

ACTION PLAN



PERSONAL APPLICATION WORKBOOK

4 TEACHINGS
ON DVD & CD

PERSONAL
APPLICATION
WORKBOOK

JOURNAL FOR
NOTES & INSIGHTS

Battlefield of the mind



Winning the Battle in Your Mind

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DEAR FRIEND,

The devil is a master at guerilla warfare. He knows that if he can establish a stronghold in your thoughts, he can take over your life.

For a long time, I didn't know my mind was the devil's playground. I spent way too many years in bondage to negative, critical and depressing thoughts based on the abuse I experienced growing up. Maybe you too have been living with negative mindsets shaped by hurts from your past. You may need to lay a new foundation in your thoughts and attitudes based not on experience or what other people have told you, but on what God's Word says. His Word says you are *more than a conqueror* through Christ who gives you strength (see Romans 8:37).

Ephesians 6:13 shows us how we overcome: *Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place].*

God has given you powerful spiritual weapons to break down the enemy's strongholds and renew your mind in the Truth (see 2 Corinthians 10:4). We've put together this action plan to help you in the process. I recommend you watch a DVD, then open your workbook and proceed through the questions and journal exercises up to the stopping point indicated. Meditate on the recommended verses. Take your time with this. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you and reveal the truth about yourself and what God has for you.

You can win this battle. Just set your mind and keep it set. Let the power of the Holy Spirit reign in your thoughts, and I'm confident in the end you will get your victory!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping 'J' and a trailing flourish at the end.



CHAPTER 1

Breaking Strongholds



WATCH DVD 1 — TEACHING 1

“Your thoughts become your words and attitudes. Where the mind goes, the man follows.” —Joyce

[Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One). —2 Corinthians 10:5 (AMP)

The enemy relentlessly seeks to build strongholds in our minds—false beliefs masquerading as Truth. His assaults start early with the critical words of a parent, a teacher, or even other children. We often internalize other people's assessments which can follow us through life, influencing our behavior and shaping the way we see ourselves, other people—and even how we see God.

Joyce shares her own struggle with negative thoughts stemming from abuse in her childhood. ***Do you struggle with a negative self-image or other self-limiting beliefs? If so, what are they and what early or past experiences may have planted them in your mind?***

Sometimes we think obsessively about everything from injustices at work to slights from friends and family members. ***What particular negative thoughts have created obstacles in your life and relationships?***

How do such thoughts and attitudes harm your relationship with God?



READ Philippians 4:6; Luke 6:37; 11:4; Colossians 3:13

How can you overcome anger and resentment toward people who've hurt you?



READ Isaiah 65:17; Ezekiel 18:31; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 12:2

God's Word states that you do not have to be defined by things you've done in the past—or things that may have been done to you. You are a new creation through Christ's sacrifice and the Holy Spirit living inside you. But *inner* transformation is a process. ***What does God need from you to complete that process?***

According to these verses, why is it so important to be vigilant about what you allow into your mind?

“The devil wants us to think we're in a trap... It all begins in your mind.” —Joyce



READ Deuteronomy 4:29; Proverbs 2:2; 3:5; 4:23; 28:26; Luke 21:34; 1 Corinthians 2:15-16; James 4:7

What are some of the keys to keeping your mind safe from Satan's ongoing assaults on your thoughts?



READ Ephesians 4:22-24

Based on this Scripture passage, what is the key to success in changing stubborn mental habits?



READ Psalm 18:29; 29:11; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:4-7

How does God empower you?

JESUS REPLIED, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.”

—Matthew 21:21 (NIV)

THINKING RIGHT THOUGHTS ON PURPOSE

“You can have a great life, but you have to think the way God tells you to think. The attitude you choose can make your life joy-filled, peaceful and fun—or miserable, wretched and sour.” —Joyce

God's Word says, ***As [a man] thinks in his heart, so he is...*** (Proverbs 23:7). Joyce teaches that you can reject negative thoughts and choose to think right thoughts on purpose.

INSTEAD OF: “My past is my destiny...”

THINK: “This experience is an open door to a new beginning.”

INSTEAD OF: “Somebody needs to rescue me from this situation...”

THINK: “Show me what to do, Lord. I'll do it!”

INSTEAD OF: “I've had enough. I can't take it any longer!”

THINK: “God's timing is perfect. I can wait patiently and remain peaceful with His help.”

