
Baggage



by Tony Portell, Lead Pastor, Life Church Indianapolis

What can we do about the issues of our past and how they affect the way we live and respond today? What weaknesses in our lives are we passing on to our children?

This teaching series deals with the insecurities in our lives from hurts, failure, disappointments, abuse, trauma and broken relationships. All of us experience pain and carry insecurities. They take on the form of lies that we believe to be the truth. The only way to be free from the influence of insecurity is to know the truth.

‘You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.’ John 8:32

Take the test before you begin each section. This will help you see if this is an issue with which you are struggling.

Remember, it takes time to change our thinking and our responses. Ask God to reveal the truth to you throughout this study and accept His love and grace that can set us free and help us lay down all of our baggage.

Note: Originally this teaching was done for High School students. Most of the content is geared toward teenagers.

Because these are pulpit notes so many of the thoughts and illustrations will not be complete. I encourage you to listen to audio messages along with the notes here.

The two resources for the teaching were **“Search for Significance”** by Robert McGee and **“The Bondage Breaker”** by Neil Anderson.

Baggage - Introduction

The last series, "The Amazing Race" taught us that God created us on purpose with a purpose. We only discover our purpose or destiny when we walk with God

With all this good news why do we still struggle?

Who do you know who is really happy with everything about themselves?

Do you people who...

- Don't like and are overly critical of themselves when they don't succeed.
- Sexually active or have an affair they are looking for love or affection.
- Who rebel to gain attention and look more important.
- Escape into material things, sports, TV, alcohol, pornography.
- Overwhelmed by guilt and low self-esteem.

(Take Test and Score at this point)

We all have issues, everyone, based on insecurities.

Prov. 14:13 "Laughter can conceal a heavy heart; when the laughter ends, the grief remains."

Jer 6:14 "You can't hide a hurt by saying its not there."

We all have a need to fee loved (security) and purposeful (significance).

Premises or beliefs we are going into this series with:

- Some issues are physiological, such as a chemical imbalance
- Experiences in your life shape who you are today.
- Your childhood and parent's backgrounds affect who you are.
- You have an enemy, satan, who is out to destroy you. **John 10:10**
- Demonic activity has not ceased in the world. **Sketch: "Neither Do I"**
- You can be free!

Our primary text for series: John 8:32

You will know the truth and the truth will make you free. "truth versus "lies"

God's Plan for His Children

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image and likeness. And let them rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the tame animals, over all the earth, and over all the small crawling animals on the earth."

27 So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female.

28 God blessed them and said, "Have many children and grow in number. Fill the earth and be its master. Rule over the fish in the sea and over the birds in the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

What went wrong – Satan hates God, is original insecure being.

Gen. 3:1 Now the snake was the most clever of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day the snake said to the woman, "Did God really say that you must not eat fruit from any tree in the garden?"

2 The woman answered the snake, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden.

3 But God told us, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. You must not even touch it, or you will die.'"

Note: Gen. 2:17 – God said, “You shall not eat from it.” (Man added stuff)

4 But the snake said to the woman, "You will not die.

5 God knows that if you eat the fruit from that tree, you will learn about good and evil and you will be like God!" (**appeal to significance**)

6 The woman **saw** that the tree was beautiful, that its fruit was **good to eat**, and that it would **make her wise**. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of the fruit to her husband, and he ate it.

Satan misled Eve from the truth. “Did God really say...?”

I John 2: 15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For everything in the world--**the cravings** of sinful man, the **lust of his eyes** and **the boasting** of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world.

17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Gen. 3:7 Then, it was as if their eyes were opened. They realized they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made something to cover themselves. (**World today would applaud independent self-made hero**)

Gen. 3:8 Then they heard the LORD God walking in the garden during the cool part of the day, and the man and his wife **hid** from the LORD God **among the trees** in the garden.

9 But the LORD God called to the man and said, "**Where are you?**"

10 The man answered, "I heard you walking in the garden, and **I was afraid** because I was naked, so I hid."

11 Who told you you were naked, did you eat from the tree (man blames wife)

The Performance Trap

Trap: I must meet certain standards to feel good about myself.

