

AFFIRMATIONS

MISPERCEPTIONS AND AFFIRMATIONS

Last week, you identified *misperceptions* about the real you. This week's Reading gave deeper insight into the source of these misperceptions. They are not the random wanderings of a weak mind. Rather, they are strategically spoken lies to frustrate our growth, limit our experience of God's goodness, and minimize our impact in the world. Without question, misperceptions must be addressed.

This week, not only will you address misperceptions, but you will be guided through a thoughtful process to develop *affirmations*. An affirmation is a personalized statement, rooted in Scripture, that affirms something you know to be true in your head but may need convincing of in your heart. By developing these affirmations, you engage the process of grabbing hold of and empowering scriptural truths about the real you in life.

The development of these affirmations will start where the previous Morph Me exercises left off. For example, maybe over the last couple of weeks you discovered a pattern of anxiety in your life rather than peace. Suppose you traced this anxiety down to a pattern of people-pleasing driven by the misperception, "My worth is tied to people's approval of me." To address this misperception, you could develop an affirmation from God's perception of you. This truth might be, "God's love for me is infinite and unconditional," based on Jeremiah 31:3—*I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness*. This affirmation, then, would become something you integrate into your daily thoughts to help you "Recognize the real me" and "Fight for my life."

A few things to know before getting started:

- ▶ **Examples**—At the beginning are sample affirmations. Read these briefly to better understand affirmations.
- ▶ **Cards**—You're encouraged to create the affirmations here, but to then rewrite them on the small pages provided in the Scripture memory cards.
- ▶ **Plan**—As part of this exercise, you're encouraged to create a regular rhythm to review your affirmations. If, for example, you create an affirmation about people-pleasing, and the person you struggle with most is a boss or colleague, your plan might be to review the affirmation before any meeting with that person.

DEVELOP AFFIRMATIONS

There are four components of an Affirmation Statement.

1. **Scripture**—Affirmation Statements are rooted in Scripture. These biblical statements remind us of truths that counteract lies. Multiple passages can be included, but Affirmation Statements are meant to be brief.
2. **The Affirmation Statement**—The second aspect is the Affirmation Statement itself. This is your own personal application of the passage written in a brief and memorable statement.
3. **The Affirmation Description**—Because the Affirmation Statement is brief, it is followed by a thoughtful description. This description is taking the Scripture and the statement and personalizing it in a manner that speaks to current needs and realities.
4. **Plan**—Finally, consider when the affirmation is most applicable in your life, and plan to review the affirmation in these moments.

Follow these steps:

STEP 1: Start by reviewing the misperceptions (i.e., strongholds) that you identified through last week's Morph Me exercise. Taking one misperception/stronghold at a time, pause to ask God to direct you to Scripture that counteracts this lie, and write the Scripture in the space provided. If you do not know applicable Scriptures, consider the following:

- ▶ At the back of this exercise are lists of Scriptures associated with common areas of struggle.
- ▶ Use www.studylight.org to search for Scriptures with particular keywords.
- ▶ Ask Running Partners to help you find Scriptures.

STEP 2: Write an Affirmation Statement that expresses this biblical truth about “the real me.”

STEP 3: Write a lengthier description of your Affirmation Statement. This lengthier description is a fuller description that you might not memorize, but that you read from time to time to remind you of thoughts behind the affirmation.

Step 4: Write a plan for reviewing your affirmation. Your plan may be to review the affirmations at critical times, or it may be to simply review affirmations first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Step 5: Rewrite an abbreviated version of your affirmation in your Scripture cards notebook.

AFFIRMATIONS

**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture His divine power has given us everything we need for life and
godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his
own glory and goodness. 2 Peter 1:3

Affirmation Statement I have what I need to follow Christ.

Affirmation Description (Against stronghold: I'm not capable of following Christ.)
God has given me everything I need to follow him. I'm not enslaved to
past failures. I have what I need today. God has given me great grace.

Review Plan Review at breakfast daily

**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace
with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained
access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. Romans 5:1-2

Affirmation Statement Because God is my God, I will live peacefully today.

Affirmation Description (Against stronghold: My peace is dictated by those around me.)
God is at peace with me. Others may not be at peace with me today, but God
is the authority. If I am fully acceptable to him, then I too fully accept
myself.

Review Plan Review before team meetings at work.

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**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has
gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Affirmation Statement By God's grace, through Christ, I am whole.

Affirmation Description (Against stronghold: I am broken and unfixable.)
Past mistakes are exactly that. past. I am a new creation filled with love for
God and those around me. I will not settle for anything less. I will live in
accordance with who I truly am.

Review Plan Review when I wake up and before I go to sleep.

**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your
God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my
righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Affirmation Statement God is with me; I am not alone.

Affirmation Description (Against stronghold: I am all alone; my circumstances will overwhelm me.)
I will not be afraid of the challenges that face me today, but I will trust God
and acknowledge his presence with me today.

Review Plan Review before driving home from work.

AFFIRMATIONS

**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

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**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture

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**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT THE REAL ME**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

AFFIRMATIONS

ANXIETY LIES

ANXIETY LIES

- ▶ Lies about personal well-being
- ▶ Lies about finances and material needs
- ▶ Lies about life challenges
- ▶ Lies about phobias and fears

PASSAGES TO CONSIDER

Joshua 1:6-9

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Jeremiah 1:6-8

"Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD.

Matthew 6:25-27

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

Matthew 6:31-34

So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

2 Timothy 1:7

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

AFFIRMATIONS

PERSONAL LIES

PERSONAL LIES

- ▶ Lies about God's forgiveness
- ▶ Lies about God's purification
- ▶ Lies about God's empowerment and equipping

PASSAGES TO CONSIDER

Psalm 147:10-11

His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man; the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

Isaiah 1:18

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD.

"Though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson,
they shall be like wool."

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 8:1-2

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2 Peter 1:3

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

1 John 5:1

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

AFFIRMATIONS

TEMPTATION LIES

TEMPTATION LIES

- ▶ Lies about God's power to break habitual behavior
- ▶ Lies about personal ability to resist temptation
- ▶ Lies about what will truly make us happy

PASSAGES TO CONSIDER

Proverbs 1:10-19

My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul; let's swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common purse"— my son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths; for their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood. How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds! These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

Romans 6:13

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1 Timothy 6:9

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Hebrews 2:18

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

James 1:13-14

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

2 Peter 3:17

Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

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HARDSHIP LIES

HARDSHIP LIES

- ▶ If God loved me, this would not be happening.
- ▶ If God loved me, I would have _____.
- ▶ I cannot make it through this.
- ▶ God is not able to solve this problem. God is not really in control.

PASSAGES TO CONSIDER

Job 2:9-10

His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

Psalm 68:5

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

Isaiah 25:8

He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

Hebrews 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

1 Peter 4:12

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

Revelation 2:10

Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

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