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Author Video

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Lose the Victim Mindset

A victim mentality will keep you focused on the limitations of self. You will constantly justify why you are not moving forward.

- Someone took advantage of you.
- Someone received a reward that you should have received.
- Someone got a break that you did not get.
- Someone had advantages that you did not have.

Lose the Victim Mindset

The only way to break out of a victim mindset is to embrace the mindset of a victor! Replace the old negative thoughts with creative ideas for success.

- Identify the lesson you learned when you thought you were being taken advantage of.
- Discover ways you can reward others when they deserve acknowledgment.
- Receive the strength for continuing perseverance until the breakthrough comes.
- List the many advantages you have in contrast to so many disadvantaged people in the world today.

Now, make a commitment to turn your focus away from the limitations of self to the unlimited ways you can help others succeed. Watch your own life move forward into the victorious success that you are destined for!

When the Vow Breaks

Jack Hayford, gifted pastor, teacher and speaker, posed the question: “Do marriage vows matter?” It’s an important question that deserves more discussion. Hayford states that confronting the problem of divorce among Christians is not “a showdown between those who have failed and those who might criticize them—it’s a confrontation needed to face down a mind-set that, if left unchanged, will bring an onslaught of hellish delusions.”

In other words, it’s time for Christians to rethink divorce. Has the church taken on a secular view? Too often, yes.

The blur between secular and Christian views begins in the mind and heart. When we entertain the lies of our culture, we become disillusioned. Lies build on lies. They work on our feelings and eventually alter our relationships.

Over time, we “fall out of love” and excuse those who do the same. This pattern of thinking and behavior is the subject of my book, *Divorce Proofing Your Marriage*.

In my experience, most Christian divorces are not about abuse, repeated infidelity or abandonment. Christians divorce over solvable problems.

Christian couples say: “We’ve grown apart. We’re not in love anymore.” Divorce becomes the solution to unhappiness or lost passion.

Marriage is no longer seen as a covenant but as a breakable contract. When the costs of marriage outweigh the rewards, divorce happens! The attitude is, Time for a new partner who can better meet my needs and make me happy.

Happiness is the ultimate end—so underlying the marriage vows is the unstated escape clause, “I’m outta here if it doesn’t

work out.” In short, postmodern followers of Jesus have ditched the concept of a marriage covenant for the secular view of a marital contract.

Television has a fascination with real people placed in surreal settings. As I flipped through the channels an episode of Temptation Island caught my curiosity, I had to wonder, would Christian couples placed on that island behave any differently? Sadly, the answer to that question is, “Probably not.”

The pull of cultural deception is like an undertow. Many fight it for a while but ultimately succumb to its strength. The fight is against delusion. The problem with being deluded is that you rarely know when you are!

If you believe marriage to be at best tenuous, divorce becomes a viable option. But believe the covenant to be sacred and honorable, and marital relationships will survive.

Marriage will still have its unhappy times, but problems will be solvable, forgiveness will abound, godly obedience will be manifest and blessings will be restored when covenant is invoked.

In *Divorce Proofing Your Marriage*, I identify 10 popular cultural lies Christians use to support divorce. The first lie is that marriage is a contract. Most Christians say, “No, it’s a covenant.”

But their behavior doesn’t support their claim. Behavior follows belief. Too many react to marital difficulty by seeking an escape from their vows.

Reread the chronicles of the Old Testament kings. The Israelites endured king after king: Good kings. Bad kings. Kings whose behavior was despicable.

But God in His mercy and grace maintained the covenant with

His chosen people. His decision to do so was unconditional. Though He sometimes had to deal with His people's behavior through judgment, He never opted out of the covenant.

What is the application to Christian marriage? We have entered into a holy covenant, before God, with another person: Good spouse. Bad spouse. Our mind-set should be "till death do us part," not "till I'm unhappy." Deal with the unhappiness but stay in the covenant.

Without God, most marriages simply limp along. That is precisely why secular culture reframed the institution of marriage to make it more disposable.

But make no mistake, this new view is a lie that pulls you away from biblical truth and desensitizes you to a secular view. As pastor Hayford reminds us, this mind-set leads to an onslaught of hellish delusions—more lies, more anguish and more breakup.

This article is from the June 2001 issue of *Charisma*.

Inauguration of Barack Obama "Hinge point of History"

Christian leaders said the swearing-in of the nation's first African-American president is a sign of racial progress but worried that the battle to end abortion and defend traditional marriage would intensify in the coming months.

