

GROWING UP IN THE LORD

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Week 4: Getting Up When You're Down



How quickly a bad day can turn into a bad week! Then, before you know it, your whole month is bad. If you're not careful, you'll think the whole world is bad and maybe that you don't even want to live anymore. One of the top killers today is depression that leads to suicide. Everyone gets down once in a while, but God doesn't want you to stay down! He says in Proverbs 24:16, "A righteous person falls seven times, but always gets back up" (my paraphrase). This chapter is on learning how to get back up.

DAY 1

ACCEPTANCE

(Date)

The number one thing that all of us want and need is to belong. We need to feel needed and important. When we don't feel this way, depression can set in. When God created man, they felt important.; they knew they mattered!

Read Genesis 1:26-30

What does it mean that man was made in God's image?

How do you think that affected the way Adam & Eve felt about themselves? _____

What big jobs did God give them in verse 26?

What about in verse 28? _____

Adam and Eve were important! Adam even took a walk with God every day!

But something happened to man.

Read Genesis 3:1-19

What happened in this passage? _____

What were the curses that resulted from “the Fall”?

Man felt needed and important until he directly disobeyed God, and we’ve been searching for our identity ever since. God didn’t change; He still loves and accepts us, but we changed. Tomorrow we will study how this problem can be remedied.

DAY 2

SEARCHING FOR SIGNIFICANCE

(Date)

Robert McGee, in his book, *“The Search for Significance,”* gives four traps that we’ve been falling into since Adam & Eve sinned. They cause us to be down on ourselves. Let’s look at them and a solution for each.

The first trap is called **The Performance Trap**. It simply says, “I must meet certain standards in order to feel good about myself.” In other words, if I do well, I’m fine, but if I don’t measure up to my own expectations, I’m a failure. An example would be, “if I make good grades, I’m good; if I make bad grades, I’m bad.” We know that that’s not true, but many times we fall into this way of thinking.

Read Colossians 2:8

What do you think this passage is saying? _____

What does “*human tradition*” refer to? _____

What warning does the Bible give in this verse? _____

The way to overcome The Performance Trap is to realize that when God saves us, He cleans us up! He makes us pure and holy. We will still sin, but through Jesus’ blood, God sees us as clean.

Read Romans 5:1

Justified means *just as if I’d never sinned*. Through Christ, that’s how God sees us. What does this verse say we have through Jesus Christ? _____

Peace makes The Performance Trap obsolete because we are “good enough” through Christ!

Read Colossians 1:20-22

What is this passage saying about our justification through Jesus Christ? _____

DAY 3

THE APPROVAL TRAP

(Date)

The second trap is called **The Approval Trap**. It says, "I must be approved by certain others to feel good about myself." In other words, if others like me I'm okay; if they don't, I must not be ok. There will always be people who don't like you; don't let that get you down. Satan wants to use that to discourage you! When Jesus died for you, He made a way for you to be totally accepted by God—that way is to ask Christ into your heart.

Read Romans 5:10

What does the word "reconciled" mean? _____

Once you ask Jesus into your heart, you are totally accepted by God the Father!

Read Romans 8:38-39

What is this verse saying about God's love for you?

Read John 15:15-16

What is this verse saying about God's love for you?

DAY 4

THE BLAME GAME

(Date)

The third trap is called **The Blame Game**. It says that, “those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished”. In other words, “I’m a dirty rotten sinner and I deserve to be punished”. While it’s true that we are all sinners, and that we all deserve hell, when we accept Jesus, we can be made saints and go to heaven.

Read 1 John 4:9-10

What does “atoning” mean? (try the dictionary) _____

Read Romans 8:1

What does it mean to be condemned? _____

What is this verse saying to you? _____

THE SHAME TRAP

The last trap is called **The Shame Trap**. It says, “ I must always be what I have been and live with whatever self-worth I have. I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.”

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-18

What are some old things God wants to take away in your life?

What are some new things He wants to add? _____

Read Philippians 1:6

How does this verse contradict The Shame Trap?

DAY 5

DEPRESSION

(Date)

When you get down, examine yourself to see if you are being deceived by any of these traps we just discussed. Then, if you're still down, you need to seek God more closely for a root cause of your heartache. Spend more time in prayer and Bible study asking God to help you.

God takes your depression seriously. He understands.

Read Proverbs 18:14

Read Psalm 38:4,8,10-11,21-22

What does verse 11 say about friends in times of trouble?

Who does David call on in verses 21-22?

God wants to restore your happiness and excitement, but you must seek Him for it.

Read Psalm 51:10-13

What should happen when you get restored? (see verse 12 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Sometimes God uses others to help us when we're down. It can be a friend, a pastor, or someone else that we trust.

Read Psalm 32:3

What does this verse say about sharing with someone when we're down? _____

DAY 6

SUICIDE

(Date)

Sometimes when people get down and can't seem to find their way back up (and don't seek God), they consider suicide as an option. It is most certainly *not* an option! God created you and He's the only one who should decide when you die. It is His right, not yours! Think carefully about this quote:

"Suicide is a permanent answer to a temporary problem."

No matter what happens in your life, God loves you and wants to draw you to Himself. Sometimes pain is the way He does that. Let's look at some verses that address the ever-growing problem of suicide.

Read John 14:27

What is peace?

In this verse who is giving the peace?

How good is that peace? _____

Have you ever experienced this peace? When? _____

Read Philippians 4:4-7

See if you can identify the 6 steps this passage gives (verses 4-6) on how to obtain peace when you need it.

1.(v. 4) _____

2.(v. 5) _____

3.(v. 6) _____

4.(v. 6) _____

5.(v. 6) _____

6.(v. 6) _____

What promise does God give you in verse 7 if you'll follow these 6 steps? _____

DAY 7

THE PROMISE

(Date)

Look carefully at Romans 8:28-29

What does God promise in this verse?

Read Romans 8:37-39

What 10 things does God list that cannot separate us from His love?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Does that cover all the bases? You bet!

God does not want you to stay down; He wants you to get right back up. If you are going through depression, evaluate whether you have fallen prey to any of the four traps we discussed. Spend time in prayer and Bible study and ask God to reveal His love to you. Most of all, don't even *consider* suicide. Seek professional counseling. God loves you so much and He wants you to be able to love yourself. God made you and He's proud of His work!

NOTE: Some of the material in this chapter was taken from "*The Search for Significance*" written by Robert McGee and rewritten for teens by Dawson McAllister.

**OBSERVATIONS ABOUT
THIS WEEK'S STUDY:**
