



Being Transformed

BOOK 3

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Christ Is Life Ministries

Being Transformed

Book Three of The Curriculum:

Living A Transformed Life In Christ

Bill Loveless

Christ Is Life Ministries

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The Layout of This Study

I want to thank you for choosing this study. I believe that this is a crucial study for every Christian to understand. God has been using the truths of this study to radically change my life. Therefore, my desire is for you to not only learn these truths but to also apply them personally to your life. I would first like to share with you how this study is laid out.

There are six lessons, and each lesson has five daily readings. This will allow you to break down the material into five separate parts each week. Throughout each lesson will be exercises, questions, and scriptures for you to meditate upon in an “Engaging God” section.

Engaging God

The “Engaging God” section is designed for you to seek out the Holy Spirit for personal revelation and understanding of what you have just read. This is especially crucial when you come to truths that contradict what you believe. If we don’t seek God to reveal the truth, then we will never move beyond the false beliefs that we may be believing.

The Word “Meditation”

Some people struggle with the word “meditation” because of the New Age connotations. However, it is a biblical word that we do not need to shy away from. The key is what and Who that we are meditating on. The focus of our meditation will be on God and His truth. If you really have a struggle with the word “meditate,” then use the word “think” instead.

The Word “Revelation”

I will be using the word “revelation” several times throughout the study. This is a key word that simply means that God supernaturally takes His truth and makes it personal to you and to your life situations. Revelation is God’s way of giving you understanding of what you are reading. Revelation takes you beyond cognitive understanding in that it gives you spiritual understanding of God’s truth.

What Do You Believe?

Remember this key truth as you go through this study:

You will not live beyond what you believe.

This is key because if you have false or lying beliefs about living the Christian life, then you will be making choices from those false beliefs. What you believe affects what you think, how you feel, and the choices that you make. Therefore, one of God’s objectives is to expose your lying beliefs about God, yourself, and the Christian life. He then wants to move you from believing the lies to believing the truth. Therefore, I would encourage you throughout the study to ask God to expose any lying beliefs that you may have and to ask Him to renew your mind to His truth. (Romans 12:2)

Lesson One

What Is Sanctification?

The Renewing of Your Mind

DAY ONE

***“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but
BE TRANSFORMED...” Romans 12:2b***

Why This Study?

Before we get started, I want to share with you why I believe that this study is the next step in learning to live in Christ. Before I do let’s review for a moment what we have learned in the first two studies. We laid a foundation in Book One on what it looks like for Christ to be our Source and what it looks like to live FROM Christ.

In Book Two, we learned about our new identity in Christ. (I hope that you are continuing to allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind to the truth of your true identity.) Remember in this study, we discovered the difference between the soul and the human spirit. I trust the Lord gave you revelation of why it is essential to understand the difference between the condition of the human spirit (perfect, complete, etc.) versus the condition of the soul.

Therefore, I believe this study is the next step in our journey because it digs deeper into the condition of our soul and how and why God will transform it. Because we are living constantly with our thoughts, emotions and choices, it is crucial to learn more about how we allow Christ to transform all of three of these areas.

Therefore, to give you a road map of where we are going, we will be discussing the following topics:

- **The meaning of sanctification – God’s transformation process of the soul.**
- **Your thought life and God’s process of building a “truth” filter.**
- **The truth about the battle of the mind and how to fight the battle.**
- **Satanic/demonic influence on the soul and spiritual warfare**
- **Healing of our damaged emotions and woundedness.**
- **The transformation of our will and brokenness.**
- **Expectations concerning sanctification.**

I trust that the Lord will use the truths in this study to experience deeper transformation in your life. Let’s start by understanding the theological term “sanctification.”

What Is Sanctification?

I think a good place to start is understanding the word “sanctification.” One of the Biblical terms for God’s process of transformation is called **sanctification**. Paul refers to “sanctification” in the verses below.

*“But now that you have been freed from sin ... the benefit you reap is **sanctification** ...”*
Romans 6:22

*“He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and **sanctification** and redemption” 1 Corinthians 1:30*

What is the definition of sanctification?

SANCTIFICATION

means “to PURIFY internally by the renewing of the SOUL.”

The two key words in this definition are “purify” and “soul.” Through sanctification God wants to purify or transform our souls so that our mind, will and emotions, line up with the truth. We see that David in the Old Testament talks about the need for the restoration or transformation of the soul when he says in Psalm 23:3:

*“He **restores** my soul...”*

Why is it important to have our souls restored? So that our thoughts, emotions, and choices will line up with Christ’s. Remember that being “conformed to the image of Christ” in Romans 8:29 means that we are being transformed to think, believe, choose and behave like Christ.

Sanctification of the soul results in being conformed to Christ with the result that we will think, feel, and choose LIKE Christ.

Meditate: on this question. What is the result if you don’t allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify your soul?

Question: Why is it only the soul that needs to be sanctified?

Engaging God: Ask God to give you a greater willingness for Him purify, restore, and sanctify your soul.

I want to start our study by revisiting the condition of our soul versus our human spirit at salvation.

The Condition Of The Soul Versus The Human Spirit

We know from our previous study that we have a new human spirit that is perfect and complete and in union with God. Our human spirit was totally transformed at salvation. What about our soul? The truth is that God did nothing at salvation to transform our soul. Therefore, the part of us that needs to be transformed is our soul. Why?

The soul needs to be transformed because:

- The **MIND** is filled with false beliefs.
- There are negative and damaged **EMOTIONS** tied to our false beliefs.
- Our **WILL** is for the most part unwilling to live from God's will and it desires to live independently of God.
- There is **WOUNDEDNESS** in our soul as a result of past abuse, rejection, trauma, etc.
- We have **STRONGHOLDS** (defeating sin patterns) that we need to be set free from.

Let's look at the difference between the condition of the soul versus the human spirit at the point of salvation in the following diagram.



What God Promises Through The Sanctification Process

What is it that God wants to accomplish in your soul through sanctification?

MIND – God wants to renew your mind to His truth in order to set you free from your false beliefs. Romans 12:2; John 8:32

EMOTIONS – God wants to heal the negative/damaged emotions associated with your false beliefs so that your emotions will line up with the truth. Psalm 147:3

WILL – God wants to move your will from being unwilling to becoming more willing to depend upon Him, trust in Him, to obey Him, to submit to Him, and to surrender to Him. Mark 14:36; Philippians 2:13

WOUNDEDNESS – God wants to heal you of your past or present woundedness. Psalm 147:3

STRONGHOLDS – God wants to free you from your ongoing defeating sin patterns. Galatians 5:1

The following diagram illustrates the results of sanctification.



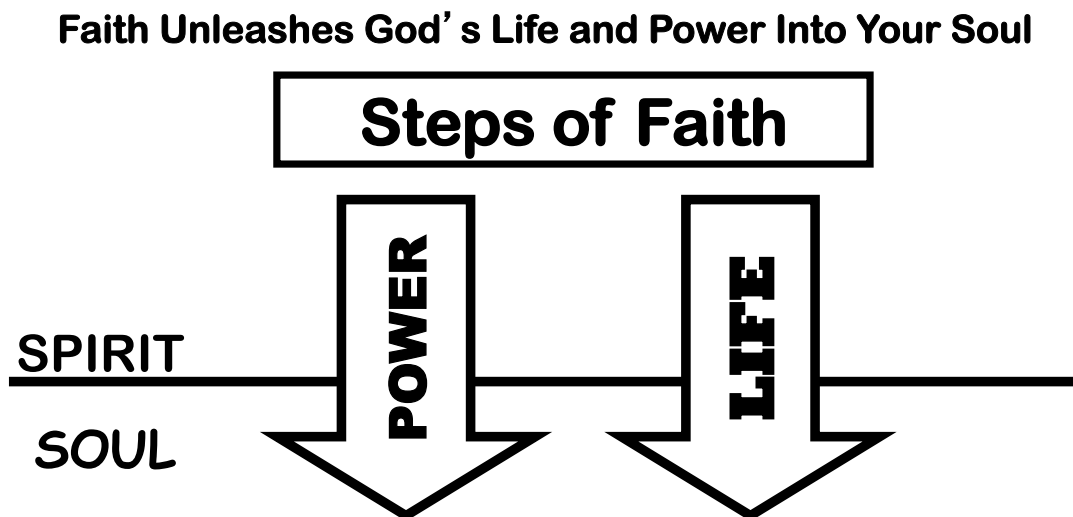
Questions: What specific truths do you want God to renew your mind to? Are there any damaged emotions from your past that need to be healed? If so, what are they? What are some of the areas of your life where you are unwilling to submit or surrender to God? What are some of your defeating sin patterns that you would like to experience victory over?

Engaging God: Begin taking steps of faith by asking the Lord to transform your soul in the areas listed above.

DAY TWO

“The Line” and Sanctification

Let’s use “The Line” analogy to help illustrate God’s process of sanctification. We know as we take steps of faith that God unleashes His LIFE and POWER into our soul to transform it. Look at the following “Line” illustration which depicts this process:



Mind - Renew the mind to believe the truth.

Emotions - Heal your damaged emotions.

Will – Move your will to be dependent and willing.

Strongholds – Free you from defeating sin patterns.

Woundedness – Heal you of past/present woundedness.

Let’s start by looking deeper into the truths associated with the renewing of our minds.

The Renewing Of Your Mind

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2*

As we learned from the identity study, the key to transformation starts in your mind. We saw that God wants to renew our minds to the truth so that we will no longer believe or live from our false beliefs. We will explore that more in depth, but I would first like to look at the difference between your brain and your mind.

Your Brain Versus Your Mind

Your Brain – “The Hard Drive”

Your brain is like the hard drive of your computer. It stores data, events, images, etc. You have heard the expression “forgive and forget.” The truth is that you can forgive but you may never forget because all the information, events, etc. are permanently stored in your brain. We will talk more about this further in future lessons.

Your Mind – “The Evaluator”

Your mind on the other hand **evaluates** and **makes conclusions** about events in your brain and then **forms beliefs** around those conclusions.

For example, if there was a single or multiple events of abuse, your brain recorded all of them. However, it is your mind that evaluates, draws conclusions, and then forms beliefs about those events. There was a lady who was sexually abused multiple times by her father. She recalled from her brain those events as clearly as they had just happened. Her evaluation and conclusion of those events led her to the false belief that she was “dirty and unworthy.”

***Remember that a FALSE belief is ANY belief that does NOT
line up with God’s truth.***

What are some categories of false beliefs:

- **False beliefs about living the Christian life.**
- **False beliefs about God.**
- **False beliefs about your identity.**
- **False beliefs about marriage.**

Question: Look on page 23 to see some examples of the false beliefs that are listed above. As you look at the list of the false beliefs, do any of those apply to you? If so, write them down below.

How False Beliefs Are Formed



All false beliefs begin with one thought. If you take ownership of that thought and continue taking ownership of similar thoughts then you will eventually come to conclusions, which will, as they are being reinforced, eventually lead to false beliefs.

Building false beliefs is much like building a brick wall. Each brick laid represents a thought that is being laid on top of another

thought until a false belief is formed. Let's look at an example of how false beliefs are formed. Let's assume that I am having thoughts of rejection.

If I **TAKE OWNERSHIP** of the thought that says: **"I AM rejected."**

And if I **CONTINUE** to take ownership of those thoughts that: **"I AM rejected."**

Then I will **CONCLUDE** that: **"I AM rejected."**

With the result that I will come to **BELIEVE** that: **"I AM rejected."**

Once a belief is formed, every time that thought comes into your mind it reinforces your beliefs. If these lying beliefs are reinforced long enough, they become strongholds. I simply define a stronghold as:

STRONGHOLD

A reinforced false belief that becomes entrenched in our minds.

We will talk further about strongholds in a future lesson. The key point to remember is that false beliefs are being formed and reinforced as you continue to take ownership of the thoughts that line up with your false beliefs.

DAY THREE

Remember That You Will Not Live Beyond What Your Believe

You have heard me say many times that "You will not live beyond what you believe." This is crucial to remember for the following reason:

If what you believe is a lie, then

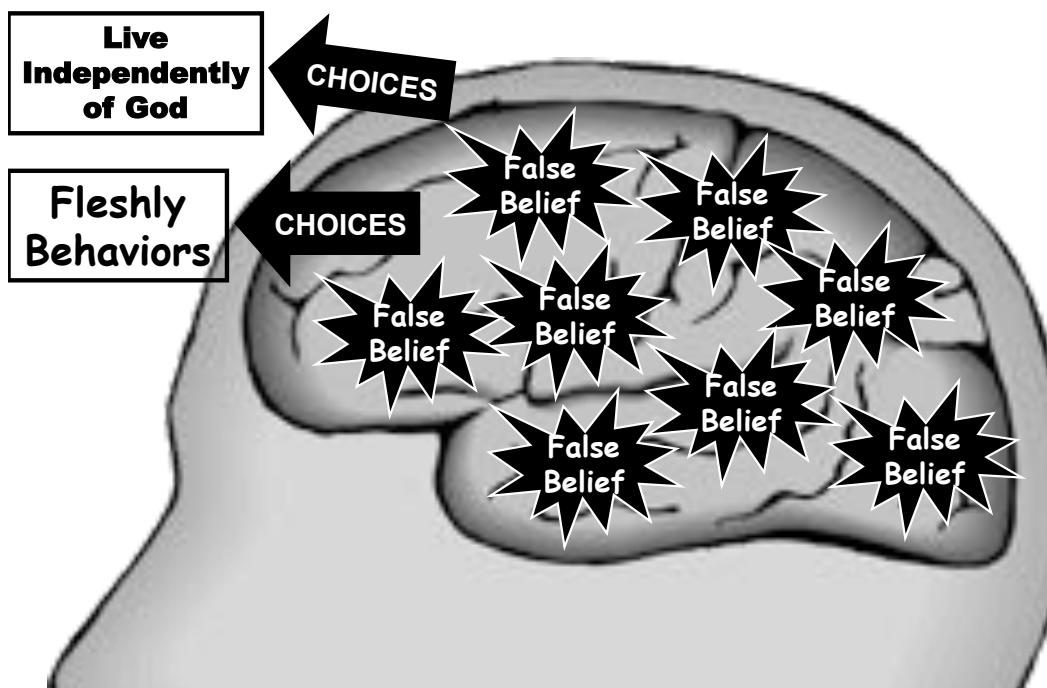
you will be making CHOICES to live from your false beliefs.

The choices that we tend to make from our false beliefs are choices that result in:

- **Trying to make life work independently of God.**
- **Fleshly behaviors.**

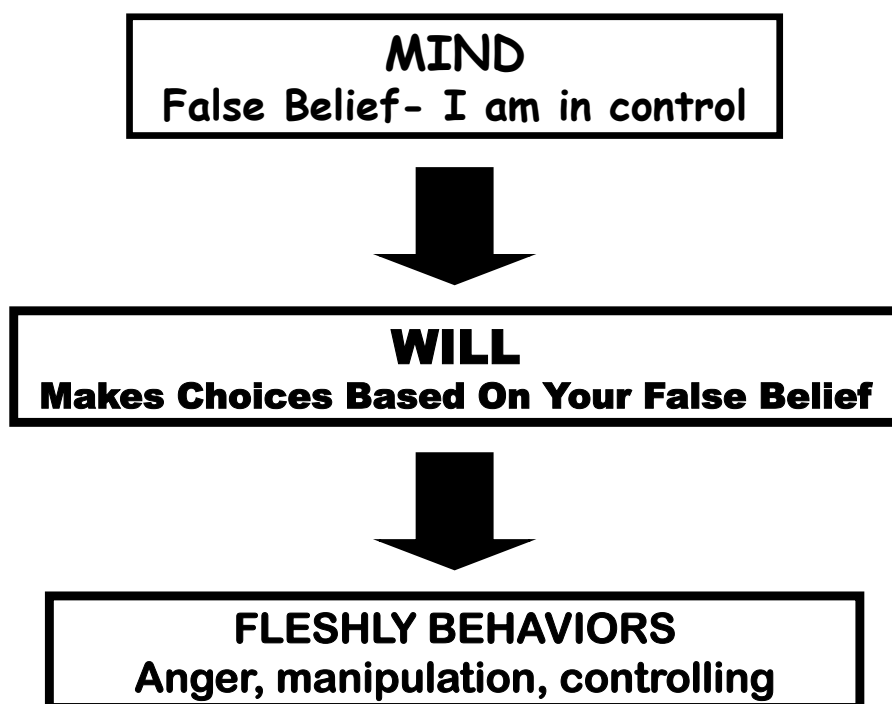
The diagram on the following page illustrates this. (I am using the brain in the diagram as an illustration of the mind even though we now know they are different from one another.)

Choices Are Made From Your False Beliefs



Choices And Fleshly Behaviors

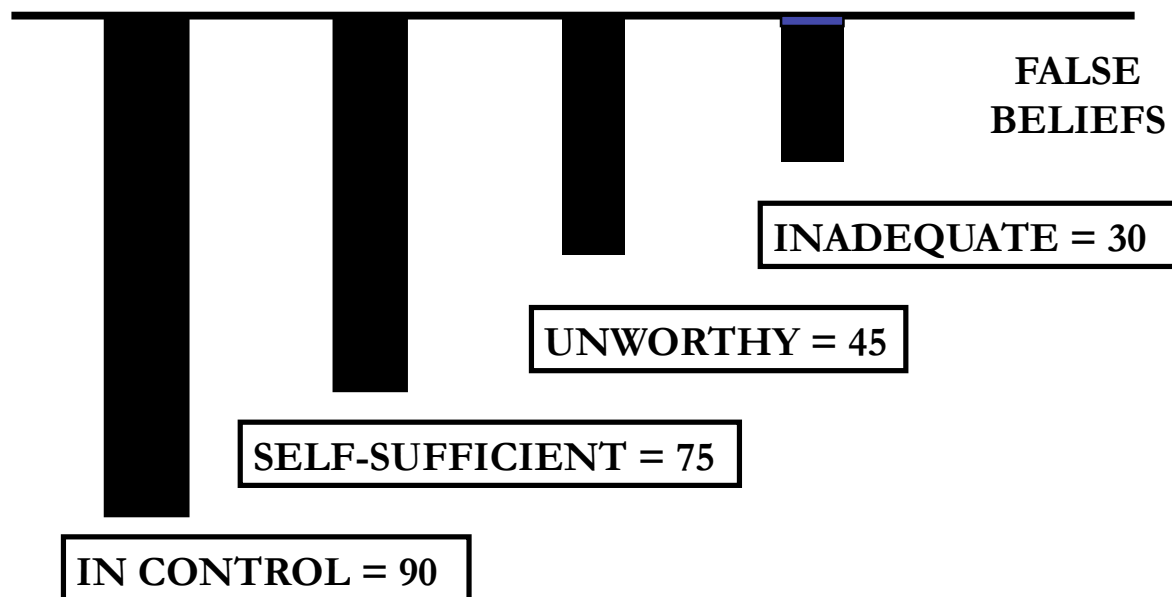
Let's assume you have the false belief that you are in control. (I believe consciously or unconsciously we all struggle with this one.) Your will makes choices based on your false belief which leads to fleshly behaviors such as anger, manipulation or controlling. The diagram below illustrates this point.



False Beliefs Have Varying Strengths

Another key point in understanding false beliefs is that they have varying degrees of a grip on your mind. Let me use the following diagram to illustrate the point. In the diagram below, let's use some examples of false beliefs we have about ourselves. This person's strongest false belief is that he is in control, which is 90 on a scale of 1-100. Inadequacy is the weakest false belief at 30. We will see shortly why this is important to understand. Suffice for now it is important to understand that some of your false beliefs have a greater grip on your mind than others.

False Beliefs Have Different Degrees Of Strength



Question: Why do you think that it is important to understand that some of your lying beliefs are stronger than others?

Engaging God: Seek God to reveal to you which of your lying beliefs have a stronger hold on you.

How will these fleshly behaviors ever change?

***Fleshly behaviors will ONLY change if you depend on
the Spirit to renew your mind to the truth.***

So Why Does God Need To Renew Your Mind?

Whatever false beliefs you are believing this moment are resulting in fleshly behaviors that will not only negatively impact you but those around you. Therefore, God wants to renew your mind so that:

1. **You won't continue to living in BONDAGE to your false beliefs.**
2. **You won't CONTINUE LIVING from your fleshly behaviors.**
3. **He can REPLACE the false beliefs with the truth and set you free.**

Let's take look at God's process of renewing your mind.

God's Process of Renewing Your Mind?

Remember that I am not giving you steps to have your mind renewed. Rather, I am giving you truths that will lead to a renewed mind. Here are four key truths we will discuss for the rest of this lesson.

- **LEARN and seek REVELATION of God's truth.**
- **Begin THINKING and REMINDING yourself of the truth.**
- **Take steps of faith ENGAGING the Holy Spirit to RENEW your mind to the truth.**
- **By faith THANK and PRAISE God that He is in the process of renewing your mind.**

a. LEARN and seek REVELATION of God's truth.

"God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."
1 Timothy 2:3b, 4



We must first know the truth in order to have our minds renewed to the truth. Remember that cognitive knowledge will not lead to the renewing of your mind. It is crucial to seek the Holy Spirit to give you revelation of the truths that you are learning. This revelation will lead to the renewing of your mind.

Let's apply this by referring to our example of the false belief that you are in control. What is the truth: There is only One who is in control and that is Christ Himself.

We see that truth in Philippians 3:20, 21:

"...the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body."

If Christ is the only One who is in control, then who is not in control? Even though you now know from scripture that Christ is the only One in control, it is crucial to seek the Holy Spirit to give you revelation of this truth.

Engaging God: Take one of your false beliefs and ask yourself this question: "What is the biblical truth concerning this false belief?"

DAY FOUR

b. Begin THINKING and REMINDING yourself of the truth.

*“For the **word of God** is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and **able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**” Hebrews 4:12*

I have used the word “intentional” many times in the previous studies. It is crucial that early on in the process of having your mind renewed that you **intentionally** think about specific verses that apply to your false beliefs.

Applying this truth to our example might look like this: “Lord, Your Word, *“the Lord Jesus Christ, brings everything under His control”* I am asking You to continually remind me of this truth.”

c. Take steps of faith to ENGAGE the Holy Spirit to RENEW your mind to the truth.

Begin taking steps of faith engaging the Holy Spirit to renew your mind to the truth. Practically speaking it might look like this:

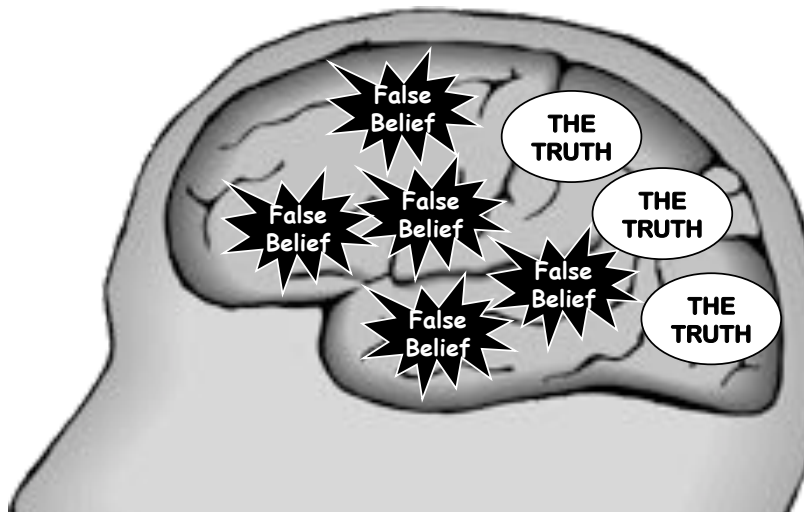
“Lord, I am asking (trusting) You to renew my mind to the truth that You are the only One in control. Replace my false belief that I am in control with Your truth.”

As you begin to seek the Spirit to renew your mind:

1. God will begin to REPLACE your false beliefs with the TRUTH as illustrated below.

As you begin thinking the truth and are seeking the Spirit to renew your mind, He will begin replacing your false beliefs with the truth as illustrated below.

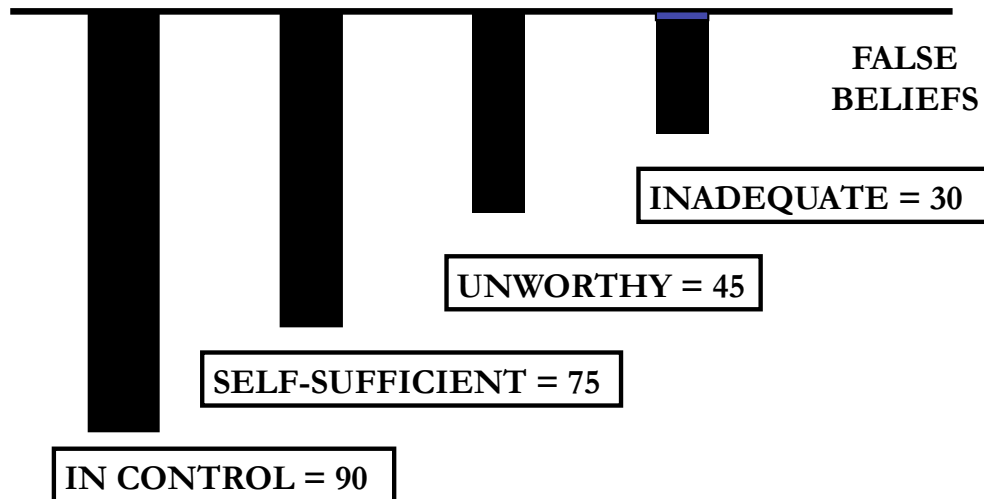
The Spirit Begins Replacing False Beliefs With The Truth



2. As the Spirit renews your mind to the truth, your false beliefs will have LESS and LESS a grip on your mind.

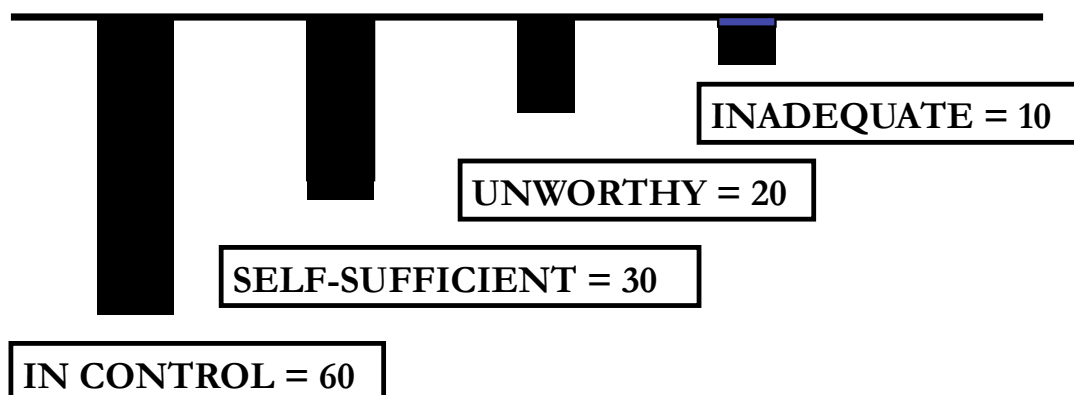
As the Lord is in process of replacing your false beliefs with the truth, the false belief decreases in strength and influence in your thinking and choices. Let's use the same illustration that we used for the varying strengths of lying beliefs above. In this diagram, trying to be in control has a strength of 90, self-sufficiency is a 75, unworthiness is a 45, and inadequacy is a 30.

