

Dear Friends:

We are glad you have joined us for our Victory Over the Darkness Video Series. Thank you for taking the time to let me share my life and experience with you. It is my firm conviction that our identity and position in Christ are the only foundation that can free us from our past and enable us to live a meaningful life.

We will be discussing who God is and who we are in Christ, how we walk by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, and why we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We will talk about our emotional life and how to resolve the emotional consequences of past experiences. We will also look at how we are to relate to one another in love and forgiveness.

It is my desire that Christians will experience the freedom that Christ purchased for them and live productive, fruitful lives.

My prayer for you as you go through this series is that God will richly bless you through His Son, Jesus Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Neil", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Neil T. Anderson

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A. False Equations in Search of Identity and Meaning**B. Lost in the Fall**1. First Adam (*original creation*—see next page)

“Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen. 2:7).

- a. Physical Life (*Bios*)—Our soul/spirit is in union with our body. To die physically is separation of the soul/spirit and body.
- b. Spiritual Life (*Zoa*)—Our soul/spirit is in union with God. To be spiritually dead is to be separated from God (Eph. 2:1). For the Christian to be spiritually alive is to be “in Christ” or “born again” (spiritually).

The Search for Identity and Meaning

Learning Objective:

To fully understand the Gospel message of who we are in Christ in order that we may live as children of God.

ORIGINAL CREATION: Genesis 1, 2**Significant** (Gn. 1:28)

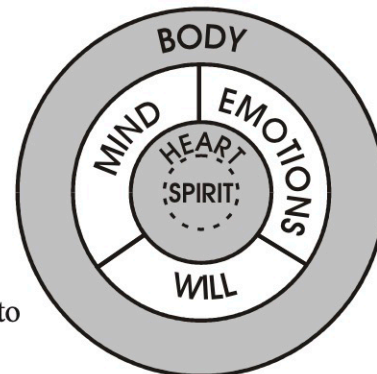
Mankind had a divine purpose.

Safe and Secure (Gn. 1:29f.)

All of mankind's needs were provided.

Belonged (Gn. 2:18f.)

Mankind had a sense of identity and belonging to God and each other.



Notes

Sinful behavior is the result of fallen humanity attempting to meet their own needs without Christ. The essence of sin is man living independently of God.

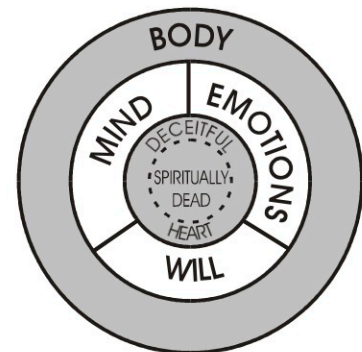
What Adam and Eve lost was “life,” not physical life immediately, but spiritual life that was characterized by a living, vital, dependent relationship with God. The essence of Adam’s fall was his deliberate breaking of his intimate relationship with God. Sin can only be understood in terms of man’s relationship to God and His will.

EFFECTS OF THE FALL: Genesis 3:8-4:9

Rejection: therefore, a need to belong!

Guilt and Shame: therefore, a need of acceptance and affirmation!

Weak and Helpless: therefore, a need for strength and self-control!



2. The Effects of the Fall

3. Last Adam

The last Adam, Jesus, was also born physically and spiritually alive. This was possible because He was born of a virgin.

C. What did Jesus come to do?

1. He modeled how to live (Jn. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21). The essence of His life was all that He did—His word, His works, His entire life—came from His Father. His was a totally dependent life.

2. He came to die for our sins and give us life.

The Apostle Paul said “for me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). Spiritual “life” is recovered in Christ.

3. He came to destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8).

Notes

D. Life Determines Identity

A Christian is not simply a person who gets forgiveness, who gets to go to heaven, who gets the Holy Spirit, who gets a new nature. Being a Christian is not just *getting something*; it is *being someone*.

A Christian, in terms of his deepest identity, is a saint, a child born of God, a divine masterpiece, a child of light, a citizen of heaven.

