

Walk Out of a Restricting Poverty Mindset With These 8 Liberating Steps

Jesus said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 19:19). It's surprising how much of an impact two little letters, "as," can have on a person's life. Your neighbors, coworkers, family members and friends are all being dramatically affected by this two-letter word! In fact, I propose that this tiny word is in charge of your finances, rules your emotional state and dictates how you relate to God.

"What?," you may protest! Okay, let me explain. The word "as" means "the same." In other words, love your neighbor the same way or to the same level that you love yourself. Since love looks like something, your behavior towards your neighbor, your finances and even God is a reflection of how you feel about yourself.

Loving Yourself Is Key to a Prosperous Life

Loving yourself is the key to a prosperous soul, which is the foundation for becoming wealthy and healthy in every area of your life. So how do we learn to love ourselves?

Here are 8 simple but profound steps to walking out of poverty and into a prosperous soul:

1. Discover who God says you are. There are hundreds of Scriptures that reveal your amazing identity in Jesus. The apostle Paul said, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8b) The connotation is that you used to be a sinner, someone whose nature it was to sin and to do evil. But when you received Jesus into your life, you became a saint! It's no longer your nature to sin because you are a holy person and a citizen of a holy nation (1 Peter 2:9). You are

also a son or daughter of God and a new creation in Him!

2. Envision yourself as God sees you. I discovered a principle in the kingdom that simply says, “If I can envision it, I can have it.” The wisest king in the world articulated it like this, “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7a). There is something very powerful about your imagination. What you imagine has a huge impact on who you are becoming. You are forming your outer world with your inner thoughts, so what will you choose to meditate on? Imagine, think about, envision, talk to yourself and even sing the truth to yourself!

3. Recount your past sins and failures that still trouble you and ask Jesus to forgive you. Let me be clear, I am not talking about spending your days in regret; I am merely saying that if you are still plagued by any past failures, then deal with them head-on. You can’t conquer what you refuse to confront, and buried shame is more dominant than unapplied redemption. Closure is so easy, in Jesus, that it’s almost embarrassing. The apostle John said it best: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). There it is, short and sweet: confess your sins, and He does the rest.

4. Ask Jesus to show you your sins or failures from His perspective. It is so important, especially when you fail, that you see yourself from God’s merciful perspective. Envisioning your failure through the eyes of Jesus is essential to assigning the right roles to the proper characters in your life. That loud voice shouting “Guilty! Away to the gallows with them! Off with their heads!” is not the Lord convicting you; it’s Satan trying to mess with your head. His goal is to get your eyes off of the Lord’s redemption and onto your own failures. But in the midst of all the shouting, there is always the reassuring voice of your Shepherd. Stay in that quiet place until you can see your failings transformed into His fantastic future!

5. Ask Jesus if there are actions you need to take to clean up your messes or to bring closure to your life. The Bible says that we need to “bear fruit worthy of repentance” (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). Most of the time this simply means asking people that we have wronged to forgive us and doing what we can to right our wrongs. It’s important to note here that you are responsible to do your part, but you can’t make someone forgive you. Let the Holy Spirit do His part in convincing other people involved to reciprocate your response.

6. Develop a vetting system for what you allow yourself to listen to and think about. Jesus gave us profound insights into how our vetting process affects our lives when He said, “Take heed what you hear. The measure you give will be measured for you, and to you who hear will more be given” (Mark 4:24). When you choose to entertain certain kinds of thoughts, maybe it’s worry and fear, you will invite other worriers and fearful people into your world. It’s true when they say, “Birds of a feather flock together.” On the other hand, if you “Keep your heart with all diligence” (Prov. 4:23) and vet your thoughts through God’s divine filter, then you will attract like-minded people to you.

7. Make a list of the five most profound things that Jesus says about you and memorize them. The goal of this exercise is to help you develop new, positive ways of thinking, which will assist you in beginning a powerful and peaceful life. When you proactively spend time pondering the things Jesus says about you, you create new neural pathways in your brain. These pathways become mindsets that tend to dictate how you think and what you visualize most easily. The apostle Paul gave us great insight into this when he said, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). The truth is you cannot always change your life, but if you change your thoughts, He will transform your life!

8. Ask yourself how someone who has the five attributes Jesus said you have should think, talk, behave and dream. Then, do

accordingly. Nothing is quite so affirming and confidence-building as acting out your God-thoughts instead of your feelings. Your feelings, although important, are great servants but terrible masters! I am reminded of God's counsel to Cain when jealousy was plaguing the guy. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your countenance fallen? If you do well, shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must rule over it" (Gen. 4:6-7). Did you notice how "doing well," or not doing well, was directly related to Cain's attitude? When you act upon the things Jesus says about you, you forge the truth into your heart and accelerate the transformation process in your mind.

Give Yourself to the Process

If you have spent your life with a poverty mentality, then thinking and acting differently may not feel real or authentic at first. But persevere, because 40 days from now, it will be the new you! I want to remind you that you were born to win, and Jesus is in your corner. Therefore, if God is for you, then who can be against you? I encourage you to journey through the Scriptures and unearth the full revelation of the mystery of your identity in God, then walk out these steps. He is waiting eagerly for you to encounter His indescribable, outrageous love for you so that He might awaken the new you to your fantastic future.

How do you combat a poverty mindset? I'd love to hear from you! {eoa}

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