



WEEK 2: RELEASE

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future solely in Christ.

WEEK 2 CHALLENGE

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DAY 1: STILLNESS & WAITING

Today is our day of stillness and quiet to enjoy God's presence. He is with You today. Sit with Him, even if just for 5-10 minutes. Ask Him to show you what steps you need to take to release your hope in the "lesser things."

Question to ponder:

How can I release placing my hope in _____
in my daily life this week in order to find my true hope for now and the future solely in Christ?

Ideas:

- Stop watching the news for a week if you struggle with the negativity of the news on television.
- Take a break from social media. Don't check back to social media simply to check likes, follows, or subscribers for one week.
- Don't open up "sale alerts" and emails about specials so you aren't tempted to see all the "things" you may "need."
- Give up a certain substance or habit you go to in order to "feel good" (chocolate, alcohol, soft drink, junk food, video game, TV, etc.).
- Release the pressure of accomplishment for your worth by observing one Sabbath day this week where you rest, spend time with the Lord, and reset.

Prayer:

"Lord, today I am releasing my desire for _____ to give me hope and security. I ask that you would fill me with more of You, so that I don't desire lesser things. I'm releasing _____, because I know that it will not ultimately fulfill me or bring me any more hope and peace in my life. Only you can bring me true hope, fulfillment, meaning, and purpose. Amen."

Enjoy your time in God's presence!

DAY 2: WORDS OF TRUTH & PRAYER

Phil. 3:7-11 — “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and power of His resurrection and fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

Have you decided on one thing you can do this week to release your affection for your “lesser thing” this week? How can you be less consumed by this thing that prevents you from placing God first for your hope? If you have determined one action you can do/not do this week to help you release your hope in that thing, write it below.

Prayer:

“Lord, as Paul so boldly exemplified, help me to live considering EVERYTHING a loss compared to the incredible greatness of KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD. Help me to consider EVERYTHING as RUBBISH so that I may live a life full of faith and hope in YOU ALONE! You are all that I need! Amen.”

DAY 3: DIGGING DEEPER

Identify and write in the space provided a lie or lies you have believed that have caused you to think that your “lesser thing,” _____, was worthy of your hope. What made you think that everything would be better if you attained this one thing or if this one thing went your way? What is the lie you might be believing right now that has caused you to hold too tightly to this “lesser” thing?

Examples of Lies

The Success Lie:

“The only way I can truly be successful is to completely pour myself into my career. Everything else will need to take second place to this one goal. I won’t be fulfilled if I am not the best and have the ideal career and lifestyle.”

Unfortunately, there is always more to achieve. You will never be satisfied when there is always a new challenge, position, or reward to attain.

The Performance Lie:

“If I am always a top performer and continue to push myself beyond what I can handle I will be somebody. Only in doing more and more will I be satisfied, please people around me, feel a sense of worth and be respected.”

If you tend to be addicted to achievement, frenzied activity, and DOING, you might believe that you MUST push and push and push, never acknowledging your human limitations and never resting. It’s a misapplication of Paul’s statement in I Cor. 9:27 when he says, “I discipline my body and make it my slave.”

Unfortunately, what happens is your body starts to break down, because it cannot handle the work without rest.

The Relationship Lie:

“When the people I care about act a certain way or live their lives the way I think they should live, I will finally have peace in my life.”

Unfortunately, we cannot control how others choose to live their lives. We only have power to control ourselves.

The Popularity Lie:

“When I have x number of friends, followers, or likes on social media, I will be satisfied and everything will be great.”

Unfortunately, people are fickle. We may be popular one day and totally out-of-style or not relevant the next day. Placing our hope in how others view us can be ego-stroking or devastating depending on the day.

The Circumstances Lie:

“When my circumstances change, I will finally be at peace and be more joyful and hopeful.”

Unfortunately, we are not promised an easy, stress-free life empty of grief and loss.

The Comparison Lie:

“If my life looks more like his or her life, I will be satisfied, settled, and at peace.”

Unfortunately, we could never really have enough if our affections are not fully placed on Christ. We will never be satisfied if we are placing our hope in comparing our lives, position, or financial situation to that of others.

