



# Practical Christian Living

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you". Matthew 6:33  
Course 4 Lesson 4

## How To Overcome



## Feelings of Inferiority



### KEY VERSE:

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain." 1 Timothy 6:6*

Dear Friend,

There is a certain problem which almost everyone faces at one time or another. For some people it is a lifelong problem. But it is especially hurtful and painful to young people.

What is this problem which causes so much hurt and pain? It's the feeling that you are not as good as other people. It's that awful feeling that you are ugly and unattractive and that nobody likes you. It's feeling that you are dumb and that other people are smarter than you. It's the feeling that you are a failure and a loser. It's called "feelings of inferiority."

### WHY DO WE HAVE FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY?

Feelings of inferiority come from accepting the values of the world. We have already seen that wrong thinking leads to wrong actions and wrong feelings. In this case, the wrong feelings are feelings of inferiority.

What does the world value most? The world puts its highest value on three things: (1) Phys-

ical attractiveness, (2) Intelligence, and (3) Money, Most people, especially young people, think that they must have these things in order to feel good about themselves. Let us consider them.

#### 1. Physical attractiveness

So far as the world is concerned, a person's looks is one of the most important things about him or her. The world says, "If you are a "beautiful person", you are worth a lot; if you are not beautiful, you are not worth much and you probably won't be happy in life."

This is one of Satan's lies. Even though it is not true, many people believe it and it has a profound effect upon them. Some people dislike themselves and some even hate themselves because they are so dissatisfied with the way they look.



They think, "If only I could look like so-and-so, I'd be happy."

The fact is that physical attractiveness does not make a person happy. A noted psychiatrist studied some of the most beautiful women and the most handsome men to see how they felt about themselves and how they got along with others.

After considering the results of his study, he said. "It has been a source of startling surprise to me to see the amount of depression, loneliness, and deep unhappiness among beautiful people."

God wants us to see that our worth as a person does not depend on our outward appearance. The Bible says,

*"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."  
1 Samuel 16:7*

#### 2. Intelligence

The world says, "If you are smart, you are worthwhile; if you are not, then you are not worth much."

This is another of Satan's lies. Your value is not determined by how smart you are. Some young people have a hard time in school. They do not learn as easily as others.

When they give a wrong answer in class, everyone

laughs. This makes them feel dumb and inferior.

The more a person fails at something, the more discouraged he gets. Gradually he comes to think that he is a complete failure. He may decide that he can't do anything right and quit trying. This brings on more failure and deeper feelings of inferiority.



God never values a person by his intelligence. When the Lord Jesus chose His disciples, He did not choose the smartest, most intelligent people of His day. He chose plain, ordinary people. The Bible says,

*"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."*  
1 Corinthians 1:26

### 3. Money

A third way that the world values a person is by his wealth. The world says, "If you want to be important and you want to be happy, you must have money."



This too is one of Satan's lies. Money does not make a person happy, nor does it determine his value. The Lord Jesus said,

*"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."*  
Luke 12:15

Those who make wealth their goal in life fall into many sins. The Bible says, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."<sup>1</sup>

God wants us to see that we do not need money to be happy. The Bible says, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."<sup>2</sup>

### CHANGE YOUR THINKING!

Wisdom is seeing things as God sees them. God never values a person by his outward appearance, or by his wealth or social position. God deals with rich people exactly the same way he deals with poor people. The Bible says, "For there is no respect of persons with God."<sup>3</sup>

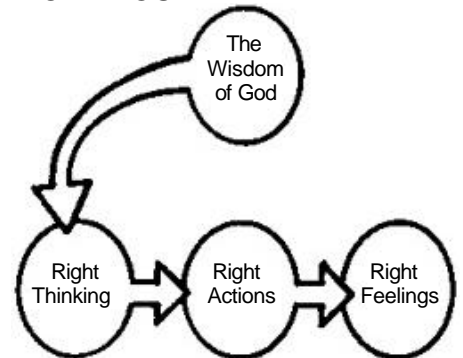
Physical attractiveness, intelligence and money are not evil in themselves. It is the wrong value the world places on these things that is wrong. If we accept the wrong beliefs and values of the world, it will lead to feelings of inferiority.

To change the way we feel about ourselves, we change our thinking. We must see that our worth as a person does not depend on our outward appearance, our intelligence, our wealth or our social position.

We must see ourselves as God sees us. What are we worth in God's sight? We are worth what He paid for us. He gave His Son to redeem us.

That's how much we are worth in His sight.

We must see too that God loves us and accepts us as we are. His love does not depend on what we are or what we have or what we do. God says, "Regardless of whether you are a success or failure, regardless what you may think about yourself, regardless of what other people may think about you, I LOVE YOU!"



### SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS...

Here are a few practical suggestions that will help you overcome feelings of inferiority:

#### ◆ Recognize that you are not alone

You are not alone in your feelings of inferiority. As you go about school or work, you come in contact with many other people - some smiling, talking, and laughing. You might think that they do not have a care in the world. But underneath it all, you will probably find out that they, too, have deep feelings of inferiority. Almost all people have these feelings.

When you realize that other people have the same problem that you have, it helps you to understand them.

#### ◆ Make Genuine Friends

You don't have to be beautiful or highly intelligent or have a lot of money to make friends. The best way to have a good friend is to be a good friend.

Never make fun of another person. Respect others and accept them as they are. Let them know that they are important to you. Be especially considerate of those who have difficulty making friends. They will love and appreciate you for this. Nothing helps your self-confidence more than having genuine friends. When you realize that other people like and appreciate you, it is easier to accept yourself.

◆ **Learn to do something well**

Everyone needs to have proper self-esteem. One way to build proper self-esteem is to learn to do something well.

