



## BUILD CHARACTER

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## NEW CREATION

Consider again this brief paragraph from the reading...

*Perception influences action. The person who believes his car is trashy will treat that car in a trashy manner. The person who believes her house is dilapidated will treat that house in a dilapidated manner. Tragic is the life lived with a warped view of self. This new heart we have been given will beat for the greatest and grandest of things, the love of God. If, though, we deny this new heart and assume the old heart, we will, no doubt, live in accordance with our old self, our old heart. If Christ has done a revolutionary work, we must recognize this work and deny old perceptions. To miss this will influence our actions, and even more, it will dishonor God.*

Put succinctly: Perception influences fruit.

In this exercise, you work to uncover harmful misperceptions about the real you, and then develop brief affirmations, based on Scripture, about who you truly are in Christ. As with all exercises, you will get out of this what you put into it. Because identifying misperceptions could bring significant and lasting change to your life, you're encouraged to make the most of this exercise.

Not only are you encouraged to be thoughtful and prayerful, but you're also encouraged to process these openly with your Life Group. Doing so will provide opportunity for increased insight into yourself and into truths found in Scripture that could very well bring needed insight and healing.



- What expectations did or do you have on your life that influence your perception of yourself—positively or negatively (relational expectations, vocational expectations, family expectations, etc.)?

- What struggles do you have or battles do you fight that influence your perception of yourself (temptations, health, sin, etc.)?



The following are examples of self-perceptions:

**SELF-PERCEPTION:** I view myself as unlovable and undesirable due to how I was treated in certain past relationships.

**SELF-PERCEPTION:** I view myself as successful. This may be good, but I also see arrogance as I view myself as more important than others.

**SELF-PERCEPTION:** I view myself as unclean, dirty, and incapable of beating temptation.

**SELF-PERCEPTION:** I view myself as incapable of doing anything truly important in the world.

State your own self-perceptions based on your thoughts and insights gained from the above questions.

**SELF-PERCEPTION:**

**SELF-PERCEPTION:**

**SELF-PERCEPTION:**

**SELF-PERCEPTION:**



## **Affirmations**

Self-perceptions are often misperceptions. Misperceptions are healed with truth. On the page that follows are examples of affirmations. Use these as examples to develop your own affirmations to address areas of misperception.

Use the passages of Scripture listed toward the end of this exercise and organized by category. These are provided to assist you in identifying truths that will strengthen your affirmations. With your self-perceptions in mind, review these passages and look for truths that correct any misperceptions.



## Sample Affirmation about the Real Me

**Scripture** “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.” 2 Peter 1:3

**Affirmation Statement** I have what I need to follow Christ.

**Affirmation Description** (Against stronghold: I’m not capable of following Christ.)  
God has given me everything I need to follow him. I’m not enslaved to past failures. I have what I need today. God has given me great grace.

**Review Plan** Review at breakfast daily

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## Sample Affirmation about the Real Me

**Scripture** “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.” Romans 5:1-2

**Affirmation Statement** Because God is my God, I will live peacefully today.

**Affirmation Description** (Against stronghold: My peace is dictated by those around me.)  
God is at peace with me. Others may not be at peace with me today, but God is the authority. If I am fully acceptable to him, then I too fully accept myself.

**Review Plan** Review before team meetings at work.



## Sample Affirmation about the Real Me

**Scripture** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”  
2 Corinthians 5:17

**Affirmation  
Statement** By God’s grace, through Christ, I am whole.

**Affirmation  
Description** (Against stronghold: I am broken and unfixable.)  
Past mistakes are exactly that: past. I am a new creation filled with love for God and those around me. I will not settle for anything less. I will live in accordance with who I truly am.

**Review Plan** Review when I wake up and before I go to sleep.

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## Sample Affirmation about the Real Me

**Scripture** “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10

**Affirmation  
Statement** God is with me; I am not alone.

**Affirmation  
Description** (Against stronghold: I am all alone; my circumstances will overwhelm me.)  
I will not be afraid of the challenges that face me today, but I will trust God and acknowledge his presence with me today.

**Review Plan** Review before driving home from work.



**Affirmation  
about the Real Me**

**Scripture**

**Affirmation  
Statement**

**Affirmation  
Description**

**Review Plan**

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**Affirmation  
about the Real Me**

**Scripture**

**Affirmation  
Statement**

**Affirmation  
Description**

**Review Plan**



**Affirmation  
about the Real Me**

**Scripture**

**Affirmation  
Statement**

**Affirmation  
Description**

**Review  
Plan**

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**Affirmation  
about the Real Me**

**Scripture**

**Affirmation  
Statement**

**Affirmation  
Description**

**Review Plan**



## Anxiety Misperceptions

### Anxiety Lies

- Lies about personal well-being
- Lies about finances and material needs
- Lies about life challenges
- Lies about phobias and fears

### Passages to Consider

#### Joshua 1:6-9

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

#### Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

#### Jeremiah 1:6-8

"Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD.

#### Matthew 6:25-27

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

#### Matthew 6:31-34

So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

#### 2 Timothy 1:7

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.



## Personal Misperceptions

### Personal Lies

- Lies about God's forgiveness
- Lies about God's purification
- Lies about God's empowerment and equipping

### Passages to Consider

#### **Psalm 147:10-11**

His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man; the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

#### **Isaiah 1:18**

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD.

"Though your sins are like scarlet,  
they shall be as white as snow;  
though they are red as crimson,  
they shall be like wool."

#### **John 15:5**

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

#### **Romans 5:1**

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

#### **Romans 8:1-2**

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

#### **Ephesians 2:10**

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

#### **1 John 5:1**

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.



## Temptation Misperceptions

### Temptation Lies

- Lies about God's power to break habitual behavior
- Lies about personal ability to resist temptation
- Lies about what will truly make us happy

### Passages to Consider

#### **Proverbs 1:10-19**

My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul; let's swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common purse"—my son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths; for their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood. How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds! These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

#### **Romans 6:13**

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

#### **1 Corinthians 10:13**

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

#### **1 Timothy 6:9**

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

#### **Hebrews 2:18**

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

#### **James 1:13-14**

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

#### **2 Peter 3:17**

Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.



## Hardship Misperceptions

### Hardship Lies

- If God loved me, this would not be happening.
- If God loved me, I would have \_\_\_\_\_.
- I cannot make it through this.
- God is not able to solve this problem. God is not really in control.

### Passages to Consider

#### Job 2:9-10

His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

#### Psalms 68:5

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

#### Psalms 126:5

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

#### Isaiah 25:8

He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

#### Hebrews 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

#### James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

#### 1 Peter 4:12

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

#### Revelation 2:10

Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.



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