

Lesson 5:

Tearing Down a Stronghold of Self-Deception (Part 2)

- I. A stronghold is a strongly held belief or attitude that is contrary to God's Word, which Satan uses to enslave us to sin. 2 Cor.10:3-5
 - A. We are commanded to consciously reject these mindsets, not ignore them, because they will distort our perception of the truth of God's Word.
 - B. Example: Feminism
 1. Feminism is not about equal rights for women. It is a self-centered, self-serving, self-promoting worldly philosophy that has no place in the Church.
 2. If we do not consciously reject it, the feminist philosophy will distort our perception of the truth of God's Word, and render us incapable of surrendering our lives to the will and purposes of God.
 - Philippians 2:5-8 Jesus, equal with the Father, willingly became subordinate to the Father, for the good of "The Plan" (Salvation).
 - Ephesians 5:22-23 Wives, equal to their husbands, are called to submit to their husband's God-ordained authority in the home, for the good of "The Plan" (God's Design for the Family).

II. More on self-deception: Are you sober?

A. Romans 12:1-3

1. (v.2) “Mind” (Greek “nous”) is “Faculty of Perception.”
2. (v.3) “Sober” (Greek root is “sophron”) means (a) “of a sound mind, sane, in one’s senses; and (b) curbing one’s desires and impulses, self-controlled.”

B. Being “sober” (having “sober judgment”) is BOTH an accurate perception of ourselves vs. self-deception, AND curbing our desires and appetites. It is self-control, as a fruit of the Spirit.

Dr. Rockwell Dillaman, writes in Ministering The Cross of Jesus Christ:

“Dying to the flesh hurts because God is tearing the very fabric of our lives, uprooting practices and attitudes that have been securely in place for years, removing our emotional security blanket.”¹

C. Where do we turn for comfort; what do we use to “medicate” our emotional pain, to feel secure, to feel “normal”? All sin is meeting our own need in our own way, independently of God.² We are to turn to the “Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.” 2 Cor. 1:3

III. Solution: surrender to God (See next page for Prayer of Surrender)

This Week’s Memorization Verse: Romans 12:2

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

¹ Dr. Rockwell Dillaman, unpublished sermon: *Ministering the Cross of Jesus Christ* (Allegheny Community Alliance Church, Pittsburgh, PA), 3. Used by permission.

² Anderson, *Victors*, 28.

Prayer of Surrender³

I present myself to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as a living sacrifice. With the authority of the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I renounce “the power and persuasion of the Evil One, the love of the world and the lust of the flesh.” Father, I confess the sin of unbelief - believing the lies of the enemy rather than Your Word, and the sin of pride by relying on my human reasoning. “[Christ’s] divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and goodness” (2 Peter 1:3). I pray that I may listen and believe as I hear or read the Word of God, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s will and purposes will be accomplished in me. Please reveal MY sin and change me, Lord, that I would manifest the character of Christ in increasing measure. “If My people would but listen to me, if [they] would walk in My ways, how quickly would I subdue their enemies and turn My Hand against their foes” (Ps. 81:13-14).

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I claim “that which the blood of Christ has secured.” I profess that I am “God’s purchased possession on the basis of Christ’s shed blood,” and I claim the tearing down of strongholds and “all the works of Satan, such as false doctrine, unbelief, atheistic teaching and bitterness which the enemy may have built up in my thinking.” In Christ’s Name, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I pray that my very thoughts would be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

I put on the full armor of God, standing firm and free from fear, with the belt of truth around my waist, the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with my feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. I take up the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I claim every detail of my life for God, that by the Blood of Jesus Christ, the works of the enemy will be destroyed. I thank you and praise you, Father, that you have made these divine weapons available to me, giving me “authority in Christ that is far above all the authority of the rulers, powers and forces of darkness, so that the Enemy must yield.” In Jesus’ Name. Amen!

³ All quotations in this prayer, other than Scripture, are taken from the Bible tract, *How I Learned to Pray for the Lost*, by Back to the Bible. Reprinted by permission from the *Alliance Witness*.

