

AFFIRMATIONS, PART II



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we asked a question.

What inhibits my trust in God?

The question is simple but weighty. To morph, to experience irreversible life change, we do not look to our own power any more than the weary traveler looks to his feet to travel cross country. Weary travelers look to a power greater than themselves, most commonly an airplane, to get them up and over the land. Likewise, we look to a power greater than ourselves to bring about a change we cannot bring on our own.

This week, we pick up where we left off with last week's Morph Me, and we develop affirmations to address the identified inhibitors of trust. By identifying and addressing these inhibitors, not only do we set ourselves up to engage God's power, but we also increase the clarity of God's voice in our lives by removing barriers that may diminish our desire to listen for his voice. Put another way, the exercise that follows gives application to two imperatives: *I must trust* and *I must walk by God's Spirit*.

With that said, an important distinction must be made.

This exercise addresses strongholds by applying truth to falsehood, but if that's all it does, it runs the risk of failing at the very truth this teaches. It's been a week (or more), but consider this paragraph from Week Four's reading:

The identification of strongholds, the development of affirmations are essential, as we just discovered. But if this is all we do, if we simply embrace the conviction that truth beats lies, we run the risk of being like the sword-swinging Israelites engaged in the battle but not entrusting the battle to God. Yes, truth beats lies, but swords also beat attacking enemies, and the Israelites would have lost if their faith had just been in their swords. To fight for our lives is much more than personal pep talks convincing ourselves we can do it, we can live well, we can think right and do good. Such tactics, unsubmitted to God, leave us naked and vulnerable before an enemy hellbent on our destruction.

With this in mind, this week's Morph Me comes in two stages. First, you will engage a thoughtful process to create affirmations that address inhibitors to trusting God and living by his Spirit. Second, you will be encouraged to engage God thoughtfully and prayerfully. As you do this, you will not only be engaging God's power in this moment, but you will be talking with God about future moments and how you can apply the affirmations you have developed. With these two steps, the arming of truth and the engagement of God's power, there's no limit to what God could do.

FIRST STAGE DEVELOP AFFIRMATIONS

This week, you will create affirmations similar to those you created in Week Three. Then, you affirmed biblical truths that address misperceptions about the real you; now, you will affirm biblical truths that address inhibitors to your trust in God. If, for example, in Week Four you identified self-sufficiency as an inhibitor to trust in your life, then you might develop an affirmation around 2 Corinthians 12:9, “*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*”

STEP 1: Turn to page 115 where you listed identified inhibitors, and repeat these below. If you have identified other inhibitors in your life since last week’s exercise, write these below as well.

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STEP 2: Ask God to direct you to Scriptures that address these inhibitors. Write the Scriptures on the affirmation pages that follow.

This step may not come quickly or easily. A few suggestions...

- Sit prayerfully in God’s presence and ask for his guidance.
- The pages at the end of this exercise offer a partial list of passages associated with the six common inhibitors discussed in Week Four (self-sufficiency, self-abasement, misperceptions about God, complacency, woundedness, and cynicism).
- Ask Running Partners for insight.
- Use www.studylight.org to search for passages with particular key words.

STEP 3: Write affirmation statements that express these biblical truths that encourage trust in God. Write them in a way that is personalized to the area you are addressing in your life.

STEP 4: Write a lengthier description of your affirmation statement and a plan for review. Use this space to give supporting thoughts and ideas that will strengthen your thinking. Your plan may be to review the affirmations at critical times, or it may be to simply review first thing and last thing of every day.

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

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SAMPLE AFFIRMATION ABOUT TRUST

Scripture In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the
plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose
of his will. Ephesians 1:11

Affirmation Statement God is in control.

Affirmation Description What is happening in my life right now is not a shock to God. He knew
this would happen even before I was born, and he is able to make his
good will come out of the situation.

Review Plan Review before starting my car and meditate on as I drive to work.

SAMPLE AFFIRMATION ABOUT TRUST

Scripture In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in
all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith... may be proved genuine and
may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1 Peter 1:6-7

Affirmation Statement God sees and cares about my situation, and my suffering is not in vain.

Affirmation Description God has not forgotten me or turned a blind-eye to my pain. He knows what I
am experiencing, and he is even using these difficulties for my own good—to
grow me spiritually and to bring about good even in ways that I cannot yet
understand.

