

## CS5. Overcoming the Victim Mentality

### Sons of God are Not Victims

#### I. Introduction

##### 1. God created us to be image bearers

○ *Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion*

- ▪ *•“Image” ....to resemble, to be similar to in resemblance or qualities*
- ▪ *•Man was created as an image bearer of God, to act as His representative, or ambassador in the physical realm and to extend His Kingdom and dominion*
- ▪ *•You are designed to be a son of God who represents your Heavenly Father*

##### 2. Image bearers Embrace Responsibility

- ○ **Responsibility is a key part of being Image Bearers of God**
  - ▪ *•After creating Adam the first action of God was to give Adam responsibility*
  - ▪ *•“ Let them have **dominion**” (Gen.1:26)*
  - ▪ *•Gen 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to **tend and keep it.***
  - ▪ *•The original man Adam was given personal responsibility, an assignment or work to do*
  - ▪ *•He was given responsibility for dominion over, care for and protection of the Garden of Eden*
  - ▪ *•He was also responsible to protect and cultivate His relationship with God and with his wife*
- ○ **Assuming responsibility is essential to**
  - Being a representative of God, a true Son
- ▪ Growing to maturity
- ▪ Living in Freedom
- ○ **God also gave Adam opportunity to be responsible for his failure and putting it right**
  - ▪ *•Gen 3:11b Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"*

This is a “Yes” or “No” question

- ▪ *•Adam chose to avoid responsibility, act as a victim, and blame both Eve and God for his own choice*
- ▪ *•Gen 3:12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."*
- ▪ *•Adam’s sin caused man to lose his relationship and blessing and authority*

- ▪ •When we fail to assume God given responsibility and act as a victim blaming others, we will experience consequences of our choices
- ○ **God Himself took responsibility for resolving the issue of the sin of mankind**
  - ▪ •God sent Jesus to purchase freedom...freedom from sin, curses, oppression, sickness,
  - ▪ •Jesus came to restore our true identity...

An overcoming Child and Representative of God in the earth

## II. **What is a Victim Identity?**

### 1. **A Victim**

- **A Victim is a person that has been subjected to real or perceived oppression, abuse, hardships or mistreatment, injustice**
  - ▪ •He may not have been responsible in any way for his injustice and suffering
  - ▪ •People who have been victimised by others often develop a victim mentality or mindset

### 2. **A Victim Mentality**

- ○ **A Victim Mentality is a mindset or habitual way of thinking about self.**
  - A Victim Mentality is a spiritual stronghold
  - The person sees themselves as powerless, subject to oppression and victimisation by people and circumstances.
- ○ **A person with a Victim Mentality chooses to refuse responsibility.**
- ▪ He will not take responsibility for his condition and choices
  - ▪ •He blames others for his condition
  - ▪ •He makes excuses constantly for his condition and circumstances
  - ▪ •His life and relationships are in constant turmoil and conflict
  - ▪ •He reacts to life's difficulties with "It's not my fault"
  - ▪ •People who see themselves as victims make a conscious choice to shift the blame and to take offense
- ○ **The Victim Mentality looks for two other people:**
  - Someone to Blame: The Bad Guy (My Persecutor)...

*"They are responsible for my suffering".....Its all your fault!"*

- Someone to Rescue: The Good Guy (My Rescuer)

*"They are responsible to solve my problems"....."You need to come through for me"*

### 3. **A Victim Identity**

- ○ **Being a victim becomes their identity, their way of viewing themselves, their life and relationships**
- ○ *This is who I am....I am the person who was wronged, treated unjustly, abused*
- ○ *Pro 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he*
- ○ **They have exchanged the Image of God for a substitute.....a Victim**
  - All of their relationships are viewed through the filter of being a victim
  - *"People and life always treat me badly"*
  - *"What's the use of eleven trying"*
  - *"I never seem to get a break"*
- ○ Victim Thinking causes powerlessness and deep feelings of injustice and anger and bitterness

### III. **What are the Root Causes of Victim Identity**

#### 1. The person has experienced injustice and bad treatment

**Most likely none of this is their fault and they have not resolved the pain.**

- ○ **Examples:**
  - Generational family patterns
  - Past Trauma experiences...abandonment, rejection, abuse
  - Repeated emotional pain
  - Injustice experiences, especially with authority figures
  - Betrayal by someone close
  - Codependency...taking on responsibilities that belong to others
  - Control: Living under the control or domination of another person
- ▪ Fear or unwillingness to acknowledge and process pain
- ○ **Its always a personal choice in response to painful life experiences**

#### 2. **Victim Ideology**

- ○ Victim Identity can become part of a whole culture...an accepted way of thinking, an ideology
- ○ Ideology: A set or system of theories and beliefs held by an individual or group
- Ideology is a set of beliefs so strongly held by their adherents as to cause them to ignore evidence against such beliefs, and thus fall into error .
- ○ Victim Ideology leaves people open and vulnerable to being manipulated and exploited
  - ▪ •Education systems, media, ideological movements, and governments can promote the acceptance of a Victim Identity
  - ▪ •*"You are a victim. You are powerless. Someone else is to blame for your condition"*
- ○ **Eg. Politics:**

- ■ •The Left: Society becomes better by Government imposing centralised power to force “fairness” , “equity” and “justice” upon people.  
“Big Government is the answer. Let us be Responsible for you”
- ■ •The Right:  
Society becomes better by individuals becoming more responsible.  
“ Less Government is the answer. Be responsible for yourself. Become Responsible”
- ○ **Eg. Identity Politics**
  - ■ •This is a current ideology that places people into groups based upon victim status
  - ■ •Those who promote identity politics want to see themselves or the people they claim to represent as part of a discriminated minority
  - ■ •They believe that the basis for a person’s identity is their membership of a “ disadvantaged” minority group
  - ■ •They assert that no individual’s personal situation can improve by individual responsibility and striving for achievement. They are powerless to change
  - ■ •Improvement can only take place by fighting at a political level to secure preferential rights for their “disadvantaged group”
- ○ **Eg. Ideological Movements**
  - Black Lives Matter is built upon a Marxist or Communist ideology that emphasises Victim Identity and divides society into two classes of people ... The Oppressed who are the Victims and The Oppressors who are the cause of their suffering
    - ■ •The Oppressors or Persecutors are varied:  
Eg. Jews, White People, Rich People, Christians, Straight People,
    - ■ •Hatred against the oppressors are actively stirred up by media and advocates of Victim Culture. They exploit people who have suffered injustice
    - ■ •The solution offered is for the oppressed to overcome and silence their oppressors and impose by force their beliefs upon others using all means possible  
Eg Labels (Racist, Haters), Rejection (Cancel), Violence (Riots), Laws (Penalties)
- ○ **Victim Mentality, Identity and Culture is totally opposed to Kingdom Values**
  - ■ •When a Victim Culture is promoted the society divides and is destroyed from within
  - ■ •Christians must understand and embrace personal responsibility and freedom

#### IV. What are the Characteristics of a Victim Identity?

##### 1. Bitterness

- They Harbour deep unresolved offences in the heart
- They are angry at how they have been treated
- They harbour resentment at how they have been treated

- They are also resentful at those who seem happy and successful
- There is a bitter expectation of being further taken advantage of
- This attracts more experiences of being treated unjustly
- This filters how I interpret life experiences..."I interpret them as a further victimisation"
- In reality, I am judging incorrectly and reaping the painful consequences
- Bitterness manifests as blaming and complaining

## 2. **Self Pity**

- They dwell on their injustices and feel sorry for themselves
  - They would rather wallow in self pity than make changes
  - ▪ They experience loneliness and depression
  - ▪ They gravitate to others who hold offences and injustice because this fuels their buried feelings
  - ▪ They can't help telling them their story of being treated unjustly
  - ▪ They seek to gain agreement with their narrative of injustice so they can justify their anger and bitterness
  - ▪ Their relationships are unhealthy and dysfunctional

## 3. **Negative Self Talk**

The victim mentality rests on three key beliefs:

- Bad things happen and will keep happening.
- Other people or circumstances are to blame.
- Any efforts to create change will fail, so there's no point in trying.

People living with a victim mentality take personally all negative experiences

- *"Bad things always happen to me"*
- *"I can't do anything about it"*
- *"What can I do about it?" Why try?"*
- *"No one cares about me"*

Each new difficulty reinforces the inner heart beliefs and bitterness

This leads to frustration, resentment, loneliness, hopelessness and depression

People who hold a Victim Mentality are constantly critical of others

## 4. **Entitlement**

- They believe they are entitled or have rights because of the injustice and abuse they have suffered.

