

Finding freedom from "Core Lies"



✦ *MINISTERING IN
DEEPER ISSUES* ✦

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GUIDE

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Packet Overview	5
Longings & Events	6
Beliefs	9
Image & Vows	13
Goals	16
Behavior & Strategies	20
Emotions	23
Solution & Conclusion	26
APPLICATION	28
Helpful Biblical Passages	35



INTRODUCTION

“Discipleship is broadening one’s awareness of Christ’s authority. It is bringing our enslavements to Him, submitting them to that authority.”

—Jim Peterson

This packet is designed to be an equipping tool. The ultimate goal is to help someone recognize how he or she responds to events in life and is in bondage to the lies he or she believes. We want to help our student friends recognize the lies they believe and turn to the truth, which can set them free (John 8:31-32). We consider this turning from lies to God’s truth to be a vital part of the discipling relationship. This is a process and not an event.

While this packet is an equipping tool, all of us should be able to apply this to our own lives. This tool is not only for the person “being disciplined” but for the “discipler” as well. This is because all of us have sins that easily entangle us.

None of us completely escapes the enemy’s lies (Hebrews 12:1,2). And also, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death.” Proverbs 14:12. All of us need to examine our “ways” to see if they are God’s.

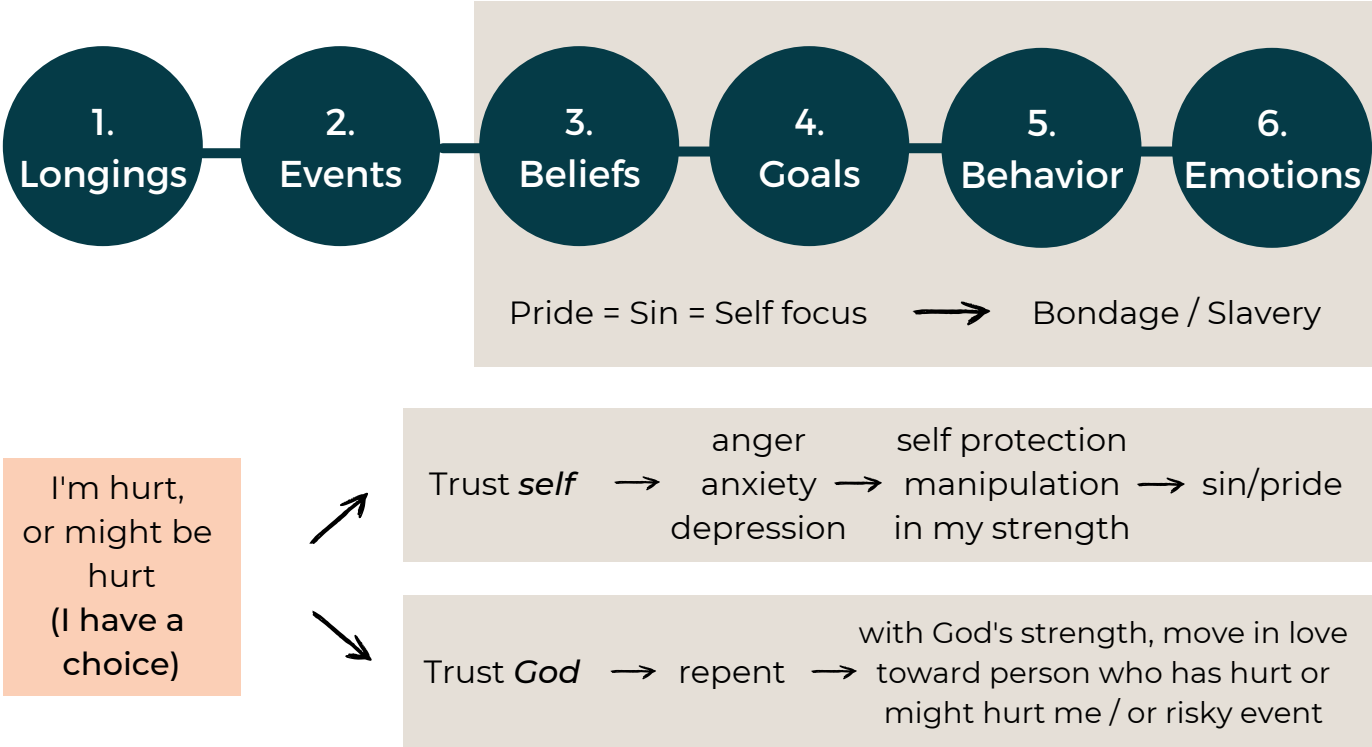
Acknowledgement: We have been impacted by Larry Crabb and Neil Anderson seminars and writings as is evident in the following material. Also, without the communication/editing skills of Doug Weber, this material would never be on paper.

PACKET OVERVIEW

God has given each of us deep LONGINGS that we yearn for. We have had hurtful EVENTS in our lives which prompt (and have prompted) conclusions within us. We have responded to these emotions by forming false BELIEFS and IMAGES about ourselves and about God by which we live. We have then set personal VOWS and GOALS based upon these beliefs and images. Our subsequent BEHAVIORS are our attempt to achieve these goals.

These goals and images, however, are not Biblical, and our pursuit of them can never satisfy our Deepest Longings. **Only God can satisfy our deepest longings.** The problem continues because we try to fulfill these God-given longings through our own effort and we continue to have painful events that threaten our goals and causes emotional responses and behaviors that keep us distant from God and others.

The following diagram is a flow chart of this process:



LONGINGS & EVENTS

1. Longings

1.) Deepest God-given Longings

God has put within each of us two main non-negotiable longings.