E. The Whole Gospel

If you wanted to save a dead man, you would have to do two things:

- a. First, cure the disease that caused him to die (Rom. 6:23a).
- b. Second, give him life (Rom. 6:23b).

It is not what we do that determines our identity; it is who we are and how we perceive ourselves that determines what we do.

Who Am I?

Matt. 5:13	I am the salt of the earth.
Matt. 5:14	I am the light of the world.
John 1:12	I am a child of God (part of His family). (See Rom. 8:16.)
John 15:1,5	I am part of the true vine, a channel (branch) of Christ's life.
John 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
John 15:16	I am chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit.
Rom. 6:18	I am a slave of righteousness.
Rom. 6:22	I am enslaved to God.
Rom. 8:14,15	I am a son of God (God is spiritually my Father) (see Gal. 3:26; 4:6).
Rom. 8:17	I am a joint-heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him.
1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19	I am a temple (home) of God. His Spirit (His life) dwells in me.
1 Cor. 6:17	I am joined (united) to the Lord and am one spirit with Him.
1 Cor. 12:27	I am a member (part) of Christ's body. (See Eph. 5:30.)
2 Cor. 5:17	I am a new creation (new person).
2 Cor. 5:18,19	I am reconciled to God and am a minister of reconciliation.
Gal. 3:26, 28	I am a son of God and one in Christ.
Gal. 4:6,7	I am an heir of God since I am a son of God.
Eph. 1:1	I am a saint. (See 1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; and Col. 1:2.)
Eph. 2:10	I am God's workmanship (handiwork), created (born anew) in Christ to do His work that He planned beforehand that I should do.
Eph. 2:19	I am a fellow citizen with the rest of God's people in His family.
Eph. 3:1; 4:1	I am a prisoner of Christ.
Eph. 4:24	I am righteous and holy.
Phil. 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven and seated in heaven right now (see Eph. 2:6).
Col. 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God.
Col. 3:4	I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life.
Col. 3:12	I am chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved.
1 Thess. 1:4	I am chosen and dearly loved by God.
1 Thess. 5:5	I am a son of light and not of darkness.
Heb. 3:1	I am a holy brother, partaker of a heavenly calling.
Heb. 3:14	I am a partaker of Christ . . . I share in His life.
1 Pet. 2:5	I am one of God's living stones and am being built up (in Christ) as a spiritual house.
1 Pet. 2:9,10	I am a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession to proclaim the excellencies of Him.
1 Pet. 2:11	I am an alien and stranger to this world in which I temporarily live.
1 Pet. 5:8	I am an enemy of the devil.
1 John 3:1,2	I am now a child of God. I will resemble Christ when He returns.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God and the evil one (the devil) cannot touch me.

**I am not the great "I AM" (Exod. 3:14; John 8:24,28,58), "but by the grace of God
I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).**

God is a Spirit: infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

Westminster Shorter Catechism

There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute.

Westminster Confession of Faith

“You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13).

“I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord” (Phil. 3:8).

Knowing God

Learning Objective:

To understand how we can know God in a personal way and relate to Him intimately.

The following defines four levels of intimacy with God:

A. Outer Level of Intimacy (Exod. 19:9-20; 20:18-21).

1. Preferred a second-hand experience or relationship with God.
2. Their orientation toward God was to avoid punishment.
3. They had a distorted concept of God.

We can know all about God and not know Him at all. The process of knowing God is not just an intellectual exercise; it is a personal encounter with our Creator.

Loving and Caring
Good and Merciful
Steadfast and Reliable
Unconditional Grace
Present and Available
Giver of Good Gifts
Nurturing and Affirming
Accepting
Just, Fair and Impartial

Truth about God is filtered through the grid of:

1. Ignorance
2. False prophets and teachers
3. Blasphemous mental thoughts
4. Unhealthy interpersonal relationships during early developmental years
5. Negative Role model of authority figures--especially parents

Hateful and Unconcerned
Mean and Unforgiving
Unpredictable and Untrustworthy
Conditional Approval
Absent When Needed
Takes Away, “Kill Joy”
Critical and Unpleasable
Rejecting
Unjust, Unfair, Partial

Notes

B. Third Level of Intimacy (Exod. 24:9-11)

People at this level of intimacy have had a very personal encounter with God; however, they soon tire of waiting upon the Lord.