False Beliefs Have Different Degrees Of Strength



As you seek God to renew your mind and to set you free from your false beliefs of anger, self-sufficiency, worry, and inadequacy, you will see that as you continue to walk by faith the “grip” of these false beliefs on you will decrease. The next diagram illustrates this as anger has gone from a strength of 90 to a strength of 70, self-sufficiency from a 75 to a 50, and so on.

As God Replaces Your False Beliefs With The Truth Your False Beliefs Will Lose Their Grip

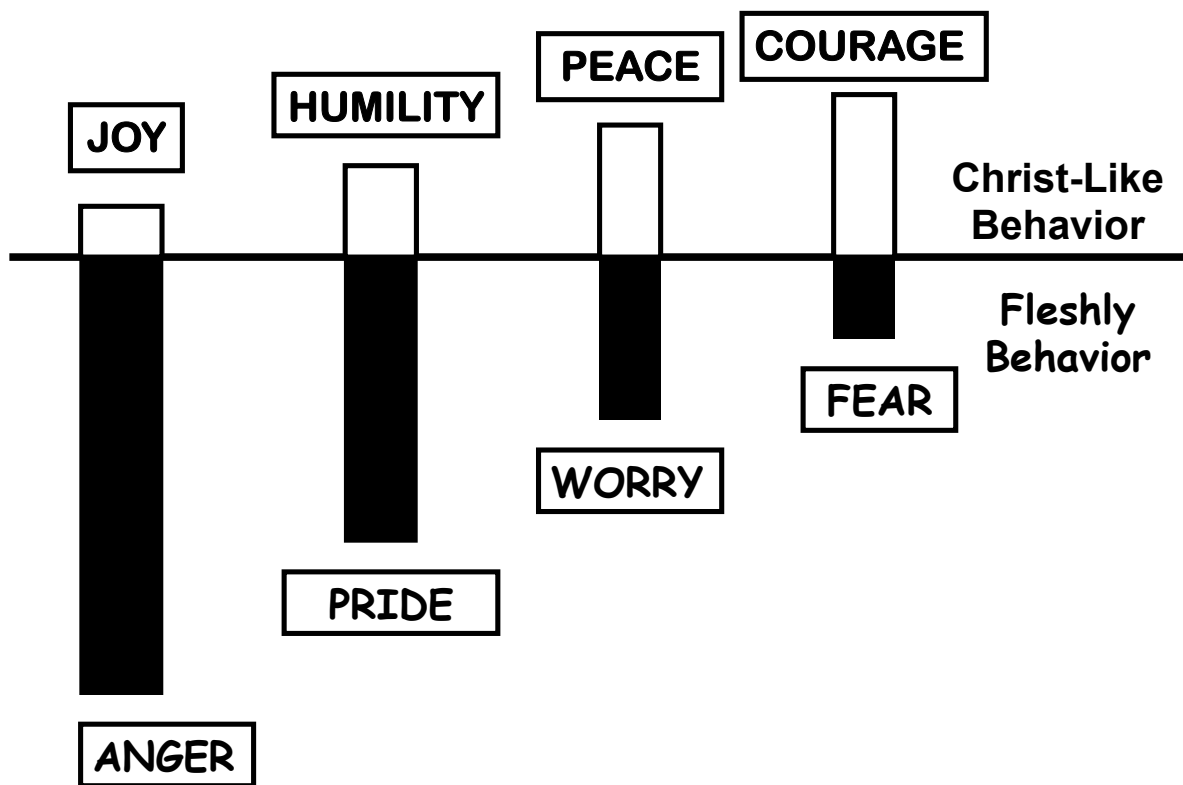


Of course, this is just an illustration of what God is doing. Unfortunately, He is not giving us a percentage scale to measure our progress. (In fact, He does not want us to measure our progress at all. So you might want to put down your tape measure.) Here is a key truth to remember:

If you continue seeking God to renew your mind with His truth, you will begin to experience a **DECREASE** in the **INFLUENCE** that your false beliefs have over you.

3. As your mind is being renewed the Spirit will begin to REPLACE your fleshly behaviors with CHRIST-LIKE behaviors.

In addition to the lessening of the strength and influence of your false beliefs, Christ-like behaviors will begin replacing your fleshly behaviors. In this illustration below, joy is replacing anger, humility is replacing pride, etc.



I hope this encourages you because this is one of the amazing things that God supernaturally accomplishes in us as we engage Him by faith.

Exercise: Look at the list below and pick out 2 or 3 Christ-like behaviors you would most like to experience.

Unconditional love
Security
Forgiveness
Compassion
Adequacy
Sacrificial
Freedom
Joy

Worthiness
Acceptance
Kindness
Discernment
Thankfulness
Righteousness
Victory
Peace

Humility
Patience
Fearlessness
Wisdom
Christ-confidence
Selflessness
Strength
Goodness

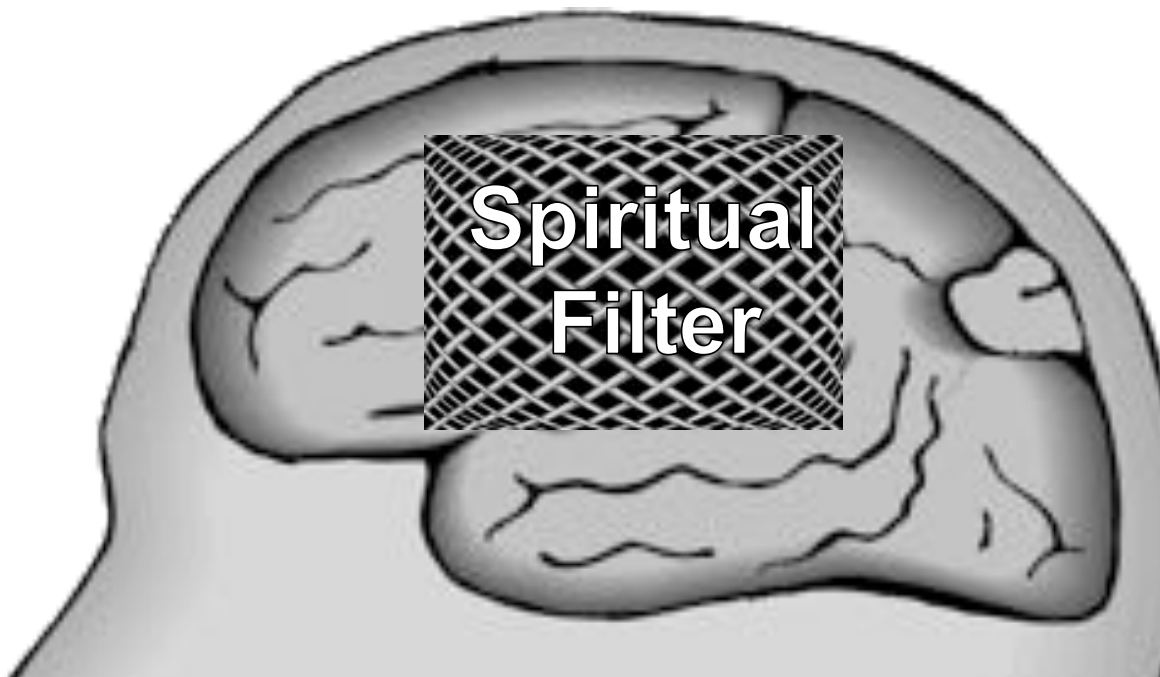
Engaging God: Begin seeking God to replace your fleshly behaviors with the Christ-like behaviors you most want to experience.

***As God renews your mind to the truth, He will REPLACE your
fleshly behaviors with Christ-like BEHAVIORS***

4. The Holy Spirit begins producing a “SPIRITUAL” filter.

Not only are your false beliefs being replaced by the truth, the Spirit is developing a “spiritual” filter. The spiritual filter is made up of biblical truths that you not only know but believe as well.

A “Spiritual” Filter Begins To Form



Why is it so important for a spiritual filter to be formed?

DAY FIVE

5. As your “spiritual” filter GROWS, you will begin to FILTER out or NO LONGER take ownership of your lying thoughts.

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” John 17:17

Let me first start by asking you a question. Do you have to take ownership of all your thoughts? By “ownership,” I mean that we simply accept every thought that comes into our minds. When I ask this question, most people just assume that they are to take ownership of all of their thoughts.



In light of this issue think about this example for a moment. I assume you have a front door to your home. You may have a deadbolt and a peep hole so that you can see who is at the front door. If you live in a high crime area, your tendency will be to make sure that the deadbolt is secure and that you will always look through the peep hole to see who is at the door. Imagine taking the door off the hinges and putting it in your garage. You have no security and any person good or bad can enter your home. For many of us, we have removed the front door of our minds and we are letting in every thought that comes our way.

As a non-Christian, you had no filter for your thoughts. The result was that you had no other choice but to take ownership of all your thoughts.

Let me give you an example: Let's also assume that you lost your job and thoughts come into your mind like “I can't believe they let me go. I am the best employee they have ever had. I will get even with them.” If you are a non-Christian, you automatically open the door of your mind and take ownership of all those thoughts. Without a spiritual filter, you always invite every thought through the door.

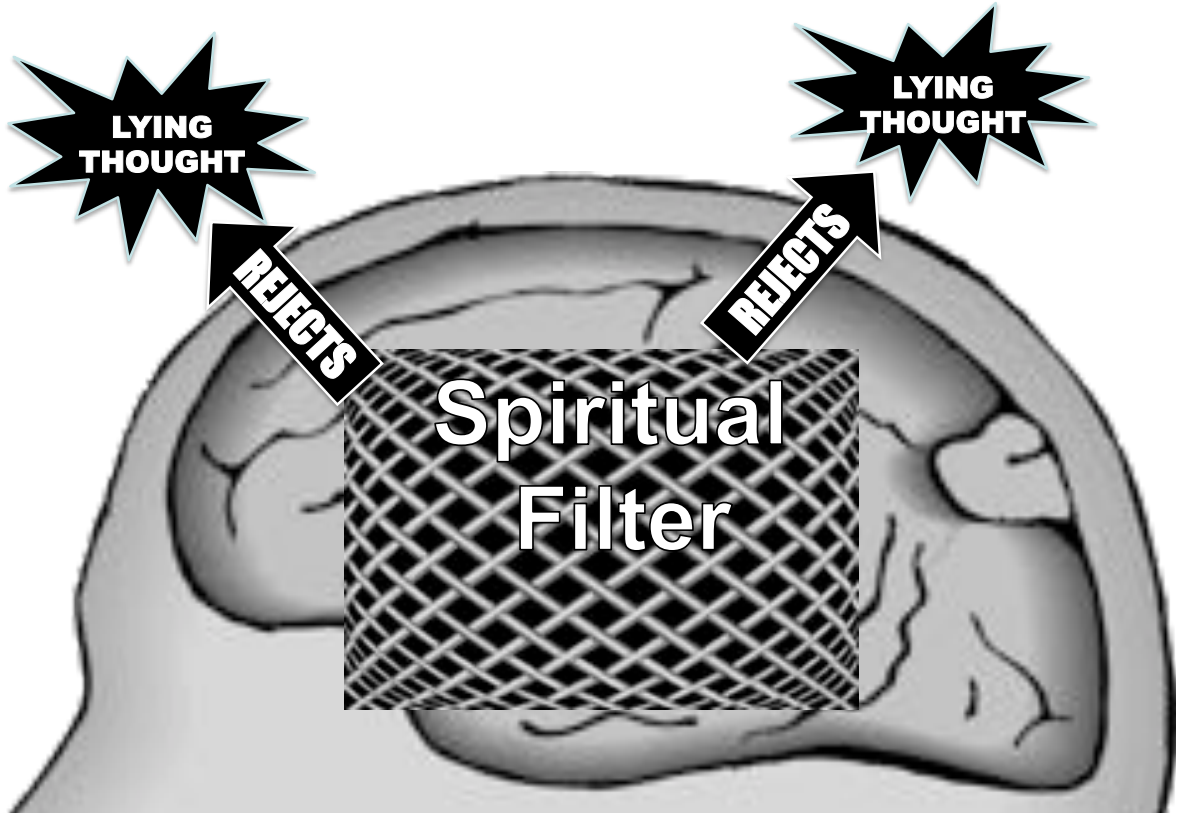
However, part of the process of renewing your mind is that the Holy Spirit will take God's truth and develop a “spiritual” filter in order that you will no longer take ownership of lying thoughts.

The truth is that we DON'T have to take ownership of ANY of our lying thoughts.

As your spiritual filter grows it will begin blocking or rejecting the lying thoughts that helped shape and now want to reinforce your false beliefs. Let me give you an example:

Let's assume you have a false belief that you are a rejected person. As you learn the truth and engage the Spirit of God to renew your mind, He is replacing the false belief that you are rejected with the truth that you are totally accepted in Christ. (Remember your true identity?) As your mind is being renewed, then your spiritual filter is being formed so that when those thoughts of rejection try to enter into your mind, your spiritual filter blocks them from entering into your mind. We will talk more about this process in the next lesson.

You Will Begin To Filter Your Thoughts



Engaging God: As you seek God to renew your mind, ask Him to give you an awareness of the lying thoughts that you were taking ownership of and now are blocking out?

Remember that if you DON'T engage the Spirit of God to develop a spiritual filter, you will find yourself taking ownership of ALL of your lying thoughts.

d. By faith THANK and PRAISE God that He is in the process of renewing your mind even though you may not be FEELING any change taking place.

*"I will **praise** the name of God with song, and shall magnify Him with **thanksgiving**."*
Psalm 69:30

*"I will bless the LORD at all times; His **praise shall continually** be in my mouth."* Psalm 63:1

As we abide in Him and walk in faith that God is working, we need to thank Him for what He is doing. Thank Him for the fact that He is in you and is renewing your mind to His truth. Thank Him that even though you may not be experiencing a change in your belief systems, by faith you

know that **change is taking place**. As David said in Psalm 63, “let your praise to God be continually in your mouth.”

Step of faith: “Lord, even though I am not experiencing any change, I thank You and know by faith that You are renewing my mind and are setting me free.”

Engaging God: This is a crucial truth in that thanksgiving and praise during the transformation process is a confirmation that you are walking by faith even though you may not yet be experiencing the results of your transformation.

Key Truths To Remember As Your Mind Is Being Renewed

1. **ONLY God** can renew your mind to the truth. You are not capable of renewing your own mind.
2. The renewing process begins as you take **STEPS** of faith in God’s ability to renew and transform your mind.
3. Remember that you, for the most part, won’t **FEEL** or **EXPERIENCE** God replacing the lying beliefs with His truth.
4. However, during the renewing process you will find yourself living **LESS** and **LESS** out of your lying beliefs and the fleshly behaviors that they produce.
5. Your desire to live from your lying beliefs will **DECREASE**, and your desire to live from the truth (Christ-like attitudes) will **INCREASE**.
6. God’s transformation process will produce a **BATTLE** in your mind.

Meditate: on the truths listed above.

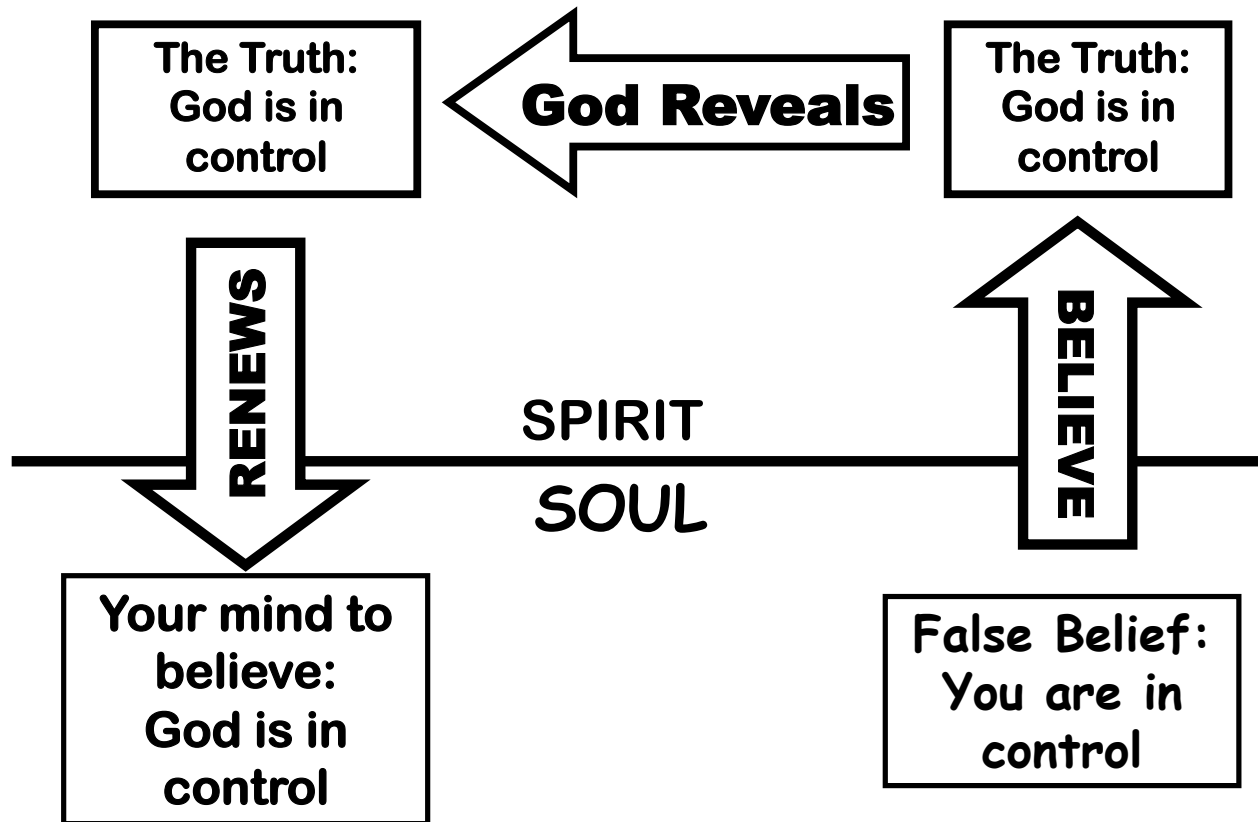
Engaging God: Seek the Spirit to remind you of these truths as you walk by faith.

The last point concerning the renewing of your mind that is important to understand is that there will be resistance to God’s renewing process. This resistance results in the battle of the mind. We will be discussing the battle of the mind in the next lesson.

God’s Process of Renewing Your Mind and “The Line”

Let’s look at the line analogy as it applies the renewing of your mind concerning the false belief that you are in control. In “The Line” diagram on the following page we see this process as we go from having the false belief that we are in control to believing the truth that Christ is in control. The Spirit will reveal to you the truth that He, and He alone, is in control. He will renew your mind to the point that your mind will truly believe that God, and not you, is the One in control.

Renewing Your Mind To God's Truth



What Will Be the Proof of A Renewed Mind?

As God Renews Your Mind:

- You will be thinking God's **TRUTH** versus your false beliefs.
- Your discernment concerning the lies versus the truth in your thought life will **GROW**.
- You will discern more **QUICKLY** when you are going back to your false beliefs versus your walking in the truth.
- You will **EXPERIENCE** God renewing your mind, and it will create a greater desire to continue walking by faith.
- You will be making **CHOICES** based upon the truth versus your false beliefs.
- Your **CHRIST-CONFIDENCE** will grow as you experience more of God's transformation.

Renewing Your Mind Is A Process! It May Take Time! Why?

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.” Ecclesiastes 3:1

The question that we might ask ourselves concerning God’s timing in the “mind-renewing” process is, “How long has it taken for these lies to develop and the strongholds to have taken hold of my life?” We know that God can remove any lie or stronghold in a moment. However, one of the reasons that He may not do this instantly is to “grow” your faith.

The process of transformation is designed to build your faith and confidence in Him as the One who renews your mind to His truth. Therefore, as He works in and through you, let Him grow in you His patience concerning His renewal timetable. His timing is always perfect. Therefore, when you become frustrated or impatient with God’s timing, what is it that you need in those moments? It is His peace, His patience, and His endurance.

***You will want God to move faster in the process, but remember that He is
teaching you faith in the WAITING.***

Doesn’t This Sound Like FREEDOM?

*“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”
Romans 8:32*

Wouldn’t you agree that if God is accomplishing all that we discussed in this lesson that you would call that freedom. I believe you would. This is what freedom would look like:

- Believing and living from the truth rather than your false beliefs.
- Developing a spiritual filter to block out lying thoughts.
- Having your fleshly behaviors being replaced by Christ-like behaviors.

Therefore, I hope that you will more intentionally engage God to renew your mind, transform your life and set you free.

FALSE BELIEFS

False Beliefs About Your Identity:

I feel or believe that I am:

Unworthy	Secure in myself	Unacceptable
Self-confident	Rejected	Self-sufficient
A Failure	Successful	Anxious
Self-reliant	Inadequate	In control
Weak	Worthy in myself	Defeated
Competent	Insecure	Fearless
Fearful	Strong in myself	

False Beliefs About God:

I believe that God is:

Or, in the past in a very stressful situation I felt like God was:

Angry	Judgmental	Unloving
Cold and distant	Condemning	Unable
Indifferent	Punishing	Unwilling
Not really in control	Uncaring	Not compassionate
Only loving conditionally	Expecting performance	A taskmaster

False Beliefs About Marriage:

It is my spouse's responsibility to meet my needs.

My spouse needs to love me unconditionally.

My spouse needs to meet my expectations

I have certain fleshly rights in marriage.

Lying Beliefs About How To Live the Christian Life:

1. I must do something for God:
 - a. to gain His love.
 - b. for God to be happy with me.
 - c. to earn His acceptance.
 - d. to escape His condemnation.
 - e. to feel good about myself.
 - f. to please others.
2. It is up to me using my intellect and ability (with God's help):
 - a. to keep His commands.
 - b. to make His promises real in my life.
 - c. to transform myself.
 - d. to be happy.
 - e. to be successful.

Lesson Two

The Battle Of The Mind

*“But there is another power within me that is at **WAR** with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.” Romans 7:23 (Emphasis mine)*

DAY ONE

Why Is There A Battle?

The battle of the mind is created when you begin engaging the Spirit of God to renew your mind to the truth. When that process begins your fleshly mind begins to resist the work of the Spirit. At the point of the resistance, the battle begins. Here is how Paul describes the ongoing battle that rages in our minds.

“For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.”
Romans 7:19

There is not one of us who does not feel like Paul did. Now that we are Christians, we have a desire for the Spirit to renew our minds to the truth. However, as we seek God to renew our minds, a war breaks out in our minds pitting our lying beliefs against God’s truth.

What are some truths that we need to understand about this battle?

- 1. The battle for the control of our mind is NON-STOP and will last a lifetime.**
- 2. We have UNSEEN enemies in this battle.**
- 3. Our enemies seek to keep us in BONDAGE to our false beliefs and fleshly behaviors.**
- 4. We CANNOT win this battle apart from the Holy Spirit WINNING it in our minds.**
- 5. WHO wins this battle will determine whether or not we will EXPERIENCE a transformed life.**

We will be exploring each of these truths in more depth throughout the rest of the study. The next question that we need to ask ourselves is, “To what extent are we aware of the battle?”

***If we don’t know the truth about the battle for the mind, then
the battle will NEVER be won!***

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to give you deeper revelation of these truths, and seek Him to make you aware of these truths as you enter into the battle for your mind.

How Aware Are You Of The Battle?

*“... **I see** another law at work in the members of my body, **waging war against the law of my mind.**” Romans 7:23*

Paul’s words “I see” tell us that he was aware that there was a battle that was being waged in his mind. What “I see” is that too many Christians are not aware of the battle that is going on in their thought life. When we do not recognize the battle, it leaves us vulnerable in many ways:

- We will be vulnerable to the strategies of the flesh, power of sin, and Satan/demonic forces.
- We will tend to take ownership of thoughts that need to be taken captive by the Spirit.
- Taking ownership of lying thoughts will reinforce our lying beliefs.
- These reinforced lying beliefs will lead us to reinforced fleshly attitudes and behaviors.

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a greater awareness of the height and length and depth of the battle that is taking place in your mind.

What Is The Battle?

*“the **mind set on the flesh is death.** The mind set on the **Spirit is life and peace.**” Romans 8:6*

The battle is between every thought that lines up with GOD’S TRUTH versus every thought that CONTRADICTS God’s truth.

The battle of the mind is between thinking God’s thoughts (truth) versus thinking fleshly, lying, deceiving, tempting, and condemning thoughts produced by the enemies of your mind. Let’s look further

Fleshly, Lying, Deceiving, Tempting, and Condemning Thoughts

Fleshly Thoughts - Thoughts that lead to fleshly choices and behaviors.

The flesh is an attitude or strategy of living that says, “I can live life, solve my problems, control my life, and be happy independently of God.” From the flesh flows fleshly behavior. What drives fleshly behavior is fleshly thoughts.

Lying Thoughts - Thoughts that contradict God’s truth.

Lying thoughts primarily come from our lying beliefs about ourselves, God, and living the Christian life.

Deceiving Thoughts - Thoughts that come in first person that are designed to deceive us and to keep us from walking by faith in God’s truth

Deceiving thoughts primarily come from Satan and his demonic forces. These are thoughts inserted into our minds that come in first person. Deceiving thoughts direct our paths toward thinking which can produce fear, anxiety, worry, etc.

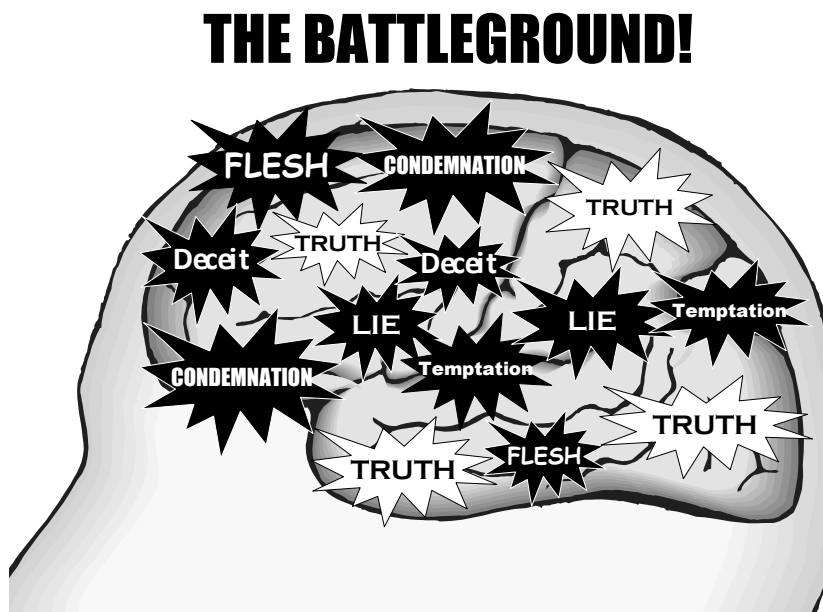
Tempting Thoughts - Thoughts that tempt you and draw you away from living from the truth

Tempting thoughts are thoughts usually attached to our lying beliefs and our defeating sin patterns. Since we are most susceptible in these two areas, tempting thoughts will most likely be centered there.

Condemning Thoughts - Thoughts which produce guilt, shame, or self-condemnation

These are thoughts that also come in the form of first person. They accuse us of wrongdoing and persuade us to condemn ourselves when we fail or sin.

The diagram below gives us an illustration of the battle between God's truth and all of the thoughts that contradict God's truth:



What (or Who) Are The Enemies of Your Mind in This Battle?