Find something that you like to do and then work at it! Say to yourself, "I'll learn to play a musical instrument," or "I'll succeed in my part-time job," or "I'll learn how to play basketball as well as possible," or "I'll see how many friends I can make," or "I'll learn to be a good tennis player," or "I'll learn to be a good cook."

Don't waste time feeling sorry for yourself. Make the most out of what you have. Develop a skill that will make you feel good about yourself. Do the best you can in that particular thing. As you do, you will begin to like yourself more.

◆ **Face your problems honestly**

Get alone where you can be quiet and think. Then make a list

of all the things which you most dislike about yourself. Be honest. No one need see this except you and God.

Do people get the wrong impression of you from the way you dress? You can correct this and you should. Are you lazy and careless about your work? Do something about it! We should do all things to the glory of God. Careless, haphazard work does not bring glory to God.

Whatever your problems are, write them down so you can face them honestly. Check the ones that you can do something about. Perhaps you know an older person - someone you can trust - who could help you.

**"UNSOLVABLE PROBLEMS"**

What about the problems you have left on your list - those "unsolvable problems"? Everyone has one or more of these.

The best thing to do with your "unsolvable problems" is to give them to the Lord Jesus. Tell the Lord that you cannot handle these problems and that you are giving them to Him. Your prayer should contain these thoughts, stated in your own words:

Dear Lord Jesus, You know all about me. You know about these "unsolvable problems." I cannot handle them, so I'm turn-

ing them over to You. I'm giving myself to You and I'm giving these problems to You. From now on, I am not going to worry about these problems because I've given them to You. I'm trusting Your love and Your wisdom and Your power to make something beautiful of my life.



When you have prayed this prayer, destroy your paper as a symbol that you have turned these problems over to the Lord forever. Whenever you start to fret about these problems again, remind yourself of your decision. Tell the Lord that you have turned these problems over to Him and that you are trusting Him to handle them.



*Discovered Gem*

Accepting the values of the world leads to feelings of inferiority: accepting God's values takes away feelings of inferiority.

1. 1 Timothy 6:9
2. 1 Timothy 6:6-8
3. Romans 2:11

**MEDITATION GUIDE**

(TO STUDY AS YOU PREPARE FOR THE NEXT LESSON)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

On the following pages there is a Meditation Guide for each of the three lessons in this booklet. Each Guide has a key verse, comments, and questions that will help you to see from the Bible the main message of the lesson.

**AFTER YOU FINISH** the Question Pages, and have sent them in, we suggest that you work on the meditations. Do NOT send in your meditations. They are for you to personally use and keep.

**THE PURPOSE** of the Meditation Guide is to help you learn how to study the Bible on your own. It will help you

to think (meditate) about a portion of Scripture in order to understand it. It will help you learn how to get in touch with God through His Word and through prayer.

**MEDITATION.** What does "meditation" mean? It does not mean to let your mind go blank. Quite the contrary, meditation means that you get hold of your thoughts and bring them all together to concentrate on a portion of God's Word. As you do this, it gives the Lord an opportunity to make Himself known to you.

**PAUSE TO PRAY.** Before beginning each meditation, pause to pray, quieting your heart before the Lord so that you will be ready to hear what He has to say to you from the Bible.

If there are any words you do not understand, be sure to look them up in a dictionary.

**VERSE.** You may wish to memorize the Key Verses, or other verses found in these Meditation Guides. Memorizing Scripture is one of the best means to meditate on God's Word. It would also be very helpful in keeping before you the main truth of each lesson.

**NOTE:** The King James Bible was used in preparing these Meditation Guides.

**KEEP THIS GUIDE - DO NOT SEND IT IN**

**Lesson 4: How To Overcome Feelings of Inferiority**

**Key Verse:**

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain." I Timothy 6:6*

Open your Bible to the Key Verse, I Timothy 6:6. Underline it.

As you read this verse several times and think about its meaning, notice that there are three main words: Godliness, contentment, and gain. Make a comment about each one. (You could give a definition, or tell what each means to you.)

Godliness: \_\_\_\_\_

Contentment: \_\_\_\_\_

Gain: \_\_\_\_\_

After you finish your comments, open your Bible to Hebrews 13:5. (See the note below.) This verse tells us to be content with something. What is it?

This verse also gives us the reason that we can be content. What is it?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you contented? \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is "yes," what should be added to contentment? (See Key Verse above.)  
\_\_\_\_\_

How is this added to our lives? See Joshua 1:8 for one way. Write it down.  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you are not contented, perhaps you need to read Lesson 4 again. Write down what you need to do to overcome discontentment with yourself, or with what you have.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In prayer, thank the Lord Jesus that He is always with you and will never leave you.

**NOTE:** The King James version of the Bible was translated over 300 years ago. The meaning of some words has changed since that time. Today, the word "conversation" would be translated "behavior" or "manner of life," so that the verse would read: "Let your behavior be without covetousness."

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1. Turn to the Question Page as you finish each lesson. Fill in the answers for that lesson before going on to the next lesson.
- 2. When you have studied all the lessons and have completed the Question Pages, prepare for mailing. Don't forget to write in your name and return address. Send in your ANSWER SHEET ONLY!

**EXAM**

Lesson 4

1. Where do feelings of inferiority come from? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What three things does the world value most?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Wisdom is seeing things as \_\_\_\_\_

Does God value a person by his outward appearance? \_\_\_\_\_ By his intelligence? \_\_\_\_\_ By his wealth? \_\_\_\_\_.

4. To change the way we feel about ourselves, we must change our \_\_\_\_\_.

5. List 4 practical ways to help you overcome feelings of inferiority:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these do you think you need to work on? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Send your exam to the following address:  
**Latin Evangelical Outreach**  
 P.O. Box 549  
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