C. Second Level of Intimacy (Exod. 24:12-14)

Only Joshua continued climbing the mountain of God with Moses. When the religious services were over, the others would depart, but Joshua “would not depart from the tent” (Exod. 33:11). Example of Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2):

D. The Ultimate Level of Intimacy (Exod. 33:11)

1. “Moses was more humble than any man who was on the face of the earth” (Num. 12:3).
2. Moses was free from selfish ambition (Exod. 32:9-14).
3. Moses had the right goal, which was to know God and His ways (Exod. 33:12-14). Note: Biblical rest is not a cessation of labor or abdication of responsibility. It is knowing God’s ways and living that way with the assurance of His presence.
4. Moses desired to see God’s glory (Exod. 33:18).

Since the Fall of man, everybody is born into this world physically alive but spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). Having no relationship with God, we progress through these developmental years learning to survive without Him. Defense mechanisms are developed as we learn how to cope, relate and hopefully succeed in life.

A. Stimulation (from our environment)

- brief (situations, places, pictures, etc.)
- prevailing (family, friends, job, neighborhood, etc.)

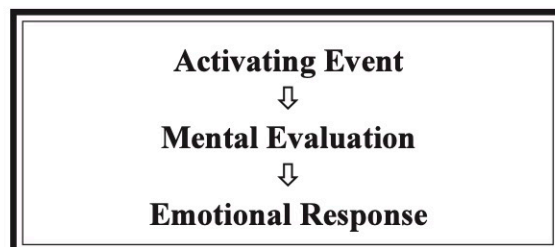
B. Temptation (1 Cor. 10:13)

Temptation begins with a seed thought that is essentially this idea: “You can get your needs met through the world, the flesh or the devil.” The root of all temptation is to get the Christian to live independently of God.

We are not shaped by our environment, but by our perception of the environment. It is not life events which determine who we are, but how we interpret life events.

C. Consideration

Faith is God’s way and reason is man’s way. It is not that faith is unreasonable, because God is a rational God and does work through our reason. The problem is that man’s ability to reason is limited. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding” (Prov. 3:5). We consciously or



If what we believe does not reflect truth, then what we feel does not reflect reality.

Mental Strongholds and the Renewing of Our Minds

Learning Objective:

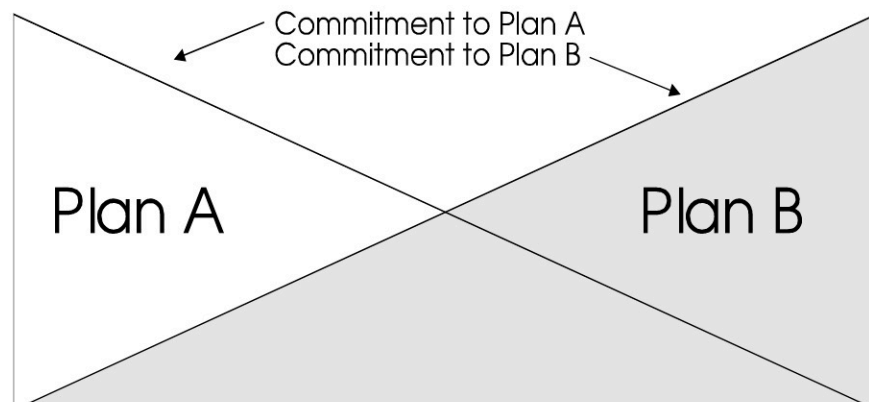
To understand how conforming to this world develops strongholds in our minds, resulting in less-than-Christlike temperaments, so that we can begin the process of renewing our minds.

Notes

subconsciously form two plans in our minds.

Plan A is God's way that we accept by faith. The strength of Plan A is dependent upon two things: (1) the person's conviction that God's way is right and (2) the person's level of commitment in obeying God.