“....My deadly enemies that surround me.” Psalm 17:9

One of the first axioms of war is to know your enemy. In the case of the Christian there is more than one enemy. Even though David was referring to human enemies in Psalm 17:9, we as Christians are surrounded by unseen “deadly” enemies that seek to steal, kill, and destroy our walk of faith. These are the five enemies we will be discussing:

1. The flesh.
2. The power of sin.
3. Satan and his demonic forces.
4. The world.
5. Distracting thoughts of daily living.

DAY TWO

Let's explore each one of these in greater depth.

Enemy #1 -The FLESH

"The mind set on the flesh is death," Romans 8:6

When it comes to the flesh and our thought life remember this key truth:

KEY TRUTH

The flesh CONSTANTLY produces fleshly thoughts which say "I can fix, solve, or overcome any problem, situation, etc. in MY OWN intellect and ability.

As an attitude, the flesh continues to produce fleshly thoughts which can lead to fleshly behavior. However, equally destructive is the fact that the flesh impacts your thinking by drawing you to live from your finite intellect and ability versus depending on God. For example, let's assume that you are struggling with a difficult decision. The flesh can introduce thoughts such as, "You can reason yourself through this decision. Given enough time you can figure out what to do." Even though this is a normal tendency, what part does God want to play in this decision-making process? Does He not want you to depend upon His wisdom and discernment instead of your own finite thinking?

Since the flesh is for the most part our default position, then it is easy to be drawn by the flesh to use our finite ability and power to solve our problems and meet our needs.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you the "death" that those fleshly thoughts are causing you.

Enemy #2 - The POWER OF SIN

*"But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but **(the power of) sin** which dwells in me." Romans 7:20 (Parenthesis mine)*

THE POWER OF SIN:

an INTERNAL and ONGOING power in your life that seeks to DRAW you away from God and to TEMPT you to sin.

As we have studied previously, the power of sin and the flesh work as partners seeking to draw you in to independent living. The power of sin also serves up fleshly and sinful thoughts which seek to keep us in bondage to our lying beliefs. For example, there was a time when I believed that I had the fleshly right to be critical of and to judge others, especially when they

were critical of me. The source of my being critical and judgmental was my lying belief that I was inadequate.

Therefore, how I dealt with the rejection of someone else was to set myself up as judge as a way of protecting myself or justifying why or what I did. When rejection came my way, my flesh, in collusion with the power of sin, offered up such fleshly thoughts as, “I have the right to be critical because they offended me by what they said. I am justified in my being judgmental.” Every time that I would take ownership of these thoughts, they reinforced my lying belief.

Therefore, become aware in your own thought life about how the power of sin and the flesh function with each other.

The FLESH and the POWER OF SIN function in PARTNERSHIP to act upon your fleshly thoughts and produce fleshly behavior.

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to expose the areas in your life where the power of sin is serving up fleshly thoughts that are reinforcing your lying beliefs.

Enemy #3 - SATAN and His DEMONIC Forces

*“For our struggle is **not** against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers**, against the **authorities**, against the **powers of this dark world** and against the **spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly realms.” Ephesians 6:12*

*“...for **he (Satan) is a liar and the father of lies.**” John 8:44 (Parenthesis mine)*

We must realize that we are in a fierce and ongoing battle with Satan and his demons. Since Satan can't be everywhere at once, he depends upon his army of demons to carry out his evil strategies. These enemies are formidable foes in that they are unseen. In addition, they know the Bible only too well and clearly understand what God can and will do in our lives if we walk by faith. Therefore, Satan's and his demon's objectives are to prevent us from walking by faith, experiencing transformation, and developing a personal, intimate relationship with God. Satan and his demonic forces' primary strategy in accomplishing this is by:

INSERTING lying, condemning, deceiving, tempting, and fleshly thoughts into our minds.

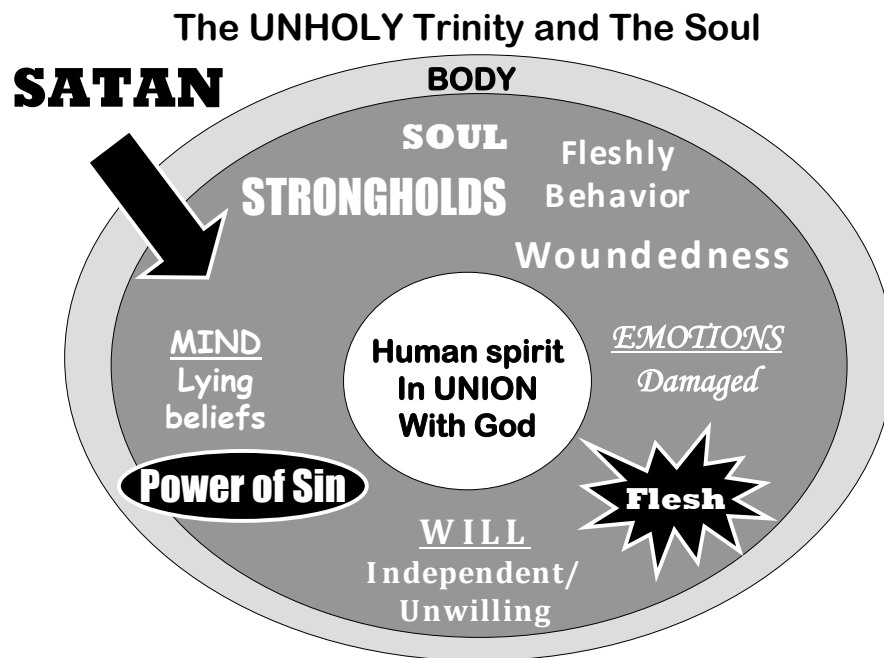
You see, Satan and the demonic know precisely which thoughts to insert because they have a complete file on our life. They know our flesh patterns, our strongholds, our woundedness, and our weaknesses. Therefore, they use all of this information plus our relationships and circumstances to insert these thoughts into our minds so that we will take ownership of them with the result that we will commit sins.

Satan knows that if he can keep us thinking and believing the lies about ourselves, God, and living the Christian life, we will never experience the transformation and abundant life that God

promises. In Lesson Three we will discuss further Satan/demon's strategy to win the battle in our minds.

Satan and his demons have primarily one FOCUS and that is to keep you in BONDAGE to your lying beliefs.

The following diagram illustrates the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan's/demon's impact on the soul:



Engaging God: Begin asking God to expose any thoughts that you are having that may be coming from Satan/demons.

Enemy #4 - The WORLD.

*“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”
Colossians 2:8*

*“For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh** and the **lust of the eyes** and the **boastful pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from the world.” 1 John 2:16*

Turn on the TV, pick up a newspaper, or read a magazine. Immediately you will be bombarded with the world's thinking. It is non-stop propaganda spread by Satan, the god of this world who is influencing you to succeed and win according to the world's standards, to be strong, to be self-sufficient, and most importantly to be independent. Satan uses our culture to

entice you to want bigger, better, and always more. It is the only message that you will ever get from the world. Why? All that the world can serve up to you, as it says in 1 John 2:16, is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful PRIDE of life.

In addition, world events, politicians, etc. can invoke fearful, angry, and anxious thoughts. I know Christians that can't get past their anger about what the government is doing or is not doing. They let politicians and governmental action (or inaction) steal their peace and rest in Christ. They just "wallow" in their "stinking" thinking. I believe that we would be surprised to know how deeply our culture influences our thought life and how much it can trigger fleshly thoughts of lust, envy, anger, anxiety, etc.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you where you may not be aware that the world is negatively impacting your thoughts and are causing you to lust for the things of the world.

***Satan, as the god of this world, will use the things of the world to
NEGATIVELY influence your thinking.***

DAY THREE

Enemy #5 - Distracting Thoughts of Daily Living

Throughout each day we can be distracted from our walk with God just by the everyday issues of life. Taking care of kids, job, activities, etc. are not necessarily sinful or Satanic, but they can distract us from our walk with God. Satan can certainly use our checklists as a strategy to distract us from our walk with the Lord.

"Busy-ness" is another way that we can lose our focus on Christ and lose the battle of the mind. It seems like we are filling every minute with activity. "Busy-ness" has become so pandemic that I believe it has become the substitute for thinking about or spending time with God.

***As busy as we make ourselves, I wonder if we believe that FULFILLMENT in life
comes from being busy every moment rather than from
spending time communing with God?***

Another ploy of Satan/demons is to keep you distracted. He knows only too well the damage that he can create by just keeping you distracted from spending time in focusing on and abiding in Christ. He will use any and every form of distraction to keep you from thinking on Christ.

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to expose where your "busy-ness" is taking you away from time that could be spent with Him. Ask the Spirit as well to reveal where Satan may be using distraction as a ploy to keep you from thinking about or spending time with God.

Satan will use BENIGN thoughts of daily living to keep us distracted from God.

You CANNOT Win This Battle! (Independent of Christ)

Before we go any further in this study of the battle of the mind, we must first understand a basic, fundamental truth:

***You CANNOT win the battle of your mind using your
OWN strength and willpower.***

This is another application of John 15:5:

“.....apart from Me you can do NOTHING...”

God knew that without His power indwelling us, we would never overcome the power of the flesh, the power of sin, or Satan/demons. What are some reasons why we can't win this battle independent of God:

- **We can be deceived in our thinking.**
- **We can't discern between the truthful thoughts and the lying thoughts.**
- **We have taken ownership of thoughts that do not line up with God's truth for so long that they have become reinforced lying beliefs that we cannot free ourselves from.**
- **Our willpower and intellect alone are no match for the thoughts inserted into our minds by the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan/demons.**

Question: Have you tried to win this battle in your own strength? If so, how is it working for you?

If you are tempted to fight this battle using your own strength and willpower, think about the following verse:

“The weapons we use in our fight are not the world's weapons but God's powerful weapons, which we use to destroy strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4

The VICTOR In The Battle Lives Within You!

So many believers that I have discipled early on believed that they could win the battle in their minds in their own strength and willpower. However, winning the battle of the mind is like living the Christian life. There is only One Person who can win the battle and that is the Holy Spirit. Look at Romans 8:13:

“for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

When Jesus said in John 15:5 that “apart from Me you can do nothing,” part of what He meant is that apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, you cannot win the battle of the mind. This is another reason why God put the fullness of Himself in us.

“For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.” Colossians 2: 9, 10

Key Truth:

ONLY the HOLY SPIRIT in you can win the battle of the mind.

Here are key truths concerning the Holy Spirit’s part in winning the battle in your mind.

As your Victor the Holy Spirit will:

1. Teach you God’s truth. John 14:26
2. Make God’s truth become revelation to you. John 16:13
3. Renew your mind to believe God’s truth. Romans 12:2
4. Discern for you truthful versus lying thoughts. 1 Corinthians 2:12
5. Remind you of God’s truth in the midst of the battle. John 14:26
6. Overpower your enemies in this battle. 2 Corinthians 10:4

Taking Your Thoughts Captive – Can You Do It?

Before we talk about how we engage the Holy Spirit to fight this battle, I want to explore one other key truth. Let’s look at 2 Corinthian 10:4, 5

“...we (Christ in us) destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we (Christ in us) take every thought captive to obey Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:4b, 5 (Parentheses mine)

You will see that I have inserted parentheses within this verse. It is key to understand that Paul is **not** saying that the responsibility for destroying speculations or taking every thought captive is your responsibility.

***The truth is that APART from the Holy Spirit taking those thoughts captive
THROUGH you, you CANNOT take your thoughts captive.***

What Paul means through this verse is that the Holy Spirit can discern and can tell whether the thought is from God, the flesh, or Satan. In addition to the Holy Spirit discerning our thoughts, He wants to build within our minds a “divine filter” as we participate with Him.

Truths Concerning Engaging The Holy Spirit To Win The Battle Of The Mind

*“Therefore, **prepare your minds for action**, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:13*

1. THINK About What You Are Thinking About.

“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” Proverbs 23:7

The first thing that we need to do is to be more aware of what thoughts are coming into our minds. We have developed habits of taking ownership of thoughts that God does not want us to take ownership of.

Therefore, begin to take an inventory of:

Recurring thoughts - Many of our recurring thoughts can be those which are tied to our lying beliefs.

Fleshly thoughts - Look at the flesh patterns that you marked down in Lesson Two, and identify some of the fleshly thoughts that revolve around your fleshly behavior.

Fantasy thoughts - If you tend to fantasize, take inventory of those thoughts.

Evil thoughts - Take inventory of recurring evil thoughts because they are almost always associated with the Satanic or demonic.

The key is to take steps of faith in bringing God’s discernment to bear on your thought patterns. A step of faith might look like the following:

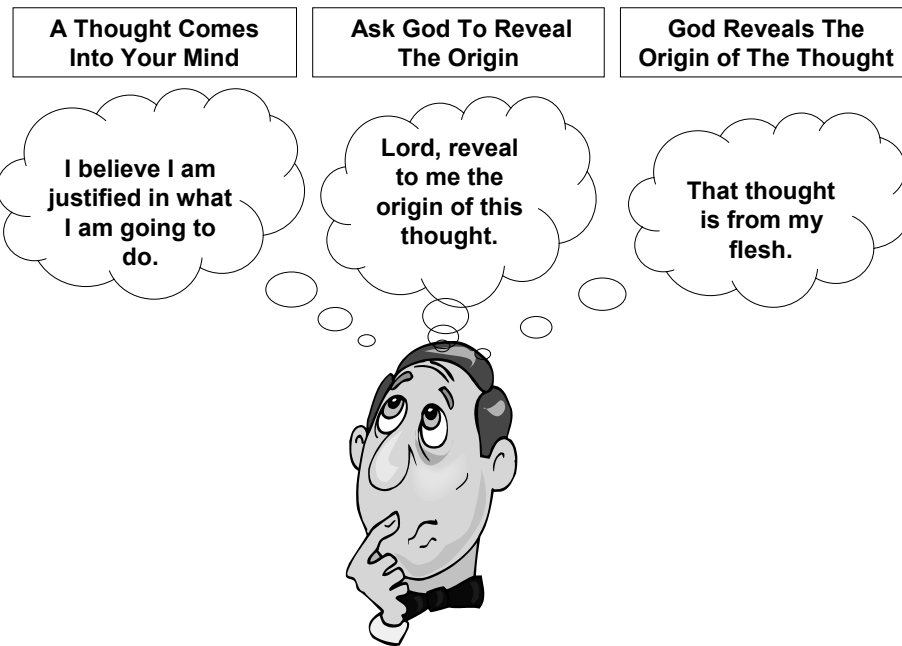
“Lord, I am asking You to give me a greater awareness of what I am thinking. Expose any thinking that is sinful.”

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a greater awareness of what you are thinking about.

2. Ask God To Reveal The ORIGIN of Your Thoughts.

*“**Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.** Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?” 2 Corinthians 13:5*

The key thing that we need to understand in 2 Corinthians 13:5 is that when Paul is telling us to examine ourselves, he means to bring the Holy Spirit’s discernment into play to examine our thoughts and to tell us the origin of that thought. There are some thoughts that come into your mind that you need to examine and ask God to tell you the origin of that thought. The next diagram illustrates engaging God to discern for you the origin of your thoughts:



Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a greater awareness of what you are thinking about. Ask Him to reveal the origin of your thoughts.

Sinful thoughts: It is important to understand that sinful thoughts will be exposed by the Holy Spirit. The problem is that we may not be aware of the Spirit's exposure. Therefore, a step of faith might look like the following:

"Lord, I am trusting You to increase my awareness and sensitivity to sinful thoughts."

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness and sensitivity to sinful thoughts as they occur.

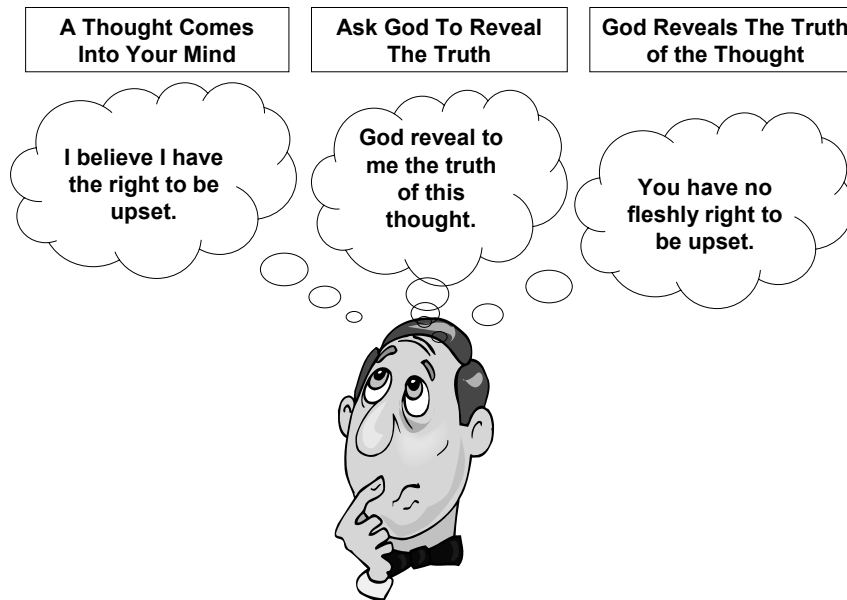
As you take steps of faith, you will become more SENSITIVE to the Holy Spirit's exposure of SINFUL thoughts.

DAY FOUR

3. Ask God to REVEAL The Truth Concerning Your Thoughts.

*"But when he, the **Spirit** of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth." John 16:13a*

Since one of the responsibilities of the Holy Spirit is to reveal the truth to you, ask God to reveal to you what the truth is concerning the thoughts that you are thinking.



Engaging God: Begin asking God to reveal to you what is the truth concerning your thoughts.

3. When The Spirit Exposes Sinful, Lying, Deceiving, Tempting, Fleshly, or Condemning Thoughts, REFUSE to take ownership and ENTRUST Your Fleshly Thoughts To God.

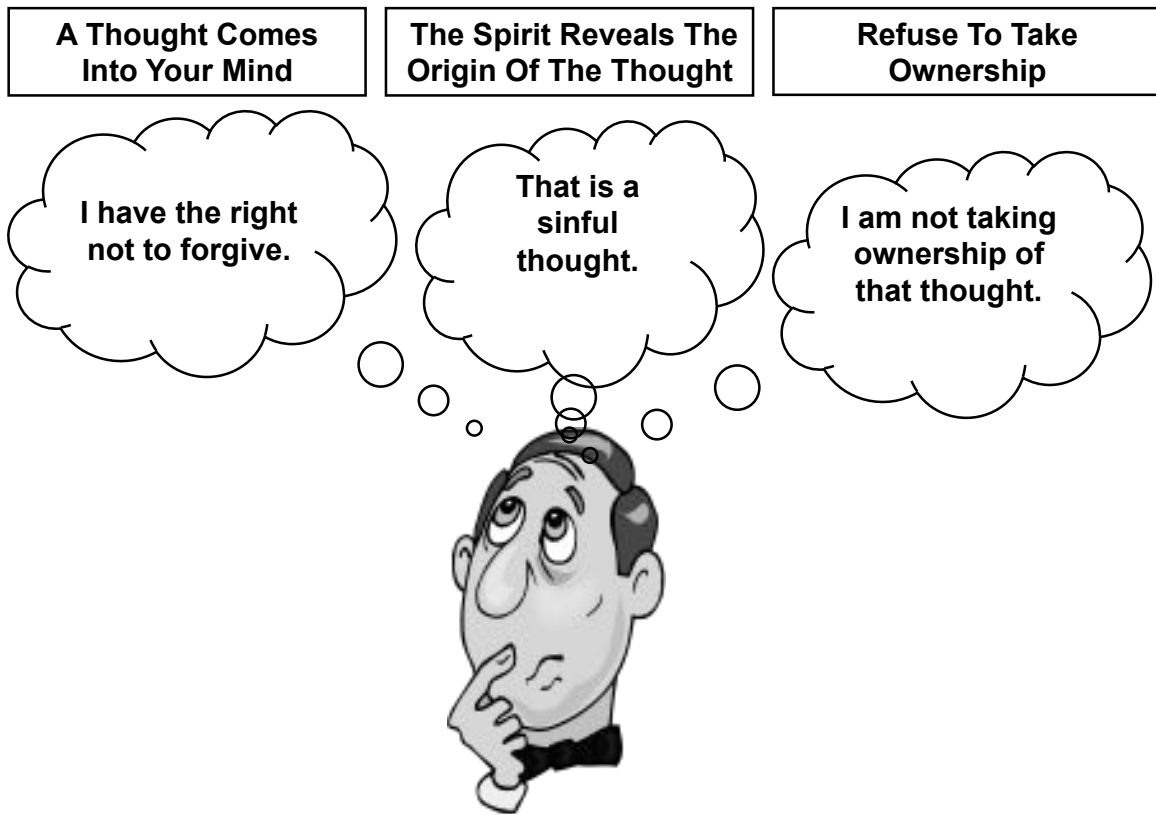
a. Refuse To Take Ownership of The Thoughts

“do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.” Romans 6:12

Once the Holy Spirit has revealed to you the truth of the thought, you can refuse to take ownership of any thought that is not of God. In Christ’s power you have His power to say “NO” to any sinful, fleshly thought. As someone once said, “If a fleshly or lying thought comes through the front door of your mind, simply open the back door and let it out.”

IN addition, God wants you to entrust that thought to Him by faith for Him to take captive. **Entrustment means that you give God the ownership of that thought.** If you don’t entrust that lying/fleshly thought to God, the temptation is to continue thinking this thought until you take ownership of the thought and let that thought cause you to sin.

The problem is that you have been AUTOMATICALLY taking ownership of the recurring fleshly, lying thoughts, and it is easy to continue taking ownership.



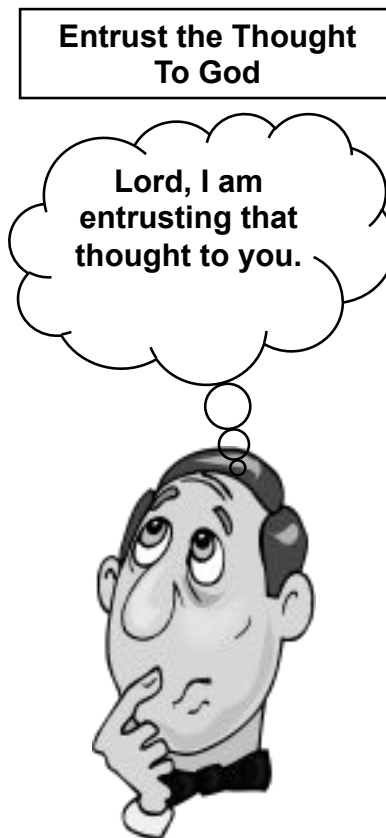
Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you some of the fleshly, lying, or condemning thoughts that you automatically take ownership of without presenting them to God for Him to tell you whether they are true or not. As He reveals those thoughts, draw on His power to say “NO” to these thoughts.

b. Entrust Every One Of These Thoughts To God

*“**Throw all** your worry **on Him**, because He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7 (ISV)*

This is why you can’t waste time with your fleshly or lying thoughts. It is crucial that you entrust them to God immediately. That is why Peter says in 1 Peter 5:7 to “throw all your worry on Him.” Throw your temptations, your lies, and your condemnation on the Spirit for Him to take captive.

For example, “Lord, You have revealed to me that I have recurring fearful thoughts. I am asking You to BE my power to say ‘No’ to these thoughts and to not continue taking ownership of these fearful thoughts.”



Engaging God: As God reveals the truth about your thoughts, learn to entrust those fleshly and lying thoughts to God.

What If You Take Ownership of A Lying or Sinful Thought

If you take ownership of a lying or sinful thought, rest assured, the Spirit will reveal that to you. The problem is that usually it is not just one thought but a string of thoughts. It is like a string of lights. Once you let one in the rest will follow because they are connected. Therefore, as soon as you recognize that the thought is a lie then begin entrusting the thought(s) to the Lord.

DAY FIVE

Other Key Truths To Remember Concerning Your Thought Life

1. Spiritual Filter

Remember that the spiritual filter is God's truth that you believe. Early on your filter will not be sensitive enough to take every thought captive and you will take ownership of those thoughts. However, as you continue to receive revelation of the truth and believe it, your filter will become more sensitive to the lying, condemning, tempting, etc. thoughts. You will find yourself not taking ownership of thoughts that you once did.

2. Develop "Holy Habits"

Involving the Holy Spirit in our thought life is a process that must be learned. It is like learning to drive a standard transmission. Early on you had to be very focused on the connection between the brake, gas pedal, and the clutch. However, after a period of time you did it automatically. It is the same with your thought life.

At the beginning, it is important to be intentionally focused on engaging the Holy Spirit to reveal the origin and truth of a thought and to entrust those thoughts for the Spirit to take captive. However, as you develop a “holy habit” of doing this, it will come automatically.

3. Self-Talk

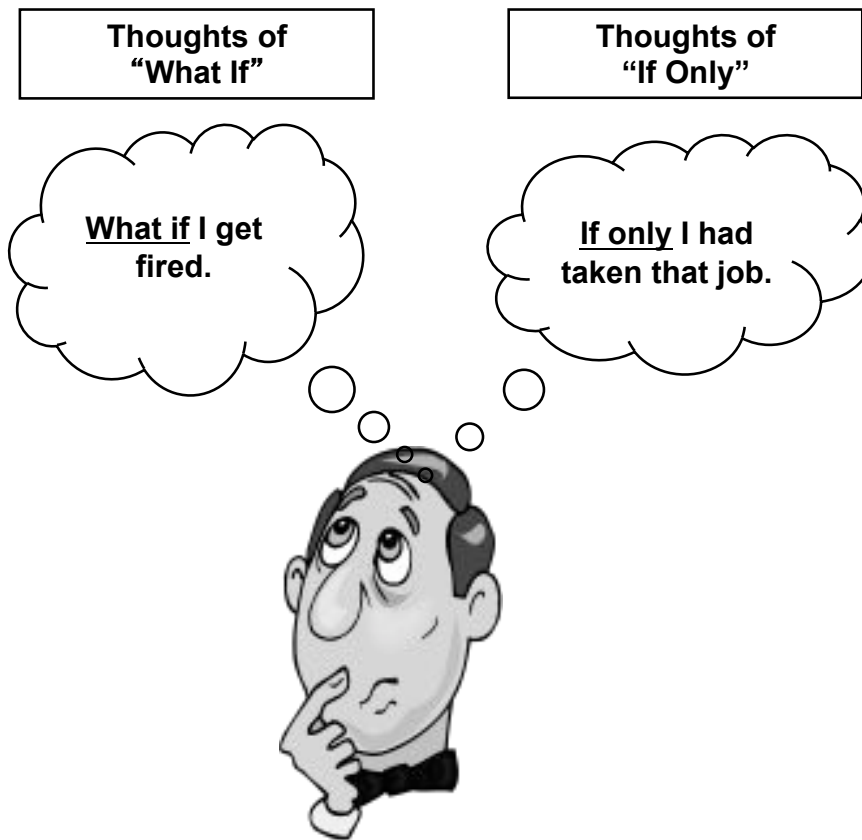
*“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” 1 John 4:1*

Another “holy habit” to develop is what I call “self-talk.” This is the process of thinking or speaking out loud God’s truth. I do this especially when the battle is raging in my mind. (There is always a battle but there are times when the battle is more intense than others.) It is a way of reminding you of what the truth is and it is a way to “test the spirits” to see if what you are thinking is the truth or is a lie.

4. When You Are Tempted To Live In The Future Or In The Past, FIX Your Eyes On Christ In The Present Moment.

“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith...” Hebrews 12:2

Most Christians live in the “what ifs” of the future or the “if onlys” of the past. “**What if** I don’t get this promotion? **If only** I had made a different decision, things would be different today.” I believe that if you were to take a daily inventory of your thoughts, you would find yourself amazed at how many of those thoughts focus on the “what ifs” or the “if onlys.” Dwelling on the past or the future can produce fleshly thoughts of anger, anxiety, regrets, insecurity, etc. It also robs you of the peace, rest, and joy that you have in Christ in the present moment.



The truth is that you cannot afford to live in the past or in the future. Why? It is because that you do not have the God of "I will be" or the God of "I was." Your God is the God of the "I AM." In other words, God does not want you to squander the present life, peace, and rest for anxious, worrisome, condemning, and guilty thoughts of the future or the past.

As God renews your mind, you will see the FUTILITY (and waste of time) to live from the "WHAT IFS" or the "IF ONLYS" in life.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal the "what ifs" or the "if onlys" that your mind is dwelling upon. Entrust those thoughts to Him, and ask Him to keep your eyes fixed on Him moment by moment.

For example: "Lord, reveal to me where I am focusing on the past or the future rather than on You. Move me to a place of willingness to not focus on the 'what ifs' or the 'if onlys.'"

4. A Litmus Test For Whether or Not A Thought Is A CONDEMNING Thought

*"Therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those who are **in Christ Jesus**." Romans 8:1*

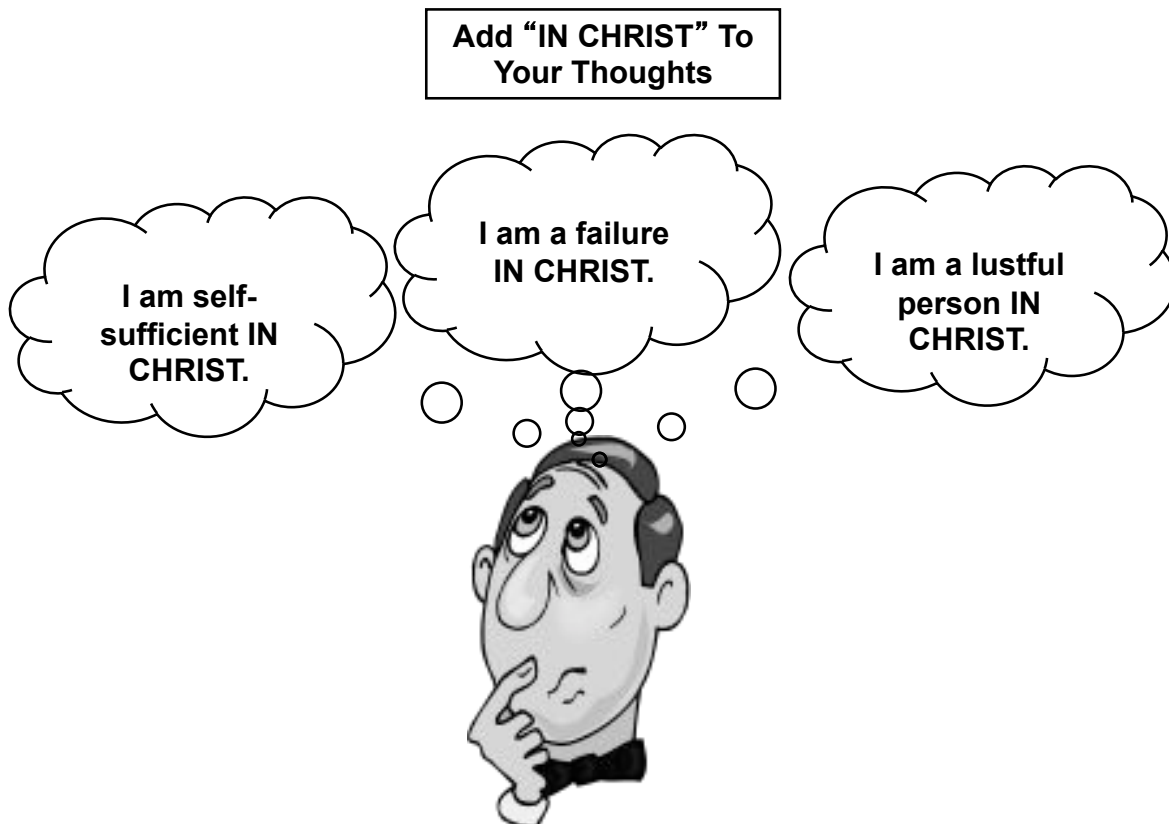
*"and be found in him, not having a **righteousness** of my own that comes from the law, but that **which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith**." Philippians 3:9*

I know that many Christians experience self-condemning thoughts. These self-condemning thoughts usually arise when we sin, catch ourselves thinking in the flesh, or fail to measure up to what we think that God expects as to where we should be in our Christian walk. I find that many Christians spend more time in self-condemnation for these things than in the actual sin or the fleshly thinking that brought on the self-condemnation.

The key truth to remember is that our CONDEMNATION was COMPLETELY dealt with at the cross. You are NO longer condemned!

One of the most crucial verses to the Christian is Romans 8:1. Since you are in Christ, there is no more condemnation for you as a Christian. The truth is that according to Philippians 3:9, you are RIGHTEOUS. This means that you do not have to spend even a moment condemning yourself. God no longer condemns you, so why should you? If you are unsure whether or not you are experiencing self-condemning thoughts, add the words “in Christ” to your thoughts.

For example, the thought may be, “I am a failure,” or “I am unworthy.” This may sound like the truth to you. But when you say, “I am a failure in Christ,” or “I am unworthy in Christ,” you can readily see that this is a lie.



Inserting the words “IN CHRIST” will expose whether or not the thought is from God or not.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal any thoughts that you have that might be self-condemning. Use the words “in Christ” with some of your thoughts to expose whether or not they are condemning. As these self-condemning thoughts come to mind, ask God to remind you and renew your mind to the truth that “there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

Remember That There Are No PACIFISTS In This Battle.

*“Timothy,**fight the good fight.**” 1 Timothy 1:18*

There are no pacifists nor anyone sitting on the sidelines in this battle. Even though there may be Christians that are acting like conscientious objectors, you cannot afford to not fight this battle. That is why Paul exhorts Timothy to fight. If you do not enter into the battle, it means that you have already given up the battle. You must fight this fight in the Spirit with alertness and vigilance as it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:6:

*“so then let us **not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober**” 1 Thessalonians 5:6*

<p><i>If you do NOT enter into the battle, you have already LOST it!</i></p>

Engaging God: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the areas where you have not entered into and are not fighting the fight.

Summary

I hope that this lesson has been helpful in gaining a better understanding of what it means to engage the Holy Spirit to fight the battle for your mind. In the next lesson we will see how Satan influences our thought life.

Lesson Three

Satanic Influence On Your Thought Life

Spiritual Warfare

*“The god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
2 Corinthians 4:4*

DAY ONE

Introduction

We talked in Lesson Two about Satan and his demonic forces being enemies of our minds. I think that it would be profitable to spend a lesson focusing on the influence that Satan has on our minds and on how to engage God in spiritual warfare to deal with Satan and the demonic forces. Satan/demons hate God. They rebelled against God early on, and they know that their eventual eternal destiny is hell. Their primary objective is to do everything in their power to keep mankind from being saved. Once you are saved, their objective is to steal, kill, and destroy your walk with Christ. Therefore, we will explore some of the enemies' strategies and how to engage God's power to deal with Satan/demonic.

Dealing With Satan and His Demonic Forces

Satan is your only historian. He has kept very meticulous records on your entire life. He and his demonic forces know your weaknesses, your flesh patterns, and your lying beliefs. They know exactly the areas where you are most vulnerable. Therefore, they attempt to draw you away from your walk with God by triggering the power of sin and your flesh patterns. Satan and his demonic forces are ruthless in that they will use lies, temptation, deceit, and condemnation to draw you away from your faith walk.

*“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, **the devil**, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to **devour**.” 1 Peter 5:8*

The word “devour” in 1 Peter 5:8 means “to destroy” in the original Greek. Think about this for a moment. Satan/demons are intentionally seeking to destroy Christians and non-Christians. Destruction for non-Christians means that Satan/demons will try to keep them from being saved at the very least and at the other extreme will try to get them to commit suicide. What are some examples of how Satan/demons can destroy Christians?

Satan and his demons can come against Christians by:

- **Distracting them from their faith walk with God.**
- **Keeping them in bondage to their lying beliefs.**
- **Keeping them in ongoing defeat concerning their defeating sin patterns.**

- Turning them back to themselves to be the source for life.
- Persuading them to deal with their problems independently of God.
- Moving them to a place of committing suicide.

This is why Christians must be very aware of the power and capability of Satan/demons. We do not have to fear their power, but we must be spiritually knowledgeable and vigilant concerning them.

Before we go any further in the study, I want to address the issue of the indwelling of Satan/demons versus the influence of Satan/demons in our lives.

KEY TRUTH

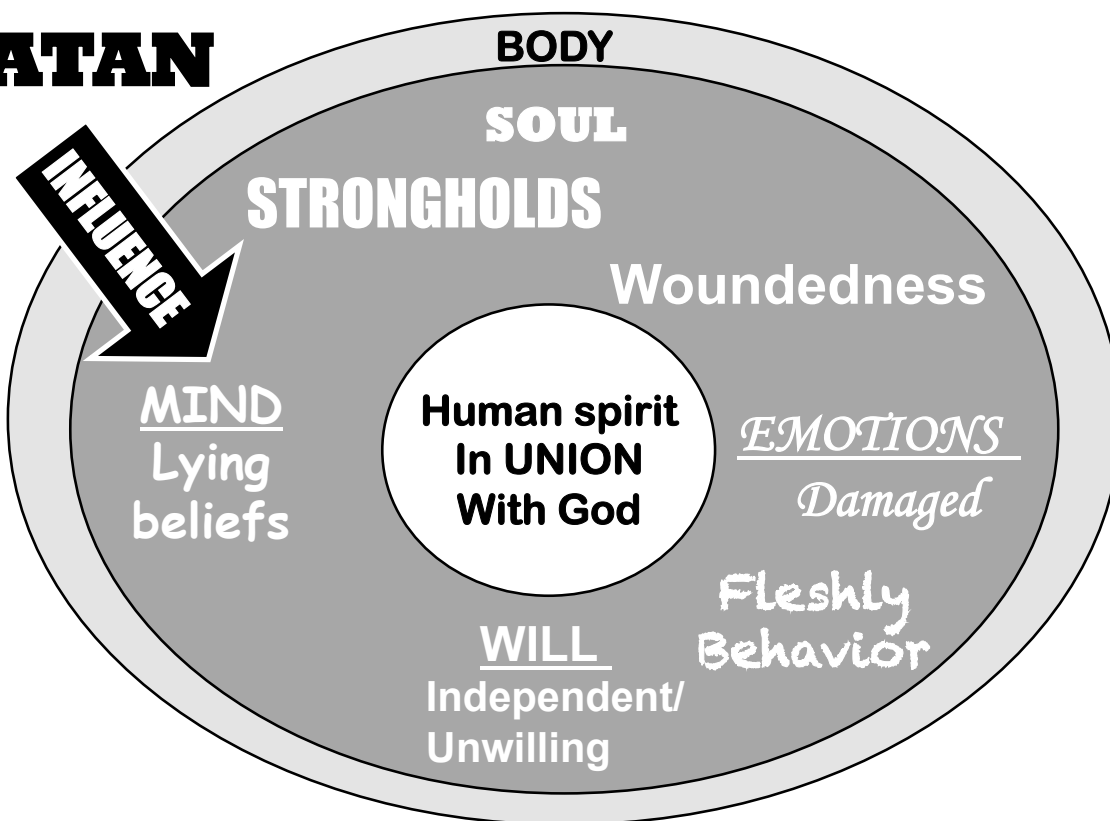
***Satan and his demons CANNOT INDWELL you as a Christian.
Because you are in union with God, Satan and his demons can now only try
to INFLUENCE your soul. They cannot indwell it.***

We see in 2 Corinthians 12:7 that Satan can bring his demons against our soul. This is what happened to Paul when Satan sent him a demon (messenger of Satan) to torment him:

“To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.” 2 Corinthians 12:7

Satan Can Influence But NOT Indwell The Soul

SATAN



Satan's Strategy

*"The thief comes only to **steal, kill, and destroy...**" John 10:10a*

We must remember that Satan's strategy is three-fold: steal, kill, and destroy. Satan wants to steal the rest, joy, and peace that we have in Christ, to kill our momentum of walking by faith, and to destroy our desire and willingness to continue depending upon God.

Let's look at some of the ways that Satan/demons implement this strategy.

Satan's/Demon's Strategy Part One - INSERTION Of Their Thoughts Into Our Minds

It is important to remember that Satan and his demonic forces know our past history. They know our strengths and weaknesses. They know intimately our flesh patterns and the strength of those flesh patterns. Therefore, they can strategize on how best to keep us focused on ourself and to use our flesh patterns against us to draw us into sin. Their strategy focuses on our thought life. Therefore, part of their strategy is to insert **fleshly, lying, condemning, and tempting thoughts** into our minds.

Read Matthew 16:21-23 below to see a perfect biblical example of Satan's strategy to insert thoughts into our minds:

*"From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."²² **Peter took him aside** and began to rebuke him. **'Never, Lord!'** he said. **'This shall never happen to you!'**" Matthew 16:21-22*

*"But He (Jesus) turned and said to Peter, **'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'**" Matthew 16:23 (Parenthesis mine)*

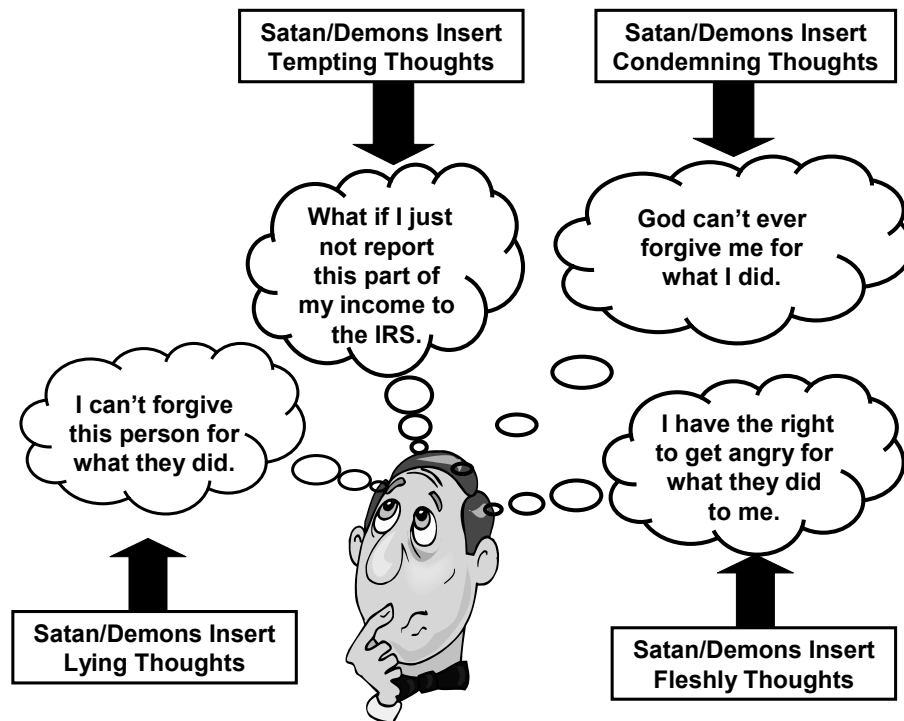
When Peter responded to what Jesus told His disciples about His death and resurrection, Jesus's response was, "Get behind Me, Satan." Jesus knew who was behind the thoughts that were verbalized by Peter. Jesus knew that Satan had introduced those thoughts because He did not address Peter. Rather, He addressed Satan. Since Satanic/demonic thoughts come in the form of first person, then it can be extremely difficult (if not impossible) for us to discern whether or not our thoughts are our own or whether they are from Satan himself.

DAY TWO

The key truth to remember concerning Satan and your thought life is:

***When Satan/demons insert thoughts into your mind,
they will come in FIRST person and will sound a lot like your voice.***

When Satan inserts thoughts into your mind, they will never be in third person. They will always come in first person (“I” or “me”) in order to persuade you that the thought originated with you. The diagram below reveals different types of thoughts that Satan/demons can insert into your mind as well as what they might sound like in first person.



Another scheme of the enemy is to insert thoughts that blame God such as, “God is the one responsible for why I am in this mess. He is the cause of all this pain.” If you take ownership of these thoughts, then you will be blaming God instead of realizing that Satan was the origin of these thoughts.

Questions: Are there any areas in your life where you are blaming God for something? Ask God to reveal if Satan/demons are behind that thinking.

Engaging God: Begin asking God to expose any lying, tempting, condemning, or fleshly thoughts that you are having that may be coming from Satan/demons.

Satan/demons are capable of INSERTING fleshly, lying, condemning, and tempting thoughts into your mind.

Satan's/Demon's Strategy Part Two - DECEPTION

*“But I am afraid, lest **as the serpent deceived Eve** by his craftiness, **your minds should be led astray** from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:3*

*“And no wonder, for **Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.**” 2 Corinthians 11:14*

Satan's objective is to insert these first person thoughts into your mind with the hope that you will take ownership of them by believing that they are your own thoughts. This is the great deception of Satan. This is where He is most dangerous. Why? If you take ownership of Satan's/demon's thoughts, they then can keep you in bondage to your lying beliefs and further draw you into false conclusions.

For example, Satan or his demons might insert first person condemning thoughts such as, "Why can't I attain victory over my sin problem? I keep getting defeated over and over again. I must be doing something wrong." If you stay focused on these Satanic/demonic thoughts, then they might deceive you further by tempting you to come to false conclusions such as, "God is not really working in my life. He must really not want me to change. I think that I am going to give up on God." If you take ownership of these thoughts and act on these thoughts, then you will conclude that you need to go back to the flesh and take control because God is not going to come through for you.

DECEPTION is the key strategy of Satan and his demons.

They constantly try to deceive you by making you believe that your OWN mind is the origin of THEIR thoughts.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you if Satan/demons are trying to deceive you concerning recurring fleshly or sinful thoughts.

DAY THREE

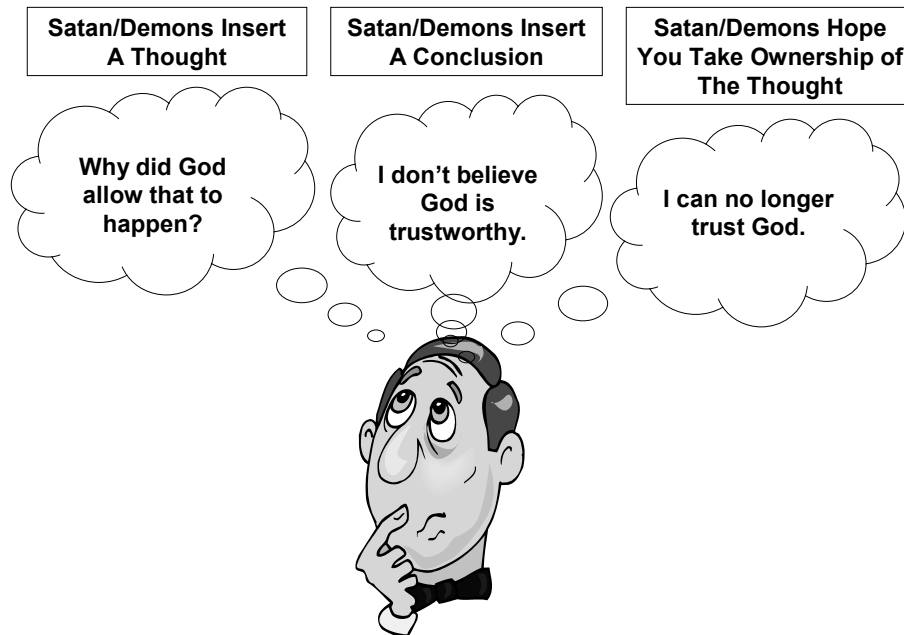
Satan's/Demon's Strategy Part Three - Persuading You To DOUBT God

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?''"
Genesis 3:1

*"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, **she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.**"* Genesis 3:6

As we saw in the Garden of Eden, Satan/demon's objective is to create havoc in your soul by persuading you to doubt God, His love, His power, His goodness, and His desire for your transformation, etc. Satan knows that if he can just create one ounce of doubt, you will be tempted to turn back to your flesh to live life in your own self-effort.

For example, let's assume that you lose a close friend through a freak accident. Look at the next illustration to see how Satan might use this to create doubt in your mind about God and to turn you away from trusting Him.



Satan/demons know that once you begin to doubt God, you will turn back to living from yourself as the source,

Engaging God: Ask God to expose whether or not the thoughts behind your doubts are coming from Satan/demons.

How Do We Engage God To Deal With Satan and His Demons?

1. LEARN the truth about Satan from God's Word Develops Our Spiritual Filter

Learning God's truth will build the "spiritual filter" that we talked about previously. As we learn the truth, and receive revelation from the Holy Spirit about the truth, then our spiritual filter will be developed to be more discerning, entrusting, and not taking ownership of Satanic/demonic thoughts. There are four key truths that we need to learn about Satan:

a. Be VIGILANT concerning the schemes and strategies of Satan/demons.

*"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, **the devil**, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to **devour**." 1 Peter 5:8*

*"lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his **schemes**." 2 Corinthians 2:11*

We have already discussed several of Satan's strategies. The key in dealing with Satan's strategies is **spiritual vigilance**. I simply define spiritual vigilance as staying spiritually aware and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's revelation of Satan's schemes.

Ultimately, Satan's main objective is to keep you focused upon yourself as the source to live life.

b. We, in our own power, are POWERLESS to fight Satan and his demons.

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and **not from ourselves.**” 2 Corinthians 4:7*

Since we are fighting an unseen enemy, we can’t possibly fight Satan and his demonic forces. Therefore, do not talk to Satan or his demons. That is God’s job. Your part is to engage God and His power to deal with these enemies.

c. Satan and his demons are powerless when we walk in God’s POWER.

*“And then the **lawless one (Satan)** will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8 (Parenthesis mine)*

*“Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death **He (Jesus) might render powerless him (Satan) who had the power of death, that is, the devil.**” Hebrews 2:14 (Parentheses mine)*

*“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because **greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.**” 1 John 4:4*

As we walk by faith, we are walking in God’s power over Satan/demons. This is another key reason why it is so critical to walk by faith. Satan is a “toothless” lion when we depend upon, rest upon, and draw upon God’s power.

Engaging God: Seek God to give you greater revelation of the truth concerning Satan and his demons.

DAY FOUR

d. Now that you are in union with God, you have His FULL protection (ARMOR).

*“**Put on the full armor of God** so that you (in God’s power) can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.” Ephesians 6:11 (Parenthesis mine)*

The moment you are saved God makes His armor available to you. The armor is Christ Himself. However, you have a choice to make and that is to put on the armor or not. As you walk dependently upon God, you are wearing (and have the full protection of) His armor. However, when you choose to walk in fleshly independence from God then you, in effect, have taken your armor off. God’s armor can no longer offer you no protection against your flesh, the power of sin and Satan/demonic.

Now it is up to YOU to protect yourself against all your internal and external enemies. You might as well have your hands tied behind your back because you are defenseless against all of these enemies. Therefore, it is crucial that you continue to walk by faith so that the armor of God will continually protect you from the “fiery darts” of the enemy.

*“above all, taking the **shield of faith** with which you will be able to **quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.**” Ephesians 6:16*

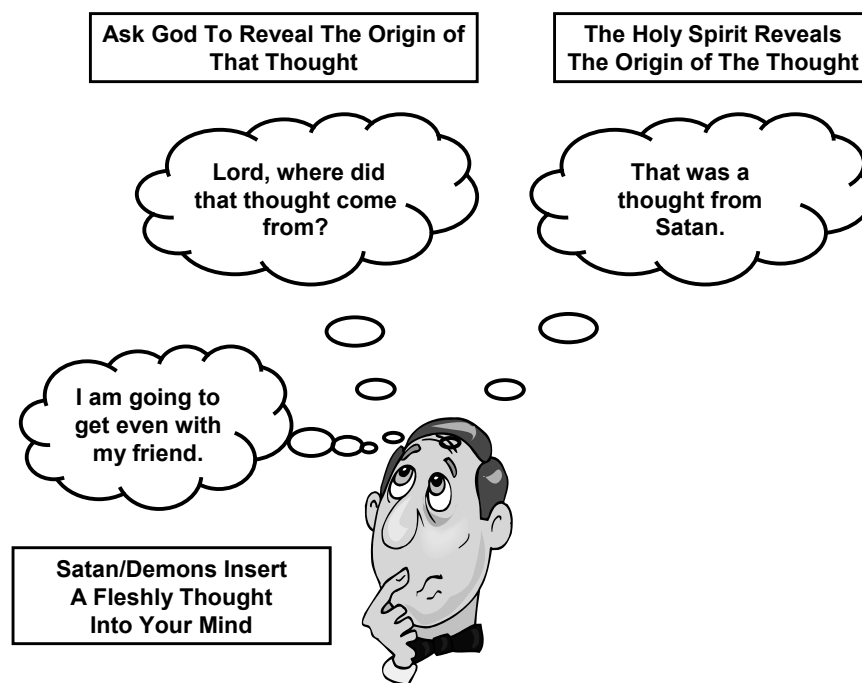
Engaging God: Seek God to give you a greater desire to walk in His armor so that you will be able to withstand the fiery darts of the enemy.

2. Ask the Holy Spirit to REVEAL to you if the thoughts that you are thinking are of Satan/demons.

*“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God..” 1 John 4:1*

Let’s assume that you have a thought to get even with a friend who rejected you. Let’s also assume that this thought came from Satan. It might sound like, “I can’t believe that my friend said that to me. I can’t let this go. I am going to have to get even with this person.”

Before you act on that thought, ask God to tell you who was the origin of that thought. Listen closely to what the Holy Spirit reveals to you. The following is an illustration of what this might look like:



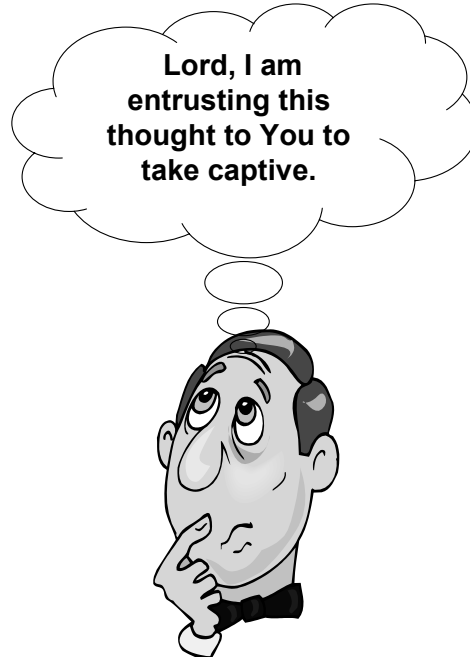
Engaging God: Develop a habit of asking the Holy Spirit to reveal the origin of your thoughts. Ask Him to expose those thoughts that are coming from Satan/demons.

3. ENTRUST The Satanic/Demonic thoughts to God, and ask the Holy Spirit to take those thoughts captive.

Once the Holy Spirit reveals to you that the thoughts are coming from Satan/demons, entrust those thoughts to Him for Him to take captive. Remember that entrusting the thoughts to God

means that you are not taking ownership of those Satanic/demonic thoughts. It means that you are handing them over to God for Him to take captive.

**Entrust The Satanic/Demonic Thoughts To
God For Him To Take Captive**



DAY FIVE

4. If the thoughts keep coming, KEEP drawing on God's POWER to remove those thoughts.

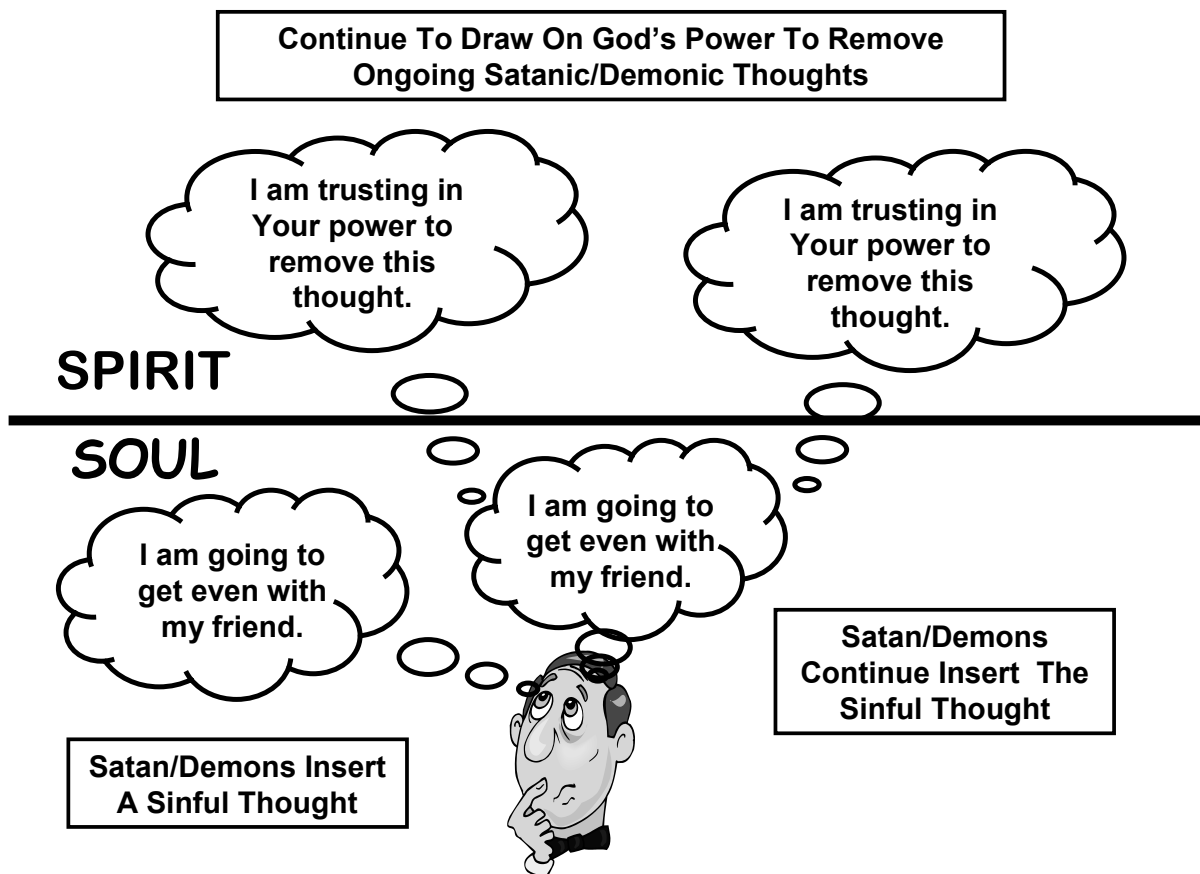
“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

Many times Satan will not insert a thought only once . He may continue to insert the same thought over and over again in order to wear your faith down to a place where you will finally take ownership of that thought and give in to sin. Therefore, you must persist in drawing upon God's power to remove those thoughts.

In James 4:7 you can see that you must submit your thoughts to God, and God will resist Satan/demons through you. Apart from God you are not the one to resist Satan. You are powerless to do that in your own strength.

***It may take some time before Satan FINALLY gives up, so continue to seek God
to REMOVE any Satanic/demonic thoughts.***

The diagram on the following page uses “The Line” analogy to show how we continue to draw on God’s power to deal with Satanic/demonic thoughts. Reading from left to right, you first have Satan/demons inserting a fleshly thought in your mind below “The Line.” If you go above “The Line” and engage God’s power, then you entrust the thought to Him. However, the enemy may come at you again with the same sinful thought below “The Line.” You then must go above “The Line” and once again seek God’s power to remove that thought. This process may have to go on and on until the enemy quits attacking you with those thoughts.

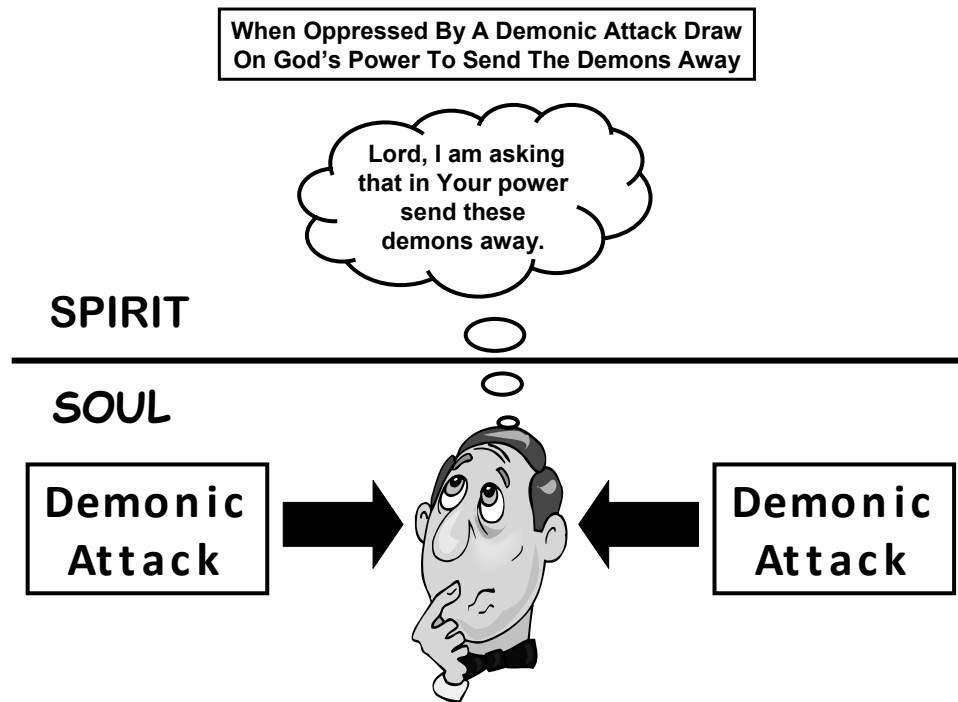


5. When you sense that you are under DEMONIC attack, seek God and His power to send those demons away who may be OPPRESSING you.

There will be times in your faith walk that you will experience ongoing oppression by Satan or demons. It will feel like an all-out attack on your mind. You cannot keep them from influencing your mind in your own strength. Therefore, ask God to use His power to remove the Satanic/demonic influence that is oppressing you. Here again you may have to fight the fight of faith by continually asking God to remove the oppression. During a demonic attack, the demons will not usually give up after only one attack. This is especially true in areas of your reinforced lying beliefs and sin strongholds. This is illustrated in the next diagram.

Using “The Line” analogy, let’s assume that you come under demonic attack. Immediately seek God in His power to send the demons away. This may have to be repeated several times

depending upon the severity of the attack. The key is to continue seeking God in His power to remove the demonic influence until the attack is over.



Thickening Your Armor (What Happens As We Walk By Faith)

There is an analogy that I share that we need to talk further about concerning Satanic and demonic strategies in our lives. We know that the moment we are saved we have access to the full armor of God. The armor is Christ Himself Who is the truth. However, early on our armor is very thin due to unbelief. However, as we grow in, believe and walk in the truth our armor thickens and we are more and more able to withstand the fiery darts of the enemy. However, since the enemy knows our history, He is constantly looking for the weak spots in your armor. Therefore, it is crucial to continue walking by faith so that your armor will thicken and you will be able to stand firm against the enemy's attack.

Summary

There is so much more that we can say about Satan and his demonic forces. However, the key truth in this part of the study is that you are defenseless against Satan/demons apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. However, as you engage God, the Holy Spirit will expose the thoughts that are from Satan/demons and will take those thoughts captive.

Lesson Four

Understanding Our Emotions

DAY ONE

Introduction

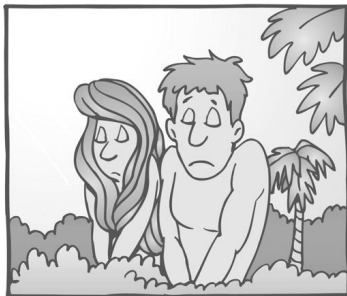
In this lesson we will focus on healing of our damaged emotions and the woundedness that resides in our soul. We will explore the sources of our woundedness as well as God's process of healing. I trust that if you struggle in this area that God will use these truths to begin the healing process.

What Do We Need To Understand About Emotions?

From the beginning God created us with emotions as part of the makeup of our soul. This is part of our "human-ness." Emotions are a gift from God. They allow us to express our feelings about all that has happened or is happening in our lives.

A noted author writes, "Emotions are God's indicators of what is going on inside. They are neither good nor bad. They are amoral and are just part of your humanity. Just like you respond to the warnings of physical pain, you need to learn to respond to your emotional indicators."

When emotions are in line with God's truth, we are then functioning in them as God intended. However, when emotions are tied to or flow from our lying beliefs, they become damaged emotions and can create havoc in our soul. Look at the first damaged emotions in the Garden of Eden after the Fall:



*"Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?' So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was **afraid** because I was naked; and I hid myself.'"* Genesis 3:9, 10

The question is, "Why were Adam and Eve experiencing fear?" Before the Fall they never experienced fear, especially fear of God. Why did they hide themselves from God? They hid themselves as a result of their sin and their lying belief that they were to be afraid of God. As a result of their independent decision to not believe God, they experienced a damaged emotion of fear that they had never experienced before.

Exercise: Write down the damaged emotions that you feel when your lying beliefs are triggered (e.g., anxiety, fear, inadequacy, guilt, condemnation, etc.).

DAMAGED emotions are those emotions that are tied to and are the product of our lying beliefs.

Jesus Had Emotions Too!

*“For we do not have a high priest **who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses**, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15*

*“Then He said to them, ‘**My soul is deeply grieved**, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.’” Matthew 26:38*

Jesus in His humanity had feelings and emotions just like you and me have. He was not exempt from the same emotions that we feel. Why? One reason is that in order for Jesus to empathize with us, He had to feel the pain of our emotions (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus **wept** as He saw the grief of His friends over the death of Lazarus (John 11), and Jesus **was excited** at the centurion’s faith (Matthew 8). We see His **anger** at the temple when He overturned the tables (John 13), and His **grief** at the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:38).

Why is it important that we remember that Jesus had our same emotions? It is because day by day and moment by moment, Jesus had to make the same choices that we have to make. Just as we experience, Jesus Himself was presented with the same question, “Are You going to live from Your emotions, or are You going to live moment by moment in dependence upon the Father and His truth?”

Had you ever considered that if Jesus had chosen to live out of His own emotions instead of His dependence upon His Father that He might NOT have gone to the cross for us?

Damaged or Deceiving Emotions

Damaged Emotions



Damaged emotions are a result of repeated **negative** messages, abuse, trauma, etc. Let’s go back to some of the negative messages that you heard growing up such as, “You are no good! You are a failure! I don’t love you!” (Remember that these can be verbal or non-verbal messages.) Let’s assume for a moment that those messages left you feeling inadequate, unworthy, or insecure. As you start believing that these messages are true of you, then the tendency is to feel inadequate, unworthy, and/or insecure whenever similar messages are said to you today.

DAY TWO

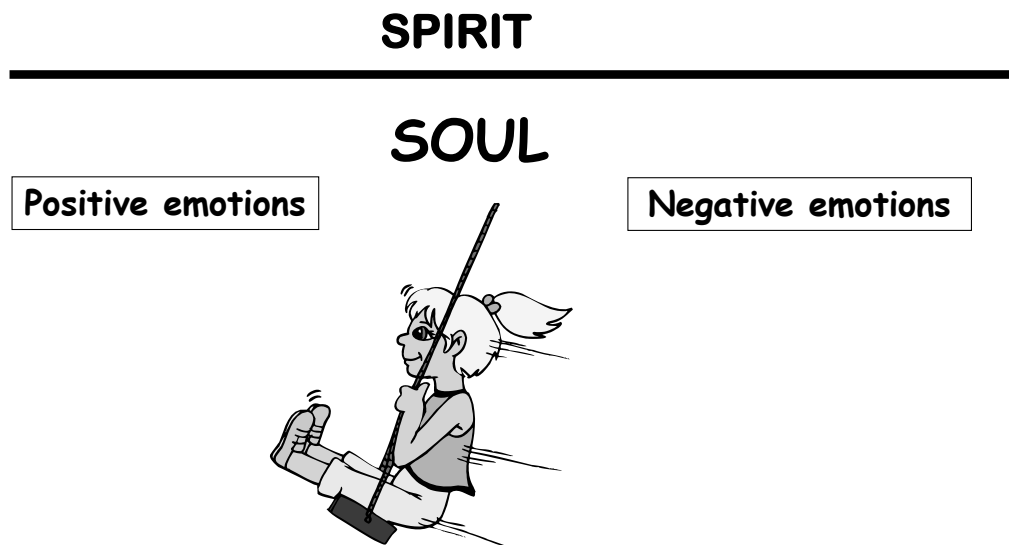
Deceiving Emotions



Deceiving emotions are derived primarily from **positive** messages and circumstances. If they come from positive messages such as, “You can do it. There is nothing that you can’t do.” etc., you might feel self-confident and self-assured. Why are these emotions deceiving? They are deceiving because they can strengthen your independent, self-sufficient attitude which will result in YOU attempting to live the Christian life independently of God.

The “Emotional” Swing

Feelings flow from our soul every moment. We experience **positive** emotions such as love or happiness, and we experience **negative** emotions such as fear or anger. It is like being on a swing. We swing back and forth in our soul from **positive** to **negative** emotions. We don’t mind swinging towards **positive** emotions, but when we begin to experience **negative** emotions, we want to swing away from them. We want to try to control the swing, but the truth is that we can’t stop the emotions from swinging. The next diagram illustrates this truth:



Our Emotions Are Like A Swing

In God’s design our emotions were meant to swing. It is part of our soulful makeup. However, God wants to work through our emotions. As God transforms our souls, He wants us to experience positive emotions such as joy or happiness. When we experience negative emotions, He uses them to reveal to us our fleshly attitudes or our lying beliefs. He allows our emotions to show us that we need to turn to God as our Source for Him to deal with what is behind any negative emotions.



For example, you just find out that you have a life-threatening health issue. At the moment when you get the bad news, the negative emotions of fear or worry may come to the surface. The decision will be to either entrust the fear and worry to God or to hold onto the fear and worry yourself. If you hold on to those negative emotions, they can overcome you and control you. However, if you entrust those negative emotions to God, then He can be your Source of comfort and peace.

As much as we would like to avoid or not feel negative emotions, it is impossible to do so. That is why it is important to know that feelings are just indicators of what is going on inside and that there is no need to attempt to try to control them. However, when feelings are wrapped around lying beliefs, a larger problem exists.

As much as we would like to control the SWING of our emotions, it is impossible.
However, God will use our emotions in His transformation process.

Feelings and Your Belief Systems

Any repeated message in our mind can result in feelings that may or may not be true, but they can be accepted as being true. If the repeated lying messages are not dealt with through the grid of God's truth, then the feelings associated with those messages can turn into lying beliefs. "I feel" becomes "I believe that I am." Once the lying belief is accepted as being true, the feelings associated with it are no longer questioned. The feelings themselves then dictate to an individual what truth is. This results in fleshly behaviors being consistent with the feelings. These emotions become "damaged" emotions because they are lying to us.

In the next diagram we see that what we feel and believe have become one and the same. When these damaged emotions that are wrapped around the associated lying beliefs are touched, they can lead to fleshly behaviors in the same way that our lying beliefs can lead us to fleshly behaviors.

Feelings Are Tied To Your Lying Beliefs



DAY THREE

"I Feel" To "I Believe That I Am"

Let's look at this process of how damaged and deceiving emotions can lead to lying beliefs. We will start with a damaging emotion.

Example: Let's assume that for the most part you failed in meeting your parents' expectations. You begin to have feelings associated with that failure. As a result of your failure, you might say:

I FEEL unacceptable or unworthy.

Because **I FEEL** this way,

I ACT as if **I AM** unacceptable or unworthy.

Because **I FEEL** and **ACT** this way,

I BELIEVE that **I AM** not acceptable or that **I AM** not worthy.

Because **I FEEL** and **ACT** and **BELIEVE** this way,

I make it a **FACT** by saying, "**I AM** unacceptable" or "**I AM** unworthy."

Going from **feelings** to **beliefs** to **facts** is largely an unconscious event that takes place over a period of time or perhaps years. The previous example began with damaged emotions. Let's see how a belief system can be formed around deceiving emotions.

Let's assume that your parents constantly reinforced the message that you could do no wrong. You might say to yourself:

I FEEL self-confident or self-sufficient.

Because **I FEEL** this way,

I ACT as if **I AM** self-confident or self-sufficient.

Because **I FEEL** and **ACT** this way,

I BELIEVE that I am self-confident or that I am self-sufficient.

Because **I FEEL** and **ACT** and **BELIEVE** this way,

I make it a **FACT** by saying, "I AM self-confident" or "I AM self-sufficient."

How Those "Feeling" Beliefs Affect You Today

How do your beliefs affect you today? One of two things happens on a continuing basis. Either a similar event takes place that triggers your feelings which in turn triggers your beliefs, or that event can trigger your beliefs which are followed by the feelings associated with your beliefs.



For example, you walk in to work today, and the boss says without any warning or explanation that this is your last day at your job. Your emotions respond first with feelings of unacceptability or unworthiness followed by the lying belief system that reinforces your feelings. Or, your lying belief system responds first with the belief that you are unacceptable or unworthy and your feelings quickly follow to reinforce your beliefs. Therefore, when similar events come into your life that trigger your feelings and/or beliefs, your tendency will be to continue to believe the lies.

REMEMBER: Every time that an event causes you to confirm what is in your belief system, you are reinforcing that belief system. Therefore, if your belief system does not line up with God's Word, you continue reinforcing your lying beliefs.

Emotions – Thoughts and Behavior

It is not the **thought** that suddenly appears in our mind that causes behaviors or attitudes. The thought must find something to partner with. The thing within us that makes a thought controlling or causes us to accept the thought without question is our **feeling** about the thought. All of this has roots in our beliefs that may be forgotten or denied.

**If a thought can't find other similar thoughts or emotions, it is only a fleeting thought.
Our response is that we let it go.**

OR

A thought comes into the mind and finds other thoughts like itself to unite with. There is a meeting of past thoughts and emotions with the current thoughts and emotions, and they empower each other to impact our behavior.

Example: I see a semi truck approaching as I am driving down the road. A thought enters my mind such as, "I could turn into that truck at just the last minute." That thought finds no feelings or emotions that it can attach to that are in agreement with it. It is just a random thought that comes and goes. But, if life has dealt me a tragedy, and I begin to feel hopeless, unwanted, shameful, depressed, and that the world would be better off without me, that random thought takes on power because of my beliefs and their accompanying emotions. More thoughts are produced, and more emotions come. Strength is given to the new thoughts that are coming alive in me. I am now in danger.



This is the meeting of my past with my present, with my habits being touched with current thoughts. What comes together is the incoming thought, the existing habits of thought, and the resulting emotions that empower each other as behavior begins to take place.

If we have emotions without putting them through a grid of truth, then we will validate and reinforce the way that we feel. So from birth as we respond to life, we continue to reinforce thought patterns and emotions until we lose our freedom and become enslaved to our emotions.

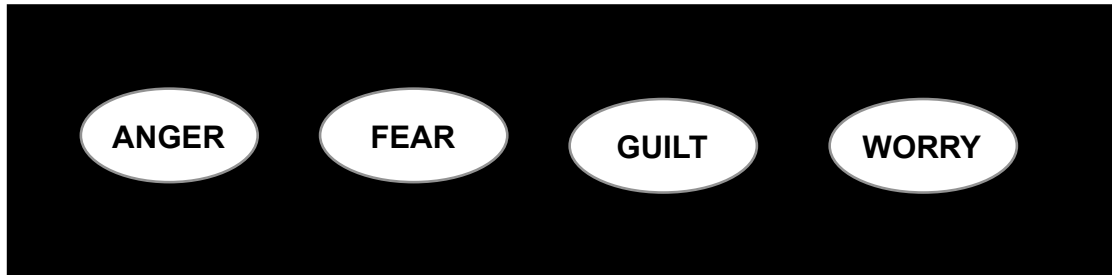
DAY FOUR

There Is Nothing Wrong With the Initial Feelings.

"Be angry and do not sin...." Ephesians 4:26

Ephesians 4:26 is telling us that we can have an emotion of anger, but it is not necessarily sin. It can certainly lead to sin, but it points out a very important truth when it comes to our emotions. If someone or something triggers a negative emotion, there is no sin in the emotion. The negative emotion is just an indicator of what is going on in our soul. Emotions are like the indicator lights on the dashboard of our car. When the oil light flashes, it is indicating that we are about to be out of oil. In like manner, our emotions are indicators on our "soulical" dashboard. When we feel anger, fear, guilt, etc., these emotional indicators are telling us that there is a soulical problem.

"Emotional" Dashboard



All that the initial negative emotion is telling us is, “There is a problem, and a choice is needing to be made.” What is the choice? The choice is between choosing to believe the lying belief tied to the emotion or choosing Christ. Therefore, God is using our emotions to reveal to us that we must get above “The Line” in order for Him to deal with the lying beliefs behind those emotions.

For example, you find out you owe \$3,000 more on your income taxes and that there is not enough money in your bank account to cover those taxes. Your emotional indicator light goes “on” as you become anxious and fearful. At that very moment you have a choice to make. If you take ownership of those negative feelings, the result will be that the power of sin and the flesh will take over.

You Can Live Above “The Line” Even Though Your Emotions Are Still In Turmoil.

*“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest.**” Matthew 11:28*

*“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the **way of escape** also, that you may be able to endure it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13*

*“Then He said to them, “**My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me. And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.**” Matthew 26:38,39*

Look at Jesus’s soul in the garden of Gethsemane the night before He was to go to the cross. He said in Matthew 26:38 that His soul was “deeply grieved to the point of death.” In other words, Jesus was feeling genuine grief in facing the cross. It was so deep a grief that it resulted in Jesus asking the Father if He could bypass the cross. However, He immediately went to His Spirit and responded with an attitude of obedience. Do you think that the grief of Jesus went away even though He chose to live from His Spirit? I doubt it! I believe that the grief continued all the way to the cross. Jesus chose, as you and I have to do, to live from the Spirit and to not allow the emotions to be in control.

We have the same choice when our emotions are stirred up. We can choose to live above “The Line” “in Christ” and experience His rest and peace even though the emotions are still “swinging” in our souls.

What would this look like in your life? For example, your boss calls you into his office. He is unhappy with your performance. In your soul you may begin to experience anxiety or worry over losing your job or else get angry because you think that your boss is being unfair. However, in the next moment you can go above “The Line” “in Christ” and draw on Christ’s confidence, peace, and rest. It will be an attitude of confidence that God is in control, which results in an attitude of His peace and His rest. Refer to “the line” next diagram that illustrates this point:

SPIRIT

**Christ-like Attitude of:
Confidence-Rest-Peace**

THE LINE

SOUL

*Emotions of:
Anxiety-Worry-Anger*

DAY FIVE

How Does God Take Us From Our Lying Beliefs To His Truth?

*“Sanctify them in the truth; **Thy word is truth**” Jn. 17:17*

God’s truth is the believer’s new reference point. Remember that faith is not a feeling or an experience. Rather, it is an assurance and a conviction. Faith takes us from “I feel” to “I believe.” Your point of reference is no longer your feelings. Rather, your new point of reference is faith in what God says is true. As you continue to believe God’s truth, you will begin to experience His truth in you. What happens when you start choosing God’s truth by faith over your emotions?

GOD’S TRUTH says that I am adequate in Him.

Because **GOD’S TRUTH** says that I am adequate in Him,

I NO LONGER CHOOSE to believe the lie that since I feel inadequate, that I am inadequate.

I CHOOSE TO BELIEVE by faith that the word of God is true in that I am adequate in Christ.

Because of **GOD’S TRUTH** and my **FAITH**,

I can then **WALK IN THE TRUTH** that I am adequate in Christ.

Early on in our walk of faith, we may not “experience” any changes in our “feeling” belief systems. However, as we continue to walk in God’s truth by faith, we will begin to experience our beliefs and our emotions lining up with God’s truth.

In The Moment, We Can CHOOSE Jesus As The “I AM” Over Our Emotions.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life...” John 14:6

In any given moment we can be bombarded constantly with thoughts, circumstances, or relationships which can trigger our negative emotions. In any given moment we can feel rejected, out of control, weak, mistreated, etc. Instead of taking ownership of those emotions and the lying beliefs that surround them, we can choose to believe Jesus as our “I AM.”

For example,

I feel inadequate. Jesus says, “I AM your adequacy.” 2 Corinthians 3:5

I feel rejected. Jesus says, “I AM your acceptance.” Romans 15:7

I feel weak. Jesus says, “I AM your strength.” Romans 6:10

In the moment when you choose Christ by faith to be your “I AM,” the feelings may or may not go away. However, as God renews your mind to His truth, and you begin to have an experiential confidence that He is your “need-meeter,” then whether you continue to have the feelings or not is not the issue. You will know in the moment when the feelings come up that you can simply trust Him to meet the need associated with those feelings.

Questions: What are your recurring damaged and deceiving emotions? What are they creating a need for from the supply of Christ?

Engaging God: Begin trusting Christ to be those things that you need in those moments when those damaged or deceiving emotions come to mind.

Woundedness



*“Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence. **He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge;** His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the **arrow** that flies by day,”* Psalm 91:3-5

Since you were born into a fallen world, there were painful “arrows” sent into your life that may have caused woundedness in your life that you are still suffering from today. Some examples of these “arrows” that have come in your life may be an alcoholic father, an emotionally unavailable

mother, a sexually abusive stepfather, etc. Or, it could be a traumatic event such as an accident, a physical defect, divorce, suicide, etc. What are the results of these arrows of woundedness?

As a result of these “arrows,” we have developed lying, emotionally- based belief systems about ourselves, others, and God. Such “feeling” lies as, “I feel inadequate,” “I feel dirty,” “I feel unloved,” “I feel guilty,” etc. can produce lying beliefs of unworthiness, shame, self-condemnation, rejection, etc. For example, let’s assume that you were sexually abused as a child. You look at yourself with shame, and you come to believe that you are unworthy. Your lying belief is so strong that you feel like you are not worthy of love, especially of a man. Let’s assume that a godly man comes into your life, and it is God’s will for you two to get married. However, you feel so unworthy that even with God’s provision of a godly man who is meant for you, you can’t go through with the marriage because of your stronghold of unworthiness. You find yourself defending the lie that you are unworthy and are not allowing God to give you His grace and truth. John Eldridge says this about the “arrows” in his book *Sacred Romance*:

“How can we keep our heart alive in the face of such deadly arrows? How many losses can a heart take? If we deny the wounds or try to minimize them, we deny a part of our heart and end up living a shallow optimism that frequently becomes a demand that the world be better than it is. On the other hand, if we embrace the arrows as the final word on life, we despair, which is another way to lose heart. To lose hope has the same effect on our heart as it would have if it stopped breathing. If there were only someone to help us reconcile our deepest longings with our greatest fears.”

