

# Set Free

5 week study

January 11 - February 8, 2022

## Set Free From Yourself

February 8, 2022



*"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.  
Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."  
Galatians 5:1*

What person would you identify as your biggest problem?

At the core of most of our "issues" is our own self. We either create or exacerbate most of our troubles.

### **The Freedom of Self Forgetfulness**

When you and I can come to the place where life is so not all about us that we truly don't think about ourselves first and foremost all the time, we are beginning to walk in the freedom that Jesus came to give us.

### **The Focus on Good Self-Esteem**

This philosophy would have us believe that evil would go away if we all had good or high self-esteem.

What makes this attractive to most people?

In his book *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness*, Tim Keller writes: "If someone has a problem with low self-esteem we, in our modern world, seem to have only one way of dealing with it. That is remedying it with high self-esteem. We tell someone that they need to see that they are a great person, they need to see how wonderful they are" (pg. 26).

The only way you and I can truly be changed into a person of worth is when we allow God to do it in us.

One clear proof that you are no longer trapped in this false belief about the need for high self-esteem is that you truly forget yourself.

This is what the Apostle Paul wrote about himself well into his years of ministry:

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—  
of whom I am the worst (1 Timothy 1:15).*

He didn't say he *was* the worst sinner, but he said: "I *am* the worst sinner."

Paul understood fully that he was a sinner, but he did not allow his sins to become his identity. In the same way, he does not connect his accomplishments with his identity.

It is our self-absorption, our self-centeredness that drives us to despair and keeps us in bondage. Incredible freedom is ours as we more and more just don't think about ourselves.



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There is true freedom in self-forgetfulness. You get to that place by immersing yourself in the truth of God's word, making loving God and loving others your highest priorities, and then you discover that gradually you are just thinking less and less about yourself, about your hurt feelings, about how you compare to others or what others think about you. It is marvelous freedom, and every Christian should know and live in this freedom. Getting to this place is not overnight, and many people have issues from their pasts that must be addressed before they can truly forget themselves. As Christ-followers, we have the power of the Holy Spirit to make this a reality in our lives.

### **Set Free from Self-Pity**

Think of how the enemy uses self-pity in our lives.

1. Almost always, pity parties cause us to **waste time**.
2. Pity parties also **waste our energy**.
3. When you throw a pity party, **your imagination runs wild**.
4. Often **relationships are damaged**.

### **Set Free from Hurt Feelings**

We are very prone to jump to conclusions based on the look on someone's face, the tone in someone's voice, their body language, their choice of words, etc., and we very often assume that they are sending us negative messages – that it's all about us.

### **Practical Steps to Freedom**

Here are five ways to be set free from yourself:

1. Start an intentional campaign for spiritual growth.

#### **1 Peter 2:1-3:**

*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

#### **Hebrews 12:1:**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

#### **Hebrews 5:11 – 14:**

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Choose one area where you need to grow up:

- Stop the pity parties
- Stop the over-sensitivity that causes unnecessary hurt feelings
- Stop being lazy; get moving on what you know God wants you to do
- Stop shifting the blame; accept responsibility

Pray daily that God will deliver you from that immature tendency.

2. Interrupt thoughts of yourself with thoughts of Jesus.

Become very aware of what you are thinking and as soon as you realize you're heading into the "it's all about me" pattern of thinking, start singing a good song, quoting a Scripture, praising God for his goodness.

3. Resist the enemy who is trying to entangle you and hinder you by making you self-focused.
4. Get busy doing something constructive.
5. If you have something against someone else, either go to them and get it out in the open or put it behind you.

**Matthew 5:23 – 24:**

*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*