INSTEAD OF: “This isn't my fault...”

THINK: “I'm taking responsibility for my life. I have the power through Jesus to overcome!”



THOUGHT-SWAP EXERCISE

List three negative thoughts/attitudes you've had about situations in your life and three new responses that reflect God's way of thinking.



READ Psalm 1

What are the benefits of bringing your thoughts into alignment with God's Word? What happens when you don't?



READ Isaiah 35:8; 38:17; 44:22; 51:55; 1 Peter 1: 18-19

Why does choosing to think and behave according to God's Word give you reason to rejoice?

THINKING IN THE SPIRIT VS. THINKING IN THE FLESH



READ Romans 8:1-17

What's the difference between walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit?

What characterizes a person who walks in the flesh?

What are the consequences of walking in the flesh?

What does God promise if you choose to walk in the Spirit?

“Any sin can be forgiven, but not without Truth. You have to face it, call it what it is and give it to God.” —Joyce

When God reveals problem areas in your life, He will also help you deal with them. What problem areas has He revealed in your life?



READ Romans 8:1-2

Joyce warns that you shouldn't let conviction of sin turn into self-condemnation. ***What does God's Word promise if you choose to walk in the Spirit? How does this promise free you?***

BE KIND TO YOUR IMPERFECT SELF

Joyce points out that we tend to be hypercritical of our failings, while minimizing the value of the good choices we make. Maybe you grew up in a home where the emphasis was on correcting your flaws—not relaxing in God’s grace. But Jesus said, *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”* (John 10:10 NIV). God celebrates you (see Psalm 139, Ephesians 2:10). He wants you to enjoy the life He died to give you (see Matthew 5:10). Do you mentally beat yourself up? If so, it’s time to give up self-condemnation and enjoy your imperfect self while God’s doing His work in you.

List 10 things you like about yourself:



NOW, SAY OUT LOUD:

"I may not do everything right, but I don't do everything wrong either. I may not be where I need to be, but I'm not where I used to be. I'm okay and I'm on my way!"



POINT OF DECISION

Are you ready to ask for God's help? If so, take a moment to confess *specific* problem attitudes and call on Him to transform you from the inside out.

PRAY OUT LOUD: "Father, thank You that I do not have to be defined by things that happened in my past or wrong beliefs planted in my mind a long time ago. You have given me all the tools I need to break the strongholds in my mind and live a victorious life. Help me be diligent in learning and speaking Your Word to myself, so I can identify and expel the enemy's lies immediately from my thoughts. Show me how to receive Your grace so I can enjoy the wonderful life Your Son died to give me. Renew my mind so I can have peace and walk in Your will. In Jesus' name, Amen."



CHAPTER 2

Developing the Mind of the Spirit



WATCH DVD 1 — TEACHING 2

And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth.

—Colossians 3:2 (AMP)

“We can know what God wants us to do, but in order to actually do it, our flesh has to die. If you want what you say you want from God, you have to do what He tells you to do.” —Joyce



READ Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19; Luke 21:34

Joyce teaches that a person walking in the Spirit shouldn't be plagued by severe worry, anxiety, and other extreme negative emotions. Yet, too many followers of Christ aren't experiencing victory in their lives. ***Why not?***



READ Galatians 5:22-23

Perhaps some of the fruit of the Spirit are missing in your life. ***If so, which ones have you had difficulty developing?***



READ Hebrews 4:5-6; Hebrews 4:11; Ephesians 2:1-3

What contributes to a lack of peace in your life?



READ Ephesians 4:22-24

What specific beliefs, attitudes and behaviors do you need to change in order to start walking in the Spirit?



READ Isaiah 45:9; 59:2; Ezekiel 13:3; Romans 6:16

What do you risk by clinging to disobedient attitudes?

WORTHLESS WORRY

“Worry is like a rocking chair. It keeps you busy, but gets you nowhere.” —Joyce

We all worry occasionally. But obsessive worry is an indicator that we don't trust God and His promises. We have to *choose* to believe He is who He says He is, and that He won't abandon us. ***What do you worry about?***

What habits tend to feed your fears? (watching TV news, hanging out with pessimistic people, etc.)



READ Deuteronomy 31:8; 1 John 4:18; 2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 8:28; Romans 8:35-39

Why is fear unnecessary?