These longings are fulfilled in God and in God alone.

First, He created us to be loved unconditionally for who we are and not for what we do. Secondly, we were created to make an impact and have significance in our world through agape, connecting, secure relationships. The greatest impact we can have on this world is not to make disciples, nor be committed to the vision of multiplication, but to glorify God- by loving Him and loving other people. This propels us to make disciples and be committed to the vision of multiplication.

(Mark 12:30-31, 2 Cor. 5:14, 1 John 4:7-8)

2. Events

2.) Hurtful Initial Events

We live in a fallen world! Events, experiences, situations, or environments (often in childhood) have been painful. Recognize that you have been sinned against. Don't ignore this fact but believe it is true. -- e.g. "I was sinned against and it hurt me. Also, as a result, I have and do hurt others by my self-protective and manipulative behavior."

Examples of painful "Events":

1. Hurts caused by key people in your life (father, mother, relatives, close friends, key authorities, coaches, teachers, etc.) often bring confusion.
2. Situations that prompted feelings of embarrassment, fear, exposure, humiliation, etc. Sometimes these events do not involve important/respected people but were still profound.
3. Words that were spoken toward you or about you and that stick in your mind. Was there ever anything said toward you or about you that made you feel inadequate, stupid, bad, etc.?
4. Hurts stemming from a general environment in which you were raised. (e.g. environment of abandonment, legalism, ridicule, etc.)
5. Observation of another person being hurt and subsequently saying to yourself, "I don't ever want to be treated like that." So you made a vow to yourself that you would never do, say or be the things you saw in the person who was hurt.
6. Changes brought on by moving, divorce, or the death of a significant person.
7. Observing another significant person go through a painful experience and telling yourself I must never get in that situation or I shouldn't ever behave like that.

EVENTS, CON'T

2. Events Con't

These events are important to talk through with a mentor. They can be brought into focus through prayer by asking God to show you when you were first hurt in a certain area. Ask God to bring it to your mind.

The main reason to look back on events is NOT for judging, rebuking, changing, correcting or gaining revenge against the one(s) who hurt us. Nor is it to change the person to get what we think we always needed from them.

Rather, the main reason to look back is to see how I responded to those events, what false lies were believed, and how my style of relating developed as a result of that pain. I now am relating and behaving to others to avoid that same pain.

I must now be willing

- To own the hurt—to admit that I was hurt by the above events and people (I cannot allow God to “carry my sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4) if I say they don’t exist, they “aren’t really sorrows” or “they aren’t that bad.”)
- To feel the pain—even allowing myself to feel any anger that may arise
- To repent of the sinful response I have made as a result of my hurts (we turn around and hurt others around us similarly to the way we were hurt)
- To possibly reconcile the relationship (I am only responsible for my response to the hurts. I cannot demand others to respond in any certain way.)
- To identify the lies I have believed and how to turn to corresponding truths.
- To learn how to relate in a healthy way with God, others and myself.

The Bible rarely, if ever, tells us to avoid, cover, ignore, or suppress pain. (Matthew 5:4)

- Isaiah 53—Jesus didn’t avoid hurt.
- Hebrews 12:2—Jesus saw the pain and entered it, recognizing the value of enduring the pain.
- Luke 22:42—Jesus did not like or welcome the pain, but was willing to move into it because it was necessary to continue His relationship with the Father and others.
- Romans 5— pain produces hope
- 2 Cor. 12:9-10— When I am weak then I am strong in the Lord.

LONGINGS & EVENTS

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

Optional: Ask the Lord to bring to mind events that might have been shameful, embarrassing, bullying, mistakes, failures, felt like being left-out, name calling, being the brunt of a joke, or that of feeling abandoned, rejected, fear, guilt, etc. Do not rush this process, listen and talk to the Lord about the feelings associated with those memories. (

Note: Do not beat yourself up if nothing comes to mind either. Trust that the Lord will reveal things in His time.

Consider this quote from Dave Bowman: "I at first had trouble thinking of an event that stood out to me. I then prayed and asked the Lord to bring an event to mind, and He did! I hadn't thought about the event for over 20 years. "

BELIEFS

3. Beliefs

3.) Personal beliefs

Webster defines a belief as a “conviction of the truth of some statement...especially when based on examination of evidence.”

We form our personal beliefs (some of which are destructive lies) when we examine and respond emotionally to the “evidence” of our past hurts. These lies come out of our emotional responses to the hurts. We use our thinking capacities to maintain that life can work without God. Beliefs guide us in our search for relationship and impact. In a givensituation, we are controlled by what we think or believe. We try to never be in a vulnerable situation where we don't have control.

Initial Conclusions (from events)

The hurtful (possibly childhood) events trigger emotional responses and conclusions such as confusion, fear, guilt, embarrassment, feelings of abandonment, loneliness, feelings of rejection, shame, humiliation, being “bad”, incompetent, clumsy, being singled out, left out, ugly, or being a “loser.” Note: One can also conclude “I am the center of the Universe,” or “I can conquer anyone or anything.” This is a person who feels they are “the best.” In some ways, they feel they are God's gift to the world. This is still a lie and must be dealt with. About 1/10 people fit into this category of thinking.



These initial emotional conclusions were very powerful and at a young age, conclusions often are made that there is something terribly wrong or unlovable about me that I need to hide or fix. One can also conclude “I am invincible”, “I have it all together”, or “I am the best.” These initial conclusions can turn into beliefs.

“Children are wonderful observers, but terrible interpreters.”

