

# Never Give in to Self-Pity

✖ One of the best examples of self-pity is the crippled man at the Pool of Bethesda (see John 5). Jesus knew his full condition and then, through Peter, asked the man if he wished to be healed. The man began to explain why he had not and could not be healed. Jesus seemed to quit listening to his self-pity and healed him anyway.

Self-pity is the opposite of confidence and worth. Self-pity happens when we feel we are warranted to receive but get passed by. This can occur in our natural or spiritual life. Self-pity helps define our moment or, may I say, cause us to miss our moment. We feel we are deserving or entitled to a blessing, and we lose faith when we see a blessing slip past our life.

Self-pity demands entitlement. The opposite of embracing your portion is feeling you are entitled to a portion that you are really not to have. "Entitle" means "to superscribe or prefix as a title. Hence, as titles are evidence of claim or property, entitle is to give a claim to, or to give a right to demand or receive."

So what gives someone a sense of entitlement? A close friend of ours shared some insights that I now pass on to you. In the United States we are born with a sense of entitlement. We have certain expectations because of where we live and how life should be for us who live here (or so we have been led to believe). Somewhere along the line we have gotten the idea that we are entitled to a loving husband or wife, obedient children, and a lovely home in a tree-shaded neighborhood.

Maybe it's a holdover from old black-and-white TV shows. If you've grown up watching *Father Knows Best*, *Leave It to*

Beaver, or The Waltons, you may be disappointed that your parents weren't that way. Yet how could anyone live up to such a romantic, unrealistic pattern for parenthood? So feeling deprived, something deep within works behind the scenes to convince us that we ought to be able to do whatever we want to since we didn't get those things that were owed us.

We can eat what we want when we want it because we didn't have the blissful childhood we wanted. We can spend money irresponsibly because we deserve whatever we want that is within our power to get. Somebody owes us. It's crazy, really, but it's down there. And hand-in-hand with it is unreality. The world isn't perfect, even in the United States. You might be saying, "Duh, how could anybody really think that?"

But dig down deep. See if on some level there isn't something in you that thinks it should be and that you should have had a certain kind of life—not because of anything you have done, but just because of your existence on the planet.

We are created to live a life of praise, and yet this sense of entitlement, besides causing us to live in a mindset of expectation, rather than expectancy (two vastly different things), leads to the very antithesis of gratitude—malcontentment and ingratitude. It causes a childish cry within us that says, "How come they got that and I didn't? It's not fair."

The apostle Paul said that he had learned to be content in whatsoever situation, whether abased or abounding (see Phil. 4:12). And we are to give thanks in all things. I think that the Lord in His infinite mercy is allowing us to get down to the lie that makes it hard for us to feel truly grateful. If we don't look at entitlement squarely in the face and identify it, we can't deal with it.

Until we can fall out of agreement with entitlement and unreality and know that there is a plan for us that supersedes that one we felt we “deserved” or that life owed us, we will view our circumstances through a distorted filter, at least on some level. But as we look at this honestly as the lie it is, we will find joy and gratitude rising up within us and we won’t give in to self-pity.

You know, there is another definition for “entitle” in the dictionary: “to qualify; to give a claim by the possession of suitable qualifications.” Through the blood of Jesus and our acceptance of Him as our personal Lord and Savior, we are qualified and can lay claim to the wonderful promises He has given us, and these promises are “Yes and amen.” To that we are entitled. Praise God!



Adapted from Redeeming the Time by Chuck Pierce, copyright 2009, published by Charisma House. This book helps you understand how God views time and gives you a clear perspective of His timing in your life. If you feel you’re out of step and want another opportunity to fulfill His plan then this book is for you. To order a copy click on this link: