

Lesson 13 - Uprooting Destructive Habits and Thought Patterns

We must be careful not to develop a “victim” mentality, believing that others are the source of all our problems. We are not trying to find fault or point blame on others, but to help you see the cause and effect others may have had on the choices you have made. We want to expose the things that are stealing the life of God from you, bring them to the Cross, and enter the new life in Christ.

Every Un-met Love Need Left a Wound

- ✓ Emotional immaturity such as lack of self-discipline, selfishness, compulsions, phobias, etc. and unhealthy habits such as addictions, pleasure seeking, eating disorders, etc, are a sign that your love needs were not met.
- ✓ Woundedness hinders our ability to receive and give love away.
- ✓ We spend most of our time and energy trying to fight off the pain or hide to protect our self, and have nothing left for our friends or family.

Destructive Habits

Habits are acts repeated so often that they become involuntary. There is no new decision of mind each time the act is preformed. (*Jack Frost from Breaking Free*)

Our Habits, or Lack There of, Govern Most of Our Life

- ✓ They affect our actions, our character, and our destiny.
- ✓ Good habits will lead us into God’s blessings and His peace and rest.
- ✓ Bad habits will lead us into curses, unrest, and death.
- ✓ Bad habits shape our value systems, affect how we relate to God and others, distort our priorities, hinder us from walking in the truth, and cause us to do things that we do not want to do. (**Rom. 7:15-20**)
- ✓ Our responses to life’s situations will come forth from the habit structures we have built through our thoughts and actions.

We must renew our mind (Rom. 12:2) which affects 12% of our actions and the “spirit of our mind” (**Eph. 4:22-24**), the subconscious, which affects 88% of our actions.

- ✓ The world tries to focus our attention and thoughts on the negative through what we read, hear, and see. Just read a newspaper or listen to the evening news and count how many fearful, negative, or depressive topics are discussed.
- ✓ What you think is real, is real to you. If you hear something enough times, you will begin to think that it is true.
- ✓ We can begin to form destructive thought patterns such as Ungodly Beliefs, Bitter Expectations, Fantasies, Fears, Focusing Too Much On Our Self (self-hatred, self-pity, shame, victim, guilt, etc.), and Depression.

We Need a Change of Heart!

We must allow God and the Holy Spirit to change our hearts through forgiveness and taking everything to the Cross.

- ✓ When our heart is healed, we will want to change our habits and our thought patterns to Godly ones.
- ✓ We have to die to the old self and put on Jesus Christ!

Uprooting Destructive Habits and Thought Patterns

Some Common Ways Destructive Habits Can be Formed in Us

1) Passed down from generation to generation

- Every act of obedience or disobedience on our part is an inheritance to our children.
- Whether we choose to walk in the light or in the darkness, it will affect our children either positively or negatively.
- Just living with our parents can form habits in us, and we can find ourselves walking in the same sin or lifestyle after we grow up.

2) From deep hurts or wounds we have received

- Our relationships with our parents and others can shape our value system and how we interact with God and others.
- We can begin to see God and life through the lens of how we were treated growing up.

3) Misrepresentations of love

- We were created to receive and give love away.
- If we did not receive love growing up, we are wounded in our hearts.
- This can leave us with an inner anger because we feel that we never received the love we should have received growing up.
- If our parents spent more time working to earn money, watching TV, paying attention to other siblings or newborns in the family, or involved in too many activities, we may feel rejection or abandonment.

4) By judgments or inner vows we make towards others, ourselves, or God

- When we make judgments, we place a demand on the Law of Judgment and we reap back judgment on ourselves. (**Matt. 7:1-2**)
- The law of sowing and reaping and the law of increase cause those judgments to come back worse than what we sowed.
- The law of judgment also says that we will become what we judge in others. (**Rom. 2:1-16**)
- An inner vow is a determination set in the flesh by your mind and heart early in life to do or not do something. As a child these may have been made without you being conscious of them, even in the womb.
 - They are usually forgotten until revealed by the Holy Spirit.
 - They can lie dormant until triggered by the right person or situations.
 - They are powerful and resist change.
 - They block God's good plan for our lives.
 - We take our lives into our own hands when we make vows.
 - We must release even the good vows too as they came from our flesh, not God.
 - Vows are like railroad tracks, our conscious mind may be good, but we can only run on the track set in our childhood.

