

January 31st, Crushing Hopelessness

Part 5 in the series 'Feeling Good: Living a Life Fully Alive in Christ'

Who is your favorite fictional villain?

If you could have any superpower what would it be?

In Romans 12:2 Paul wrote:

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

Why does changing the way you think allow God to transform you?

Gabe said that what you believe determines how you feel. How can what you believe influence your actions? How can what you believe influence your body?

What beliefs cause people to feel angry?

What beliefs cause people to feel worried?

What beliefs cause people to feel guilty?

What beliefs cause people to feel hopeless?

What beliefs cause people to feel embarrassed?

Read John 8:44 NIV

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Jesus said that the devil came to steal, kill, and destroy.

How does Satan accomplish these goals by lying?

What can Satan influence you to do by convincing you your worth is based on your looks?

What can Satan influence you to do by convincing you that people will judge you if they know all your flaws?

What can Satan influence you to do by convincing you that your conflict with someone else is 100% their fault when in reality some of the fault belongs to you?

What can Satan influence you to do by convincing you that you'll be miserable the rest of your life?

A literal word for word translation of 1 Peter 1:13 teaches us to gird up the loins of our minds.

What does this mean? Answer: Prepare your mind.

What must we prepare our minds for?

Peter also says we must have sober minds. How can we do that?

Why is it important to discover the benefits of negative emotions and beliefs as well as the positive and awesome things they say about you?

Gabe listed some benefits of being hopeless as well as some positive and awesome things that being hopeless says about you. What were some of them? Can you think of any more?

Benefits Gabe listed:

- Can make you more empathetic towards hopeless people
- Keeps you safe from being let down because you won't get your hopes up.
- You never have to fail because you don't have to try.
- You don't have to change, which can be painful.
- You don't have to give up bad habits.

Positive and awesome things Gabe listed:

- Shows you are strong because you can endure the pain of hopelessness
- You are willing to face beliefs that may be true even if they are painful.
- You don't sugarcoat things.
- You are a critical thinker.
- You are cautious
 - Being cautious shows you care about your own well-being

What were some of the cognitive distortions Gabe mentioned?

- Labeling** - Giving yourself a label like a loser or failure instead of someone who loses and wins or someone who fails and succeeds.
- Overgeneralization** - Using words like always and never when they don't apply
- Mental Filters** - Ignoring the positive because something negative happened or vice versa.
- Mind Reading** - assuming you know what others are thinking.
- Magnification or minimization** - Making a mountain out of a molehill or making something seem like it doesn't matter.
- Fortune Telling** - Assuming you know the future.

Which of these applied to the belief "Things will never get better" and why did they apply? Can you think of any other reasons that belief isn't true?

Read 1 Peter 1:13 in its entirety:

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your HOPE on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

Even if things never got better in our current lives, Peter shows us that is not true of our next lives. How can that cause us to live differently?

Read John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;
I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

How can believing that Jesus came to give life and give it to the full affect someone's behavior and emotions?