Creates a tremendous fear of failure.

Symptoms of the performance Trap:

1. **Perfectionism** – sounds good, but has a weakness that ties our self-worth to our completion of a project and a judgment of the project is a judgment on us.

3 phrases – “could have”, “should have” & “would have”. Tyranny of the ought

2. **Avoidance of Risk** – Not willing to try things we might not succeed at. Can't see the fun in just trying or experiencing something.

3. **Anger and resentment** – When we feel that we, or our work is being criticized. **They are attacking me.**

4. **Pride** – Self-worth is based on success so when it is reached after so much striving the person **judges others.**

5. **Anxiety & Fear** – that we might fail in front of people.

6. **Depression** – We fail to reach the high standards we set for ourselves and then feel worthless when we cannot meet those standards.

7. **Dishonesty** – any attempt to hide our failure by embellishing our accomplishments to gain credit for ourselves, or lying to avoid blame for failure.

8. **Low Motivation** – unwilling to get involved in anything because we cannot get instant gratification from success. Don't try rather than risk failure.

9. **Chemical Addiction** – Try to mask or ease the fear of failure. Give up competing with everyone else. Takes away pressure to perform.

David Seamands - :Healing for Damaged Emotions”

“under the stress and strain of trying to live with a self he can't like, a God he can't love, and other people he can't get along with, the strain becomes too much. And one of two things happen: either there is a breakaway or breakdown.”

God's Perspective

God's Solution: Justification.

Justification: "to show to be just or right. To uphold as well-grounded. To absolve of guilt. (**Just** as if I'd never sinned).

We can never be good enough through our performance. That is why Jesus died for us. The best thing we can do is accept God's design of us and understand He knows us best.

Gods' acceptance has nothing to do with your worthiness or performance.

Rom. 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.*

II Cor. 5:21 Christ had no sin, but God made him become sin so that in Christ we could become right with God.

To be justified means that we are forgiven, and fully accepted and fully pleasing to God.

Col. 1: 22 yet now he has brought you back as his friends. He has done this through his death on the cross in his own human body. As a result, he has brought you into the very presence of God, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

Heb. 12: 5 And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, "My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you.

6 For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children."

Titus 3: 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior was shown,
5 he saved us because of his **mercy**. It was not because of good deeds we did to be right with him. He saved us through the washing that made us new people through the Holy Spirit.

The Performance Trap is from insecurity that deals with how we view ourselves.

Next week: The Approval Addict, another symptom of insecurity deals with how we see others.

Rom. 5:1 – it is by "faith" we are made right in God's sight. All we have to do is believe this truth and make the great exchange. God's life for control of yours.

The Approval Trap

Our series: **Baggage** deals with things from our past, hurts, pains, disappointments from parents, friends, spouses, employers, teachers, etc.

This creates insecurity in us and we try to compensate through human effort.

Video: God Forgives 1

We mentioned the **two drives** in life: **Significance** and **Security**.

The Performance Trap dealt with a wrong view of ourselves. It comes out in our fear of Failure. God's answer is justification. Meaning that you were accepted by God as you were and He unconditionally loves you. **SCORE TEST**

The Approval Trap deals with wrong view of others and **FEAR OF REJECTION**

Developing our self worth on what others think of us is the false belief satan uses to draw us into the Approval Trap.

Satan lies to people and gets them to believe that if they are accepted by other people they will be fulfilled, happy, and accept themselves. The wrong belief is:

"I must be approved by certain others to feel good about myself."

The lie of Rejection is: My Performance + Other's Opinion's = My Self-Worth

Satan's only weapon is deception. He cannot hurt you. Jesus took away his power and authority. He can only lie to you and get you to believe it and thus hurt yourself and others.

Wrong beliefs leads to an outlook which determines our actions. Examples:

In order to feel good about myself...

I will only be seen with people that are popular
I will avoid those that I think will reject me

In order to win the approval of others...

I will exaggerate the truth about my accomplishments or experiences
I will always make sure I wear just the right clothes
I will do things I don't feel comfortable doing (exclusion)
I will avoid any kind of disagreement

My story.

