

ENTITLED

BEGIN EACH DAY by inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to you and guide you into truth. Consider lighting a candle to represent the presence of God's Spirit.

DAY 1 Do I want to follow Jesus?

READ Mark 10:17-22. Jesus saw the man and loved him. He saw the thing destroying his soul and beckoned the young man to get rid of it and follow Him. Jesus has no tenderness whatsoever toward anything that can ultimately ruin us. An attitude or sense of entitlement will ultimately destroy and drive us away from God and His healing. Just as diagnosing a medical condition often begins by recognizing/identifying symptoms, we may first need to become aware of the symptoms and/or fruit produced by an attitude or sense of entitlement. It's easy to see it in others and in our culture and thereby dismiss the warning signs within our own hearts. Let that not be our case. The work of identifying and dealing with entitlement attitudes is heart-level work. NOTE: Allow time to work through the devo by yourself. Once you've done the heart-level work alone it's important to share with your community (your small group or someone close to you) for encouragement, prayer, and accountability.

PRAY: Father, open my heart to receive Your wisdom and truth. Bring to light the things so carefully hidden in darkness. Give me courage and strength to do the hard work of rooting out the attitude of entitlement within my heart. Help me see the symptoms of entitlement in light of Your perspective and to recognize the destruction they bring to my life. Grip me by Your power and transform my life beginning today.

DAY 2

READ James 1:5. **Fruit of Loss of Empathy ~ An Epidemic of Selfishness**
Prayerfully consider the symptoms of entitlement. Ask yourself if these attitudes/behaviors are true for you. **Are seeds at work in your heart? Do you find yourself rationalizing why these don't apply to you?** Practice provoking your mind to think through what it accepts and dismisses too easily. Resist the urge to think of someone else. Keep bringing your focus back to your own heart. Journal your thoughts as you work through each symptom and fruit of entitlement throughout the week.

LOSS OF EMPATHY - losing the capacity to understand, identify with, or experience the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of someone else, especially those different from us.

- **Inability to listen** - believing that yours is the only right answer and/or opinion and there's no need for another's input.
- **Certainty** - moves the belief of being right to self-righteousness and pride, feeding the arrogant attitude, "Others need to learn from me." It steals our ability to learn and grow.
- **Isolation and Division** - drives us to divisive situations and behaviors; we continually experience relationship crisis, strife, and "drama."
- **Cruelty** - we lose compassion and have an attitude that others get what "they deserve."

AN EPIDEMIC OF SELFISHNESS to the point of narcissism

- believing we're entitled because our situation is special, unique; we're deserving.
- devoted to our care, our interests, our benefits, our welfare... regardless of others.
- creates a warped perspective of reality in which everything is filtered by how it affects us.
- drastically inhibits our ability to see the value in others' worth and/or contribution.

DAY 3

READ Matthew 16:24. **A Pattern of Disappointment ~ A Lifestyle of Resentment**
Refer to Day 1's thoughts/considerations as you read through the symptoms each day.

A PATTERN OF DISAPPOINTMENT

- perpetual disappointment with others, how they've failed us, betrayed us, and not lived up to our entitled expectations.
- disappointment with life in general, our jobs, our circumstances, our future, our past.
- disappointment with God - what He hasn't done, should do, or how He acted/failed to act.
- expectation of disappointment to the point of self-pity; focusing on what we don't have leaving us continually dissatisfied.

A LIFESTYLE OF RESENTMENT

- **Victim mentality** - believing it isn't fair and/or it's not my fault.
- **Jealousy** and the inability to celebrate blessings in the life of others.
- **Judgment** and self-righteousness; finding fault in others; tearing down or putting others in their place.
- **Ingratitude** - the presumption that you haven't been given enough, recognized enough, or appreciated as you should be, feeding an underlying sense you deserve much more.
- **Cynicism, ridicule, and contempt**

DAY 4

READ Psalm 19:7-9. **A Culture of Idolatry ~ An Attitude of Apathy**

A CULTURE OF IDOLATRY - GREED

- increasing debt and financial ruin - I shouldn't have to wait to get things I want (things to make me happy which I deserve now); purchases become a matter of "monthly payments" instead of the realization of actual cost.
- physical ruin - focus on physical desires, patterns of over-indulgences (food, alcohol, etc.), obsession with physical appearance, fitness, working too much or too little.
- loss of generosity - over-extended emotionally, physically, and financially which leaves us with nothing to give; lack of generosity born of fear of not having enough for ourselves.

AN ATTITUDE OF APATHY

- **Indifference** - "I-don't-care" mentality - "Whatever."
- **Loss of motivation** - no desire or passion, lack of involvement, resulting in missed opportunities and wasted potential
- **Laziness** - mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually complacent, boredom
- **Depression** - despondency, hopelessness, anger, suicide

DAY 5

READ Mark 10:17-22 again. Then **READ** John 6:60-69.
Upon hearing a difficult teaching from Jesus, many disciples, much like the man in the verses from Mark, turned back from following Jesus. This has been a week of hard teaching. Read what you've written in your journal throughout the week and what the Holy Spirit has revealed. Use the **PICTURE IT** Bible study method and imagine coming to Jesus as the man asking "What must I do for eternal life?" **What has Jesus identified in your heart that must be dealt with? Which entitlement attitudes have been revealed in your own heart this week? What's your response? See how Simon Peter responded to Jesus' question (John 6:68-69). Where else can we go?**

PRAY: Lord Jesus, where else can we go? You and You alone are the Holy One of God. You alone are the hope for the world and for the brokenness in our own hearts. May we find the strength to lay aside the entitlement attitudes and the resulting ruin they bring into our hearts and lives. Help us take Your teaching and recognize their eternal wisdom.

November 10/11, 2012