BELIEFS, CON'T

3. Beliefs Con't

Examples of persons believing a lie in response to a hurt are the following:

When Joseph was younger, it was communicated to him either verbally or nonverbally that "You never do anything right! And until you do something right, you're unacceptable." Joseph's response to this painful event was to believe the lie that his worth as an individual is determined by his ability to do things right...or perfectly...or to be good...or to be successful.

Dave was playing "king of the hill" with friends. It was fun...until all the friends were on top of the hill, pushing him down. They wouldn't let him be on top of the hill with them. This hurt Dave and he felt anger toward them. He embraced the lie that he was unworthy of being wanted, feeling abandonable, and that his worth was based on people's acceptance of him. Dave would constantly be asking: "What is there about me that people would want? Who would ever really want me?" This led to the belief that *"eventually a person will abandon me"*.

As a result of hurts such as these, we all believe at least two lies (most often more):

1. Lies about ourselves:

I believe the lie that my value as an individual is dependent upon my performance or appearance. My value is unproved, non-existent, in doubt, or in question. This lie is prompted and fueled by my firmly embedded belief that "I am...(at least one of the following) a failure, unacceptable, worthless, stupid, bad, never right, incompetent, imperfect, etc." You could also believe that "I am invincible, competent, or always right".

2. Lies about God:

A.) "I can control my life to find life (being touched at the deepest part of life)apart from God and can control life to avoid all pain and hurts in life."

This lie connects to our behavior of self-protection (avoiding people or quitting, abandoning) and manipulation (abuse, anger at people, flattery, charm, etc.)

For instance, in the above examples, Joseph may believe (consciously or subconsciously) that he can work hard enough to constantly appear perfect, or good, to himself and to all the people around him.

Many times, this becomes a performance-based life.

Dave may believe "If I can only be what people want me to be they will want me." This can foster a people-pleasing lifestyle.

BELIEFS, CON'T

3. Beliefs Con't

2. Lies about God continued:

B.) God is not enough to provide my needs

While Jesus said that He came to give abundant life (John 10:10) and that He longs to take our burdens away and give us rest (Matthew 11:28), we often believe that we can secure that life and rest for ourselves. We try to find life (meaning and happiness) apart from God.

All of these lies are from Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

Jesus is the truth who sets us free from lies (John 14:6; 8:31-32).

“Control is our own personal version of the way we try to guarantee love and security so we won’t have to trust.” -Paula Rinehart

Proverbs 14:12 “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

Truth: We are valuable not only because of our actions, but in spite of our actions!

Romans 5:8 “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Luke 10:38-42 Martha was being busy but Jesus commended Mary for her devotion.

Is. 30:15 “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is yourstrength, but you were not willing.” Ezekiel 16

BELIEFS

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

1.) Is there a phrase you continually say to yourself when things are not going well? Things like.... "I'm a loser", "I can never do anything right", "I'm stupid", or "Nobody wants me", etc. Some other thoughts could be "I think I'm the best", "I'm the smartest", etc. This **could** be part of your lie you believe about yourself.

2.) Are there any conclusions you have made about your worth based on hurtful events that turned into lies?

IMAGE & VOWS

(Beliefs continued)

Image
(Byproduct of
beliefs)

From our “core lies” we form a core image of ourselves. This too is a lie. How do I view myself? (Fill in the blank “I am _____.” Our image of ourself is chosen to provide us with a basis for handling our world with our own resources. We chose to understand how things really are but it is false. (Note: “image” differs from “false identity” in that your image is how you truly see yourself, e.g. the personality you place upon yourself in light of the lies you believe. This can be deeply painful, shameful, and largely unconscious. It is a deep conviction as to how I must respond to my world if I am to avoid pain. False identity is how you want to be “seen” by others or even by yourself. Your true identity is who you are in Christ.) You must only give Christ the authority to tell you who you are.

Your image is your picture of yourself as either a particular type of animal or person. This image reflects how you view yourself (e.g. “I am a...wimp, a gorilla, a worker ant, a 7 year old little boy or girl, a clumsy ox, a baby robin, a dummy, or loser, etc.). This image, you feel, gives you license to live life the way you do (Self-protective and/or manipulative lifestyle).

The image stems from the lies and hurts. It is the way you live life in order to avoid pain. For instance, in our earlier example, Joseph, because of hurts, may picture himself as “the dumb little boy in the back row of class.” As a result of buying into this image, Joseph then feels the compulsion to act like a little boy even as an adult. He also would never want to answer questions because it would be possible he might answer incorrectly. So, he becomes shy and avoids interacting to protect himself from ever being exposed as dumb. Joseph may reason subconsciously or (rarely) consciously, “Since this is how people see me, then that is what I will be. It must be who I am.” To try to break out of this image is to invite the unknown response of people. It may also mean failure as I try new things. That brings pain. It would be less painful for me to simply live out this image.”

It is natural that we live to fulfill the image that we have of ourselves. Jesus gave Simon Peter the image of “rock” in the gospels. Peter initially struggled to live out this image, but as his life unfolded, he clearly began to reflect the image in his actions and words.

If the image I see of myself is as a son or daughter of God, then I will live out that image. In the same way, it would be natural for me to live out my image of being a little boy, gorilla, wimp, etc. if that is how I view myself and if so viewing myself this way accomplishes avoiding pain in my life

IMAGE & VOWS, CON'T

(Beliefs continued)

Runaway Bride movie example

Flirting with friend's husband—Julia Roberts' character sees herself as a flirt ("I'm mysterious" conversation with Joan Cusack). At the Luau—when reporter "calls her" on her image, she lashes out at him, not at herself or at the others who have perpetuated the image. She has become "comfortable" with this image because it protects her from the risk of commitment and the pain such commitment might bring. She doesn't want to be known, but she does want to be wanted. Attitude: If they know me will they still want me? Therefore, I must hide behind a mask.