Political family Moved around a lot Wasn't especially great at sports
Didn't know God Didn't get along with dad No close friends

I was in ministry. (**Instant recognition and respect**)

I was successful in ministry because I got the job done, (**to impress leader**).

If something went wrong it was always someone else's fault.
 I lived from success to success always trying to be smarter and better.
 Rick Shelton – Tony you are more important than your giftings.

Problem: People will not always like you, not everyone, even some you want to.

A Little Secret: The people that you are trying to impress have their own insecurities. Those get fed when they sense you want their approval. So what do they do? They hold it back and make you work a little harder or dance a little bit.

“We buy things we can't afford and don't need, to impress people we don't want to be like!”

The most important people in our lives can always hurt us the most simply because **their approval is what we look for most.** One unkind word from an important person in our lives can seriously affect our self-worth.

Dr. Charles Cooley's, “Looking Glass Self Image Theory”.

Understanding Rejection & Our Responses

1. You think or feel rejected or unloved
2. Determine to please other person to gain their approval
3. More rejection comes resulting in one of three defense mechanisms

Beat the System*	Give in to the System*	Rebel Against the System*
Accepts the system and competes with schemes to get ahead and become significant	Doesn't like the system and tries to cope and make do as a second-class citizen	Hates the system and fights social structures and often behaves or dresses in objectionable ways
Results in superficial relationships as performance and appearance diminish with age	Seeks an identity and sense of belonging but poor self-image affects the ability to relate and compete	Results in more rejection and causes others to defend the system they reject
Inability to express feelings, emotional insulation, perfectionism, worries, insecurity	Feelings of Worthlessness, Inferiority, subjectivity, introspection Self-condemnation	Undisciplined, irresponsible, self-hating, bitter
Has little need for God and struggles with lordship	Needs God but struggles with trust	Sees God as a tyrant and rebels against Him

***The systems refer to family, school, team, career and social setting.**

God's Truth for the Approval Addict - Reconciliation

We do need relationships with other people. We need the love of friends and family. The problem has been in trying to get everything from humans who are not able to give us everything we need all the time.

The Truth is... Jesus Performance + God's Opinions (Word) = My Worth

We must base our life first on Gods' love for us. We counter satan's lie by understanding that we are reconciled to God and His overwhelming love and approval all we need to be content.

Col. 1: 21 At one time you were separated from God. You were his enemies in your minds, and the evil things you did were against God.

22 But now God has made you his friends again. He did this through Christ's death in the body so that he might bring you into God's presence as people who are holy, with no wrong, and with nothing of which God can judge you guilty.

Rom. 5: 10 While we were God's enemies, he made friends with us through the death of his Son. Surely, now that we are his friends, he will save us through his Son's life.

Rom. 8: 38 Yes, I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor ruling spirits, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers,
39 nothing above us, nothing below us, nor anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As **Pinnochio** said to **Geppeto**:

"Papa, I am not sure who I am. But if I'm all right with you, then I guess I'm all right with me."

Video: God Forgives 2

God always loves me unconditionally.

God always has time for me.

God always listens and understands.

God is always willing to forgive.

God never has a bad day or is in a bad mood.

God will never betray me or leave me.

God will meet every need I have.

God will help me to love others who may be insecure and need to be loved.

Hand-out bookmarks. Study this week.

The Approval Test

Answer the following question with the answer that most relates to you. Put the number in the space and then add up the total at the bottom.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
THAT'S NOT ME			I CAN RELATE		I'M ALL THAT	
1. I avoid certain people.						_____
2. I become anxious or nervous when I think someone might reject me.						_____
3. I am uncomfortable around those who are different than me.						_____
4. It bothers when someone is unfriendly to me.						_____
5. I am basically shy and unsocial.						_____
6. I am critical of others.						_____
7. I find myself trying to impress others.						_____
8. I become depressed when someone criticizes me.						_____
9. I always try to figure out what people think of me.						_____
I feel people are always trying to control or manipulate me.						_____
Total Score						_____

Scoring

- 0 - 26 Virtually free from fear of rejection.
- 27 - 36 Small fear of rejection only in certain situations.
- 37 - 46 Moderate fear. Influence your decisions to minimize your risk of failing.
- 47 - 56 High fear of rejection. Emotional lows are tied to how you think others feel about you. Nearly all decisions are designed to avoid risk of rejection.
- 57 - 70 Overwhelming fear of rejection. Probably feel steadily depressed. Experiences of rejection probably fill your memories.

The Blame Game

Series Goal: Drill down deep through layers of scars from hurts, fears, disappointments, guilt, and feelings to the lies that keep us from walking in the freedom Jesus died to purchase for us.

SLIDE CHARTS – PERFORMANCE & APPROVAL

Nobody likes to fail but The Blame Trap takes the fear of failure to the next level. In trying to protect ourselves we blame others, condemn ourselves, or blame God for not being fair.

Every living thing that gets hurt go into defensive mode.

***LIE: “Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.”
Based on a FEAR OF PUNISHMENT***

TRUTH: Jesus Performance + God’s Opinions (Word) = My Worth

Lies effect our perspective which determines our actions. Examples:

- *I would have gotten that deal if wasn’t for so and so.*
- *If the coach didn’t have his “favorites” I’d play more.*
- *My boss has it in for me.*
- *I must be really stupid to have done that.*
- *If God loved me, He wouldn’t have let that bad thing happen.*

SCORE TEST

Blaming Ourselves

When it comes down to it, and there is no one left to blame, we condemn ourselves.

You may experience a failure but that does not make you a failure. Failing and being a failure is not the same.

Self condemnation – punish yourself for stuff already forgiven for.

Because God no longer sees me as a sinner or casts blame on me for my sin I do not have to condemn myself.

Rom. 8:1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. or, So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty.

Blaming Others

When we blame others it hurts our existing & potential relationships.

We become: closed, fragile, “nobody likes me” (self fulfilling)

We do need other people for companionship and perspective.

Because God loves us so much and treats us with understanding and complete acceptance we should treat others the same way.

If I'm secure in God's love I can afford to lift you up. I can compliment you or let you get the credit for something because I don't need it. I have all of my security and love from God that makes complete.

I John 4: 11 Dear friends, if God loved us that much we also should love each other.

People will not always live up to our expectations. When we think our success is being threatened by their failure we react by blaming them. Blaming others helps us protect our fragile self-worth. **COMPARISON**

We need spiritual fathers/mothers WHO CAN SPEAK THE TRUTH, **TRUST!**

I Cor. 4:15-16

Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

People are not our problem no matter how bad they done us. Our response the key to who we will be. **Dr. Phil** – Lady you are not a victim you're a volunteer.

Blaming God

When we start blaming ourselves and others for our failure, we naturally see God as blaming us also. We are convinced that God sees us as unworthy of His love and deserving punishment. **Every problem in our lives becomes a form of punishment from God.**

We get angry because we think God too tough and expecting too much from us. We convince ourselves that God is unfair and cruel.

Ps. 103: 13 The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he understands how weak we are; he knows we are only dust.

We have a real problem when we feel that we are unworthy of God's love and always live in fear of His punishment.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. *(King James Version)*

Propitiation:

- **to satisfy the wrath of someone who has been unjustly wronged**
- **an act that soothes hostility and satisfies the need for vengeance**

I John 4: 9 This is how God showed his love to us: He sent his one and only Son into the world so that we could have life through him. This is what real love is: It is not our love for God; it is God's love for us in sending his Son to be the way to take away our sins. *(New Century Version)*

Propitiation means to satisfy the wrath of someone who has been unjustly wronged. Propitiation is an act that soothes hostility and satisfies the need for vengeance.

God is holy and just. Sin is a slap in the face to a holy God. It is liking black tar and smearing on the wedding dress of a beautiful bride, and it deserves the worst punishment. **CAN'T JUST BE WINKED AT.**

Jesus took that punishment, on our behalf when he gave Himself up on the cross for us. He took our place. This is propitiation.

God no longer blames us for our sins and failures. He only sees us as His children, absolutely perfect.