Plan B is humanistic reasoning, man's tendency to rationalize. The strength of Plan B is determined by the amount of time one entertains thoughts that are contrary to the Word of God. Often, Plan B is a well-thought-out "escape route" should Plan A "fail!"



D. Strongholds

Strongholds are mental habit patterns of thought burned into our minds over time or from the intensity of traumatic experiences.

"A stronghold is a mindset, impregnated with hopelessness that causes one to believe that something is unchangeable when it is known to be contrary to the will of God."

Ed Silvano

If the development of strongholds is just a question of conditioning, then we can be reconditioned through the process of education, counseling, or self-directed study of God's Word. Certainly that is the major process—but is there something else going on in the spiritual world as well? Notice the following verses:

A. Satan, the Deceiver

“Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.”
1 Chronicles 21:1f.

“And supper being ended, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him. . . .”
John 13:2

“But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep some of the price of the land?’”
Acts 5:3

B. Understanding our Thoughts (*noema*)

1. Unforgiveness, Satan's greatest access to the church—2 Cor. 2:10,11—“schemes” (*noema*).
2. Satan blinds the minds of the unbelieving—2 Cor. 4:3-4—“minds” (*noema*).
3. Keeping our focus on Christ—2 Cor. 11-3—“minds” (*noema*).

The Battle for our Minds

Learning Objective:

To understand the spiritual battle that is going on for our minds so that we can take every thought captive in obedience to Christ.

Notes

C. Destroying Strongholds

1. Be transformed by renewing your mind (Rom. 12:2).
 - a. Study (2 Tim. 2:15).
 - b. Let the peace of Christ rule (Col. 3:15,16).
2. Prepare your minds for action (1 Pet. 1:13).
 - a. Keep your mind active and externally focused.
 - b. “Sanctified” imagination.
3. Turn to God (Phil. 4:6,7).
4. Choose to think the truth (Phil. 4:8).

Truth	⇒	Belief	⇒	Behave	⇒	Feelings
John 8:32		Hebrews 11:6		James 2:20		John 13:17

We have come to understand that our emotions reflect our thought life. It is also true that our emotional state can and does affect our thinking.

Emotions have been likened to a red light on the car dash indicating no oil pressure. We can put a piece of tape over the light (*suppression*), smash it with a hammer (*indiscriminate expression*), or look under the hood (*acknowledgement*).

Managing our Emotional Life

A. Suppression

1. Unhealthy (Ps. 32; 39:1-3)
2. Dishonest (Prov. 10:18; 13:10)

B. Indiscriminate Expression

1. Example of Peter
2. Unhealthy for others (Jas. 1:19)

C. Acknowledgement

1. Emotional honesty with God (Ps. 109)
We must be real in order to be right with God.
2. Emotional honesty in ministry (Job 6:24-26; Rom. 12:15)
3. Emotional honesty with others (Eph. 4:25-27)
4. Knowing our emotional limits

Learning Objective:

To understand our emotional nature in order to live as real people and bring healing to damaged emotions.

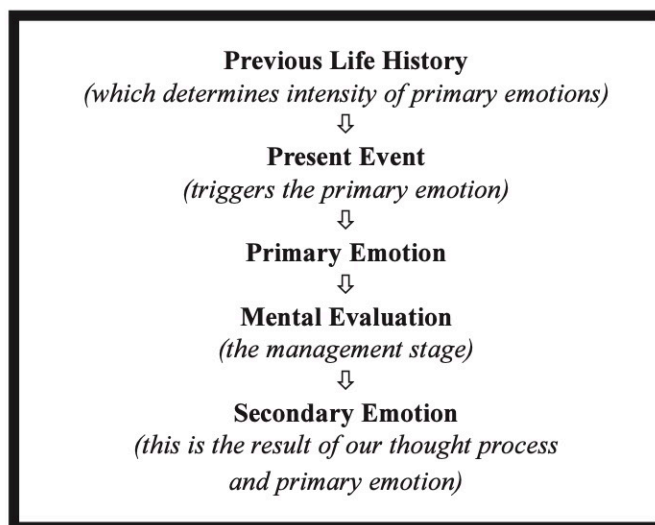
Being Emotionally Transformed

Learning Objective:

To understand how past traumas affect us emotionally and how truth penetrates our hearts and sets us free from our past.