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5) **By the words people speak over us (Prov. 18:21)**

- Our hearts can be pierced by the words of others.
- They can affect the way we think about ourselves, how we act, and how we live our whole lives.
- They can act almost like prophecies, especially those spoken by our parents, and come to pass in our lives.
- We end up following or fulfilling those words in our lives and we cannot seem to get free from them.
- We may become what our parents spoke over us like: “You are just stupid.” “You are so uncoordinated or clumsy.” “You never finish what you start.”
- We may be driven to prove our parents were wrong in what they said. Or we may become withdrawn or a quitter not even trying to do anything.

6) **Through false doctrines, false teachings, or wrong thinking (Mk. 7:7-8, Col. 2:8)**

- We may accept as truth what is not in the Bible and begin to act the wrong way towards other people. For example: “We have to follow rigid lists of rules or we always have to do it right in order to be accepted.” “Drugs or transcendental meditation are the only ways to peace of mind.” “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.” “It is wrong to show emotions.” “You can never understand a woman.” “I’m a homosexual because that is the way God created me.”

7) **Through ethnic or cultural backgrounds**

- They come from practiced beliefs and traditions from the past.
- We can be influenced by adults who hold certain prejudices against certain groups of people.
- People groups value certain actions such as the Asians who are very performance-oriented or the Europeans and Africans who are very reserved in giving expressed love and affection towards their children.

8) **Through negative thinking patterns and false belief structures (Prov. 23:7)**

- What we believe about ourselves is true to us whether it is true or not.
- Self-judgment and self-condemnation can affect our emotions and how we act.
- We will see life and treat others in accordance with how we feel about ourselves.
- It can even affect our physical health.

The Force Behind Our Destructive Habits

Four laws related to healthy relationships that when followed, release blessings in our life, but when broken, release curses. These broken laws create open doors that allow demonic activity to enter our lives and the curses to come upon us.

1) The Law of Honoring Our Parents – When we honor our parents things will go well with us and we will live long on the earth (**Ex. 20:12, Eph. 6:2-3**) However, things will not go well if we do not honor our parents.

2) The Law of Judging – What we judge in others will come back on us. (**Matt. 7:1-2, Lk. 6:37-38**) The judgments usually come out of our hurts, wounds, or feelings of rejection. Our judgments place a demand on the law and Satan uses that to bring curses on our lives.

3) The Law of Sowing and Reaping – (**Gal. 6:7-8**) Every good deed sown will reap a blessing, but every bad seed of dishonor or judgment will reap a curse. We may not even realize that the attitudes we held against others were seeds of judgment that we will eventually reap.

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4) The Law of Becoming What We Judge in Others – (Rom. 2:1)

- When we allow the judgments we make against others to take root in us, we will eventually reap the same harvest of that behavior in our own lives, our spouse or children.
- Suddenly, we realize that we are being controlled by something beyond ourselves and the good that we want to do, we do not, but practice the evil we judged in someone else. (Rom. 7:19)

Breaking free from the destructive habits

Jesus came not to do away with the law, but to fulfill it.

- He steps in and takes our place receiving the demand of the law for us. The judgments come back on Him instead of us! He fulfills the demand of the law for us.
- We must acknowledge the destructive habits at work in us and repent for our sins (Rom. 2:4).
- We must become sensitive to which voices we are listening to and control our thoughts, actions, and emotions. (Col. 3:2, Phil. 4:7)
- We must hate sin and daily die to our flesh.
- We must take everything to the cross daily until the habits are gone.
- We cannot do this alone, but only with the help of the Holy Spirit and Jesus.
- We must stand firm and resist the temptations of the old self to go back to the old ways. Satan will try to draw us back through temptations and trials. (Eph. 6:13, Phil. 1:6, 2Tim. 2:12)

Destructive Thought Patterns

Many of our problems stem from negative or destructive thinking. (Jam. 1:14-15)

- Our flesh has more power to hinder our spiritual growth and maturity than the devil. He only has the power to deceive us.
- We just need to bring more truth and light into those areas where we are not walking in obedience to Christ.