I John 4: 18 Where God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love drives out fear. It is punishment that makes a person fear, so love is not made perfect in the person who fears.

We love because God first loved us.

Because God loves us, accepts us as His children, paid the price for sins, and has an unimaginable future for us here on earth and throughout eternity, I can love God, I can loves others, and I can love and accept myself.

My self-image is strong and secure because I am God's child, made in His image and have His complete approval.

Does God Punish Us?

Heb. 12:4-8 – God's Discipline (OPEN in YOUR Bibles)

Rebuke (wink)	Privately	From God
Discipline (word)	Personally	Through Others
Punish (whack)	Publicly	Experience

The Shame Trap

The Performance Trap dealt with a wrong view of ourselves.

The Approval Trap deals with wrong view of others.

The Blame Trap drives us to the conclusion that we are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.

Shame is a deep feeling of guilt, sadness, and hopelessness that we experience when we become convinced that past failures, bad habits or poor appearance have made a permanent scar on our self-worth.

“I am what I am and I cannot change. I am hopeless.”

In the Middle East there are two great cultural values: hospitality and avoidance of shame.

Philippino dinner with so much food on the table because there's the expectation to place more before the guests than they can possibly eat.

At a birthday party you do not open your gifts at the party. The reason is that, if I give you a gift and you don't like it, I will see on your face that it is not pleasing to you. You will be shamed; I will be shamed.

1. Shame develops when we feel we have failed too often in the past.

We all have failures and set backs in life and become disappointed. Sometimes it was our fault and sometimes the situation was beyond our control. The problem is when we dwell on these disappointments and see them as our fault and we begin to see ourselves as a failure.

The more we look back and see ourselves as a failure in the past the more we will wrongly believe that we will fail in the future.

Some adjust by expecting far too little of themselves. We can even create a peer environment that honors not getting involved or makes light of failure. Inside, we all want to succeed but may times we get stopped by thinking...“How can I avoid the failure and rejection that causes me so much embarrassment, disappointment, and shame?”

If we feel our past failures will determine our future we will think like this:

- *After Mary refused a date with Joe, he decided that he would quit dating altogether.*
- *When Bill failed the science test he felt dumb and started skipping class.*
- *Sally felt like nobody liked her so she wouldn't go out even when everyone was invited to the party.*

Avoidance of risk. Why there few entrepreneurs. *“When the water is over head depth is irrelevant”.*

This type of thinking keeps Christians in bondage as well. When you see a person in need the fear of rejection, or past failures or self-consciousness stops us from reaching out to them. God wants to work through us but we won't cooperate.

2. Shame can come from our inability to break destructive bad habits that are ruining our lives.

We all have some bad habits. But certain bad habits enslave us. We seem helpless in getting control over this area that is hurting us, our relationship with God and maybe those around us.

GOAL IS TO ESCAPE OUR CIRCUMSTANCES

The more control this habit has over our lives the lesser our self-worth. This creates a feel of hopelessness in us.

Examples of life controlling habits: **A WAY TO ESCAPE.**

Drinking	Smoking	Drugs
TV	Video Games	Internet
Pornography	Shopping	Extreme behavior

Show Video: Addictions

God's Solution to the Shame Trap - Regeneration

Regeneration means that when we come to Christ that we are literally made into a new person inside. **BORN-AGAIN** (Jn. 3)

II Cor. 5:17 What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!

Regeneration is not like a self-improvement program to clean up your life and make what you can out of the little that is there.

It is becoming alive from the dead , Eph. 2

and It is dying to the old life, Rom. 6.

Regeneration is God giving you a new start, and an incredible new life without unlimited potential and fulfillment in your career, relationships, and ministry.

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and hated by people. He was a corrupt and spiteful little man. In Luke 19, Jesus touched Zacchaeus' life and he immediately had new values, goals, and behavior.

Luke 19:1 Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. 2. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was one of the most influential Jews in the Roman tax-collecting business, and he had become very rich. 3. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowds. 4. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree beside the road, so he could watch from there. 5. When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! For I must be a guest in your home today." 6. Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. 7. But the crowds were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. 8. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "*I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have overcharged people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!*" 9. Jesus responded, "**Salvation has come to this home today**, for this man has shown himself to be a son of Abraham. 10. And I, the Son of Man, have come to seek and save those like him who are lost."

Regeneration will:

1. Put your past failures into perspective.

What we were in the past is gone forever.

Titus 3: 3 Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled by others and became slaves to many wicked desires and evil pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy. We hated others, and they hated us. then God our Savior showed us his kindness and love. He saved us, not because of the good things we did, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life through the Holy Spirit.

2. Regeneration helps us overcome bad habits.

Phil. 1: 6 And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.

Eph. 4: 21 Since you have heard all about him and have learned the truth that is in Jesus, 22 throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. 23 Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. 24 You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness--righteous, holy, and true.

Proverbs 23: 7 For as he (a man) thinks in his heart, so is he:

Old Nature and Process of Thinking:

SITUATIONS → FALSE BELIEFS → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS

Renewed Nature and Process of Thinking:

SITUATIONS → TRUTH → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS

The Shame Test

Answer the following question with the answer that most relates to you. Put the number in the space and then add up the total at the bottom.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
THAT'S NOT ME		I CAN RELATE			I'M ALL THAT	
1. I think about past failures or experiences of rejection.						_____
2. I have certain memories about my past, which give strong feelings of emotion pain (guilt, shame, anger, fear, etc.).						_____
3. I seem to make the same mistakes.						_____
4. I have certain attitudes and behaviors I want to change, but don't think I can.						_____
5. I feel inferior.						_____
6. I don't like some things about the way I look.						_____
7. I am generally disgusted with myself.						_____
8. I feel certain experiences have basically ruined my life.						_____
9. I think I am an immoral person.						_____
10. I feel I have lost the opportunity to experience a complete and wonderful life.						_____
Total Score						_____

Scoring

- 0 - 26 A strong appreciation of God's unconditional love and acceptance.
- 27 - 36 Small fear of judgment only in certain situations.
- 37 - 46 Moderate fear of judgment influences your decisions. Emotional problems are sometimes rooted in this fear.
- 47 - 56 Fear of judgment forms the background of your life. Constantly critical of yourself and others.
- 57 - 70 Overwhelming fear of judgment. Probably feel steadily depressed. Experiences of rejection and failure probably fill your memories. Strong victim mentality.

Conquering Insecurity

We all have insecurities that come from false beliefs or lies about ourselves Satan plant in our mind. We also know that we are powerless to make any significant changes ourselves.

In fact Jesus said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing." Jesus didn't leave us helpless.

John 14:16 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you *forever*—

We have discussed the role of the Holy Spirit who has come to:

- Teach us...
- Lead us into truth...
- Be our counselor...
- Be our comforter...
- Reveal Jesus to us...
- Show us things to come...

The Holy Spirit knows everything about us, about God, about Satan, and about the future. He is able to give us power to change our lives.

There is only one way for the power of the Holy Spirit to work within us. We must give Him control of our lives.

Gal. 5: 22 But *when the Holy Spirit **controls** our lives*, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control...

The Holy Spirit will help you separate what is true and what is a false belief about yourself. He will help you develop all of these wonderful character qualities.

Eph. 5: 18 Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, ***let the Holy Spirit fill and control you.***

Q: How do you put the Holy Spirit in control of your life? (Communion with Him)

ILL. – For years we treated ulcers wrongly, not knowing they were just a virus.

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

The truth the Holy Spirit will lead you into is God's Word. The only way to overcome a lie is to replace it with the truth.

We stop the Holy Spirit from controlling our lives and we lose communication and leading with Him. This causes us to be left to our own abilities, which we have proven are not enough to combat Satan.

I Thess. 5: 19 Quench not the Spirit. (KJV)

Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. (NLT)

Do not hold back the work of the Holy Spirit. (NCV)

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; (NIV)

Q: What are ways we quench the Holy Spirit? (Sin, rebellion, no time for God)

The Apostle Paul said, “walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” If we are sensitive to the Holy Spirit we will listen when He speaks to us, we will be quick to recognize and repent of sin, and we will know what to do.