READ Romans 15:13; Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 3:17-20

What's possible when we choose to trust God?



READ Matthew 6:26; 1 Peter 5:10; 2 Timothy 2:1; Hebrews 13:20-21

What comfort can you take from these verses?



READ Exodus 15:2; Psalm 28:7; Proverbs 3:26; Isaiah 40:26;
Mark 9:23

God's Word says you are "more than a conqueror" through Christ who lives in you (see Romans 8:37). ***How does this perspective free you from worry?***



READ Proverbs 23:7; Luke 21:34; Philippians 4:6-8

What specific habits and disciplines can you develop to preserve peace in your heart and hope in your attitudes?

THE TRAP OF FATIGUE

Then Jesus...was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. Then the devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.” But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone.’” —Luke 4:1-4 (NLT)

Satan waited until Jesus was weak and hungry to attack Him. Likewise, we are most vulnerable to discouragement when we're tired and worn-out. Think about a time in your life when you were physically exhausted. ***How did your physical state affect your judgment?***



READ Mark 6:30-32

Based on this passage in the Bible, what's your best defense against the enemy when you're physically worn-down?

THE DANGERS OF AN UNMADE-UP MIND

“You need to have a made-up mind. It’s amazing the victory you can have if you set your mind and keep it set.”
—Joyce



READ James 1:5-8

Do you stand firmly in your convictions or do you tend to waffle back and forth? This passage of Scripture warns of the consequences of “wishy-washy” attitudes. ***How does an unstable mind cripple you?***

God will give you wisdom if you ask for it. But He sets one condition. ***What is it?***

How has unstable thinking and a lack of conviction affected your life?



READ Psalm 119:113-114

What does God promise if you make up your mind to believe what His Word says?

“ Make a decision. Not to decide is to decide. Don’t worry about missing God. If you miss Him, He’ll find you! ”
—Joyce

Joyce warns that we can talk ourselves out of God-inspired decisions simply by overthinking them. We don’t follow through because we don’t want to give up control.



READ Luke 12:29; Romans 1:21; 1 Corinthians 3:20; 10:5; James 1:22

Has God been prompting you to go in a new direction? What arguments, theories and reasonings have kept you from stepping out in faith?



READ Isaiah 54:14; Jeremiah 17:7-8; 29:11; Matthew 10:30-32

What conclusion can you draw from these verses?

Joyce shares how God has asked her to do many things over the years that didn't make worldly sense. ***Can you think of an instance when you felt God prompting you to do something that didn't seem to make sense? What was the outcome?***

DEALING WITH DECEPTION

“You need to think about what you think about. A deceived mind produces a deceived life.” —Joyce

Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many.” —Matthew 24:4-5 (NLT)

Sometimes Satan slips ideas into our heads and they seem to make sense, but go against the Word of God. Joyce reminds us that we must judge what’s right with our hearts (the Holy Spirit living within us), as well as our heads. We must “take every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ” (see 2 Corinthians 10:5). If a thought disagrees with God’s Word, it’s not from Him.



READ Matthew 15:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:9

How does the enemy use our thought process to keep us trapped?



READ 1 Peter 5:8

Joyce teaches that we get sidetracked by things that distract us from the Truth. We allow wrong thoughts to simply “fall into” our heads.

What kind of distractions have sidetracked your ability to think clearly?



READ John 7:18; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Philippians 1:9-11; James 1:22; 1 John 4:1

How can you be sure your thoughts are being influenced by God?



POINT OF DECISION

PRAY OUT LOUD: “Father, today I ask for Your help in releasing the fear and self-doubt that keep me from moving forward with the great life You want me to have. Help me trust You with my present and my future. Help me make wise decisions and act promptly when You tell me to act—secure in the knowledge that You will always protect and provide. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



CHAPTER 3

Our Arsenal of Spiritual Weapons

Satan bombards us with lies. He tries to sow disharmony in relationships and drive a wedge between us and God—the Source of our power. But God’s Word reminds us we have spiritual weapons with which to combat the enemy’s attacks.

THE WEAPON OF GOD’S WORD

“If you know the Word of God, when something destructive comes into your mind, you can think a right thought on purpose and it will produce good fruit in your life.” —Joyce

For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart. —Hebrews 4:12 (AMP)

According to the verse above, God’s Word slices with surgical precision through every deception, argument, motive and hidden intention that clouds our minds. His Word gives us complete

clarity of mind. ***In what areas of your life have you felt unsettled or confused?***



READ Proverbs 6:23; 16:20; Psalm 119:104-105

How does God's Word bring understanding?



5-MINUTE MEDITATION EXERCISE

Joyce talks about the importance of slowing down the pace of your life and meditating on God's Word. Find a comfortable, quiet place in your home—or any spot that helps you relax and be peaceful. Open your Bible and pick out three brief, affirming scriptures and repeat them out loud to yourself for at least five minutes.



POINT OF DECISION

WE MAKE TIME for things we consider important. Is studying God's Word important to you? If so, there are creative ways to get more of His Word into your life. Here are a few suggestions:

- Obtain a daily devotional or sign up for email devotions online
- Download a daily devotional "app" onto your iPad, smart phone or mobile device
- Join a weekly Bible study or church small group
- Watch Christian TV and listen to Christian radio

...For the Lord searches all hearts and minds and understands all the wanderings of the thoughts. If you seek Him [inquiring for and of Him and requiring Him as your first and vital necessity] you will find Him... —1 Chronicles 28:9 (AMP)

“A passive mind is an empty mind, waiting to see what will fall into it...Don't let the devil use your mind as a garbage dump.” —Joyce

Joyce reminds us the enemy is always looking to fill the empty spaces in our minds with negative, fearful thoughts. We have to be proactive in thinking thoughts that reflect our hope in Christ.



READ 2 Corinthians 10:5; Romans 12:2

What disciplines can you practice to begin renewing your mind in the Truth?

THE WEAPON OF PRAYER

“Prayer is a lot more powerful than we comprehend. It should be our first line of defense, not the last thing we resort to.” —Joyce

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.

—James 5:13-14 (NLT)



READ Ephesians 6:18; Matthew 7:7-8; 21:22; Luke 11:5-8;
Romans 8:26

According to Joyce, we think we're supposed to fix problems on our own before seeking God's help. ***What's wrong with this logic?***

The Psalms are King David's prayers to God. ***What kind of help does He ask for? What else does David include in his prayers?***



JOURNALING EXERCISE

Think about an area of your life where you need some help—or something you need to express to God. Study a favorite psalm, then write your own psalm/prayer.

THE WEAPON OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

“We think about everything that’s wrong...rather than thanking God for everything that’s right. We need to think less and thank more!” —Joyce



READ 1 Chronicles 16:8-15

There are several aspects of worship. *List the “action” words and phrases in these verses.*

Does your outlook allow you to be exultant about God? If not, ask Him to help you shift your focus from what’s wrong in your life to what you have to be thankful for.



READ Psalm 33; Psalm 42

“We should be in awe of God’s blessings. If you want to fast-track through the wilderness, start thanking God. *Thank You. Thank You. Thank You.*” —Joyce

Praise and worship flow out of joyful, heartfelt appreciation for what God has done. The Psalms are an honest reflection of David's feelings in good times and bad. ***As different as these two Psalms are in tone, what remains consistent? What comfort can you take from David's emotional transparency and vulnerability?***

Does your outlook on life allow you to be exultant about God? If not, it's time to set your mind and attitudes on a new course that leads to life, not depression and discouragement.



READ 1 Samuel 16:7; Zephaniah 3:17; Romans 8:38-39

What do these verses reveal about God's intentions toward you?



APPRECIATION EXERCISE

Reflecting on God's blessings in our lives is a first step to overhauling negative attitudes. When we fill our hearts and minds with thankfulness, negativity finds nowhere to get a toehold. Meditate on some things you have to be thankful for and write a letter of appreciation to God.

Dear God,

[illegible]



CHAPTER 4

Rooting Out Our Ugliest Attitudes

For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.
—Romans 12:3 (AMP)

“We can’t grow or receive the message of God’s Word if we don’t approach it with a humble mind.” —Joyce

† READ Proverbs 16:18; 18:12; 29:23; Matthew 23:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; 4:1-3; James 3:13

Joyce reminds us that in order for God’s instruction and correction to penetrate our hearts, we must humble ourselves. ***Has anyone ever accused you of an arrogant attitude—or do you secretly see yourself as superior to other people? How has a prideful attitude hindered or damaged your life and relationships?***



READ Psalm 10:3-5; Psalm 5:5; 18:27; Mark 7:21-23

How does pride damage your relationship with God?