We have all been wounded. We are living in a fallen world and woundedness is a part of it. However, we will learn in Lesson Five the truth about God’s healing of woundedness and different ways we can engage Him to experience His healing.

Lesson Five

Healing The Wounded Heart

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

Psalm 147:3

DAY ONE

Introduction

Now that we have talked about our emotions and how they can become damaged and the woundedness that can result, I want us to focus on God’s truth about healing of our wounded heart. Let’s begin by learning what God means by the “heart.”

What Is The “Heart?”

The word “heart” is referred to in the Bible 795 times. Therefore, I believe that it is important to include the heart in the discussion of the healing of our woundedness. The truth is that God is a “heart” God. We see that in several scriptures concerning David:

*“Be strong and let your **HEART** take courage, All you who hope in the LORD.” Psalm 31:24*

*“Though a host encamp against me, My **HEART** will not fear; Though war arise against me, in spite of this I shall be confident.” Psalm 27:3*

*“When You said, “Seek My face,” my **HEART** said to You, “Your face, O LORD, I shall seek.” Psalm 27:8*

In these scriptures the heart is primarily associated with the soul. Therefore, for the purpose of our discussion on the healing of our woundedness, I will be using heart and soul synonymously

It is always about the heart with God. We believe Jesus with our heart. The word of God must be sown in our hearts. God speaks to our heart through our human spirit. Jim Richards wrote in his book, “Moving Your Invisible Boundaries,” that “the heart is where the invisible transforms into the visible, the impossible made possible, and spiritual reality explodes onto the physical plane.”

When we look at the story of Mary and Martha, we tend to give Martha a hard time because she is in the kitchen and not with Mary at Jesus’s feet. The truth is that the issue was not that Martha was in the kitchen. The issue was the condition of her heart. She was not only trying to be a people-pleaser by doing for Jesus, but she was self-righteous in giving Mary a hard time for not helping her. However, the same could have been true of Mary. She could have been thinking as she sat at the feet of Jesus “what is wrong with Martha? Doesn't she see that Jesus should be a higher priority than being in the kitchen? I wish she could get her priorities straight.” Had that been the case, she would have been just as self-righteous as her sister. However, the truth was

that more importantly than being at Jesus's feet, her heart was right. She simply was hungering and thirsting to be in Christ's presence.

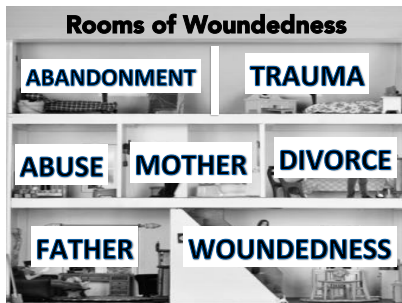
Let's continue the study by looking at how we form rooms or prisons in our heart.

You Build Rooms/Prisons In Your Heart.



*“Behold, **I stand at the door and knock**; if anyone hears My voice and **opens the door, I will come in to him...**”*
Revelation 3:20

From birth we unconsciously begin to build a house in our heart. I call this house “woundedness.” As we experience more and more of life, we build rooms in this house. Some of the rooms contain our fleshly behaviors that result from woundedness such as fear, anger, insecurity, or inadequacy. Other rooms are wounding events such as abuse, rejection, or abandonment. There can be a mother, father, or stepparent room as well.



Some of these rooms are smaller than others because their impact on our lives is not as great as some of the larger rooms which have a severe grip on our heart. Unfortunately, as we move through life and do not deal with rooms, they can grow and loom larger in our souls. They can occupy more and more space in our heart by robbing us of our joy and rest. They can control and overwhelm us. If not dealt with, this house is like a

cancer that permeates our heart and kills it. Much like heart disease slowly kills the physical heart, woundedness kills our “soulical” heart.

Because of the pain created by these rooms, we put locks on these doors. We somehow believe that if we can lock these memories, feelings, and incidents away, they won't impact us today. (At that point these rooms become prisons in our heart.) We feel that we can walk away (i.e. protect or insulate ourselves) from this prison in our soul and live life as if these things never happened. When God comes knocking on these doors in order to heal and set us free, we don't want Him to enter in. So we stand in front of the door shaking our heads saying “No” to God. The truth is that we are not in front of the door we are locked inside what has now become a prison for us.

Here is a sample list of some of the rooms/prisons of woundedness that we build in our souls:

Sexual abuse	Emotional Abuse	Physical abuse	Mother Abuse
Father abuse	Stepparent Abuse	Fear	Divorce
Abandonment	Anger	Insecurity	Inadequacy
Self-Condernation	Rejection	Self-Hatred	Unworthiness

Exercise: Pick one or more of the areas of woundedness from the list above. If you can't find anything on the list that applies to you, ask the Lord to search your heart to reveal any areas of woundedness that are not apparent to you. Write what you chose below.

Questions: In what ways do you think these rooms of woundedness may be impacting what you think, the choices you are making, and most importantly how you feel about yourself as a person, as a spouse, as a parent, and how you feel about God and others? Is it possible that these rooms are restricting or stifling your growth?

How We Try To Deal With Our Woundedness INDEPENDENTLY From God

If we do not seek the Spirit of God for healing, then we will try to deal with our woundedness in some of the following ways.

1. Denial

I think that one of the key ways that we try to deal with our woundedness is through denial. Denial usually comes in two forms in relation to woundedness.

a. Denial that a wounding event ever took place

I have met with a number of people who deny that a wounding event ever took place. However, it is obvious that they are experiencing great woundedness.

b. Denial that past events impact you today

Another way of dealing with woundedness is simply to deny that some past wounding event affects your life today. It is what I call the “**forget and move on**” syndrome. Wouldn't that be nice if that worked? Have you tried to do this? If so, have you really moved on?

The Truth: We may fool ourselves into believing that we can live in denial, but our behavior dictates otherwise. Whether we acknowledge it or not the toxic overflow from our woundedness will be a constant reminder that denial is an illusion.

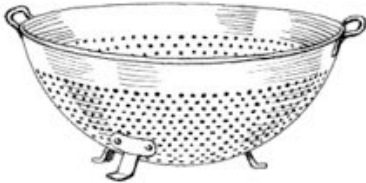
2. Self-Protection/Insulation



In order to try to protect or insulate ourselves from the pain that these events have caused us, we try to lock the doors to these rooms/prison cells. We believe that if we can lock away the woundedness or the wounding event, we will protect or insulate ourselves from further pain associated with those events. Self-protection/insulation is like trying to put your past woundedness in a bank vault where it is locked away forever, and it will never have any effect on your life ever again.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. There was a man who was rejected by his mother from the day he was born until the day that she died. He shared with me the many ways that she rejected him and the woundedness that resulted. This man knew and lived Christ as life, but he had put his mother's rejection away in a bank vault. Or so he thought. I will finish the story shortly, but before I do let's look at the truth concerning self-protection.

The Truth: The problem is that self-protection and insulation from the pain is an **illusion**. The reason is that you can't protect yourself from the pain. **Self or flesh cannot protect self or insulate self from woundedness.** Using the analogy above, the truth is that rather than locking your woundedness in a bank vault, it really ends up in a "soulical" colander where it flows or "oozes" out to negatively impact you, your relationships, and your circumstances. As the old joke goes, self-protection is like putting a screen door on a submarine.



Going back to my friend who was rejected by his mother, a series of rejecting events came about later in his life. Instead of his past rejection being in a bank vault with him thinking that it would not impact him anymore, anger and rejection toward others was "oozing" out of his soulical colander. The tragedy is that to deal with the rejecting events he further attempted to self-protect instead of seeking the Spirit for healing. In light of this think about this truth:

By engaging the Holy Spirit for healing there will be NO need to TRY to self-protect because there will be NOTHING to protect.

3. Compartmentalize

Another way to say it is that we try to compartmentalize these areas of woundedness as a way of protecting or insulating ourselves. Trying to compartmentalize our pain leads us to living a double life. We put on masks that portray an image that everything is "okay" in our lives and that those events (or the results of those events) are no longer impacting our lives. Another word for compartmentalization is "stuffing." We try to stuff these events away, hoping that they will go away or, at the very least, no longer negatively impact our lives.

The Truth: Compartmentalization is like trying to contain radiation from a nuclear power plant meltdown. Like insulation or self-protection, compartmentalization is an **illusion**. There is no such thing as stuffing the pain. If we try to "stuff" it like in the colander example earlier, it will ooze out into every area of our lives.

4. Escape or Anesthetize

If we can't insulate or compartmentalize the pain, we look for ways to escape or anesthetize it. Here are some examples of ways that we try to escape or anesthetize the pain.

Work	Shopping	Television
Pornography	Medication	Hobbies
Sex	Overeating	Movies
Anorexia	Computer	Drugs
Alcohol	Working for God	Cell phone



Most of these are self-explanatory, but you may be a little puzzled why I put “working for God” as a way of escape. I know of pastors and lay people who used God to run from God. By this I mean that they are using Christian activity as an unconscious attempt to escape from pain. In other words, we can minister to others or work for God to try to cover over our own pain. Another ploy is what I call the “let’s make a deal” plan. We make a deal with God by thinking that if we do enough for God that He will heal us.

This is a ploy that is very familiar to “doers” like me. It was this “let’s make a deal” plan that drove me for years in my Christian life. I kept thinking that the more I did for God the more He would do for me. Sadly, nothing changed, and the effects of my woundedness only got worse.

The Truth: There is no escaping the pain apart from the Holy Spirit healing it. All attempts to escape will only produce momentary relief but will never produce true healing and freedom.

5. Ignoring our emotions.

When feelings such as anger, sadness, and fear surface that are tied to our woundedness, we simply ignore them. We feel that if we ignore them long enough, they will subside and eventually not resurface again.

You have heard the expression concerning the “elephant in the room.” Imagine yourself being in a room full of elephants that represent the feelings you have that are attached to your woundedness. You think that if you simply turn your back on them or walk around them that they will go away.

The Truth: There is no real ignoring or going around your wounded feelings. They are like the wolf at the door always ready to rear his ugly head.

6. Spiritualizing away our woundedness: “This is my cross to bear.”

Another way that we deal with woundedness is to try to “spiritualize” it away. There are a number of ways that we can do this. We can say that our woundedness is like Paul’s thorn in the flesh. We just need to accept it as a spiritual reality and move on. Some people have told me that their woundedness “is just my cross to bear.” Below is a story to illustrate this.

There was a lady who had two children who died as adults with the result that this created great woundedness. However, instead of seeking divine healing for her woundedness, she felt that this was her cross to bear, and she would make it a point to tell everyone her story. This produced great self-pity. (I don’t share this in any way to minimize the grief that she must have felt.) Instead of her seeking the Spirit for healing, her self-pity produced by the woundedness continued to grow and was being reinforced each time that I heard her tell the story. The result was that her self-pity had become such a deep-seated stronghold that people did not want to be around her.

I am not refuting that we can’t have Pauline thorns or experience suffering, but when we use these spiritual or biblical phrases to justify perpetuating our woundedness, then we have crossed a line that really says, “I can’t be healed or set free in this area of woundedness.”

These phrases may sound very spiritual, but I simply call this practice “chocolate covered Alpo” (if you didn't know it, Alpo is a brand of dog food!). In my example, Alpo represents our woundedness and the chocolate syrup represents our spiritual sayings or justifications that we use to cover over our woundedness. While it may look appealing, I have never been able to get anyone to take a bite. Would you?

The Truth: Trying to spiritualize away our woundedness will only serve to kick the can of our woundedness down the road and will not allow the Spirit to heal us.

Satan/Demons Want To Make Sure You Stay Imprisoned.

You can only imagine how badly Satan/demons want you to stay locked away in your prisons and keep you living from the pain, woundedness, and hopelessness that those prison cells create. He knows that if you resist God’s healing process, you will continue being “stuck” and will eventually lose your spiritual momentum to seek Him for healing. Therefore, as we have discussed, Satan/demons work in conjunction with your flesh and the power of sin within you to keep you from being set free. What are some strategies he uses to keep you imprisoned?

1. Keep replaying past wounding events in your mind to REINFORCE or THICKEN the walls of your prison cells



The memories concerning your wounding events are permanently in your brain. They are like photos on your cell phone or computer that are always there and available. Satan will keep bringing up those memories and the feelings surrounding those memories like a non-stop running slide show. He knows that if you keep taking ownership of the thoughts and feelings surrounding your wounding events, then the walls of your prisons will thicken and be reinforced.

2. If you start down the path of spiritual healing, then Satan/demons will pull out all the stops to RESIST you and drag you back to the prison.

You probably have already discovered that when you started your new journey of living from Christ that you felt resistance from Satan/demons. The reason is that as long as you live in the “default” position of living from self, he has no reason to resist you. However, when you start learning, believing, and choosing to walk in the truth, then he must resist you because the greatest fear of Satan/demons is that you will engage God and that healing will take place.

3. Satan/demons will INSERT unbelieving/doubting, tempting, fleshly, and condemning THOUGHTS to pull you back into your prisons.

a. **Unbelieving/Doubting thoughts** such as “God can’t or won’t really heal me.” “I can’t let God in because the pain is too great.” “I can’t let God in because His grace is not greater than my pain.” “God’s power is not enough to set me from the pain, fear, unforgiveness, anger, inferiority that flows from what happened to me.”

b. **Tempting thoughts** such as: “Continue wallowing in the pain. After all, it was a very wounding event. Maybe if I read one more book or go to one more counselor, then I can set myself free. I need to just lock this woundedness away and move on because it is in the past.”

c. **Fleshly thoughts** such as “I have the right to be _____ (bitter, angry, unforgiving, self-hating, inadequate, etc.). My _____ (dad, mom, stepparent, sibling, former husband, former wife) don't deserve forgiveness for what they did to me. If I forgive them, I feel like I am letting them off the hook.”

d. **Condemning thoughts** such as: “I deserved the _____ (abuse, woundedness, divorce, abandonment, etc.) I received. I am worthless or dirty. I am unworthy of God's healing.”

4. Satan/demons will tempt you to keep using your ESCAPE mechanisms to try to stop or anesthetize the pain.

We talked in the previous section about how we try to escape or anesthetize our pain. The enemy will “help” you by bringing those escape mechanisms to mind and tempting you to use them to try and escape.

5. Satan/demons will also use BUSY-NESS to distract you from dealing with your woundedness.

This is a very subtle but very effective tool. This is one that the enemy has tried to use on me for several years. If I can just stay busy by focusing on my business, my hobbies, etc. then I don't have to think about the pain.

We need to be aware that Satan/demons will pull out all the stops to keep you in the prison cells of your woundedness. It is like being attached to a rubber band, and when you move toward freedom and away from your woundedness, the enemy wants to “pop” you back into prison.

Key Truth: Keep in mind that even if Satan/demons were not in existence, the same principles listed above would apply because of our flesh and the power of sin that indwell us. However, since there is Satan and the demonic, the truth is that the “unholy trinity” (i.e. the flesh, power of sin, Satan/demons) is always working together to keep you from experiencing the promised freedom and healing.

What If We Don't Let God Into Our Rooms/Prisons To Heal Us?

1. We will develop “DEFAULT” feelings to past wounding events that are a result of our thoughts and feelings surrounding those events.

“It has happened to them according to the true proverb, ‘A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,’ and, ‘A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.’” 2 Peter 2:22

Some people tend to replay the wounding events over and over again in their minds. The result is that we develop “default” feelings every time those thoughts cross our minds. I liken this to the dog returning to its vomit in 2 Peter 2:22. Here is a personal example to illustrate this point:

As I continued to live with the unforgiveness and bitterness toward my father, every time a wounding event came to mind I would “default” to feelings of anger and unforgiveness. Other default responses were inadequacy, insecurity, and fear. After my responses became reinforced, I no longer thought about my responses. They simply became **automatic** every time my dad or a

wounding event would come to mind.

2. Feelings associated with these rooms/prisons GROW and become stronger and more reinforced.

If you continue to take ownership of the thoughts and feelings associated with your woundedness, they become stronger and are reinforced. Much like a person who repetitively lifts weights will grow stronger, so too will your thoughts and feelings that are tied to your wounding events.

There is a lady who had two children who died as adults. For years, I would hear her over and over again share about her grief over the loss of her kids. (I don't share this story to minimize grief. Grieving is essential). However, the problem is that each time she shared the story I could sense the self-pity produced by the woundedness growing and being reinforced. The result was that she was mired in the woundedness caused by the grief rather than seeking God to heal the woundedness.

DAY THREE

3. RESIGNATION – “This is as good as it gets.”

Another result of not letting God heal is resignation. Maybe you have tried to get counseling or read books about healing, but no healing took place. Maybe for awhile you sought God for healing, but you didn't experience any healing. You may have come to the place of resignation where you say “this is as good as it gets.” This is a very dangerous place to be because it opens the door for Satan to use your resignation to keep you in bondage to your woundedness.

4. HARDENING of the heart



illustrate:

The one result that troubles me the most is that if we do not let God heal our woundedness we harden our hearts toward God. Hardening of the heart is like compounding interest of a certificate of deposit (when they actually made real interest). We know that over time the interest on a CD compounds or grows the longer we keep the CD. It is the same way with our woundedness. As time goes by, and you don't allow God into your locked rooms to heal, then you compound or add to the existing pain with more pain. Over time this “compounding” causes you to move further and further away from seeking God as the solution. Eventually you will turn away from God completely and will no longer seek Him as a source for healing. Let me share a story to

There was a man that I was discipling who shared with me that his fiancé died in a car accident the day of their wedding. I first met with him 15 years after this event and this is what I heard. “God killed the only person who ever really loved me.” He said it with such deep anger it was obvious that over those 15 years he had been hardening his heart against God.

5. Sense of HOPELESSNESS

Even greater than resignation is the experiencing of hopelessness regarding healing and freedom. Hopelessness is like a “soulical abyss” whereby you are consumed by a darkness that

concludes that it is impossible for there to be any healing. This hopelessness eventually leads to despair and can seriously damage and possibly destroy your walk with God on any and every level.

6. PSYCHOLOGICAL and PHYSIOLOGICAL disorders can eventually develop.

I have worked with a number of people over the years who had developed psychological disorders as a result of not allowing God to heal their woundedness. Such things as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, panic attacks, eating disorders, etc. resulted. It is tragic to see how the “cancer” of woundedness invaded not only their minds but their bodies as well.

Woundedness and Our Identity

Woundedness can profoundly impact how we see ourselves. By this I mean that the feelings and behaviors that flow from our woundedness can create or reinforce our false identity.

For me, as a result of the wounding events in my life, I concluded that I was a rejectable, unloving, and unworthy person. As my woundedness was reinforced, so were my false beliefs. These false beliefs became deeply entrenched. Here are some additional examples of false beliefs:

I am:

**Unworthy
Rejected
Anxious
Weak
Insecure**

**Unacceptable
A failure
Inadequate
Defeated
Fearful**

That is why knowing our true identity in Christ is so crucial to understand. Apart from knowing and believing who God says that we are, we will continue to live from (and reinforce) our false beliefs.



The result of living from false beliefs is summed up by the words of my counselor friend, Perri Dupree who said:

“Those wounds become your internal experience of self and block God’s view of self from becoming experiential.”

What we create out of living from false beliefs and not living from our true identity is what I call our “illusory” self. What I mean by an illusory self is this:

Instead of your identity being based on the TRUTH, your identity will be based on your FALSE beliefs, DAMAGED emotions, and FLESHLY behaviors that flow from your wounded heart.

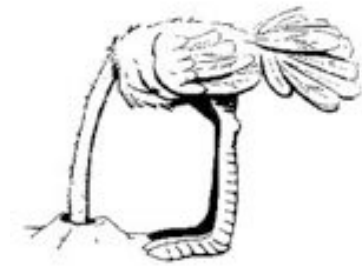
The bottom line: If we are not living from the reality of our true identity, we are living from an illusion. Let me share an example to illustrate.

A man shared with me about his controlling mother who controlled every move he made with the result that it made him feel inadequate to do anything. These feelings over time became part of his “illusory” self. As a result of her anger and controlling, he became an angry and controlling man because of his inadequacy. In fact that is how he described himself when we first met. Because he had been living out of false beliefs, damaged emotions, and fleshly behaviors, he lived in perpetual bondage to his illusory self.

Therefore, another reason why we must allow the Holy Spirit to heal our woundedness is so that we can fully experience our true identity in Christ.

The problem for me was that my false beliefs were so entrenched that even though I learned the truths of my true identity, early on I kept believing the false beliefs rather than that truth. However, as the Spirit began replacing my false beliefs with the truth, healing began to take place. There is no longer any doubt of the Spirit’s healing and transforming power because I no longer live from the false beliefs of my past woundedness.

Woundedness And Our Concept of God



I want to spend some time discussing this issue because most of us struggle in this area. When it comes to wounding events, I often hear, “Where was God when I was being molested, abused, abandoned, etc.?” The follow-up to this remark is: “If God loved me, or if He was in control, why did He let this happen to me?”

We liken God to a “divine” ostrich who has His head stuck in the sand when it comes to our struggles. If we take ownership of such thoughts and continue to reinforce them, they can negatively impact our concept of God.

God says that He is good, that He loves us, and that He is in control. However, if that is true (and it is) we ask why didn’t He intervene or prevent these wounding events from occurring? The first truth that we need to understand is that what God says about Himself is true. There is no compromising of the truth. The problem is that we take God’s truth and tie it to our expectations. What I mean by this is that our expectation (using the example above) is that we expect God to intervene or prevent the wounding event if He really is good, if He really loves me and if He really is in control. When God does not meet our expectations, then we tend to doubt His goodness, love, and sovereignty. However, just because God does not or did not meet our expectations, it does not change His character. Our problem is that we are finite people dealing with an infinite God. We ask the “Why” questions, and when we don’t get answers, then we get frustrated or angry with God.

If you would like my explanation for why a good, loving, and sovereign God does not intervene is that He has given fallen, sinful man free will. We can choose to use our will to molest, abuse, and wound other people. (We can also use it to abuse ourselves or commit suicide.) Since God has given sinful man free will, He allows man to commit these wounding events. However, His promise is that He WILL work every wounding event together for “good” (Romans 8:28). What does God mean when He uses the word “good?” Let me use my story to explain.

Before I share that part of my story, I want you to know that for 48 years I asked the “why” questions about my dad’s abuse. I shook my fist at God for not intervening. I even walked away from Him at one point. So if that is where you are today, I have been there. However, this loving, compassionate, pursuing God drew me back to Himself and began working out all of my abuse from my dad for “good.” What does that “good” look like?

On my road to healing, I learned that part of my abuse resulted from his dad’s abuse toward him. I was stunned when I heard about what happened to my dad from his dad. The generational sins of his father were definitely passed down to me. Trust me, I am not excusing my dad’s abuse. It was sin. However, I realized that my dad was never taught about the life we have in Christ. Therefore, he had no idea what it meant to be transformed even though he was a Christian. The result, like for all of us, is that he was an abuser because he was in bondage to his flesh, the power of sin, and Satan.

Another part of the “good” is that God healed me and transformed my heart so I would be willing to forgive my dad. You see, when God set me free from my unforgiveness toward my dad, then I realized that I could forgive anyone. It was through the healing and the freedom that I realized that God was a good and loving God even though He allowed the abuse to take place. Remember the enemy will even use the scriptures about God’s character to cause you to doubt or to turn away from the only One who can heal you.

DAY FOUR

Key Truths About Our Part In God’s Healing

1. Our ONLY hope for healing is in Christ THE HOPE.

*“to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, **THE HOPE**.....” Colossians 1:27 (Emphasis Mine)*

*“Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your **HOPE** completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:13 (Emphasis Mine)*

Christ is not only THE Life; He is THE Hope. There is no other hope that we can have for healing than Christ. Since you have the fullness of Christ in you, then you have all The Hope you need. We have learned from previous studies that “hope” defined in the New Testament means “confident expectation.” The world view says I hope that it **may** happen while Christ as THE Hope promises that it **will** happen. This is why we are God-seekers because He is our hope.

Human hope says: I hope to see the light at the end of the tunnel concerning my healing.

Christ-hope says: “I (Jesus) am The Light at the end of the tunnel.”

Human hope says: “If I read one more book, go to one more counselor, or hear one more sermon, I can be healed.”

Christ-hope says: “I (Jesus) may use a book, counselor, or sermon, but I am the ONLY one who can heal.”

Human hope says: “I am running out of hope.”

Christ-hope says: “I (Jesus) will provide an endless supply of hope.”

One of the Satan’s key strategies is to rob you of your hope. He knows that if you lose hope in God, then you will truly be hopeless.

Engaging God: If you are feeling hopeless about your healing, seek God to persuade you that He is your hope and the result of Him being your hope is that He will heal you.

2. Christ can EMPATHIZE with your woundedness.

*“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to **empathize** with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” Hebrews 4:15*

Look at all the woundedness that the Lord endured in three short years. He was scorned, ridiculed, rejected, judged, and abused. People hated Him, reviled Him, were bitter against Him, and threatened Him. People let Him down, they walked away from Him, they misunderstood Him, and after all this they crucified Him.

Trust me when I say that Jesus feels your pain. As painful as your woundedness is, would you trade it for what Jesus went through? The primary reason that He went through this pain is to know what woundedness is and what the associated pain feels like. His humanity did not like it any better than yours does, but He can very deeply and personally empathize with your pain and can comfort you in the midst of it.

Engaging God: If you struggle with that fact that you feel all alone in your pain, ask Christ to comfort you because He knows very well the pain that you are going through.

3. The KEY to healing is to transform what you BELIEVE.

*“And do not be conformed to this world but be **transformed** by the **renewing of your mind**...” Romans 12:2a*

Remember that we said early in this study that it is not the wounding event nor the feelings that come from that event. Rather, it is the **false beliefs** that result from the event and the feelings. Therefore, what God will do as we seek Him to renew our minds is to transform our false beliefs that resulted from our woundedness into the truth.

I have experienced this in my own life. As a result of my woundedness, I shared that I believed that I was rejectable, unworthy, inadequate, and a failure. Through seeking God to renew my mind to the truth, He has transformed me to no longer believe the lies about myself. Rather, I now believe that I am accepted, worthy, adequate, and more than a conqueror through Him.

Engaging God: Begin seeking the Lord to renew your mind to the truth and to set you free from your false beliefs that resulted from your woundedness.

4. “Spiritual” forgetting of the wounding events

*“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind** and reaching forward to what lies ahead.” Philippians 3:13*

What does Paul mean by this statement: “**forgetting what lies behind?**” We can’t really ever

forget what happened to us to cause the woundedness in our heart. However, memories of wounding events are not the real issue. It is the **lying beliefs** and **damaged emotions** surrounding those events that are the real issue. We may never forget the event in our mind, but through the process of “spiritual” forgetting, we can be healed and set free from the lying beliefs and damaged emotions attached to the event. Let me give you an analogy:

Let’s assume that an electrical plug represents a wounding event, and the electricity flowing through the outlet is your lying beliefs and damaged emotions surrounding this event. So every time you remember that event, it is like sticking your finger in a light socket. When you do, the electricity shocks you. What happens if you turn off the breaker that controls that plug? The event (plug) is still there but the electricity (lying beliefs and damaged emotions) no longer touches you. I wish it were as simple as flipping the breaker off once but forgetting can either be a one-time event or a long-term process. The good news is that once you spiritually forget the event, it may come back to your mind many times, but it will no longer have a grip on your heart.