The Kid movie example

Bruce Willis' character sees himself and his younger image of himself as a loser, therefore, he manipulates people to see him as a success.

Vows
(By product
of beliefs)

Vows are made after a hurtful event or from observing another significant person go through a painful experience. Vows help us believe we can stay in control. Example: "I will never hurt (or cry) again!" or "I will always do this in this situation!" Vows are serious and need to be renounced.

Examples:

- I will never let my daughter get hurt the same way I was.
- I will never risk doing that because I may fail.
- I will always do what others want me to do so they will like me.
- I will never put myself in a situation where others laugh at me.
- I will never say anything because it might be wrong.

IMAGE & VOWS

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

Assignment: Watch the movie *"The Kid"* and observe the whole core lie progression. You will see it clearly. The events, the lies, the goal, the self-protection and manipulation, and emotions of anger, anxiety, and depression.

Image: Ask yourself if you commonly see yourself as a certain type of person, or even a certain type of animal or insect. Why do you see yourself this way? What benefit is it to you to see yourself this way?

For example: "I am a worker ant that doesn't need much attention but is successful at what I do."

Vows: Is there something you always avoid doing? Why is that? What does this vow do for you? How is it beneficial or detrimental?

Is there a vow that you say in your head like: "I will always avoid this situation", "I will never say anything I am not 100% sure of", "I will never act like that again", "I will never show that emotion again", "I will always...", "I will never...", etc.?

GOALS

4. Goals

4.) Personal goals

Many goals are connected to vows we have made, possibly as a young child.

As a result of Joseph's belief about himself (that he is a failure), his goal is to be seen as perfect (e.g. to never fail)—His goal is to prove that he is the opposite of what he truly believes himself to be.

In the same way, your personal goal often is to prove that you are the opposite of what you truly believe yourself to be. (e.g. "I am a person not worthy of being wanted, therefore my goal is to do anything it takes to be and/or feel wanted." Or, "I am inept, therefore I will appear and be competent.") This is because you don't think others accept you the way you think you are (incompetent/ unwanted, etc).

Other examples of goals:

"I must be...successful, right, accepted, good, competent, perfect, wanted, smart, respected, the best, etc."

This goal is my preferred identity that I work to create and maintain. And I want others to see me as possessing this identity. (It is a false identity, and a mask, because it denies the fact that God, not I, determines who I truly am.) When this goal is threatened, I become frantic and I fight to maintain this identity (false self/ imposter).

The prevailing attitude during this goal seeking is a "demanding spirit." (Job in the Scriptures is a good example of a person with a "demanding spirit." Job 23:2-7)

You are demanding...

- 1.yourself to live up to your goal, or false identity
- 2.all others (including God) to see you as living up to your goal (false identity), and
- 3.all others (including God) to treat you as one who is living up to your goal (false identity).

A problem arises when we mistake a "desire" for a "need" and demand others to come through for us.

GOALS, CON'T

There is a difference between having a demanding spirit and simply having a desire. It is okay to desire to be wanted, to do well, to be smart, etc. These desires become sinful, however, when we demand them to be met in order for us to find life (joy, peace, meaning, value, love, etc.). Our chief goal is to glorify and enjoy Him forever, not to preserve a false identity.

Psalm 37:4 says, “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.” The person who delights in God will still have desires. However, those desires will be subordinate to the ultimate goal of desiring God. In God alone we find “life”, true identity, significance, security, or worth.

“He has not promised to gratify all the appetites of the body and the humours of the fancy, but to grant all the desires of the heart, all the cravings of the renewed sanctified soul. What is the desire of the heart of a good man? It is this, to know, and love, and live to God, to please him and to be pleased in him.”

—Matthew Henry; Commentary on Psalm 37:4

Your **goal** is a continuous, ungodly, personal standard that is opposed to the gospel. You need to recognize this! The gospel concludes that you are loved not for how you measure up but for who you are, a person God loves. Your **goal**, and all you do to try to achieve your **goal**, is your own made-up law that you feel you must fulfill in order to gain abundant life or survive.

--See Jeremiah 2:13 and The Well Illustration

Jeremiah 2:13 "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

Galatians 3:2,3 - I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? 3Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?

Some results of seeking our ungodly goals:

1. When you seek this **goal** you are enslaved by your own law (Gal. 5:1, Col. 2:13-14).
2. You worship false idols.
3. **You can't love others when your focus is on yourself (Gal. 5:14).** The Bible calls this self-focus, "pride". The good news is that Jesus died for this sin. You cannot completely rid yourself of this sin. Repentance of this **goal or idol** is the only avenue of true change available.

GOALS, CON'T

Goals are the bridge between your beliefs and behavior. In order to understand what your goal is, you must look at your behavior (self-protection, manipulation) and emotions (anger, anxiety, etc.) to see if you can find a repeating pattern. A key way to discover your personal goal(s) is to look at the “red lights on your dashboard” (emotions) and journal while you are angry, anxious or depressed, paying close attention to the events and circumstances surrounding/prompting the emotions.

(Note: To change behavior one must have a relatively good idea of who their genuine self is along with identifying the truth about who they are in Christ.)

Truth about my Goals:

- Phil. 3:10-16 We press on toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God.
- My goal is to be more like Jesus.
- My goal is to live in the truth of the gospel or “good news”.
- While I strive to achieve my goals in order to validate my worth, Jesus has already achieved the goals for me! He is worthy and valuable and already sees me as worthy and valuable as a result of his death as payment for my sins.

