

CRASH SITE ANALYSIS

In the United States, when an airplane crashes, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators launch a crash site analysis. They study the wreckage, review the black box, trace the timeline, and ask: *What went wrong? What led to this happening? How can it be prevented next time?*

We need the same mindset when it comes to sin.

Instead of ignoring our failures or just feeling guilty, we can pause and do a “crash site analysis” of our own. *What led to it? What triggered it? What was I feeling? Where was I? Who was I with?*

NTSB investigations are thorough, systematic, and always aimed at learning from failure—not punishing it.

Sin is the same way, this isn’t about shame—it’s about wisdom. The goal is to backtrack to learn from the last fall so we can avoid the cues that led to it and walk in freedom next time. What you’ll find is that your path to sin tends to repeat itself, making it predictable and possible to avoid.

CUES

Here are some common cues that lead to habitual actions—sinful or not:

Time of day (e.g., late at night, weekends, mornings)

Day of the week (e.g., Friday night, Sunday morning)

Location (e.g., kitchen, bedroom, car, gym, bar)

People or relational dynamics (e.g., being alone, certain friends, coworkers)

Objects (e.g., phone, computer, alcohol, credit card, TV)

Feelings (e.g., stress, boredom, loneliness, anger)

Sights (e.g., images, icons, visual reminders)

Smells (e.g., perfume, food, tobacco)

CRASH SITE ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Think about the sin you want freedom from and walk back your cues—identify as many as possible. Do this if you relapse so you can keep learning and adjust.

What time of day was it?

What day of the week?

Where were you?

Who were you with?

What were you doing before it happened?

What were you feeling?

What objects or sights were near you?

Was there a triggering sound or smell?