Engaging God: Begin to allow the Spirit to renew your mind to the truth concerning your wounding event. Seek Him to persuade you that He will eventually remove the “electricity” so that you will no longer feel the pain associated with your wounding event(s).

5. We believe that if we allow the Lord into these rooms to heal, there will be MORE pain.

“I can’t allow the Lord in this room because it will be too painful.” I hear this response more than any other. However, if you were never really able to keep your pain locked up in the first place, then the truth is that you have been carrying that pain around with you ever since the wounding event(s). I call this “familiar” pain. For some of us, we have been carrying around the “familiar” pain so long that we don’t even recognize it as pain. Therefore, when God comes knocking on the door to heal us, we become fearful of the potential “unknown” pain that may come about through the healing process.

The lie either perpetuated by your own mind or inserted by the enemy is that the healing process will be **too painful**. Let me ask you a question “What continues to happen with your pain if you don’t allow the Holy Spirit to heal you?” Remember that unhealed pain is like compounding interest. The pain will only get worse and have a deeper negative impact on every area of your life.

Let me ask you another question, “When you have a cut that requires stitches, and you are in intense pain, why do you go to a doctor?” You know that the process of stitching will create, for the moment, more pain, but you let the doctor stitch because you know it is the only way of healing. This is just like soulical healing. Yes, there may be some pain (though not always) in the process of healing, but the end result will be healing.

Engaging God: If this is the place where you are with God and His healing process, ask Him to reveal to you that healing truly will take place if you open the door and that to not let God in will only compound the pain.

6. Counselors, mentors, books, or sermons for healing

God has many spiritual “weapons” in His arsenal to heal you. He can use counselors, books, sermons, etc. as part of your healing. Here are some key questions to ask yourself if you are led to use these “weapons:”

- Is the counselor or mentor Christ-centered and Christ-focused? Are they asking God to help me be the source for healing or are they pointing me to the total sufficiency of Christ to heal me?
- Is this book I am reading giving me tips and techniques whereby I can heal myself or is it revealing to me that only the Spirit can heal?
- Is this sermon concerning healing speaking biblical truth and does it point me to Christ as my healer?

Obviously the point of these questions is for you to see that anything or anyone that you choose to help you should be totally Christ-focused.

Truths Concerning Engaging God To Heal Your Woundedness

“He will restore the years the locusts have eaten”
Joel 2:25

1. OPEN the door of your heart and let God in to begin the healing process.

*‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and **opens the door**, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.’ Revelation 3:20*

*“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me. Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; **He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted**, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind.” Luke 4:18*

God is knocking on the door of your heart to come in and heal your woundedness. If you are willing, go to the door and let Him in. If you are not willing, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him in because there can be no healing unless you allow the Spirit in to work in your heart.

Step of faith: “I am inviting You in Lord, to begin the healing process.”

Step of faith: “I am unwilling to let You in to heal me. I am asking You to move me from unwillingness to willingness to let You in.”

Engaging God: Open the door of your heart to the Holy Spirit and let Him begin the healing process.

2. Seek or ask God to SEARCH your heart to expose any subconscious woundedness.

“Examine me, O LORD, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.” Psalm 26:2

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.” Psalm 139:23, 24

Asking God to search your heart is one of the greatest forms of humility and transparency. When you ask God to search your heart, you are giving God permission to:

- a. Show you that you need someone greater than yourself to reveal what is in your heart.
- b. Expose or reveal some area of woundedness that you think that you have “hidden away.”

- c. Reveal to you the ways that you have tried to cope with, deny, escape from, self-protect, or insulate yourself from your pain.
- d. Reveal to you some of the areas in your life where your woundedness is creating “death.” (i.e. anger, bitterness, unforgiveness)

Step of faith: “Lord, I am asking You to reveal my woundedness, to reveal the ways that I am trying to cope with my pain, and the “death” that it is causing me and to everyone around me.”

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to search your heart, and if you are unwilling to do so, ask Him to give you the willingness to let Him do that..

3. Be HONEST with God, and TELL God how you feel about the wounding event(s).

*“How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? **How long** will You hide Your face from me? **How long** shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? **How long** will my enemy be exalted over me?”*
Psalms 13:1, 2



When you read through the Psalms, you see David over and over crying out to God about how he feels about his pain and about God. It is okay to be honest with God. Sometimes we are hesitant to share with God how we honestly feel because we fear His discipline or punishment. You don't have to fear verbalizing your feelings because He already knows how you feel. He has known how you feel for an eternity.

You can get angry with God, shake your fist at Him, and even ask the “why” questions. He fully understands because He knows our humanness. I think that it is important to do some “holy” venting.

Engaging God: If, right now, you are experiencing your woundedness, take a moment and simply tell God how you feel about your pain, your doubt, your unbelief, etc. Don't hold back. Let Him know what you think and how you feel.

4. ENTRUST your pain to God.

“and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.” 1 Peter 2:23

Entrust in context of healing means:

Giving over to God the PAIN associated with your woundedness.

You see, if we hold on to the pain or try to compartmentalize, deny, anesthetize, escape, etc. the pain, then it will continue to prevent us from God's healing hand. Therefore, every time that you feel the pain, give it over to God in that moment. Sometimes the pain will come in waves, and you will have to keep entrusting the pain until it subsides. Let's look at a step of faith concerning entrustment.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am experiencing pain from my woundedness. I am entrusting my pain to You, and I am asking You to replace it with your comfort.”

Engaging God: Every time the pain comes to the surface begin entrusting that pain over to God.

5. Draw on Christ to BE your COMFORT, PERSEVERANCE, PEACE, HOPE, AND CONFIDENCE as you go through the healing process.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all **comfort**, who **comforts** us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the **comfort** with which we ourselves are **comforted** by God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

During the healing process you may need to draw on Christ in the moment to be your:

- COMFORT when you are experiencing pain from your woundedness.
- PERSEVERANCE when you want to give up on God’s ability or willingness to heal.
- PATIENCE when God is not meeting your timetable for healing.
- HOPE when you are feeling hopeless about ever being healed.
- CONFIDENCE when you have lost your self-confidence in God or yourself.

There may be other needs that you have from Christ as your Source. When the need for patience, hope, perseverance, etc. arises, seek Christ to meet that need.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am in pain, and I am trusting You to be my comfort.”

Step of faith: “Lord, healing is taking longer than I thought. I am beginning to lose hope. I am trusting You to be my hope.”

Engaging God: Seek Christ to meet the need that you are experiencing in the midst of the pain of your woundedness.

6. Seek God to speak TRUTH into your heart if you are resisting God in opening the door because of your FEAR of more pain.

*“Come to me all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you **rest**.” Matthew 11:28*

*“**Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.**” John 14:27*

You may hear the Lord knocking, but you don't answer the door because you fear the pain that may come with healing. If this is true of you today, seek God to remind you that you have been carrying your “familiar” pain way too long, and if you continue carrying it, it will only get heavier and more unbearable. Seek Him to exchange your fear for His peace and confidence.

Step of faith: “Lord, I fear the pain that may come with healing and freedom. I am asking You to persuade me that I have nothing to fear. Persuade me as well that You will sustain me if there is any pain. Remind me that on the other side of any pain that I may experience will be divine healing.”

Engaging God: Seek the Lord to give you the willingness to open the doors to your rooms of woundedness. If you are fearful of doing so, ask Christ to be your courage.

7. Ask God to RENEW your mind to the truth.

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2*

Since part of the healing process is to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, ask God to begin renewing your mind to the truth. Ask Him to replace your false beliefs that flow from your woundedness with His truth.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am asking You to renew my mind to the truth and to replace my false beliefs with Your truth.”

Engaging God: Begin asking the Lord to transform your false beliefs into the truth.

8. Ask God to give you a “spiritual” AWARENESS of the battle going on in your mind concerning your wounding thoughts.

We sometimes have to ask the Lord to show us or make us aware that we are in an intense battle of the mind when it comes to our woundedness. We have the divine trinity on one hand fighting the “unholy” trinity of the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan/demons on the other.

We learned that every thought that we don't take captive only compounds or worsens the effects of our woundedness. Therefore, we must first be aware of the battle before we can engage God to fight the battle. Without being aware of the battle, we will inevitably lose the battle, and our woundedness will only get worse.

Step of Faith: “Lord, continue to remind me and make me aware that there is an intense battle in my mind concerning my wounding thoughts.”

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to reveal to you whether the thoughts that you are experiencing are from Him or from the flesh or Satan.

9. When a thought is coming into your mind that is associated with your woundedness, put it on PAUSE and APPLY God's truth to it.

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves....” 2 Corinthians 13:5

Taking thoughts captive means to allow the Spirit to put the thoughts that are coming into your mind on “pause” in order to examine the thought to see if it is a truthful thought or if it is a lying, condemning, fleshly, or tempting thought. I want to make the same application to wounding thoughts because with wounding thoughts come lying beliefs and damaged emotions.

The key thing to remember is that you have been taking ownership of your “wounding” thoughts for a long enough time that you no longer even question them. Because you have been

consistently taking ownership of them, you may no longer recognize that they are wounding thoughts.

Therefore, before taking ownership of a wounded thought, put that thought on pause and ask the Spirit to speak truth to those thoughts. If it is not readily apparent that the thought is not a thought tied to your woundedness, then ask the Spirit to reveal to you the truth about that thought.

Let me give you an example. Let's assume that you were wounded by the divorce of your parents. You had damaged emotions of rejection, insecurity, and abandonment. Every time that your parent's divorce came to mind, you would feel these emotions. When that thought is coming into your mind, put it on pause. Then think about the truth associated with that thought. One truth is that you are totally accepted and totally secure in your new identity in Christ. A second truth is that even though you felt abandoned by your parents, Hebrews tells us that your heavenly Father will "never leave you or forsake you."

You may have to do this many times before those thoughts no longer have a negative impact on you. I would even recommend that you speak the truth out loud. I have found this a very effective way of addressing wounding thoughts. Therefore a step of faith might look like the following:

Step of faith: "Lord, I have put this thought of rejection on pause, and I am asking You to reveal to me if this is a wounding thought. Keep reminding me every time that I think this thought that the truth is that I am totally accepted in my true identity in You."

10. ENTRUST to Him any thoughts that trigger your woundedness.

"Cast your burden upon the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." Psalm 55:22

In addition to pausing and examining every thought, every time that some event or thought triggers the painful memories of your past, entrust those thoughts immediately to Christ. Do not dwell on them for a moment because if you do, you will take ownership of them, and they will continue to have a grip on your heart.

Step of faith: "Lord, the Spirit has revealed the truth about that wounding thought, therefore, I am entrusting it (giving it over) to You."

Engaging God: Begin entrusting to God every thought that comes to mind that triggers your woundedness. As you do, you will begin to realize that those thoughts will come to mind less often as a result of God's healing.

11. Ask the Lord to transform you to live from your TRUE IDENTITY rather than living from your false beliefs about yourself.

Woundedness can reinforce our false beliefs about ourselves. Therefore, we need to ask the Lord to replace our false beliefs with the truth of our true identity in Christ.

Step of Faith: "I am seeking You to replace my false belief (from my woundedness) that I am unworthy with the truth that I am totally worthy in my true identity in Christ."

Engaging God: Begin seeking the Lord to replace your false beliefs with the truth of your true identity in Christ.

12. Seek the Spirit to give you the WILLINGNESS to FORGIVE the one who wounded you.

*“Bear with each other and **forgive** whatever grievances you may have against one another. **Forgive as the Lord forgave you.**” Colossians 3:13*

If you are willing, forgive the one who wounded you. If you are not willing, continually seek the Lord until He gives you a willingness to forgive. Start with the act of forgiveness, and as healing takes place, you will be transformed to have a heart of forgiveness.

Step of faith: “Lord, give me the willingness to forgive _____.”

Step of faith: “Lord, I am unwilling to forgive my offender. I am asking You to forgive them through me and to move me from an unwillingness to a willingness to forgive.”

Engaging God: Take the first step by seeking out the person to forgive them. If you are unwilling to do that, ask the Lord to give you the willingness to forgive them.

13. THANK God that He is at work to heal your woundedness.

“in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Thanking God for your healing, especially when you have not experienced any healing, is a wonderful act of faith. It is easy to thank God once we are experiencing healing, but He wants you to begin thanking Him from the beginning of the healing process.

Step of Faith: “Lord, I want to thank You for healing my woundedness even though I am not feeling or experiencing your healing.”

Engaging God: Develop a holy habit of thanking God throughout the process of renewing your mind to the truth and setting you free.

Expectations Concerning Healing

“Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him and He will do IT.” Psalm 37:5 (Emphasis mine)

Like many areas of our Christian walk we tend to put expectations on how and when God’s transformation (and in this case His healing process) will take place. The problem is that when He does not meet our expectations, we are tempted to go to doubt, unbelief, frustration, and eventually giving up on God.

Therefore, learn to “die” to your expectations because only God knows the path, the timing, and the result of His healing process. Our part is to trust and have Christ-confidence that God **is** working and knows exactly what you need to be healed. This is why in Psalm 37:5 we **commit** our way (expectations) to the Lord, keep **trusting** that He will heal, and know with **Christ-confidence** that He **will** heal.

How Will You Know That God Is Healing Your Damaged Emotions?

When you come to God by faith, you may not initially **feel** or **experience** the changes that God is making. This is very true in the case of damaged emotions. As God renews your mind to the truth, the healing of your woundedness may take longer to experience. What will be the evidence of your woundedness being healed?

- God will renew your mind to the truth concerning your lying beliefs associated with your woundedness and will heal your woundedness to a point that when those damaged emotions begin to rise up in your soul, you will no longer take ownership of them.



- The damaged emotions associated with your woundedness begin losing their control over you.
- Your damaged emotions are replaced by emotions that line up with God's truth.
- You will find yourself no longer going to the coping mechanisms and sinful behaviors that resulted from your lying beliefs and damaged emotions.

The following story may help you understand how healing can take place.

There was a lady who was sexually abused by her father. As a result, she believed and felt that she was dirty and unworthy to be married. When she got married, she could not have sexual intimacy because of her lying beliefs and associated damaged emotions. When she learned the truth that she was totally adequate in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:5) and engaged God by faith, He revealed to her the truth. He took the revealed truth and transformed her lying belief, and she no longer had the damaged emotions of feeling dirty or unworthy. When she believed God's truth that she was worthy and adequate in Christ, her damaged emotions of inadequacy and unworthiness were replaced by feelings of adequacy and worthiness.

"Unbroken"

I want to end this lesson by sharing with you a story. In 2014, a movie came out that was titled "Unbroken." It was a story about Louis "Louie" Zamperini. It is based on a book by the same title written by Laura Hillenbrand. I recommend the book over the movie because the book tells the "whole" story. Louie was a state track champion in high school. He ran so well that he was able to run in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Even though he didn't win, he knew that his chances of winning the 1940 Olympics in Japan were within reach. However, the war interrupted that dream, and he joined the Air Force.

Louie became a bombardier on a B-24 bomber. On May 27, 1943, while on the search of a downed aircraft, mechanical difficulties caused the bomber to crash into the ocean killing eight of the eleven men aboard.

The three survivors including Louie had very little food and no water and survived 47 days by capturing rainwater and eating small fish raw. They had to constantly fend off shark attacks and were nearly capsized by a storm. They were strafed multiple times by a Japanese bomber.

On their 47th day at sea, Louie and the pilot reached land in the Marshall Islands and were immediately captured by the Japanese. Louie was held in captivity in three different POW camps where he was severely beaten and mistreated until the end of the war in August 1945. His primary tormentor was a prison guard nicknamed “Bird.” He tortured Louis unmercifully until the end of the war.

Needless to say, Louie was not only physically wounded but soulfully devastated. When he came home he was filled with anger, bitterness, and hatred for the Japanese (especially for “Bird”). He would have nightmares every night. In some of those, he had his hand around “Bird’s” throat but could not squeeze hard enough to kill him. He became an alcoholic to numb the pain. He began to verbally and emotionally and eventually physically abuse his wife.

She was on the verge of divorcing Louie when she attended a Billy Graham revival in Los Angeles and got saved. The change was so dramatic in her that she knew the only hope for her husband was Christ. She almost literally dragged him to the revival where he trusted Christ as his Savior. From that point on he never had another nightmare. However, it took God a number of years to heal him from all his pain. God did such a work of healing in Louie that he made a special trip to Japan to personally forgive each of his captors. Needless to say they were stunned. The only one not to receive him was “Bird.” However, Louie had a letter delivered to “Bird” telling him that he had forgiven him. Louie lived until 2014 free from his wounded past.

Why do I share this story. To let you know that no matter how horrific your wounding events or how deep your woundedness, God can and will heal the deepest hurts and set you free.

Summary

As I said in the beginning, several books have been written on what I have just touched on in this lesson. In one sense, I have lightly touched on several subjects. However, I hope that this lesson has given you hope that regardless of the wounding events in your life, that as with Louie Zamperini and many people I have ministered to, you can experience God’s healing and freedom.

Lesson Six

Transformation Of Your Will

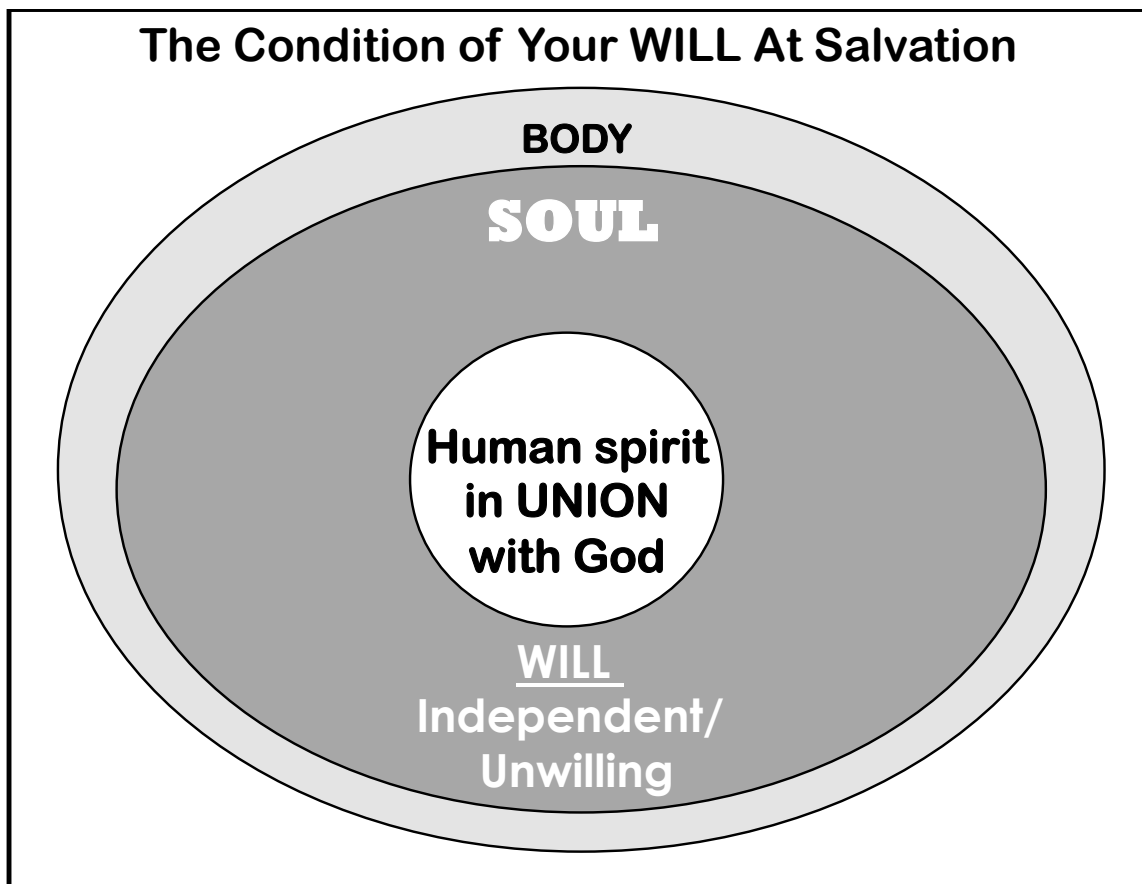
Brokenness

DAY ONE

*“...and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but **present yourselves to God** as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” Romans 6:13*

Introduction

The third part of our soul that needs to be sanctified is our will since we entered salvation with an unwilling and an independent will. The diagram below illustrates the condition of our will at salvation:



God's desire is to transform our will so that we will walk with an attitude of total dependence upon Him and be willing to submit our will to His will. However, early in our Christian walk our will (mostly controlled by our flesh) can be very stubborn and not be willing to submit to God. As God moves in our life, He will give us a greater willingness to depend upon Him and to live from Him as the Source. There is one key point that you must remember along this journey:

Key Truth

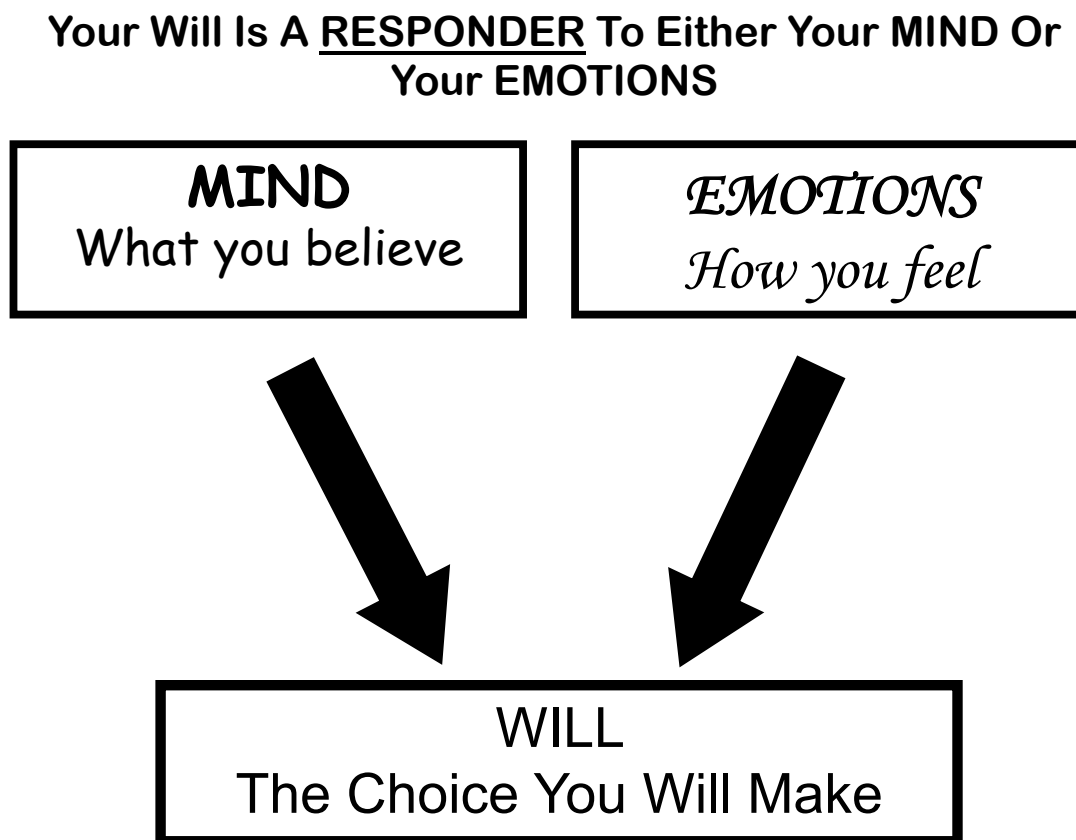
You CAN'T take yourself from being unwilling to depend upon God to submitting your will to His will. Only God can accomplish that!

Only God can move you from unwillingness to becoming willing to trust, to depend upon, to obey, etc. Therefore, our part is to come to God in faith and to ask Him to move us from independence and unwillingness to being dependent and willing.

Engaging God: Ask God to expose the areas of your life where you are unwilling to trust Him or to entrust your will to Him.

Remember That Your Will Is A RESPONDER To Your Mind and Emotions.

Remember that your will is a RESPONDER to what you **believe** or what you **feel**. Your will makes CHOICES based on what you believe and/or how you feel. The next diagram illustrates this truth:



Therefore, if you continue to believe false beliefs with their associated damaged emotions, your will has no choice but to live from those false beliefs. As you believe and make choices based upon your false beliefs, those choices will be fleshly choices. This is why it is so crucial

for God to transform your mind and emotions so that you will be making godly choices instead of fleshly choices.

As God transforms your mind and emotions with His truth, you will begin to make CHOICES that line up with God's truth.

Question: Look at the choices that you make that result in living in the flesh (i.e., sin patterns). Can you tie your choices back to your false beliefs/damaged emotions?

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you how your choices are tied back to your lying beliefs.

Surrender, Obedience, Submission, And Yieldedness

“Peter and the other apostles replied, ‘We must obey God rather than men!’” Acts 5:29



What are you thinking when you see or hear the words “surrender, obedience, submission, and yieldedness?” Are these words that bring about a sense of obligation because God expects you to surrender, obey, submit, and yield? Have you heard a pastor or a teacher tell you that it is up to YOU in your own strength to accomplish surrender, obedience, etc.? If so, are you able to consistently produce the required surrender, obedience, etc.? Look at 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19:

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Look at the commands in these verses. Are you able to continuously and consistently obey these commands? God expects that these commands be kept to the letter. However, here is the key:

Key Truth:
YOU CAN'T produce consistent obedience to ANY of God's commands!

For years I tried to obey these commands in my own strength. I even asked God to help me keep these commands. However, it wasn't long before I ran out of willingness to keep these commands, and I gave up trying. Are you in the same situation? God knows that without living out of Christ as your Source to surrender, obey, submit, etc., you will fail eventually. It is important to understand at this point that God must do a work in you before you are willing to surrender, obey, etc. Look at Philippians 2:13 in the New Living Translation:

“For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” Philippians 2:13

Only by God giving you the desire and you walking in His power will you be able to function in surrender, obedience, etc. If God does not work in you to give you a willingness, you will never be able to consistently surrender, obey, submit, or yield to God. As I have allowed God to transform my will, I am more willing to obey His commands and to surrender my will to Him. The key difference is that I now do it out of a God-produced desire rather than from a legalistic obligation or self-effort.

UNLESS God transforms your will, you will be CONTINUOUSLY frustrated and will eventually give up on being surrendered, obedient, submissive, or yielded.

Accomplishing God's Will Through Your Willingness

“Going a little farther, He fell with his face to the ground and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.’” Matthew 26:39

It is amazing how many calls that I get from Christians who want me to tell them God's will for their lives. I wish that I could tell them God's will, but I can't because He has not told me. I think that the bigger question is, “Are you willing to submit your will to His will?” Remember that God has a will, a purpose, and a plan for your life, and it is a perfect plan.

The problem is that early on in your walk of faith you want to do things your way versus God's way. God in His grace will allow you to do your own will to show you the futility of it and the lack of transformation that comes as a result. If God is sovereign, and He is good, and His heart is for you, then why would you not be more than willing to submit your will to His?