Examples of truths:

- Jesus is perfect, competent—“I don’t need to be perfect.” (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 1 Pet.2:22)
- Jesus is good— “and He died to make me righteous” (“I don’t have to be good.”) (Eph.2:8,9; 2Cor.8:9)
- Jesus is right—“I don’t have to be right.” (1 Cor.1:30, 31)
- Jesus is successful—“Success means faithful and obedient, not results.” (John 17:4)
- Jesus is smart—“I don’t have to be smart.” (Col.2:3; Luke 2:47; Mark 1:21,22)
- Jesus accepts and wants me!—“I don’t have to demand it from others.” (John 17:20,21; Eph. 3:18,19)

Of course, you may say, Jesus is competent, good, and perfect but I’m not! But Christ’s righteousness has been imputed (credited) to us (2 Cor. 5:21). **Indeed, His entire life has become our life** (Romans 3, Col. 3:2-4). We do not have to be these things for God, ourselves, or for others because He sees us as totally worthy because of Christ.

“God is asking me, the unworthy, to forget my unworthiness and that of my brothers, and dare to advance in the love which has redeemed and renewed us all in God’s likeness. And to laugh, after all, at the preposterous ideas of ‘worthiness’.”

–Thomas Merton (quoted in Abba’s Child)

GOALS

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

1.) Look at your emotions of anger, anxiety, and depression. Write a record of the last time you had one of these emotions.

2.) What was your behavior or reaction to the situation?

3.) Anger/Frustration= blocked goal ; anxiety/fear= uncertain goal ; depression/sense of inadequacy= unattainable goal.... Ask yourself, what were you threatened about? What did you not want people to see you as? What did you not want to be treated as?

4.) Did you protect yourself when this situation happened? (Such as shut down, quit, do something to numb the pain (such as pornography, eating, videos, etc.), become shy or quiet, etc.) Did you manipulate others? (Such as lash out at them, become moody, become debative, try harder, become sarcastic or belittling, etc.)

5.) Did you do this behavior automatically without thinking? (Sort of like instinct?)

6.) Did it feel like you had no choice but to be angry, anxious, or shut down, etc.?

BEHAVIOR & STRATEGIES

5. Behavior

5.) Our personal behavior & strategies

Your behavior is what you do to reach your goal. (e.g. "I will behave in such a way that my goal (false identity) MUST be seen as...competent, good, intelligent, wanted, etc."). and must be acknowledged by the other person. Behavior is our strategy that we devise that seems to help make life work and accomplish our goals.

My behavior is how I try to control (by manipulating others or protecting myself) my life to avoid experiencing pain. It is extremely painful when I am not seen or treated like my goal of being competent, intelligent, etc. Therefore, I will behave in any way necessary to assure that I will be seen by others, myself, and God as...competent, good, intelligent, wanted, etc. so that my goal is realized. I never want to be put into a situation of vulnerability where I am not in control. I need to see that this consistent personal manipulative or protecting pattern is inconsistent with God.

You choose your behaviors, but they don't seem like a choice. Rather, they seem instinctual and impulsive, as though I have no choice in the matter. Your behavior seems compulsive and justified. "This is who I am. In order to maintain life's order and sanity, this response/behavior is necessary!" But, similar to the way we "program" (by choosing) through the years our responding emotions of anger, anxiety, and depression to various situations, we also "program" through the years our responding behaviors to various situations in order to avoid pain and to achieve our goals.

Our behavior falls into one or both of two categories

A. Self protection ("abandon")

Abandonment/quitting
Avoidance
Going to something else
(T.V., pornography, YouTube, video games
eating, scrolling through social media,
"hobbies", etc.)
Self medicating
Being shy
Being silly

B. Manipulation ("abuse")

Anger/Bully
Flattery/Charm
Moodiness
Performance ("I'll try harder"), Competitive
Abusive behavior (physical, emotional, sexual)
Sarcastic/ Making fun of or belittling someone
Debatative

BEHAVIOR & STRATEGIES, CON'T

When your goal is being threatened, you feel an internal pressure to behave in at least one of these two ways. These are relational patterns of how you behave toward everyone (including God). Of course, you will behave in these patterns to different degrees depending on the persons you are with and the situations you are in. (You even behave in this manner in varying degrees around the person with whom you feel most comfortable!)

These behaviors of self-protection and manipulation are prideful because the focus is on yourself (my feelings, my comfort, my goals, finding life apart from God, etc.: "I must act this way for me to avoid pain, reach my goal and thereby find life.") *Example: Hosea 5:13.*

There is a heightened pride when one masters their manipulating behavior to cause others to see them the way they want to be seen (such as successful or worthy of respect.)

Fulfilling Longings

Deepest God-given longings I try to fulfill

Our goals are to have people see us in a certain way so that, ultimately, we feel loved. This goal and the reason for this goal expose our true, deepest longing: to feel unconditionally loved.

The problem is that we have manipulated people to "love" us. The "love" that we do get is like crumbs...mere shadows of true love. We are engaged in a continuous effort to gain these "crumbs" of love through our own efforts of manipulation or self-protection. Our deepest true longing is to be loved, and our second longing is to have a purpose in and an impact on our world.

BEHAVIOR & STRATEGIES

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

1.) Go over the behaviors listed as self protective or manipulative. Why would you see these as abandoning or abusive behaviors? Give an example of each.

2.) Write down any behaviors from this list that you see yourself doing.

3.) Why do you behave this way? How does it accomplish people seeing you in a certain way?

EMOTIONS & CURRENT REALITY

Recent Hurtful Events

Recent hurtful events

These are new present day circumstances or experiences that are painful now. These often relate back to and feel like the same pain producing the same feelings as when you were initially hurt. The feeling and lies this present day situation brings up are similar to your feelings and the lies you concluded long ago.

6. Emotions

Emotional response to present painful events

The hurtful events in our lives created emotions during the experience. Each time we have a similar experience these emotions come back and usually are similar emotions to those felt during the initial events that were so painful. These emotions are tied into our goal or false self being threatened.

Emotions (on their own) are not the problem!

However, they may be an indication of a problem (like seeing red lights on the dashboard of a car). When a red light goes on in your car, you stop the car and check the engine. Similarly, when we experience the emotions listed below (anger, anxiety, etc.) we need to realize that something may be wrong inside us. We need to stop what we are doing and check our internal heart condition.

Three key emotions that can serve as red lights are:

1.) Anger/frustration (toward self, others or God)—Anger indicates a blocked goal. (Your goal is to be “seen” in a certain way to prevent further pain. It is your false identity that you have created to gain love and acceptance from others and from yourself.) Anger toward self is self-contempt. This is an attempt to cover up shame that has developed because of past hurts. There is a righteous, Biblical anger, but this is not it.

If you are uncertain whether you will be able to control a person or situation to attain your goal, you might experience...

2.) Anxiety/fear -- Anxiety indicates an uncertain goal. This can lead to fear.

If “life” has taught you that you will never be “enough,” you might feel...

3.) A sense of depression or inadequacy -- Depression indicates an unattainable goal. Many times this happens when key relationships are involved.

EMOTIONS & CURRENT REALITY

(Review)

Anger—result of a BLOCKED GOAL

Anxiety— result of an UNCERTAIN GOAL

Depression—result of a seemingly UNATTAINABLE GOAL

Emotions typically progress from anger to anxiety to depression. However, you might try to protect yourself from this progression by manipulating situations or people to avoid hurt. In this way, your goal (the identity which is not the real you but one you want others to see you as) seems secure and you no longer feel threatened, thus life can now go on smoothly.

Examples: Jeremiah. 20:7-17, Genesis 4:5-15

All three emotions are choices even though they may not seem like choices. (e.g. "This is who I am. I can't change it!") Through the years, you have chosen (consciously and/or subconsciously) to program yourself to emotionally respond to certain situations in certain ways. ("This is who I want everyone to see me as and I'll do all I can to ensure they see me this way.)

Note: There is depression that stems from chemical imbalance. However, this is not the depression referred to in the emotions listed above. This depression (mentioned above) is a choice. It serves to bury your pain so that you don't feel it anymore.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

Processing, notes, prayer, etc.

1.) Again, write down the last time you were angry, anxious, or depressed. What was the situation? This can be the same or a different situation than the "GOALS" processing page.

2.) Ask yourself, was this a blocked goal, uncertain goal, or unattainable goal?

3.) What about my goal was threatened to not be accomplished? In other words, what were you treated like, seen as, or talked to in a way you didn't want to happen? In what way was your image you wanted the world to see threatened? (This is especially important when relating to those very important to you).

4.) Ask yourself again, what behavior did you have that was self protective or manipulative as a result of your goal being threatened?

5.) What lie came into your mind about your worth as an individual that was negative? How did you control this unwanted feeling through your behavior?

SOLUTION

Solution

Solution to the problem of Core Lies - from bondage to freedom, from sin to repentance

The way out of bondage brought on by lies, false goals, and incorrect behavior is not by trying harder or by figuring out how to get out of it. In the diagram on page 5, the 3-6 circles are very self-focused and therefore, the Bible calls this a person full of pride and in bondage.

The way out is by true repentance of the sin of pride because all of these beliefs and behaviors stem from pride. Our tendency is to repent so that we feel better and get rid of our pain. ("I'll do anything to feel better. I'll even repent, Lord.") Such "repentance" is self-focused, shallow and not true repentance. It is a man-centered repentance (pain-avoiding), not a God-centered repentance (God-honoring). See **Hosea 6 versus Hosea 14.**

The bondage or slavery includes the emotions, beliefs, vows, goals, behaviors, and image. These are all developed to avoid pain and hurt. It is not a dependency on God to be OK but dependency on self to feel whole and intact as a person. "Repent" means to choose to confess the sin (pride) and turn to the opposite direction. Repentance occurs not only once but through a lifetime of choices... A lifestyle of repentance. Throughout your life, you will have the choice to depend on yourself (using self-protection or manipulation techniques in a situation with someone), or to depend on God for your well-being—even at the risk of great pain as you move toward someone. You will know repentance is happening when you realize you do have a choice to depend on yourself or on God for your well-being, and then choose to make the decision to depend on God.

The end result of moving in dependency on God will be Psalm 42:1,2 and Psalm 73:25,26 where God now becomes your portion and not your false self or goals. One is freed to love others and God more (the Great Commandment.)

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Wrapping it up

The bottom line is that in the end, we are inadequate human beings. We are not perfect but are flawed. God allowed this so that we might depend on Him! He loves me and accepts me as I am – as I REALLY am. Jesus knows already who I am in the depths of my soul, my wounds, my lies, and He has allowed things to happen so that I would come to Him. I do not need to wear the mask of a false self, or carry goals that are not worth the anger, anxiety, and depression when they are not attained. Because of His love, God sent His Son so that through Jesus' blood you and I can relate to Him in a personal and intimate way. I can now be filled with His love and with His strength to be who I really am in my interactions with God and others. While I strive to achieve my goals in order to validate my worth, Jesus has already achieved the goals for me! He already sees me as valuable! This is evidenced through His death as payment for my sins.

APPLICATION

Step by step: How to work through "Core Lies"

Refer to previous processing pages to fill in each section

Events

1. Remember events

Look back to events in your life where you can pinpoint hurts and pains. These events often involve people who were or are important. (Parents, friends, coaches, teachers, relatives, siblings, authorities, etc.) Write or verbalize about them as much as you can remember...the words, thoughts, emotions

2. Recognize that you've been sinned against

You might not be totally aware of this. Acknowledge that another (or others) has wronged you through their own sin and lack of love toward you and it did hurt. Come to a point where you are willing to admit your disappointment in relationships with your mother, father, brother, sister, close friends, coach, etc. (Romans 8:18-24)

3. Realize response

How did you respond to the event(s) and/or to the relationship(s)? With anger? Withdrawing? Helpless feelings? Embarrassed? Feeling abandoned? Feeling controlled? Recognizing your past responses may help you see why you now relate to and respond to people the way that you do.

APPLICATION



4. Realize your emotional response

Look at your present-day painful events and how you responded to them. What were your emotions? What recent situations, conversations or thoughts caused you to feel *angry*, *anxious* or *depressed*?

Keep a journal & record whatever it is that prompted such feelings, or simply use this page...

Consider these questions as you consider the event(s):

- What was said in the situation?
- What did you see? What were you concerned/afraid would happen? Were you concerned or afraid that something would not happen?
- Did you feel threatened at all? If so, what felt threatening? What part of you felt threatened? (your intelligence, your character, your appearance, etc.)
- When you were feeling angry, anxious or depressed, what judgment or conclusion of you were you concerned people would make?
- Was there a concern in you that people would view you in a certain way if this didn't go well? What were you concerned they would see you as?

APPLICATION

Goals

5. Reveal your goals

Allow God to do this. Look at your emotions on the previous page.

- Consider what the red lights on your dashboard reveal and what prompted these feelings (your analysis above on #4). You have a goal that you are trying to reach.

-What is/are your goal(s)?

- Are you demanding that others view you in a certain way? (as competent, good, etc.)

- Are you demanding that others treat you in a certain way?

-Are you pressuring yourself to present yourself to the world in that same way? (You want to be seen in this way in order to avoid pain.)

-Therefore, in order to achieve this goal, you have imposed an unbreakable law on yourself (“I must do...” and “I must be...”) and on others (“You must view me as...” and “You must treat me as...”). This law is not God’s law, but your own, selfish law.

So what now? (For contemplation)

a. Recognize that you have chosen your response to the sin and the hurts you’ve experienced from others.

b. Recognize and “own” (admit to yourself and God) your manipulative and self-protective behaviors.

c. Identify and recognize that you have set up these goals for a purpose.

APPLICATION

Behaviors

6. Relating a certain way behaviorally

Look for self-protection or manipulation strategies and behavior in your relationships. Ask yourself why do I behave toward people a certain way? Ask others what “pulls” do they feel from you? How do they feel they need to come through for you?

If you feel pressure to behave a certain way this is time to ask “Why am I doing what I’m doing?” We must see our sinful strategies of manipulation and self-protection as sin. We must repent of these.

Our behavior falls into one or both of two categories

A. Self protection (“abandon”)

Abandonment/quitting

Avoidance

Going to something else

(T.V., pornography, Youtube, video games, eating, scrolling through social media, "hobbies", etc.)

Self medicating

Being shy

Being silly

B. Manipulation (“abuse”)

Anger/Bully

Flattery/Charm

Moodiness

Performance ("I'll try harder"), Competitive
Abusive behavior (physical, emotional, sexual)
Sarcastic/ Making fun of or belittling someone

Debatative

These relating styles are chosen to avoid the hurt, pain and subsequent feelings—anger, surprise, helplessness, etc. you have experienced in the past. Some examples of styles of relating: Bully, Silly, Charmer, Shy, Avoider, Loner, Quiet, Sarcastic, Intellect, “One-ups-manship”, Debater, Competitor, etc.

Can you see any of the above self-protective or manipulative behaviors in your own life toward others? If so, which ones?

APPLICATION

Beliefs

7. Renounce vows, lies, and images

Are there vows that you have made when you were hurt? (e.g. "I will never be embarrassed like that again.") These vows need to be brought before God and renounced.

Now that you know your goal, you need to discover the lies that you believe about yourself and the vows you made. These lies are deep within you. Thus we call them "core lies". You may begin to discover your personal core lie(s) by considering what your main goal is. Also going back to initial painful events, ask God to tell you what lie you believed in that painful event.

a. Your goal often is to present yourself opposite as the lie you believe. (e.g. "I am a failure", so I try to present myself as a success.)

We need to have a changed mind (Romans 12:1,2). We need to form ideas of who we are based on what God says in His Word.

b. What you believe you truly are is your core lie. (You may have more than one.)

Example: If my goal is to present myself as successful, it is because deep down I might feel that I am a failure, and a failure waiting to happen. A second core lie (we all believe to some degree) is "I can control my life, apart from God, in order to avoid pain and hurt...and this avoidance of pain is totally justified." We many times control our lives through self protective and manipulative behaviors.

Go back to painful events to find out what vows you embraced. Write them here if any come to mind.

So what now? (For contemplation)

1. Identify and articulate your core lies. (A core lie forms a goal which affects behavior)
2. Realize that these core lies control you. These lies dictate your relating style (your thoughts, words and actions) with everyone (to varying degrees) including God.
3. Ponder "Image" – Lies about how you truly view yourself. This is difficult to recognize at times. Often it is a type of person (wimp, loser) or animal (baby bird, worker ant, etc.) To discover image, look at the context in which your core lies were formed. Does anything come to mind?
4. Ponder "Vows" – What I said I would never or always do. Do any come to mind?

APPLICATION

Repentance

8. Repent of your goal (false self/ idol/ demanding spirit)

Acknowledge who you are in Christ and that only He will fulfill your deepest longings.

Realize that the emotions, beliefs, behavior, goals, and images are slavery for you. They have put you in bondage. The focus of these areas is self and the Bible calls such self- focus, Pride. One must choose to repent of these idols (goals) and choose to turn from them. This repentance is seen when one realizes he or she has a CHOICE to depend on self (protect themselves or manipulate others) or to depend on God. When depending on God, you are able to move toward another in love without the demands for them to come through for you in order to make your false identity secure.

Ask God to forgive you for the pride that is in you as you have been driven to pursue your false self or goal more than desiring to know Him. This is a piece of repentance that needs to happen.

Repentance is asking forgiveness for the specific sin and then turning from it. In this "Core Lies" presentation, this would mean to NOT protect yourself (avoid, become quiet, aloof, etc) OR manipulate (anger, debative, etc.) and move in love toward that person. Trusting God will be enough for you, and you don't need the person's approval of your worth. **Important note:** This does not apply to abusive situations. You should flee rather than move toward.

APPLICATION

Repentance

9. Replace with God's truth

The lies must be replaced with God's truth. For each lie, ask God what the truth is and, in prayer, nail the lie on the cross of Jesus or give the lie to God and ask Him to replace it with His truth. You will need to practice this for a lifetime! *What truths do you find are pertinent to the lies you believe?*

10. Reconcile/Restore

There are relationships that have hurt you and you might need to thank God that He died for the sin they committed against you so that you don't have to carry that weight around with you or the emotional pull that it can have on you. Forgive those who have hurt you. Reconcile with those whom it is wise or possible to reconcile with. Does anyone come to mind? What could restoration look like? Are there any scriptures that bring this truth to you?

11. Preach the Gospel to Yourself

God's truth is the Gospel! We need to preach the Gospel to ourselves every day. God's grace covers our sin and the reality is that "you are a perfectly loved moral failure." (Jerry Bridges)

"You're worse off than you ever dared believe, and you're better off than you ever dared hope."
(Tim Keller)

Enjoy loving God and others more as you move to depend on God to tell you who you are and be satisfied with Him instead of allowing others to tell you who you are and depending on yourself to find life apart from God. Only give God the authority to tell you who you are!

HELPFUL PASSAGES

Return to this list often, especially as you process through the "Application section" to be reminded of truth.

Passages that address specific goals and lies.

I am...unworthy—Luke 15 Prodigal Son I am...unwanted—Luke 15 Lost sheep

I must be perfect—2 Cor. 5:21, Phil. 1:6 I must be good—Rom. 3, Mark 10:18

'I want to be loved' Jeremiah 31:3 - 3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.

'I want to belong' Isaiah 43:1 - 1 But now, this is what the LORD says- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

'I want my heart's desires met' Psalms 37:4 - 4 Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.

'I want to be loved by someone no matter what' Romans 8:38-39 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

'I want to be comforted' 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 - 3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. 5For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

'I want someone to carry my burdens' 1 Peter 5:7 'Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

John 8:32 "You shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free"

John 10:10 "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly

John 8:36 "If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"

Isaiah 61

Psalm 119:68,69 68 You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees. 69 Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart.

Isaiah 53:3-4—3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

1 Peter 1:3-9 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, 5who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Hebrews 12:1,2 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Psalm 62: 5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.

Isaiah 30:15 For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength." But you were unwilling,

Jeremiah 17:5-9, 14 5Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. 6He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. 7"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. 8He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." 9The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?... 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.

Malachi 4: 2 But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

Psalm 119:68,69 You are good and do good; teach me your statutes. 69The insolent smear me with lies, but with my whole heart I keep your precepts;

1 Corinthians 12: 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Isaiah 58: 10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. 11And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. 12And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

Psalm 61:3 for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.

Isaiah 31:6 Turn to him from whom people have deeply revolted, O children of Israel.

Isaiah 65:1 I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here am I, here am I," to a nation that was not called by my name. 2I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; 3a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks;

Psalm 51:6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

Jeremiah 20:7-17 O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all the day; everyone mocks me. 8For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. 9If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. 10For I hear many whispering. Terror is on every side! "Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" say all my close friends, watching for my fall. "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we can overcome him and take our revenge on him." 11But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble; they will not overcome me. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten. 12 O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous, who sees the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause. 13 Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hand of evildoers. 14Cursed be the day on which I was born! The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed! 15Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, "A son is born to you," making him very glad. 16Let that man be like the cities that the LORD overthrew without pity; let him hear a cry in the morning and an alarm at noon, 17because he did not kill me in the womb; so my mother would have been my grave, and her womb forever great.

Psalm 31, esp. verse 6 I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols, but I trust in the LORD.

Psalm 16:2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

Psalm 116:16 O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have loosed my bonds.

Psalm 51 esp. 1,2, 6, 10, 16, 17 1Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. 2Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

6Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

10Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

16For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

17The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 139:23,24 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! 24And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Jeremiah 2:13 for my people have committed two evils:they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

1 Peter 1:3-9 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Romans 6:15-23 15What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. 18You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

19I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. 20When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

