

4. Romans 12:2 says: “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” What “behavior and customs” are you emulating these days?

This week (starting now) allow God to change the way you think. God’s Word is an excellent way to combat the lies of the enemy. In the space below write out a simple action plan. Think about what trips you up. Based on past experience, anticipate what you may face this coming week. Be ready with truth to battle the lies in your head.

For example, for the negative thought: “You’re no good, you’re a failure, you always screw everything up,” you can be prepared to say aloud: “I am made in the image of God” (Genesis 1:26). “I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14, NIV). “I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

# breaking free

**Text: Ecclesiastes 2:1-5, 9-11 Ephesians 2:1-10**

## The Plain Truth

It’s \_\_\_\_\_ to not be \_\_\_\_\_,  
but it’s not \_\_\_\_\_ to stay that way.

1. You were created for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You find your \_\_\_\_\_ in your \_\_\_\_\_  
not what you \_\_\_\_\_.
3. There is a \_\_\_\_\_ in your soul that only God can  
\_\_\_\_\_.

### One Year Bible Reading

November 9: Ezekiel 20:1-49, Hebrews 9:11-28, Psalm 107:1-43, Proverbs 27:11  
November 10: Ezekiel 21:1-22:31, Hebrews 10:1-17, Psalm 108:1-13, Prov. 27:12  
November 11: Ezekiel 23:1-49, Hebrews 10:18-39, Psalm 109:1-31, Proverbs 27:13  
November 12: Ezekiel 24:1-26:21, Hebrews 11:1-16, Psalm 110:1-7, Prov. 27:14  
November 13: Ezekiel 27:1-28:26, Hebrews 11:17-31, Ps. 111:1-10, Prov. 27:15-16  
November 14: Ezekiel 29:1-30:26, Hebrews 11:32-12:13, Ps/ 112:1-10, Prov. 27:17  
November 15: Ezekiel 31:1-32:32, Heb. 12:14-29, Ps. 113:1-114:8, Prov. 27:18-20

November 8 & 9, 2014

# Breaking Free

## Turning... Anxiety and Anger into Anchors of Hope

Life Group Lesson • Week of November 9

There are few things more debilitating, more paralyzing—indeed, more dangerous—than suffering from depression and anxiety. Satan is a murderer, a liar, hates the truth (see John 8:44), and is a thief who wants to steal, kill, and destroy God’s sheep (John 10:10a). One way the enemy kills our spirit is to trick us into believing that life is meaningless, that we have no purpose, and that there is no future beyond this earthly existence. Many factors can contribute to serious bouts of depression and anxiety—prolonged circumstantial difficulties, chemical imbalances, poor nutrition, lack of positive activity and exercise—but the battlefield is the mind. The enemy often attacks our thought-life in order to bring us down.

### Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-5, 9-11

At one point Solomon fell for the lie that life is utterly meaningless. But the truth is we are all created for significance, and ultimate significance is found in a personal love relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Christ gives us our purpose. “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago” (Ephesians 2:10).

1. If you have accepted God’s gift of salvation, how has knowing Christ repurposed your life?

The apostle Paul says: “No one can know a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit. And we have received God’s Spirit (not the world’s spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us” (1 Corinthians 2:11-12). Those who accept by faith the Lord Jesus into their hearts receive the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit, and according to 1 Corinthians 2:16, they are also given the “mind of Christ.”

According to one commentary: “Linked to Christ, believers have the Spirit of Christ to reveal Christ’s thinking to them.” (NLT Study Bible-Tyndale, p.1931). God wants His children to pay attention to what He says—through prayer, through His Word and through His Spirit. We no longer have to worry about what the world says or fall sway to the lies of the enemy. God wants us to live into truth, and be mindful of our thought-life. We must guard against lies and understand that our significance comes not from the world’s standard but from the One who created us.

2. Read the following passages. From each reference name one way you can be proactive in re-programming depressive or anxious thoughts.

Psalm 139:23-24

Matthew 6:25-34

Philippians 4:6-9

There’s a hole in your heart that only God can fill. God created us to worship Him, but too often we try to fill our hearts with counterfeit spirits and pleasures. Solomon did this, and soon found that the “good things” in life did nothing but leave him empty at the end of the day. In fact, it was his many foreign wives who eventually led his heart away from the Lord. “In Solomon’s old age, they turned his heart to worship other gods instead of being completely faithful to the LORD his God, as his father, David, had been” (1 Kings 11:4).

It is no wonder Jesus says: “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need” (Matthew 6:33). True wealth and purpose is found in Christ alone. He is the reward, not the things of this world. Often our depression and anxiety stems from negative thinking, unrealistic goals, feelings of being out-of-control, and disappointment over unmet expectations. The things of this world may satisfy us temporarily, but they will never deliver in the long run. Only Christ will deliver soul satisfaction for this life and beyond.

3. Read Romans 8:38-39. Contemplate on the strength of God’s love toward you. “Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Have you experienced times of deep depression and anxiety? How did God’s love come through for you?

The Lord has the power to deliver you from the clutches of any spirit of depression or anxiety. You can break free! But you must stop looking to this world to make you happy or feed your ego. Turn your eyes to Christ and let Him be your all-in-all. Put Him above everything. Give Him first-place in your heart. Ask Him to help you pay attention to what’s going on in your mind. Submit your thought-life to Him by giving Him the garbage that fills your head. Christ will replace old thoughts (lies which bring death and destruction) with good thoughts (truth which brings life and peace).