✘ [01.21.09] Record-setting crowds braved frigid weather on Tuesday to witness the historic inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States. But while many

applauded the event as a victory for racial progress, several ministry leaders warned that Christians must remain vigilant in a fight against abortion and same-sex marriage that is likely to intensify.

During his invocation, Saddleback Church pastor Rick Warren called the swearing-in of the nation's first African-American president a "hinge point of history."

"We are so grateful to live in this land, a land of unequalled possibility, where the son of an African [man] can rise to the highest level of our leadership," Warren prayed. "We know today that Dr. King and a great cloud of witnesses are shouting in heaven."

Women on the Rise

by Maureen D. Eha

Even critics of women in ministry can't deny the supernatural call of God on these female leaders' lives.

At a Glance

- Beverly Crawford
- Kimberly Daniels
- Naomi Dowdy

Most of the women profiled did not set out to become full-time ministers, let alone apostolic church leaders. In fact, many of them had no formal Bible-school training when God first tapped them on the shoulder and they, like the prophet Jonah, tried to run from His call. But in spite of their seeming lack of preparation, their initial resistance and persecution from those around them, God led them supernaturally into leadership and is using them mightily to advance His kingdom. Will you

fully heed to God's call on your life? These women did and they have impacted many lives on their journey.

Beverly Crawford

Beverly Crawford has been hungry for God since she was a little girl. But after her mother died when she was 10, she turned away from Him and focused on other pursuits.

In 1974, a friend invited her to church, and Crawford, at 29, gave her life to Christ and was filled with the Holy Spirit. She joined a large West Coast congregation and became involved in ministry, teaching Sunday school and a Bible study for women that eventually attracted men as well. It grew so large that the only venue big enough to host it was the 1,400-seat sanctuary.

"That's how things got started," she says. "That's how I learned to flow in the gifts."

During her 10 years at the church, Crawford was licensed and given responsibility for the youth department, the women's ministry and the singles ministry—yet she had never been to Bible school. All her training came from the Holy Spirit, she says.

In the mid-1980s, she stepped down from her church duties and began an outreach Bible study. At the time she had no intention of starting a church, but on the way to joining a different congregation, God spoke to her.

"He told me, 'I didn't tell you to join a church; I told you to start one,'" she says.

Today Crawford's Bible Enrichment Fellowship International Church in Inglewood, California, has 4,000 members and supports radio and television ministries as well as an apostolic network, prophetic seminars, and numerous community outreaches.

Kimberly Daniels

To look at her now, poised and well-dressed, expounding on God's Word before her 500-member congregation at Spoken Word Ministries in Jacksonville, Florida, you'd never know Kimberly Daniels spent her youth on the streets of that same city, running with a gang and becoming involved in crime and violence. A prostitute and drug addict for a time, Daniels was anything but the picture of a future pastor.

Today, however, the only hint of her former life is her familiarity with the devil's ways—and her willingness to confront the enemy when she discerns he is encroaching on God's territory. In fact, it was her boldness to take on the devil in order to bring deliverance to inner-city youth that first earned her a reputation as the "Demon Buster."

Daniels kicked her cocaine habit when she joined the Army and then gave her life to Christ while on active duty in Germany. She immediately began leading a Bible study and was preaching within six months.

When she returned to the U.S., she started a center to help girls get off drugs but had trouble finding a church that would accept them. Finally, God told her: "You pastor them." And out of her drug center came a church.

In addition to pastoring Spoken Word and overseeing Word Bible College, Daniels leads Commanders of the Morning, a large network of intercessors she trains in prayer and spiritual warfare. Through her Iron Sharpens Iron ministry she equips believers to operate in the fivefold ministry and encourages them to fulfill their God-appointed roles in the church. She also travels worldwide to minister in conferences and plans to open a second church, Rhema Way City Church, in Jacksonville this year.

Naomi Dowdy

When Naomi Dowdy was a girl, God spoke to her through the hymn "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," a song that likens believers to the lights around a lighthouse. While she was singing the words of the chorus—"Let the lower lights be burning/ Send a gleam across the wave!"—in a church service one day, she heard a voice say aloud to her, "That's what I want you to do."

Later, in San Diego, Dowdy sat on the shore as often as possible—but it wasn't to let her light shine for sinners. She had drifted from God and was working the night shift so she could spend all day on the beach.

