

Healing a Wounded Spirit
Lesson 4 – Put God in the Center of your Life
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Introduction: We are created to find joy in our God.

A. In order to be filled with the knowledge of God we must first empty ourselves.

(Eph 3:19; Phil 1:11)

1. The fear of being cheated can cause us to cheat ourselves!
2. Those who focus on themselves are the most miserable people.

B. Satan wants you to “look out for number 1” as a means of finding happiness.

1. The fear of being cheated can cause us to cheat ourselves!
2. Those who focus on themselves are the most miserable people. Those who fight God and serve self are truly “self-deluded.” **(Isa 29:7-8)**
3. True happiness comes when we mourn over and turn from our selfishness by turning to God. He will always help the empty, penitent soul! **(James 4:9-10)**

I. Slam the Door on Self-Pity

A. When we are in the center of our lives then we become very sensitive. **(1 Sam 22:8)**

1. Consider the children’s song: "Nobody loves me, everybody hates me. I'm going out and eat worms."
2. Have you ever reasoned like this: "People are talking about me. Nobody understands my feelings! There is no one on earth who has suffered as me. Nobody cares. I do not deserve this."

B. Self-pity can cause you to create your own “reality.”

1. Great men of God can fall into this frame of mind. **(1 Kings 19:9-10, 18; Psa 142:4)**
2. Without God’s help we can easily fall into a blind despair. A Biblical faith will always be optimistic! **(2 Tim 1:12)**
3. We can easily lose control of our minds in emotional times.

C. Self-pity can be described as private enemy number one.

1. How would you like it if public enemy number one came to live with you?
2. Living in self-pity is the slowest form of suicide that I know of.

D. Consider the fruits of self-pity.

1. It wipes our self-respect. It enslaves you to the past. It demoralizes you and keeps you from facing the future with wisdom and strength.
2. It mars relationships with others. “Self-pity is the one attention-getter that will eventually get you no attention.”
3. Consider these simple questions:

a. Has self-pity ever changed what has happened? b. Has self-pity ever made you feel better? c. Has self-pity ever made you feel more loved? d. Has self-pity helped you to achieve and accomplish? e. Has self-pity brought you closer to others? To God? f. Has self-pity allowed your wounded spirit to heal? g. Has self-pity helped you to understand others?

E. How to slam the door on self-pity.

1. Learn how to quickly identify it. Understand that it is selfishness.
2. We are far less likely to be hurt when we remove ourselves from “the center of the universe!” **(Jonah 4:8-11)**

3. Put God in the center of your life and find fulfillment in serving others.
(Jn 16:19-24)
4. Learn to focus on what you have, not on what you have lost. Consider the three "L's" of self pity: What I have **L**ost, What I **L**ack and How I am **L**imited.
5. Through God's word take inventory. "I complained because I had no shoes until I met someone who had no feet." **(Rom 12:2)**
3. Seek to understand the promises and the work of God in your life.
(Psa 5:11-12; Heb 13:5-6)

II. Let God's wisdom free you from false expectations

A. One of the greatest self-inflicted wounds comes from false expectations.

1. Many false expectations come when we try to view the world from a spirit of selfishness. We can only truly see when we turn wholly to God. **(Isa 55:8-9)**
2. God's wisdom will allow us to see. Selfishness makes us unmerciful judges.

B. Some have false expectations of God. Many "reason" like Ted Turner:

"Turner mentioned that he was raised in a God-fearing family and had a sister who was ill. Her illness progressed; she became critical. He prayed desperately the Lord would spare her life and make her well. She died. Then Ted told the audience that from then on he knew, even as a kid, there was no God up there. What kind of loving God would have allowed his sister to suffer and die?"

1. Why not carefully examine this question rather than emotionally writing off the existence of God?
2. Asaph, the Psalmist, was tempted to think like this until He turned his mind *to how God works in this world!* **(Ps 73:11-17)**
3. Many are like Naaman. **(2 Kgs 5:9-13)**
4. God will allow the shallow-minded to stumble. God will not submit to the proud man who makes demands of Him. **(1 Cor 1:22-23)**

C. We often have false expectations of others!

1. *People are not to be the focus of your faith.*
2. God wants you to build a doctrinal core in His Son!
3. A woman who knew who Jesus was and knew what she dearly needed from Jesus would not be turned away! **(Mt 15:22-27)**
4. How do you react to hypocrites in the church? What false expectations cause some to quit? **(Rom 3:4)**
5. False expectations in marriage must be overcome!

Unspoken, half-hidden expectations about married life put wives and husbands to the test in the Realization stage. These "rules" form in childhood and our teen years as we watch our parents' marriages and absorb silent imperatives about the roles of husbands and wives from society; from our cultural and religious affiliations; and from TV shows, movies, and books. Previous romances and even friendships further shape our expectations. And at a deeper level, we often believe our spouses will somehow intuit and heal our deepest psychic wounds.

6. It is very difficult to work with others with false expectations when there is a lack of communication, mercy and justice!
7. God's love and mercy for us teaches us how to communicate and serve.
(1 Pt 3:7-9; James 2:13)
8. When we put justice and mercy as a priority we then will be testing *our own thoughts and motives* on the basis of truth. **(Hos 2:19; 12:6; Mt 23:23)**