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

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**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should
change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise
and not fulfill? Numbers 23:19

Affirmation Statement God is faithful to keep his promises.

Affirmation Description God will be faithful to keep his promise to me that I will never be
forsaken. He will protect me and provide for me in this challenging
financial season.

Review Plan Review before and after paying bills.

**SAMPLE AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture For you, O Lord, are the Most High over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.
Psalms 97:9

Affirmation Statement God is bigger than my gods.

Affirmation Description I will no longer put my trust in gods that cannot sustain me, but I will
put my trust in God, who is the most powerful being in all of creation
and who is supremely able to meet all of my needs.

Review Plan Review at the beginning of each day.

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**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

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**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

**AFFIRMATION
ABOUT TRUST**

Scripture

**Affirmation
Statement**

**Affirmation
Description**

Review Plan

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SECOND STAGE TALK TO GOD

In the final stage of this exercise, talk to God about the affirmations you just created. Ask him to bring to mind anticipated scenarios in which you'll likely need to lean into these truths and trust God in the near future. Ask for wisdom about what it would look like for you to actively trust him in these situations. Listen for the Spirit's voice and guidance as you pray. Resist the temptation to rush this final stage. Developing the affirmations is important, but we must now genuinely entrust these to God and thoughtfully prepare ourselves for those moments we square off with temptation.

Use the space below to record thoughts and insights.



SCRIPTURES

ADDRESSING INHIBITORS TO TRUST

These Scriptures are meant to guide, but not limit, your meditation. Feel free to search Scripture for other applicable verses.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Deuteronomy 8:17-18, You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Psalms 139:2-4, You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

Isaiah 55:8-9, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Proverbs 2:6, For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Job 37:23, The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress.

2 Samuel 22:28, You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low.

Psalms 18:27, You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty.

Isaiah 66:2, "Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."

Luke 1:52, He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

1 Corinthians 4:7, For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

James 4:10, Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

SELF-ABASEMENT

2 Corinthians 10:5, We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Jeremiah 32:17, Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.

Luke 18:27, Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Ephesians 1:11, In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

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.

Ephesians 1:3-4, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

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Ephesians 3:17-19, And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

1 John 3:1, How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

MISPERCEPTIONS OF GOD

Hebrews 13:8, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Colossians 1:16-17, For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

1 Kings 19:11-13, Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Psalms 23:4, Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Nehemiah 9:17, But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.

Psalms 147:5, Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

Psalms 86:15, But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Isaiah 43:13, Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?

Jeremiah 31:3, The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”

Psalms 139:7-10, Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Joel 2:13, Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Zechariah 9:9, Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Romans 11:33, Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

Jeremiah 10:10, But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

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Psalm 89:14, Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Numbers 23:19, God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Matthew 11:29, Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Ephesians 2:4-5, But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

1 John 3:1, How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

2 Peter 3:9, The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Psalm 33:4, For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

COMPLACENCY

Proverbs 13:4, The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.

Proverbs 20:4, A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing.

Proverbs 21:25, The sluggard's craving will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work.

Proverbs 22:13, The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!" or, "I will be murdered in the streets!"

2 Thessalonians 3:13, And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

Ephesians 5:15-16, Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Colossians 4:2, Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 1:13, Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Psalm 96:9, Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.

Psalm 99:5, Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy.

Romans 2:6, God will give to each person according to what he has done.

WOUNDEDNESS

Jeremiah 31:3, I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.

Zephaniah 3:17, The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.

Romans 8:35-39, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than

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conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

I Peter 1:6-7, In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

I Peter 4:12-13, Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

I Peter 5:10, And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

John 16:33, I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

CYNICISM

***Important Note: The passages that follow address cynicism, but they do not adequately address cynicism that results from understandable sources. As described in the Week Four Morph Me, cynicism may result from warped experiences with religion or households that use God as a club. For that form of cynicism, passages listed above under *Misperceptions about God* may be a better fit. The passages below address cynical dispositions that need to be confronted.

Joshua 1:9, 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.

Numbers 14:27, How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites.

Proverbs 19:3, A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the LORD.

I Corinthians 10:10, And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

Philippians 2:14-15, Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.

Philippians 4:4, Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

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

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Week 5, Morph Me, p. 144