A CRITICAL, JUDGMENTAL NATURE

“There may be reasons you are the way you are, but you can’t use those as an excuse to stay that way.” —Joyce

Do you struggle with a critical nature? We can’t be the people God wants us to be if we hang on to critical, judgmental attitudes, or always assume the worst about people. God understands why we are the way we are—but He also loves us too much to let us stay that way.



READ Luke 6:37; Romans 2:1

***What's the danger when you criticize and condemn people?
What does your critical attitude say about you?***



READ Matthew 7:3-5

How does a critical nature keep you blind?



POINT OF DECISION

IF YOU STRUGGLE with pride or a critical nature, you are not alone. It's just another area of our fleshly natures we must lay at God's feet. He forgives a repentant spirit. If you are ready to have your heart healed of an arrogant attitude, confess it and ask the Holy Spirit to convict you in this area. When you do this, God might allow you to experience the embarrassing or painful consequences of your words and actions. If that happens, thank Him! That's how you will know He's at work in your heart.



READ 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Sometimes we assume that being competent, successful and doing all the right things will get us ahead—but God’s Word says differently. ***How does a loveless attitude and a “works” mentality keep you out of God’s will?***

List the adjectives that describe love.

List the adjectives that describe what love is not.

LEARNING TO REST IN GOD'S TIMING

“Anytime you feel confusion, it’s not God. God is the author of peace.” —Joyce

If clarity and peace have been missing in your life, perhaps God is challenging you to look to Him for answers. Maybe He is asking you to rest in the mystery until He is ready to reveal the answers you seek. His timing is always perfect!



READ Lamentations 3:25; Isaiah 40:31; Micah 7:7; Habakkuk 2:3; Galatians 5:5

Sometimes we become impatient to hear from God. ***But what does God promise if we wait patiently on His timing?***



READ Proverbs 1:7; 1 John 2:13-14; Philippians 4:9; Matthew 11:29

According to these verses, what does it take to be mature in faith? How can you win your battle with the enemy?

What does God promise if you will stay grounded in His Word?

“The Bible says those who believe His Word and walk in righteousness will shine out in the dark like bright lights, stars and beacons. Walk in the Word and before long, people will come to you wanting to know what you have that they don’t.” —Joyce



POINT OF DECISION

PRAY OUT LOUD: “Father, You have said I can overcome any obstacle, accomplish any task, remain joyful in even the most difficult circumstances with Your help. Today, renew my mind with thoughts and attitudes that reflect Your power and provision in my life. Give me a positive, ‘big picture’ perspective on my situation so I can begin to experience true peace and contentment. Help me tune in to Your blessings large and small so I can be positive in my attitudes and be an effective witness for You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



CHAPTER 5

A Mature Perspective on Problems



WATCH DVD 2 — TEACHING 3

“God can turn your mess into a miracle.” —Joyce



READ The story of Joseph in Genesis, chapters 37-50.

Joseph's saga features episodes of betrayal, injustice and false imprisonment—but ultimately, restoration and victory. Taken out of context, the wrongs committed against Joseph seem cruel and pointless. But Joseph kept a “Kingdom” perspective, choosing to trust God and believe the best. God ultimately blessed Joseph, his family and the people he governed.

Joyce says that many of the messes in our lives are attached to the messes in our minds. We allow our “fleshly” minds to rule instead of the mind of the Spirit (see Romans 7:23).



READ Genesis 50:20; Romans 5:3-5; 8:28-32; John 6:63

Have you been trapped in a negative mindset about your present situation? If so, what new perspective would help change your fleshly worldview to a more spiritual outlook?

Think about a situation in your life that was a disappointment at the time, but later turned out to be a blessing in disguise. ***What have such experiences taught you about your own perceptions? About trusting God?***

THE TRAP OF A WILDERNESS MENTALITY

“The Israelites thought their problem was their enemies. But it was their mindset, not their enemies, which kept them out of the Promised Land. They had a wilderness mentality.” —Joyce

Joyce talks about having to surrender her old ways of thinking before she could experience true transformation. Sometimes we hold on to blame, distrust, pessimism and other negative attitudes because we think they protect us from being hurt. In fact, they destroy us from within. ***What negative thoughts/attitudes are you stubbornly holding on to?***



READ Isaiah 5:21; 1 Corinthians 13:4-6

What do you risk by hanging on to negative attitudes?



READ Isaiah 27:5; Isaiah 55:1-3; Luke 6:38; 14:33; Romans 6:16

What do you stand to gain when you surrender negative thinking and allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind according to His Word?

THINKING YOUR WAY OUT OF BONDAGE

“How you think, what you say and how you act while you are in the wilderness will determine how long you stay there.” —Joyce

What should have been an eleven-day trip for the Israelites turned into forty years of wandering in the wilderness because of their bad attitudes. Too often we remain trapped by our own wrong thoughts. We *choose* to believe...

- Our wounded pasts determine our future
- Somebody else should solve things for us
- We've waited long enough and can't hold on any longer
- We're not responsible—it's not our fault this happened

Which of these beliefs do you identify with?

What other wrong ideas and destructive thought patterns have kept you from experiencing victory in your life?

Romans 6:2, 11 says we are dead to sin and alive to righteousness. According to Joyce, if we want to fast-track through the wilderness, we must think, believe and speak God's Word. Whether it's forgiving someone, conquering an addiction, or developing more self-discipline, we are confident we can do it through Christ living inside us.



POINT OF DECISION

PRAY OUT LOUD: "Father, I am ready to be healed of the negative attitudes that have blocked my blessings and kept me from experiencing and expressing the fruit of my faith. Clear away all mental obstacles so I can see You clearly at work in my life and circumstances. Make me aware when negative or pessimistic attitudes are creeping into my mind, so I can stop them at the root and replace them with thoughts that glorify You. Continue to renew my mind in the Truth so I can receive the great life You want me to have, and be the person You designed me to be. In Jesus' name, Amen."



CHAPTER 6

Taking Your Faith to the Next Level

But be doers of the Word [obey the message], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth]. —James 1:22 (AMP)

“What do you see for yourself? You need to have goals and dreams, to be reaching in faith for something—something to work toward. I’d rather want everything and get half of it than want nothing and get all of it.”
—Joyce

After the death of Moses the LORD’s servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ assistant. He said, “Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. I promise you what I promised Moses: ‘Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you...’ —Joshua 1:1-3 (NLT)

What are some of the emotions Joshua might have felt as God passed the torch of leadership to him?

What ultimately gave him the confidence to do what God commanded?

God challenged Joshua to take a new responsibility. ***Has God been challenging you to move to the next level? If so, what do you feel He is calling you to do?***

Joyce says when we feel the Holy Spirit nudging us to do something—whether it's dealing with a problem or seizing an opportunity, we should do it now, not later. ***Why is it so important to act decisively when God directs?***




READ Deuteronomy 30:11; Isaiah 4:5; Galatians 6:9

What does God promise if you will follow through with His call on your life?

GOD'S SECRET WEAPON: SERVING AND BLESSING OTHERS

“When you’ve got a need, sow a seed. THAT’s the Kingdom Principle.” —Joyce

 **READ** John 13:34-35; Ephesians 5:2; 1 Peter 4:8-10; Acts 2:42;
2 Thessalonians 1:3

Jesus said loving others should be our number one priority. ***What keeps us from loving people as we should?***

“You don’t have to feel patient to be patient. You don’t have to feel right to do right.” —Joyce

Too often we think we must feel like doing something before we can do it. ***How does that mindset keep your faith ineffectual?***

Joyce suggests that you can't be pitiful and powerful at the same time. The devil rejoices when we turn inward and obsess on our own hurts and needs. ***How does self-pity keep us bound?***

What are some ways that helping other people actually helps us in our own pain? How does focusing on being a friend rather than finding friends actually lift us out of loneliness and depression?



READ Romans 12:10, 21

What's the best way to overcome evil in the world?



KINDNESS EXERCISE

“You don’t have to wait to have three trumpet blasts, two prophecies and four angels to appear before you will do a good deed. Make up your mind to be a blessing.” —Joyce

Nothing disorients the devil, says Joyce, like doing nice things for people. Ask yourself, *How can I be a blessing to someone today?* **List five nice things you can do for someone in the next twenty-four hours—then DO them. When the mission is accomplished, think of five more things.**

He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. —Romans 2:7 (NLT)

Sometimes we think we can't be a blessing to anyone until we're healed ourselves. But God uses us in our imperfections. Second Corinthians 12:9 says His power shines through our weaknesses. Our healing comes in the act of blessing somebody else. No matter where you are in the growth process, God can use you if you let Him.



POINT OF DECISION

PRAY OUT LOUD: "Father, I'm ready to give up self-pity and start living in victory. Help me focus more on my blessings and less on what's missing in my life. Give me a deeper appreciation for the many good things You've done for me, so I can glorify You with my words and attitudes. Bring people into my life who need help and show me what I can do to bless them. In Jesus' name, Amen."



CHAPTER 7

Fast-tracking Through the Wilderness



WATCH DVD 2 — TEACHING 4

“It took forty years for the Israelites to make it to the Promised Land—forty years to make an eleven-day trip. Why? Because they kept going around and around the same old mountain.” —Joyce

If you want to avoid going around the same old mountain, you have to be willing to give up a wilderness mentality.

A WILDERNESS MENTALITY CONSISTS OF...

- Blaming others for our problems (making excuses, passing the buck)
- An untrusting attitude toward God (impatience)
- Pessimistic thinking (low expectations)
- Short-sightedness about trials (taking a worldly, fleshly view)
- “Sin” consciousness (failure to accept God’s gift of grace)
- Staying stuck in the past (not believing He has a good plan for your future)
- Self-pity (an “all about me” victim mentality)
- Faultfinding and complaining (a lack of gratitude)
- Jealousy (always wanting what someone else has)
- “My way or no way” attitude (stubbornness, rebellion, self-will)

Which of these wilderness mentalities have been a problem for you?



READ 1 John 4:17

Joyce says renewing our minds is a process. ***The changes we want to make won't happen overnight, but what does God's Word promise if we just keep at it?***



READ 2 Corinthians 1:21; Ephesians 3:16

What ensures our success?



READ Philippians 3:10-14; James 5:7

According to these verses, what attitude will help you stay positive when you are going through the wilderness?



READ John 14:14; Ephesians 1:3-5

Is there something you need or want from God? Joyce says we sometimes don't ask for God's blessings because we don't think we deserve it. But He wants to bless us because He loves us—all we have to do is ask in His Name. ***Write a bold prayer to God!***

“You aren't a failure because you failed. You are only a failure if you quit trying.” —Joyce


God loves people with a “can-do” attitude—like Joshua and Caleb, who were willing to take on whole armies, and Zacchaeus, who

despite his short stature, didn't let his so-called disability keep him from his goal to see Jesus up close.

 **READ** Nehemiah 2

Nehemiah had a vision to repair the broken-down walls of Jerusalem. But before he could begin, he had to lay some groundwork. ***What specific things did Nehemiah do to help ensure he got off to a strong start?***

What qualities of character did Nehemiah possess that helped him achieve his goals?

 **READ** Isaiah 40:31; Hebrews 13:21; Psalm 37:5

How can you reinforce self-confidence and ensure your dreams have both roots and wings?

“Impatience is the fruit of pride. We don’t consider that God knows better than we do.” —Joyce

According to Joyce, what does an impatient attitude cause us to do?

“Remember that the same God who parted the Red Sea is living inside of you. Get out of your head and into the Spirit. Stop thinkin’ it to death and start believing God!” —Joyce



POINT OF DECISION

IF YOU ARE READY TO RELEASE YOUR OWN WILDERNESS MENTALITY, PRAY OUT LOUD:

“Father, today, I surrender my thoughts to You. Shine Your light on every faulty belief, every sinful attitude, every wrong thought that’s keeping me in defeat. Help me think like You in every situation. Fill my mind with only those thoughts that are pure, noble, and true, according to Your precious Word. Help me discern what You want me to do, then give me the desire, courage and strength to do it. Show me how to wait patiently and confidently on Your perfect timing. Don’t let me miss a single opportunity to make a difference for Your Kingdom. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

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For the weapons of our warfare
are not physical [weapons of flesh
and blood], but they are mighty
before God for the overthrow and
destruction of strongholds, [Inasmuch
as we] refute arguments and theories
and reasonings and every proud and
lofty thing that sets itself up against
the [true] knowledge of God; and we
lead every thought and purpose away
captive into the obedience of Christ
(the Messiah, the Anointed One).

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (AMP)