Write below the lie or lies you have been believing. (The above statements are simply examples. Yours may be completely different.)

[illegible]

DAY 4: MIDWEEK ACCOUNTABILITY

We are halfway through this week! How are you doing with learning the thought patterns that have fueled your desire for placing your “lesser thing” above Christ for your hope?

Now that you’ve identified a lie you have believed that has caused you to cling to something else for your hope, **write a “truth statement”** that is based on a truth from scripture, or find a Bible verse that helps to combat the lie you wrote down in Day 3.

To combat this lie with truth, we meditate on the truth of God’s word and fill our minds with thoughts or statements that align with the Bible.

Examples of Truth Statements to Combat Lies

Combating the Success Lie:

Truth Statement: “True success comes when I am seeking God first. When He is first in my life, all other priorities fall into place.”

Scripture: Matt. 6:33 — “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Combating the Physical Limits Lie:

Truth Statement: “I choose to find freedom in and embrace my human limitations as Christ exemplified while on earth. I will take time to rest and ‘go to a quiet place’ as Christ did. I will trust God to work in and through me as I take care of my physical, mental, and emotional needs.”

Scripture: Matt. 14:23a — “After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray.” (See also Mark 4:35-40; Mark 2:27, Mark 6:31)

Combating the Relationship Lie:

Truth Statement: “I choose to place my peace, security, and hope for the future in Christ and His power to act on behalf of those I love. I will not live in angst and worry over the actions of others. Even if they are not living in obedience to Christ, I trust my all-powerful God to work in them.”

Scripture: Romans 12:12, 14 & 16a — “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. . . . Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. . . . Live in harmony with one another.”

Combating the Popularity Lie:

Truth Statement: “I live for an audience of One. God’s favor is all I seek. I know that God delights in me.”

Scripture: Psalm 147:11 — “The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.”

Combating the Circumstances Lie:

Truth Statement: “God is with me in the storms of life. I choose to place my hope in Him even when my circumstances are unbearable. He is with me, and I choose to praise Him in the valley.”

Scripture: See 2 Cor. 12:10 & Psalm 46:1-3, 10.

Combating the Comparison Lie:

Truth Statement: “I choose to keep my eyes fixed on Christ without looking to the right or left to see how I measure up to others around me. Others are on their own journey. I choose to live for God in my own unique journey.”

Scripture: 2 Cor. 10:12 — “We do not dare classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.”

What truth from scripture and/or truth statement can you meditate on to train your mind to believe what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy (Phil. 4:8)?

1. Write your truth statement/scripture below.

2. Share your truth statement with a close friend, mentor, or accountability partner.

DAY 5: WRITTEN PRAYER

Write out your prayer below releasing your hope in the wrong things. Surrender your “lesser thing” to Him in your prayer. Ask God to help you give your hope to Him DAILY rather than to this “lesser thing.” He is the only one who is worth your trust.

You might even consider reading back your written prayer to God in a posture of humility (kneeling or bowing before Him).

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 6: MEDITATION

Sit in silence or with your worship music playing and meditate on your truth statement from Day 5.

Other truth statements for meditation & prayer:

- I will refuse God nothing.
- I choose to release my worry by turning it into a prayer offered up to God. He can handle my worries.
- Nothing else can satisfy, Lord. You are all that I need.
- I surrender ALL!
- Psalm 73:25 — “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.”

DAY 7: REFLECTION & THANKSGIVING

Reflect on this past week and the work God is doing in your life. Offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for how He is molding and shaping you to become more like Himself (more “holy” or “set apart”).

Fill in the blank below with the thing(s) or idol(s) to which you have been clinging for hope.

Prayer:

“God, I thank you that you are so gracious to love me in spite of my sinfulness and lack of trust in you so often. I surrender to You _____

I know that it cannot fully satisfy me. It is a lie to believe that everything will be okay if this particular earthly desire goes my way. Everything of this earth is fleeting. You are eternal. I surrender, Lord. I release my hope in _____

You are my Lord. You are my hope. Amen.”