But immediately after she gave her life to Christ at age 25, Dowdy says, she began preaching, first on Skid Row in San Diego and later on the radio. Then God appeared to her in a vision and told her He was going to send her to "the islands of the sea." For nine years she worked as a missionary in the Marshall Islands, teaching at Bible schools, planting churches and training pastors throughout Asia—until God offered her her own church.

"I didn't want to be a pastor," Dowdy says. "It was not even on the radar screen."

But she agreed to lead the pioneer Assemblies of God church in Singapore for six months. Nearly 30 years later, she resigned as senior pastor of Trinity Christian Centre. She had grown the church from 42 to 4,500 members, founded a Bible school and seminary—now TCA College—and developed a cell model currently used by thousands of churches around the world.

Dowdy, with bases in both Dallas and Singapore, continues to give spiritual oversight to the church as the resident apostle. She is also the founder and president of Global Leadership Network and the Global Covenant Network.

Maureen D. Eha is the features editor of *Charisma*.

This article is from the June 2007 issue of *Charisma*

Is Something Missing in Your Life?

by Joyce Meyer

Many Christians follow all the “right” rules and carefully live “the Christian life,” but inside they are wondering: Is this it? Is this all there is? I experienced that same emptiness in 1976 when as a young Christian I realized that doing the right things brought temporary happiness but not deep, satisfying joy.

In those early days of my walk with God, I could only see Him from a distance. Even though I was doing what I thought He required of me, I still felt that I needed change in my life. I was searching, but I didn't know what I was searching for.

One Friday morning in February, I was driving to work and feeling particularly discouraged. My husband and I had argued before we left home, something that happened quite often. I felt I couldn't go on any longer with the way things were. Out of sheer desperation I called out to God.

I remember crying
out: "God, something is missing. I don't know what it is, but
something is
missing."

To my surprise, I heard the audible voice of God that morning
in my car. He
called my name and spoke to me about patience.
From that moment, I knew with certainty that God was going to
do something
about my situation. I didn't know what He would do or when,
but I knew that He
was about to move in my life. Only a few hours later Jesus
filled me with the
presence of the Holy Spirit in a way that I had never before
experienced.

More than likely, you can reflect on an encounter with God
that was more
satisfying than any other event in your life. But if that
moment was years ago,
or even yesterday, then you are missing out on the rich
pleasure that comes from
daily fellowship with the Father through His Holy Spirit. The
Lord says, "I love
those who love Me, and those who seek Me early and diligently
shall find Me"
(Prov. 8:17, The Amplified Bible).

There are too many unhappy born-again and so-called Spirit-
filled believers
who are without knowledge of what to do about their dry,
unfulfilled lives. I
say "so-called" because to be filled is to remain full of the
Spirit of God by
acknowledging Him and pursuing His ways daily.

It is possible to fill a glass with water without filling it to full capacity. Likewise, when we are born again we have the Holy Spirit in us, but we may not yet be totally filled with the Spirit. In Acts 1:8 Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will also come upon us, giving us power (ability, efficiency and might) to be Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth. Acts 4:31 reports that when people were filled with the Holy Spirit, they spoke the Word of God "with freedom and boldness and courage."

Before I was immersed in the Holy Spirit, I was very busy doing things for God, yet I did not have enough power in my everyday life to be what God wanted. I desired to be like Jesus, but I had no power to successfully handle the ordinary events of my life. Although I was born again, I needed something more.

It does not please God when people leave Him out of their daily lives and then work religious formulas to try to appease Him. I regret all the years I wasted being religious, just going through the motions, following formulas, and not having the revelation that Jesus was alive in me through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I urge you to begin taking full advantage of your blood-bought relationship with God, through Jesus. Don't tuck God away for emergencies and Sunday mornings. Allow Him to work freely in every area of your life

through the power
of the Holy Spirit.

Above all, don't be afraid of new things—just make sure they are biblical. I believe that God desires to take you to new heights in Him. He is knocking at the door of your heart. Will you open it wide and welcome Him? If you have not been providing a good home for the Holy Spirit, He has been missing you—and whether you know it or not, you have been missing Him.

Joyce Meyer is an internationally recognized minister and author of 54 books, including the best sellers *Beauty for Ashes* and *Battlefield of the Mind* (Warner Faith), and her most recent, *Knowing God Intimately: Being as Close to Him as You Want to Be* (Warner Faith, 2003). She is the founder of Life In The Word Inc. and the host of Life In The Word radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide.