

Steps To Freedom

Tearing Down The Barrier Of Condemnation

The survey questions correspond with the following:

1. **ASK:** (Survey question 1)

- Ask God to break the lie of condemnation over your life. (James 4:4, 2 Corinthians 10:5)

1. **BIBLICAL TRUTH:** (Survey questions 18, 20)

For many, knowing the truth about condemnation will set you free.

- Meditate on key New Testament verses: Romans 8:1,15,16,31, 33-39, John 1:12-13, Ephesians 1:3-14, Philippians 1:6, 2:13, 1 John 3:1, 4:18, 5:13. Cross-reference for other verses.
- Using a concordance, study the word “beloved”—a title of endearment applied to all believers.
- Look for verses that show God’s father-like heart: Isaiah 49:14-16a, Psalm 103:8-14.

2. **HONEST PRAYERS:** (Survey questions 1, 2, 17) Be real as you talk to God. Many of God’s “friends,” spoke candidly with Him.

- Check out Moses in Exodus 33, David in Psalm 51, Job in chapter 10.

4. **START A PRAYER JOURNAL:** (Survey questions 1, 4) A prayer journal is a faith-building document, chronicling a two-way connection with the living God.

- Pray specific instead of general prayers.
- Write down and date your request.

- Expect answers and record them as they come.

5. GET REAL ABOUT SIN: (Survey questions 3, 9) If you have an area of continual sin in your life, it is likely you under the feeling of condemnation.

- Bring sin into the light by confessing it to another. (1 John 1:7)
- Asking for help and accountability often brings the victory.
- Apart from blaspheming the Holy Spirit, Jesus says God will forgive all our sins.
(Mark 3:28-29)

6. IDENTIFY FORMS OF PENANCE: (Survey questions 5,6,15)

- Give up making “deals” with God, such as “New Year’s resolutions,” sacrifices at Lent and even fasting if it’s motivated by guilt, shame or fear.
- Acts of religious duty are often a form of penance.

7. INTENTIONAL FORGIVENESS: (Survey questions 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17)

Forgiving others is an essential component in dismantling the stranglehold of condemnation over your life. Those who have hurt you may not apologize, might not change, and could hurt you again, but God tells us to forgive because He has forgiven us.

(Matt.18: 23-35) Work on forgiving your parents first:

- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance specific incidents and overall themes of how you were hurt. Write it down. You may be hurt by what you didn’t receive but needed from your parents. The Holy Spirit is the best counselor and knows what is pertinent.
- Share your notes with a trusted person. Speak forgiveness out loud over each item saying, “This hurt me, but I choose to forgive them.” You may grieve in the process, but this is good and it leads to freedom.

- Repent of any judgments you made against your parents (“Dad is a jerk”) and pray a blessing over them.
- Forgive others who hurt you—siblings, extended family, friends, employers, teachers etc.
- A hidden rift with God can also keep you in the lie of condemnation. Write down your specific grievances against God, confess it to another and together, ask God to increase your faith.

8. SEEK UNCONDITIONAL LOVE: (Survey questions 7, 8, 10)

- Ask your pastor to recommend a small Bible study or home group where you can experience safe and loving relationships.
- If you were a victim of parental emotional abuse (“You won’t amount to anything!” “You’re stupid!”), you may need professional help.

9. EXPOSE PERFECTIONISM: (Survey questions 11, 14, 15) Perfectionist

tendencies can be a manifestation of condemnation. If you were raised in a family with high performance standards or expectations and parents who seemed perfect, you are at risk.

- Accept that your life is a process. Spiritual maturity and character development take time. God loves you from the beginning to the end.
- With the help of others, identify overbearing actions and agree to change.
- Start a new spiritual discipline: turn every critical thought into a positive prayer.

10. STOP BEING A SCAPEGOAT: (Survey question 12) Do you accept blame that is not yours? Do you say, “I’m sorry,” every few sentences?

- Ask God for discernment: what is your fault, and what isn't?
- Let your apologies be *specific* instead of general. No more—"It's all my fault."
- Set a boundary with guilt. When appropriate, learn to say, "This is not my responsibility."

11. **BECOME A "RECOVERING MARTHA":** (Survey questions 13,14, 19) Do you always volunteer at church, feel over-extended in commitments, and have endless "To Do" lists? Do you stay up late, wake up early, hit the floor running and always run late? You may be a practicing Martha. (Luke 10:38-42) Sometimes the driving force behind a Martha-like lifestyle is condemnation—striving for approval from God.

- 1 Make a daily priority of spending time with God. He wants your company, not your works.
- 2 Take a sabbatical from all unnecessary commitments. Let life slow down.
- 3 Pray, ask and wait on God before saying, "yes" to new commitments. When God says "yes," it bears fruit. (John 21:3-6)