A big part of insecurity is carrying sin that should be repented of, and given over to Christ. Jesus will forgive us the moment we ask Him to of any wrong doings.

I John 1:9 But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done.

When we confess our sins we reinforce the truth in our life that:

- *God is faithful and loving...*
- *Jesus died to take our sins...*
- *Our sins are not remembered or held against us...*
- *Satan has no power to control us...*
- *We are sensitive to the Holy Spirit...*
- *And, our actions or thoughts that were sinful were based on truth, or the real me!*

The Battle of Insecurity and Self-Esteem is Won or Lost in Our Minds

What we think about is what we become.

Proverbs 23: 7 For as he (a man) thinks in his heart, so is he:

There is a series of events that take place in our minds to shape our self-esteem.

The following is the step-by-step process we go through in our mind that determines how we will respond to events or thought in our life.

SITUATIONS → BELIEFS → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS

Situations: Real events, circumstances, or experiences in everyday life.

In may be in our relationships:

- *Mike tells Sally she looks nice today.*
- *John's English teacher told him she needed to see him after school.*

Situations that occur in everyday life:

- *Joe locks his keys in his car.*
- *Kristi's loses her purse.*

Regardless of our situations, the way we react or respond is entirely determined by our beliefs.

Q: What responses might occur from the above situations?

Project: Give examples of false beliefs from the above situations.
Give examples of correct beliefs from the above situations.

Sometimes false beliefs are deeply held in our lives.

1. I must meet certain standards in order to feel good about myself.
2. I must be approved by certain others in order to feel good about myself.
3. Those who are unworthy of love deserve to be punished.
4. I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.

Sometimes these false beliefs are in our conscious mind where we are aware of them. Sometimes they are locked away in our unconscious mind. We may be unaware that they are there but they still affect our thoughts.

Beliefs: These are deeply held ideas that we believe are truth, on the conscious and unconscious level.

Examples of deeply held beliefs:

- God is good.
- My parents love me.

Thoughts: These are conscious ideas that occur in our mind and are shaped by our beliefs that as we interpret life's situations.

All thoughts go through, and are shaped by, our beliefs. Again, those beliefs are either, lessons from our experiences in life, truths from God's word, or lies from Satan.

Example: *The school bus is 30 minutes late.*

Sample thoughts:

- *The bus driver is irresponsible and doesn't care.*
- *I will be late and the teacher will be mad at me.*
- *The bus probably broke down, in the end everything will be okay.*

Our thoughts are our attempt to **INTERPET** a given situation. Our beliefs are a filter or like glasses that influence our view or potential outcome of the situation.

ILL. Grandpa asleep and boy put garlic paste on his mustache. The whole world stinks.

Our thoughts trigger EMOTIONS.

Emotions: Feelings we have, based upon what we believe about a situation.

We think that situations trigger our emotions. *THIS IS NOT TRUE!*

It is our beliefs that trigger our emotions.

ILL. Little child falls watches mom to know how they should respond. We can evaluate our emotions to determine if our beliefs are true or false. Negative emotions like anger or fear often will reveal some kind of deeply held false belief about our self-esteem.

Actions: This is a thing we do based on how we feel about a situation. Our emotions are the launching pad for our actions. When our emotions respond to a situation based on our beliefs we have three choices of action:

1. We can ignore the message, or our emotions.
2. We can follow what are emotions tell us to do.
3. We can do the opposite of what are emotions are telling us to do.

Discovering our False-Beliefs Project

As we have seen. Deeply held false beliefs can determine how we will respond to every situation in our lives. The following stories illustrate how this happens. Read each story and identify which of the following four false beliefs affected the person's thoughts.

1. I must meet certain standards in order to feel good about myself. (Performance Trap)
2. I must be approved by certain others in order to feel good about myself. (Approval Trap)
3. Those who are unworthy of love deserve to be punished. (Blame Trap)
4. I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless. (Shame Trap)

Bill's situation: Bill is first trumpet player in his high school band. The band is having an important practice on Saturday. The band teacher made it clear that there will be no excuses for missing. Bill arranged to get a ride from his friend Tom. When Saturday came, Tom didn't show up. Bill. Finally called and found out Tom had overslept. By the time Tom arrived at Bill's house, it was too late for them to make band practice.

