

The Importance of Self Talk

Today you will spend solitary moments of conversation with yourself. No person is more influential in your life than you are, because no one talks to you more than you do. We never stop talking to ourselves. The things you say to you about you, God, and life are profoundly important because they form and shape the way you then respond to the things that God has put on your plate. Human beings made in the image of God do not live life based on the facts of their experience, but based on their interpretation of the facts. Paul David Tripp says "Whether you know it or not, you have been designed by God to be a meaning maker. You don't actually respond to what is going on around you; you respond to the sense you have made of what is going on around you."

Many things influence our interpretation of what is happening in our lives, and it is important that we are both aware of these influences and that we also intentionally align our thoughts and self-talk to the truth of God's Word. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 we are told "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,". So how do we, as Christians, do this? Christians create God-centered self-talk by intentionally replacing negative, anxious, or self-focused thoughts with Scripture, focusing on God's character and promises rather than circumstances. This practice involves meditating on Bible verses, practicing gratitude, and affirming one's identity as loved and redeemed in Christ to transform inner dialogue.

Here are some specific suggestions:

- **Replacing Lies with Scripture (Mind Renewal):** Actively challenge negative, self-defeating, or ungodly thoughts by replacing them with biblical truth. For example, replacing "I am a failure" with Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through

Christ which strengthens me". Writing these down so you can go back and reference the scriptures when you recognize your negative self-talk.

- **Speaking Truth to Oneself (Psalm Technique):** Model self-talk after the Psalms, where the psalmist often speaks *to* their own soul, commanding it to hope in God (e.g., Psalm 103:1, "Bless the Lord, O my soul"). You can start by memorizing a Psalm or two so you learn the pattern.
- **Focusing on God's Attributes:** Intentionally dwell on the character of God—His love, power, and faithfulness—rather than focusing on personal inadequacies or overwhelming problems. Speak this out loud to yourself and others.
- **Integrating Praise and Gratitude:** Shift perspectives by speaking words of gratitude and praise to God, regardless of emotional or circumstantial situations. Keep a daily gratitude journal.
- **Meditation and Memorization:** Daily meditation on Scripture, such as focusing on a single verse (e.g., Psalm 51:10), allows God's word to fill the mind and guide inner thoughts. Even if you "have a bad memory" God will teach you scripture if you ask Him to do so.
- **Identifying as "In Christ":** Affirm your identity in Christ as forgiven, valued, and accepted. Listen to affirmations on apps we have talked about before such as "Abide" .
- **Participating in Counseling:** Seek professional help when needed to recognize family of origin and life experiences that contribute to negative self-talk that you are struggling to change.

These practices are sometimes referred to as "preaching the Gospel to yourself". Speaking the gospel to yourself is the daily spiritual discipline of actively reminding your heart of the good news of Jesus Christ—His grace, forgiveness, and righteousness—to combat sin, anxiety, and self-reliance. It involves consciously directing your

internal dialogue toward truth, resting in Christ's finished work rather than self-effort, and embracing your identity as a loved child of God. It starts with awareness and it is my prayer this article has helped create space in your mind to recognize your thoughts and a desire to align them to the truth of God's Word.

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