you just say it's relationship without rules, you'll go into license, and you'll lower the moral standard. So we love who He truly is, and then we follow Him out of gratitude.

FRANK:

Yeah, the rules are for our benefit, not for His, right?

BOBBY:

Yeah.

FRANK:

I mean, He doesn't get any benefit out of us obeying rules. It's us.

BOBBY:

Right.

FRANK:

We get the benefit. He's protecting us in this dangerous world. Tell us about the websites where people can learn more. Allen, the book's called Breaking Through. They can get that anywhere.

ALLEN:

Anywhere books are sold.

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FRANK:

Allen Parr. But what about your great great YouTube channel? Tell people about that, your website.

ALLEN:

Yep. Easiest way to find me is allenparr.com. They can find a little bit more about me, book me to speak or whatever it is that they're interested in, but probably the best way is just go to my YouTube channel which is The BEAT, which stands for Biblical Encouragement and Truth And they can peruse around a thousand videos or so where we deal with all kinds of topics. And so yeah, that's probably the easiest way they can.

FRANK:

A L L E N P A R R. Bobby?

BOBBY:

Yeah, and I'm really excited because I've been kind of wandering for a while with my channel here. It was one minute apologist, Christianity Still Makes Sense, but now my son took a lot of time to really learn video editing and he's an apologist too, and so we're doing father-son apologetics.

And Dawson has been putting out a video a day on Christianity Still Makes Sense. It's on Instagram, it's on Facebook, and it's on YouTube. It's father-son Apologetics with daily videos that are coming out.

FRANK:

Beautiful. Check it out, friends. Check out Allen Parr and Bobby Conway and Dawson Conway. And also, don't forget about the book The War on Reality. Please pre-order it. Go to thewaronreality.com and Lord willing, we will see you here next week. God bless.

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