A. How the Past affects us Emotionally

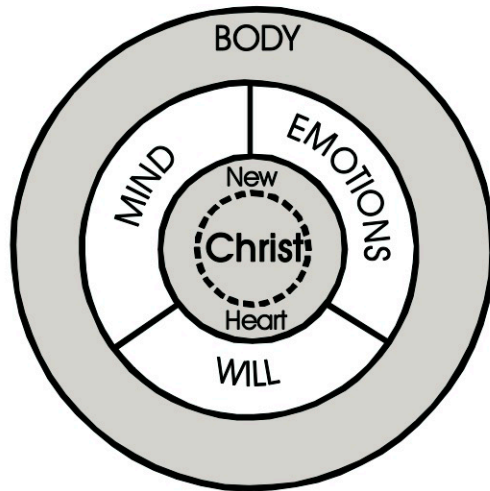
There are long-standing emotional traumas from the past, lingering near the surface which can be triggered by present events or reminiscing thoughts. The normal sequence is:



Secondary emotions are determined by the intensity of the primary emotion and the mental evaluation (perception) of the present event.

B. How the Truth sets us Free

There are 822 uses of the word “heart” in Scripture that are related to human personality. Of that usage, 204 refer to intellectual activity, 195 to the will and 166 to an emotional state. The heart is the real person (Prov. 27:19) and the place from which all life flows (Prov. 4:23). The heart is the place of personhood, intellect, emotion and will. God promised in Ezekiel 36:26, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.”



Notes

1. We have to be new creations in Christ.

We are not primarily a product of our past; we are new creations in Christ, a product of Christ's work on the cross and His resurrection. Nobody can fix your past, but you can be free from it by the grace of God.

2. The truth has to enter our hearts.

"Behold, you desire truth in the innermost being" (Ps. 51:6).

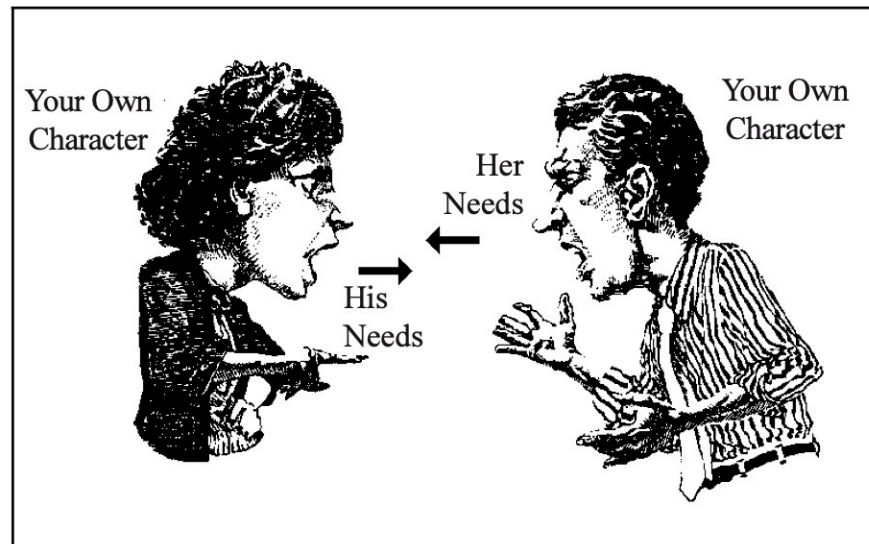
Thinking, feeling and willing all come together in the heart in holistic unity. Our emotions have been set by how our minds were programmed by past events.

As new creations in Christ with a new heart and the mind of Christ, we reprocess the past that left us in emotional bondage. Those past traumas do not keep us in bondage. It is the lies we have believed as a result of the traumas that keep us in bondage.