Bill thoughts:

- *If Tom were really a friend he wouldn't be this irresponsible.*
- *I'll probably lose first chair over this. I might as well quit band if that happens.*
- *The teacher is going to feel like I let him down and is not going to like me.*
- *The teacher will cut my grade and I had the highest grade in class.*
- *Because of Tom, I'll probably get a bad grade in band.*
- *I don't know if Tom and I can ever be friends again.*

Bill's emotions:

- *Missing this practice makes me angry with Tom.*
- *I feel stupid for not planning another way to band practice.*
- *I feel like a failure at band.*

Bill's Actions:

- *He talks to his counselor about dropping band.*
- *He stops practicing his trumpet.*
- *He avoids his band teacher.*
- *He avoids Tom and tells other friends how Tom let him down.*

Bill's False Beliefs:

- *Performance Trap*
- *Blame Trap*

Karen's Situation: Karen had a small group of close friends. However, when Karen made the cheerleading squad, she became very busy. Cheerleading practice and games gave her much less time to spend with her friends.

Unfortunately, Karen's friends thought she was just acting stuck-up. Karen found out that her friends were having a party and she was not invited.

Karen's thoughts:

- My friends act like they don't care about me anymore.
- I've let my closest friends down.
- I'll never have them as friends again.

Joining the cheerleading squad was a mistake.

- Why do I always make the wrong choices in my life?

Karen's emotions:

- I feel lonely.
- I feel rejected and worthless.
- I feel stupid for trying out for cheerleading.
- I feel I never do anything right.

Karen's Actions:

- She walks the other way when she sees her old friends.
- She withdraws and seldom talks to anyone.
- She begins to miss practices and can't keep up with others in their routines.

Karen's False Beliefs:

- The Approval Trap
- The Shame Trap

Your situation:

Your thoughts:

Your emotions:

Your actions:

False Beliefs about the situation:

Replacing False Beliefs with God's Truth

Self-esteem is a battle between right and wrong beliefs. The battleground is the mind. The war is between Satan and lies he has planted in our mind, and the Holy Spirit who wants us to believe the truth of God's word.

In order to win the battle we must capture those wrong beliefs and replace them with truth.

Old Nature and Process of Thinking:

SITUATIONS → FALSE BELIEFS → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS

Renewed Nature and Process of Thinking:

SITUATIONS → TRUTH → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS

The only way to change our thinking is for our mind to be renewed with God's word. God's word can pierce all the way down into our sub-conscious to affect our most deeply held beliefs.

Rom. 12: 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think**. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.

Heb. 4: 12 For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, **cutting deep into our innermost thoughts** and desires. **It exposes us for what we really are.**

II Cor. 10:4 We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds.

5 With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ.

Conquering "*these rebellious ideas...*" means we must find and examine these wrong or false beliefs. By analyzing these beliefs we throw them out and replace them with truth and ... "*teach them (our mind and thoughts) to obey Christ.*"

Here's is the Bible's way to replace false beliefs:

Phil. 4: 8 And now, dear friends, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

What things do we listen to, watch, and think about that reinforce false beliefs:

- Music with a rebellious message
- Television shows or movies that celebrate and condone sinful living
- Pornography
- Strong relationships with unbelievers that have too much influence on us.

What things can we do to reinforce true beliefs.

- Reading God's word
- Worshipping God
- Hanging out with godly people.
- Listening to music that honors God.
- Analyzing things on TV and radio to see if they honor God.

We have choice in what we will believe. Whenever situations arise in our lives we will either respond from false beliefs or the truth.

TRAP	FEAR	ANSWER	TRUTH
Performance	Failure	Justification	I'm forgiven
Approval	Rejection	Reconciliation	I'm accepted
Blame	Punishment	Propitiation	I'm loved
Shame	Judgement	Regeneration	I'm complete