Here are a few good reasons why we don't submit our will to Him:



1. **Our fleshly desire to do our will versus God's will is a greater reality.**
2. **We have not walked long enough by faith to experience any supernatural change.**
3. **We have not developed enough Christ-confidence to outweigh our self-confidence.**
4. **We are not persuaded of God's love, goodness, and sovereignty concerning His plans for us.**
5. **We are afraid that if we submit our will to God's will, that we will then suffer.**
6. **We think that we are smarter than God. We have a better plan than He does.**

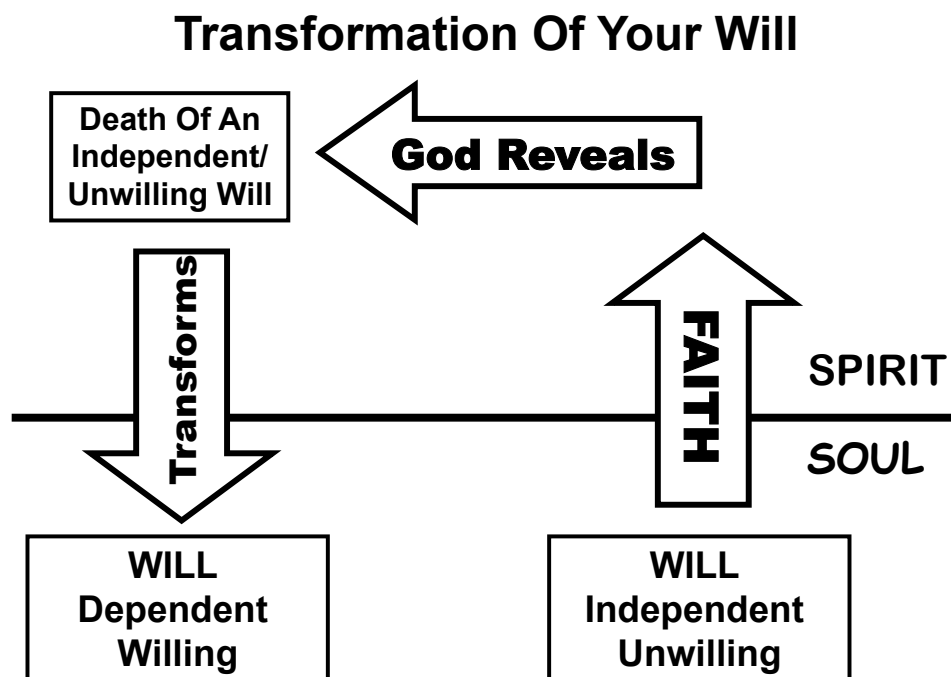
Concerning the last point, we would never say that we are smarter than God, but our actions continue to prove that it must be true. Think about it. You have the sovereign God of the universe Who has eternal wisdom and understanding and Who knows all options concerning your decisions, and yet you still follow your own plan and purpose rather than His.

The good news is that as you more consistently walk by faith and your Christ-confidence grows, you will find that it becomes easier and easier to submit your will to God's will. (He really does have a better plan.)

DAY TWO

"The Line" And The Transformation Of Your Will

In the next diagram it shows that our will is initially independent and unwilling. As we begin walking dependently upon Him, He reveals and exposes the death of our independent and unwilling will. What does that "death" look like? The death is the fleshly behavior and attitudes that result from our independence. As we see the death of an independent and unwilling will, He transforms us by giving us a desire to be willing and dependent.



Here are some areas that God moves us toward:

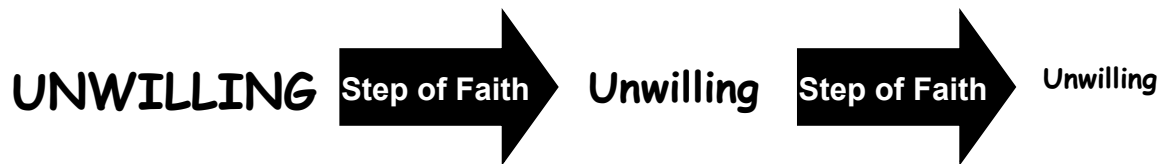
- Willingness to believe that God is Who He says that He is and that He will accomplish what He has promised.
- Willingness to walk by faith in God versus faith in ourselves.
- Willingness to spend time with God, meditate on His word, or pray.
- Willingness to walk in our true identity in Christ versus our lying beliefs.
- Willingness to believe and receive God's grace, goodness, and love.
- Willingness to walk in the Spirit versus walking in the flesh.

The next diagram illustrates how that early on in our walk of faith our unwillingness to submit our will to God's will is a greater reality than our willingness to submit. However, as we take steps of faith, our willingness to submit grows greater as our unwillingness diminishes.



SPIRIT

SOUL



Question: What are some areas of your life where you struggle with being willing versus being unwilling?

Key Point:

Since most of us have SEVERAL areas of our flesh that cause us to live independently and unwilling, God will have to give us the desire to move toward depending upon Him in EACH of those areas.

Personal Story of Unwillingness

I disciplined a man who really struggled with a critical attitude toward his wife. At some point God exposed to this man the “death” that his critical attitude was causing his marriage. As he realized the death that this attitude was causing, he began to seek God to move his will to a place of loving his wife rather than being critical of her. Next is a diagram illustrating this man’s transformation:



SPIRIT

SOUL



Engaging God To Move You From Unwillingness To Willingness

Start engaging God to move you from unwillingness to being willing in those areas that you previously listed. Use some of the principles below in that process.

1. ADMIT to God the areas where you struggle with being willing.

God has known for an eternity about the areas of your life where you struggle with unwillingness. I believe that a good first step toward changes in those areas is to admit them to God.

Engaging God: Look at your personal areas of unwillingness and admit the stubbornness of your will to God.

2. Ask God to EXPOSE the “death” that your unwillingness is causing in you internally (in your marriage, family, job, etc.).

We have a pretty good idea what misery is being caused by our stubborn wills. However, in some areas we have been miserable for so long that it has become our abiding place. Therefore, we need the Holy Spirit to reveal to us the misery that we have been living in for so long due to our unwillingness.

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you the death that your unwillingness is causing you.

3. Ask God to give you a DESIRE to be willing.

Since only God can give you a desire to be willing, ask Him to move in areas of your life to break down your unwillingness.

Engaging God: Ask God to replace your resistance to His will with His desire to be willing.

Remember that when you resist God and turn back to your own way, you are turning back to The PRODIGAL PIGPEN, which is the place of more self-induced pain, misery, and emptiness.

What Can You Expect As God Transforms Your Will?

Like the mind and the emotions, the transformation of the will is a process. As you seek the Lord to transform your will, He will begin confirming in you the changes that He is making. Below are some results that you can experience as you engage God to transform your will:

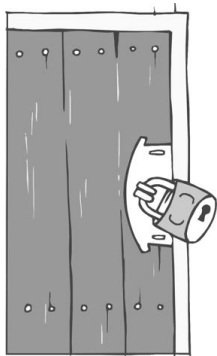
- A **lessening** of the resistance to live from your flesh versus living dependently upon God.
- A **greater willingness** to come to God for Him to transform your will.
- A **desire** to walk dependently in an area of your life where you were unwilling to before.
- **Recognizing** the death of your flesh quicker when you are independent or are unwilling.
- **Realize** the freedom, joy, and rest that comes with a Christ-produced willingness.

As God gives you a greater willingness to be dependent upon Him and to submit your will to Him, you will see more clearly this God within you Who loves you and has your best interests at heart.

DAY THREE

BROKENNESS

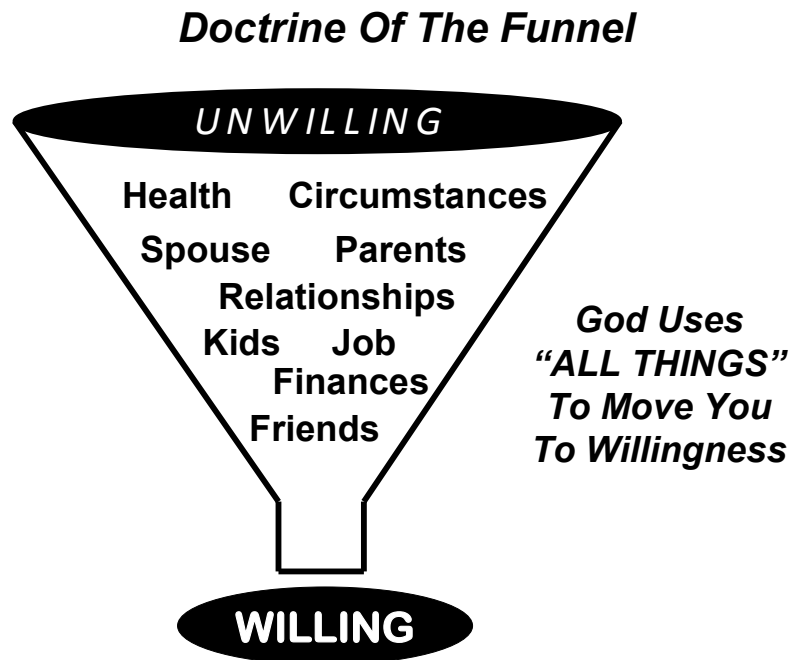
Introduction



As much as you might be willing for God to transform your will, there are areas of your life that you are unwilling to change. I liken your will to your home. There are rooms that you are willing to let anyone go into, but there are some rooms that you are unwilling to let anyone into. It is the same with our willingness toward God. There are areas of our lives that we padlock and are unwilling for God to work in those areas. However, God loves you enough that He will bring events in your life to bring you to willingness. I want to illustrate this by what I call the doctrine of the “funnel.”

Doctrine Of The Funnel – When You Are Unwilling

God will use the “all things” of Romans 8:28 to move you from being unwilling and independent to being willing and dependent upon Him. Look at the illustration below:



What Is God’s Process of Persuasion When We Are UNWILLING To Live By Faith?

There are areas of our life where we resist God’s process of persuading us of His truth. These are areas where God wants to set us free, but we resist His efforts. Why? Our independent flesh is stronger in these areas and is unwilling to allow God to work. There is one key truth that we need to understand about our flesh:

Your flesh will ALWAYS resist God’s transforming work in your lives.

This is why Paul says in Romans 7:18:



“For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.”

When our flesh resists God’s work, God then initiates another process to persuade us to depend upon Him. It is a process whereby God reveals to us the death of our flesh (misery of the soul) and destroys its resistance to Him. The result is that we turn away from our flesh and turn back to God as our Source. This process is called **brokenness**.

Questions: In some area(s) of your life do you feel like Paul did in

Romans 7:18? List some of the areas in your personal life where you feel that your flesh may be resisting God. What kind of turmoil is that creating in your soul?

Meditate: on the second part of Romans 7:18 where it says, “the willing is present in me.” Think about the truth that the “willing” that is present in you is Christ’s willingness. It is always there and is always available to you.

Engaging God: Ask God to expose the areas in your life where you are resisting His work in your life. Then ask Him to move you from unwillingness to willingness in those areas.

What Is Brokenness?

“Whoever seeks to keep his (self) life shall lose it, and whoever loses his (self) life shall preserve it (Christ’s life).” (Parentheses mine) Luke 17:33; Matt. 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; John 12:25

“For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death (to the flesh) for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:11 (Parenthesis mine)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” John 12:24



The key word in these passages is “death.” In 2 Corinthians 4:11, Paul is saying that death to our flesh is essential. Death to our flesh means to “turn away from” our flesh. Without this death or turning away, the life of Jesus will not be manifested in our lives. He is saying the same thing in John 12:24. Unless we die to and turn away from our flesh, there will be no fruit of the Spirit produced in our life. Therefore, brokenness is a “death process” that must take place in order for us to experience Christ’s life. Let’s look at a further definition of brokenness:

BROKENNESS:

A process that God uses in your life to turn you away from your flesh as the source for coping and dealing with life, solving your own problems, and meeting your needs so that you will to turn to God as your Source.

In short, brokenness is God’s way of making the death of your flesh so clear to you that you will turn to Him and will allow Him to live His life in and through you. (Death of your flesh is the misery in your soul that is created by your flesh.) Another way to look at brokenness is that God is making you pliable or moldable so that you will receive His truth and be transformed by that truth.

Remember: The flesh itself does not die. It will remain with you until you die physically. We die **TO** the flesh by turning away from it.

Meditate: on 2 Corinthians 4:11 and think about these questions: “Why does Paul use the word ‘constantly?’ Is it possible that he is telling us that brokenness is an ongoing process and not just a one time event?”

Engaging God: For the areas of the flesh that you listed in the previous exercise, ask God to show you the death of your flesh and to give you a willingness to turn away from it. A step of faith might look like the following:

“Lord, in this area of my flesh I am resisting Your work in my life. Reveal to me the death that my flesh is causing me in this area and turn me away from it and back to You as my Source.”

Brokenness Is A Process Rather Than A Single Event.

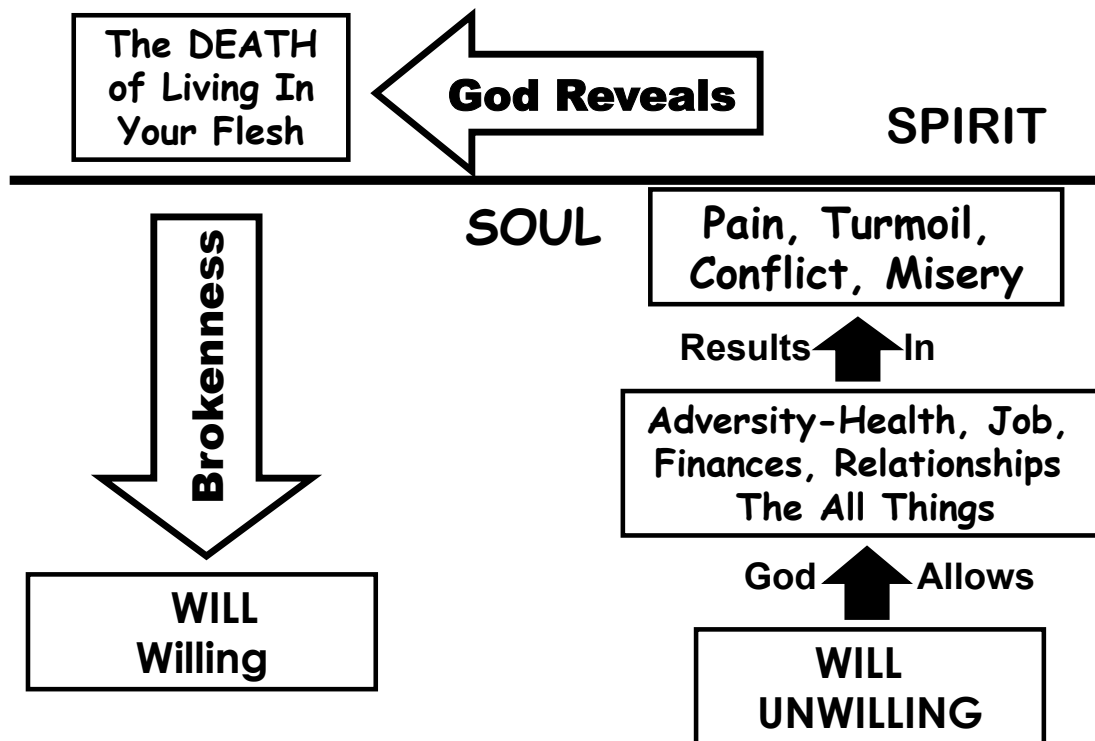
So many Christians tell me that they are totally broken. If you are one of those folks, I am sorry to tell you that you are not totally broken. Why? As long as we have the flesh and the power of sin dwelling in us (which will be in our soul until we die), there will always be a need for brokenness. Brokenness is a life-long process of revealing the death of our flesh to us and turning us back to God for life. Brokenness is a tool that God uses as a necessary part of our ongoing sanctification.

<p><i>Brokenness is a LIFE-LONG process of revealing the death of our flesh and turning us back to God for life.</i></p>

“The Line” and Brokenness

Let’s assume that your will is unwilling to be transformed in the area of pride. God’s desire is that you live from humility. Therefore, He will allow the “all things” in your life that may come in the form of a health issue, job loss, financial struggle, or a hurting relationship. This will result in enough pain, turmoil, conflict and misery that will cause you to go above “The Line” where God reveals to you the death that your pride is causing. This will result in brokenness. Your will is then willing to live from humility rather than from pride. This is illustrated in the next diagram:

The Brokenness Process



Brokenness Does NOT Always Have To Be Painful.

Most people believe that God only uses painful events in our life to bring us to brokenness. Many times He does. However, let me share with you a personal story of how God broke me of a lying belief by positive circumstances.

There was a time in my Christian life when I did not believe that God was a good God. I knew theologically that He was good, but deep down within I did not believe it. When we started this ministry, God set out to break me of this lie. He started the breaking process by providing an abundance of ministry. He then grew the ministry and used it to radically change Christians' lives. It eventually became obvious that He was trying to prove His goodness to me. I remember the day that it hit me. It was the day that He broke me of my lying belief because He had so overwhelmed me with His goodness that I could no longer deny it. Therefore, brokenness can come as positive events as well as negative events in our lives.

God can bring us to brokenness with POSITIVE as well as negative circumstances in our life.

Think about this: Every time that you get revelation about God's truth and turn away from living from the lie, that is brokenness. It does not always have to be painful.


DAY FOUR

What Does God Use To Bring Us To Brokenness?

Circumstances

God will allow struggle and conflict in our jobs, health, finances, etc. to show us that turning to the flesh will only cause more conflict and struggle. He will use those events to cause us to turn away from our flesh and to turn to Him as our Source.

For example: You just lost your job with the result that you are going to lose your home. If you turn to your flesh, you might become angry, anxious, fearful, etc. This will only create misery in your soul. As God reveals to you the death of your anger, anxiety, or fear, He will use that misery to persuade you to turn back to Him as the solution to the problem.



Engaging God: Think about the adverse circumstances that you are currently going through. Are any of them creating fleshly attitudes? Through them is God trying to deal with something in your life, but you feel that you are resisting Him? If so, ask God to expose to you the death (misery in the soul) of those fleshly attitudes and to remove the resistance to His work in you. A step of faith might look like the following:

“Lord, this financial problem is causing me great anxiety and worry. I am **entrusting** this problem to You and am asking You to remove this resistance within my flesh so that I will enter into Your rest knowing that You have a solution for this problem.”

Relationships

God uses hurting and/or broken relationships to break us from going to the flesh to try to resolve or reconcile relationships. He uses those difficult relationships to reveal our need for Him to heal or restore those relationships.



For example: Think of the one person who agitates you the most. It may only take a few moments to work up frustration, anger, unforgiveness, or even bitterness toward that person if you stay in your flesh. However, is it possible that God is using that relationship to expose your fleshly attitude of frustration, anger, or unforgiveness? God's desire is that you will see the death that your flesh is causing you and that it will cause you turn back to Him. Is it possible that instead of living from those fleshly attitudes that God wants to transform you so that you can forgive and even love that person? By the way, what do you think that person that you struggle with needs? Is it your fleshly attitudes or God's unconditional love?

Engaging God: What kind of fleshly attitudes are you experiencing in the relationships that you are currently struggling with? Ask God to give you “spiritual” eyes to see the death that your flesh is causing in you and in the relationship. Ask Him to break you of those fleshly attitudes and to unconditionally love this person through you. A step of faith might look like the following:

“Lord, show me the death that my frustration, anger, or unforgiveness toward this person is causing me. Give me a heart of repentance, and replace my unforgiveness with Your forgiveness.”

Internal Struggles

Even internal struggles caused by our lying beliefs, damaged emotions, woundedness, strongholds, etc. are used by God to break us and to reveal our moment by moment need for Him. We all have internal struggles that can keep us in bondage to our flesh or that can drive us to God. Initially, God uses these struggles to expose the flesh and its resistance to His work. However, God wants us to bring these struggles to Him.



For example: Let’s assume that you have an ongoing struggle in your flesh with a critical or judgmental spirit. Let’s assume that your flesh is unwilling to be broken in this area. Every time that critical spirit is activated by your flesh, God’s desire is to reveal to you the death (misery of the soul) that your critical spirit is causing you and the person that it is directed toward. It is through that misery that God will break down your fleshly resistance and replace your critical spirit with His love.

Engaging God: What are some of the fleshly attitudes/behaviors that are resulting from the internal struggles that you are facing? Ask God to expose the death of these attitudes and your fleshly resistance to them so that you will turn to Him to break you of them and to replace them with Christ-like attitudes. (We are about to study the meaning of a Christ-like attitude.) A step of faith might look like the following:

“I am struggling with the lie that I am an inadequate person. As a result, I am a people-pleaser. Lord, show me the death of my flesh and persuade me of the truth that I am totally adequate in You.”

God uses every circumstance, relationship, and internal struggle to EXPOSE the death of your flesh and to turn you back to Him for LIFE.

DAY FIVE

What Is God's Motivation For Bringing You To Brokenness?

God's motivation for bringing you to brokenness is His LOVE for you.

This may be difficult if not impossible for you to understand because many ask, "How could a loving God allow so much pain and heartache in my life?". This is an extremely difficult truth to teach.

Therefore, I will personally testify to this truth. I have experienced great pain, woundedness, and rejection in my life. However, God has persuaded me that He loved me enough that He allowed all those things in my life to turn me away from my fleshly independence and to turn to Him for life. I realized that it was His great love at work because He could not bear for me to be stuck in the death of my flesh. He saw the intense pain that these issues were creating in my life and in the lives of those around me.

Therefore, out of His love, He used every painful event in my life to bring me to brokenness and back to Him. As I look back over my life, I have honestly said to God (many times), "Thank you for every painful and hurtful experience in my life because through them you destroyed my fleshly resistance and radically changed my life." You may not be able to thank God today for your past. However, I trust that the Lord will move you at some point to a place where you will see His love behind every "brokenness" experience in your life so that you can thank Him for those experiences.

Engaging God: Have you experienced woundedness, abuse, or painful events in your life that cause you to question God's love and concern for you? How do these events make you feel about God? If they have caused negative feelings towards God, come to Him and ask Him to change your heart to a point where you will thank Him for every event in your life. A step of faith might look like the following:

"Lord, because of the pain that I am experiencing through this brokenness, it is difficult for me to believe that You are allowing this out of Your love for me. I am asking You to persuade me of Your love even in the midst of this pain."

Contrast Between Unbrokenness And Brokenness

Let's look at the differences between an unbroken Christian and a broken one:

Unbrokenness

Seeks relief
Seeks fleshly solutions
Is independent
Claims fleshly rights
Is self-confident
Is self-protective
Is arrogant and prideful
Doubts God

Brokenness

Seeks God
Seeks God as the solution
Is dependent
Surrenders fleshly rights
Is Christ-confident
Is transparent
Is walking in Christ's humility
Trusts God

Exercise: Look at one area of your life where you believe that you are not broken. Write down which of the characteristics above describe your unbrokenness.

Engaging God: Ask God to begin moving you to brokenness in this area. A step of faith might look like the following:

“Lord, I feel that I have the fleshly right to be unforgiving to this person who has offended me. I am entrusting my unforgiveness to You and am asking You to move me to a place where I will surrender my fleshly right to not forgive this person.”

What Is On The Other Side of Brokenness?

*“always carrying about in the body the **dying** of Jesus, that the **life** of Jesus also **may be manifested** in our body. For we who **live** are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, that **the life** of Jesus also **may be manifested** in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:10-11*

Good news! 2 Corinthians 4:10-11 reveals that brokenness which brings about the death of self results in more of the **life** of Jesus being manifested in your life. What are some of the manifestations of Christ’s life in your life as a result of brokenness?

1. **Seeing God’s immeasurable love** for you as the motivation for your brokenness.
2. **Seeing your absolute need for dependence** upon God.
3. **Healing and restoration** in your soul.
4. **Having Christ-confidence** concerning His work in your life.
5. **Experiencing God’s peace and rest** instead of the turmoil caused by your flesh.
6. **Replacing of fleshly attitudes** with Christ-like attitudes.
7. **Enjoying a personal, intimate relationship** with God.

REMEMBER:

God loves you enough that He will turn up the HEAT in your life until you come to the place of brokenness. The reason is that He does not want you to spend any more time in the misery of your soul due to unbrokenness.

God’s greatest desire is for your will to be totally submissive to His will. He knows that as you walk in submission, obedience, and dependence to His will that it will produce the transformation that you so desire. Therefore, He wants to transform your thinking and emotions so that your will makes choices based upon truth. To the extent that you are unwilling to let God work, He loves you enough that He will initiate the brokenness process in your life. For the most part, I have not enjoyed God’s process of brokenness. However, when I look back and see the results of brokenness, I thank Him for what it has produced. I pray that you will do the same when you see the transforming results of your brokenness.

Summary

I trust by this point you have a better understanding of the sanctification process. I want to share with you again what is happening to the soul as you are being transformed.



Are you beginning to experience any change in these areas? Let's sum up the key truths in this study.

- The renewing of your mind begins with learning God's truth and then engaging the Spirit to create a "spiritual" filter and begin replacing your lying beliefs with the truth.
- As you begin to believe and live from the truth, God will break down your strongholds.
- There is a non-stop battle in your mind. If you don't engage God to fight this battle then you cannot win.
- Satan has a non-stop strategy to insert thoughts, deceive, and distract you from your walk in Christ. Remember that the greatest fear of the enemy is the truth.
- As the Spirit renews your mind to the truth, He will heal your damaged emotions tied to your lying beliefs and heal your woundedness.
- As your mind is being renewed and your damaged emotions are being healed, your choices will line up with God's truth.
- God will use all things in your life to bring about brokenness so that your willingness to live from the truth grows.

You Will Find Your Soul At A Greater REST

*“Come to Me all you who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you **(BE YOUR) REST.**”
Matthew 11:28 (Parenthesis mine)*

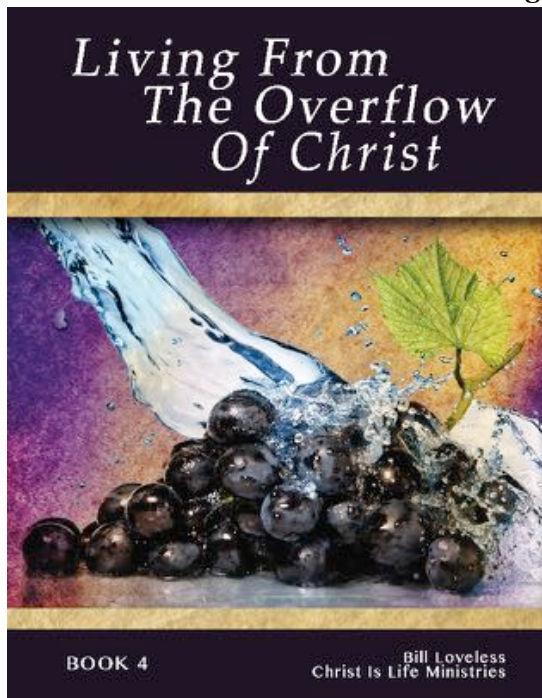


As your soul is being transformed, you will find your mind, emotions, and will coming to a greater rest. What do I mean by “rest?” It means that thoughts that use to overwhelm you and cause anxiety, fear, worry, etc. don’t anymore. Emotions that would cause you unrest, anger, etc. no longer control you. The choices you will make will line up with God’s truth and your Christ-confidence will grow. As your resistance to God’s work in your life subsides you will experience a greater rest. All of these things will give you a “supernatural rest” in your soul.

Where Do I Go From Here?

You have just finished Book Three of the four part discipleship series called ***Living A Transformed Life In Christ***. Book Four of this series is called ***Living From The Overflow of Christ***. If you would like this next study, please go to our ministry website which is www.christislifeministries.com and look under the **Store** section.

You will find the series called ***Living A Transformed Life In Christ***. You will see under this section the curriculum called ***Living From The Overflow of Christ***. You can purchase them online or email your order to our email address below. Or, you can download these materials for free and reproduce as many copies as you would like.



Living From The Overflow of Christ will focus on the following:

- God’s process of producing Christ-like attitudes.
- How the overflow of God’s internal transformation impacts you personally, the workplace, marriage and family.
- What does ministry look like at home, at church and at the workplace from the overflow of Christ in you.