3. We have to forgive from our hearts (Matt. 18:35).

Relational Perspectives

As we live our lives before God, we are to assume our responsibility for our own character, and seek to meet the needs of those around us (Phil. 2:3-5) as follows:



Learning Objective:

To understand how God intends us to relate to one another in order that we may live in harmony with Him and each other.

The seeds of destruction are sown when the rights of any group, family or person are emphasized over responsibilities.

A. What right do we have to expect anything from another person?

B. In what ways should we, or should we not, be another person's conscience? In what ways are we?

Notes

When you seek to play the role of the Holy Spirit in another person's life, you will misdirect that person's battle with God onto yourself.

C. How should we relate to another person in reference to his character? Behavior? How does this relate to acceptance? Judgment? Discipline?

1. Judgment is an issue of character:
2. Discipline is an issue of observed behavior:

D. Should we be defensive?

1. If you are wrong, you don't have a defense.
2. If you are right, you don't need one.

E. Should the authority figure be authoritarian (1 Thess. 2:5-9)?

1. Authority
2. Accountability
3. Affirmation
4. Acceptance

F. Should we express our needs? How?

G. What needs do all people have which should always be addressed in any relationship?

Notes

UNDERSTANDING REJECTION

Romans 15:7

Think and feel
rejected and unloved



Determine to please the significant others
to gain their approval



More rejection comes, resulting in
choosing one of three defense postures

***Beat the System***

This person basically buys the system
and learns to compete or scheme to
“get ahead” and become the
“significant other.”

This eventually results in more
rejection because the ability to
perform eventually diminishes.

Give in to the System

Continue the efforts to satisfy
others but begin to believe that you
are rejectable and unlovable.

This results in more rejection
because acceptance comes less to
those who reject themselves.

Rebel against the System

This person fights the system and says “I
don’t need or want your love,” often
behaves or dresses in an
objectionable way.

This results in more rejection because a
rebel causes others to be more defensive of
the system being rejected.

Emotional Results

inability to express feelings
emotional insulation
perfectionism
worries

feelings of worthlessness
and inferiority
subjectivity
introspection
self-condemning

wishing he had never been
born
undisciplined
irresponsible
self-hating
bitter

Attitudes and Reactions Toward God

Refuses to come under
God’s authority,
has little real fellowship with
God.

Projects earthly father’s
behavior onto God, unable to
trust God.

Views God as a tyrant and rebels
against Him.

NOTE: The family “system” is the most significant, followed by school and society in general.

Forgiving from the Heart

A. The Need to Forgive

1. Required by God (Matt. 6:9-15)
2. Essential for our freedom (Matt. 18:21-35).
 - a. Know the extent of our debt (Luke 7:47).
 - b. Repayment is impossible.
 - c. Mercy is required.
 - d. So that no advantage be taken of us by Satan (2 Cor. 2:10, 11).
3. Must be extended to others (Eph. 4:31,32); however, the crisis of forgiveness is only between us and God.
4. Why should we forgive?
STOP THE PAIN!
You don't heal in order to forgive; you forgive in order to heal.

Learning Objective:

To understand what it means to forgive from the heart in order that all would do so.

B. What is forgiveness?

1. Not forgetting
Forgetting is not a means to forgiveness, but it may be a long-term by-product.
2. Not tolerating sin
Scriptural boundaries must be set in order to stop further abuse.
3. Not seeking resentment, revenge or repayment
4. Resolving to live with the consequences of another's sin

Notes

5. Not using the past against offenders

6. Where is the justice?

THE CROSS OF CHRIST!

What's to be gained in forgiveness is freedom from our past and oppressors.

C. Steps to Forgiveness

1. Make a list of all who have offended you, including all those for whom you have negative feelings.

2. Face the hurt and the hate.

3. Decide that you will bear the burden of their sin and not hold it against them in the future.

4. Take it to the cross.

5. Forgiveness is now a choice.

Forgiveness is to set a captive free and then to realize that you were the captive.