- ■ They bury themselves in work or false forms of comfort...alcohol, drugs, media relationships with  
*"I deserve this'...I'm entitled to this"..."this is my right"*
- ■ They avoid or refuse to take personal responsibility for their life as the consequences of being irresponsible.  
*"It's not my fault"*
- ■ They view consequences as another form of being victimised, not connected to their choices
- ■ They blame others for their suffering.  
*"It's all their fault I am like this"*  
*"I need this to make me feel better, to cope"*  
By doing this they become disempowered and unable to change
- ■ They refuse to be accountable for personal change *"Why should I have to do this?"*
- ■ They expect someone else to take responsibility to rescue or help them  
*"You should be doing something about this!"*

**Note:**

- ○ **The victim identity is empowered by the pain of unresolved injustice, unforgiveness and bitterness**
  - ■ To maintain the Victim Identity, the person refuses to take responsibility to engage and resolve the root causes of that identity, their pain, injustice, anger and bitterness
  - ■ The Victim Identity becomes an idol that imprisons and torments them
  - ■ They are resisting the purpose and grace of God in their life and grieving the

Holy Spirit

- ○ **They are bearing the image of a victim rather than the image of God**
- ○ **They are resisting God's Sonship purpose and design for them**

V. **How to be Free of Victim Mentality ?**

1. **We must abandon and reject the identity of being "The Wronged One"**

- We must abandon our focus off the people who wronged us, and the injustice experienced
- We must face the unresolved pain and take responsibility to resolve it through forgiveness and repentance

2. **We must Choose our God given identity as a Son and Overcomer...a Victor**

3. **■ God our Father is the source of our identity**

- ■ "Victor" .....One who defeats an enemy in a battle
- ■ *-Rom 8:37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*

#### 4. Examples: (All through the Bible)

- Joseph
- Jephthah
- Israel....the Victim Identity was the first issue the Lord challenged them to change
  
- Jesus

#### 5. Bartimeaus is Healed :

- He refused to remain a Victim

**Faith enabled him to see a different possible future, no longer a victim**

*Mar 10:47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

- ▪ **•He chose to believe who Jesus was and Jesus power to transform Him**  
**He chose Faith over Unbelief**  
*Mar 10:47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*
- ▪ **•He refused to be silenced by the crowd and further victimised**  
**He chose Faith over Victimhood**  
*Mar 10:48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*
- ▪ **•He arose and threw off his cloak, the symbol of his Victim Identity**  
**He chose Faith over Bitterness, Self Pity and Entitlement**  
**Mar 10:50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.**
- ▪ **•What do you want?**  
**He stated clearly his desire to be free of blindness the cause of his sorrow**
- *Mar 10:51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*
- ▪ **•What story will you tell?**
- ▪ **•Will your narrative be your injustice? or your testimony of breakthrough?**  
  
*Mar 10:51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."*
- ▪ **•He received a miracle...a transformed life and followed Jesus**  
**He chose the Possible over the Impossible**  
**Mar 10:52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has**

*made you well."And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.*

- ▪ •To follow Jesus is to embrace our identity as an Image bearer of God
- ▪ •We choose responsibility for our life and future
- ▪ •We choose to believe God and His power to transform our life

## **VI. Keys to Freedom from Victim Identity**

1. **Recognise your condition, & also the painful consequences of refusal to change**
2. **Responsibility...** commit to resolve past personal pain and injustice and to change Become Accountable for personal change
3. **Resolve** core pain from longstanding Offences and Injustice
  - Identify the real or perceived sources of feeling or being victimised and powerless
    - ▪ •Acknowledge the events and the personal pain experienced through journaling
    - ▪ •Release the pain and injustice to the cross
    - ▪ •Receive comfort from the Holy Spirit
4. **Release** Forgiveness from heart
  - Speak words and release forgiveness from the heart to each offender, each experience
  - Choose to bless people whose actions were the source of the pain
5. **Repent** of Heart Reactions and Defences to pain ▪ Anger,
  - Bitterness,
  - Bitter judgments
  - Inner vows
  - Self pity,
  - Rebellion
  - Resisting God,
  - Choosing victim identity
6. **Break agreement victim identity**
  - Speak words to break that agreement and the idolatry of it
  - Speak words to agree with the new identity in Christ as an overcoming Child of God
7. **Choose to become image bearer**
  - Rom.8:29 Daily yield to be Conformed to Christ

## **VII. Daily Journal**

1. Practice identifying and articulating feelings

2. Practice identifying and articulating needs.
3. Practice establishing new healthy boundaries to resist further mistreatment
4. **Change your personal internal narrative- focus**
  - Away from external issues
  - No longer what others did or how hurt, being a victim
  - Identify personal feelings and needs and respond in godly way
  - Comfort self in Lord
5. Faith confessions daily to declare what God says about your identity
6. Meditation on the Word of God regarding your identity and strength in Christ