Ungodly Beliefs – Isaiah 55:7, Rom. 12:2

A. Our ungodly beliefs usually make up, or at least influence, all of the areas of our lives. (Prov. 23:7)

- We may believe lies about ourselves, about others, or about God. All of these are ungodly beliefs that will damage our lives and hinder our relationship with God.
- You have ungodly beliefs that you don't realize are there for one of two reasons;
 - 1) You don't know what the Bible says and thus you don't know it doesn't agree with God
 - 2) You believed it and your experiences have reinforced it to the point that you think its truth rather than what God says. Wounds affect our hearts, but ungodly beliefs affect our mind.

Ungodly beliefs are **all beliefs, decisions, attitudes, agreements, judgments, expectations, vows, and oaths** that **do not** agree with God, His Word, His nature, and His character.

- A perfect ungodly belief is one that appears to be absolutely **true** based on the **facts** of our experience and yet is absolutely **false** based on **God's Word**.
- Most ungodly beliefs are not absolutes but a mixture of truth and error.

Uprooting Destructive Habits and Thought Patterns

B. Ways ungodly beliefs can form in us

1) Many of the negative beliefs that we have about ourselves, others, and God result from the hurtful ways we have been treated.

- ✓ Most of our ungodly beliefs resulted from childhood hurts, traumas, and negative experiences that left a very strong impression on us.
- ✓ These ungodly beliefs from the hurts and wounds go to the very core of our being and may be very difficult to root out.
- ✓ Hurts and wrongs are like hands that come together with fingers locking together. Hurts must be healed along with renewing our minds.
- ✓ Ungodly beliefs also give legal permission for demons to stay.
- ✓ Our agreement with the devil rather than God connects us to demonic oppression.

2) Our family experience is the source of many ungodly beliefs.

- ✓ Traditions, habits, prejudices, attitudes, actions, and words of our parents can be passed on to us.
- ✓ Words that are repeatedly spoken about us can also become ungodly beliefs. “You’ll never amount to anything.” “Can’t you do anything right?” “Joey is a sissy.”
- ✓ These ungodly beliefs undermine our self-worth and ability to succeed.

3) Today’s world and society are permeated with concepts of worldly success, popularity, and the self-made man.

- ✓ All of these ungodly beliefs encourage us to “be in charge” and “do your own thing.”
- ✓ These beliefs are in our culture.
- ✓ Thus we may fail to detect how tightly they are woven into our thoughts and beliefs.

4) Our natural, unredeemed mind can form ungodly beliefs that may sound logical and appealing, but do not agree with the Word.

- ✓ These tend to focus on self and not God. “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.” “Disasters are ‘acts of God.’” “You have to work for everything you get in this life.” “God is trying to teach us something through sickness, disease, and accidents.” “We’re poor, but we’re proud!” “You can never understand a woman.”
- ✓ Our mind can also form ungodly beliefs in an attempt to handle or make sense out of life’s hurts and traumas.

5) Our parents can unintentionally teach us ungodly beliefs through their attempts to comfort us. For example, a mother may tell her hurting child (whether physically or emotionally) that “It’s OK. You will be just fine. Now, don’t cry.” If this is repeated many times, a child may believe: a) that it is wrong to cry; b) the people who love me don’t care about my feelings; or c) it is not right to really hurt about anything that affects me.

6) Many times ungodly beliefs are related to the sins of the fathers and the resulting curses.

- ✓ The specific sin of the father is like the hub of a wheel and the ungodly beliefs are like the spokes going out from it.
- ✓ Ungodly beliefs (UGB) become an extension of the sin. For example sexual sin causes many wrong twisted beliefs about sex. You must deal with both to be totally free.

7) Ungodly beliefs can also come from church leaders, friends, or whatever you read.

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C. What God thinks about ungodly beliefs

God views ungodly beliefs as covenants with the enemy.

- ✓ God fully respects and honors covenants as we see throughout the Bible. In **Joshua 9:3-14** there is a story of the people of Gibeon who tricked the Israelites into believing that they had come from a far country. They wore old worn clothes and had dry moldy bread. They asked to make a covenant with Israel and Israel entered into a covenant with them without asking the Lord. Later they found out the Gibeonites were their neighbors, but the covenant remained.
- ✓ God will let you remain in the ungodly beliefs you have until you break your agreement with them.
- ✓ We must learn to reprogram our minds so that they are filled with more and more Godly beliefs.
- ✓ Then God will help you drive out the ungodly beliefs a little at a time. (**Ex. 23:30-32**)

The Belief-Expectation Cycle

1. **Ungodly beliefs** are formed out of hurtful experiences, leading to
2. **expectations** arising from these beliefs. These expectations affect our
3. **behavior**, causing us also to influence the behavior of others, leading to
4. **experiences** in line with these behaviors that confirm the ungodly beliefs.

This traps a person. You must renounce your agreement with the ungodly beliefs and stop the cycle. *We must choose to make God's Word our new belief.* As we receive the truth and let it change what we believe, we can expect positive things to happen in our lives.

D. Some results of ungodly beliefs

- 1) **Our ungodly beliefs affect how we relate to others, our identity, and how we perceive ourselves.**
 - ✓ They choke out the abundant life God intended for us to have by destroying our ability to believe Him.
 - ✓ The ungodly beliefs undermine our faith and hinder our ability to understand and know God's promises and the truths in the Bible. (**Mk. 11:23-24**)
 - ✓ They also shut off our ability to receive God's blessings such as healing and prosperity.
- 2) **Our ungodly beliefs can block the Holy Spirit from sanctifying us because we may use them to justify our sins or the old self.** (**Rom. 6:6-7, 12**) They also prevent us from having a meaningful relationship with God.
- 3) **Our ungodly beliefs can give us a false identity of ourselves.**
 - ✓ We see ourselves through the lies that we have embraced.
 - ✓ Satan uses these lies to keep us from ever finding out our true identity in Christ Jesus.
 - ✓ We may not feel like we are important or feel secure in His love.
- 4) **We can develop negative expectations about life and ourselves.**
 - ✓ We may believe that everyone is going to reject us or hurt us in some way.
 - ✓ We may never get close or open our spirits to anyone for fear of being hurt again.
 - ✓ We believe the lies more than we do God's Word of protection and love.
 - ✓ We can also expect to never have anything and always live in lack, never experiencing the great provisions and promises of God.

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5) ***Our negative beliefs and expectations from ungodly beliefs can defile those around us.***

- ✓ Spiritual forces emanating from us can affect others thinking such as sexual lusts or unresolved conflicts in the home.
- ✓ You can sense the atmosphere is not safe without seeing anything in the natural.
- ✓ You can also draw your negative expectations out of someone else such as expecting to be rejected or being fearful about something going to happen.

What you believe is true is true to you!

- If you believe you can't, you can't.
- If you believe you will fail, you will fail.
- If you believe people will reject you, eventually they will.
- If you believe people will hurt you, you will draw people around you who will hurt you.

E. Breaking free from ungodly beliefs

- 1) **First, we must recognize that we have an ungodly belief through the work of the Holy Spirit. If you have the fruit, you have the root too.** You must renounce the ungodly belief and break all ties to demons that this belief may have made.
- 2) **Then you must forgive those who caused you to form this ungodly belief (be as specific as you can be).**
- 3) **Then forgive yourself for believing this lie and ask God to forgive you for any adverse effects you may have had on others as a result of believing the lie.**
- 4) **Finally, go to the Bible and find out what God says about what you should believe and write out a Godly Belief.**
- 5) **Start renewing your mind every day with the Godly Belief until it becomes a part of your thinking.**
- 6) **Take all the negative thoughts, habits, and expectation to the cross and leave them there. Start seeing yourself the way God sees you.**