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THE DANGERS OF INTERNAL DECAY

By Tanya Curren

When you choose to carry a burden in your life, it opens the door for a flood of other issues to enter. This cascade of weight then becomes so difficult to overcome because you feel buried beneath it. The burden doesn't just sit on your shoulders, either. It has roots that shoot down from your mind, through your body and into your heart. Unless this dangerous internal decay is identified and removed, it will grow and grow until it consumes your thoughts, words and actions.

Does this sound familiar? If so, you are not alone. And, this isn't something that just impacts women, either. Whether you are male or female, guilt can creep in through the tiniest crack. When you open the door for one Satanic attack or distraction, you open the door for more to fly in. This is why it is vitally important that we set healthy boundaries, spiritually lock our doors and set our spiritual alarms over our houses and choose daily to live guilt free!

Proverbs 6:27-28 says, "Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?" You can't set a fire on your lap and expect to not get burned. Likewise, you can't heap burden upon burden upon your mind and expect to live a life full of freedom, peace and joy.

Look at the following examples and see if you identify with any of these issues in your life. Do any of these bring you guilt, pain or shame?

Not making enough money * Overeating or being overweight * Regret for the way you raised your children * Having a child who is unsaved or living in sin * Not having the marriage or family that you desire * Bad choices from your past that haunt you now * Living a lie * Being a shopaholic * Being a workaholic * Having a secret guilty pleasure * Hiding money from your spouse * Covering up a volatile temper * Being lazy * Gossiping * Coveting * Worrying * Not spending enough time with your family * Being undisciplined in different areas of your life * Trying to be "good enough"

There are so many problems with carrying these burdens! Let's look at some of the ways they erode your confidence, consume your thoughts and eventually cause you to make choices that are not God's best for your life.

THE DANGERS OF INTERNAL DECAY: IT EATS YOU ALIVE

Have you ever watched a CSI episode where the investigator finds a dead body that has already decayed? They are able to determine the approximate time of death by looking at the stage of the maggots that are

eating the flesh. Sounds totally disgusting, right? I agree! The first time I heard about this and saw it on tv I thought I was going to throw up! But, the concept is extremely interesting.

Look at this from a spiritual perspective. Just like the little bugs survive on decaying flesh, the Satanic attack of guilt survives on unforgiveness of self and unwillingness to release burdens to the Lord. Spiritually speaking, guilt is like a revolting little maggot whose goal is to eat you alive. You won't physically die from feeling guilty, but you can feel like you are dying from the inside out. If you allow it, guilt has the ability to make you feel worthless, powerless and useless.

This is NOT what God wants for you! If you have been eaten up with guilt and consumed with carrying burdens for so long, I want you to stop right now and repeat this Scripture out loud: Colossians 1:13, "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Jesus RESCUES us, TRANSFERS us and PURCHASES us! There is no reason in the world to hold on to ANY form of guilt because you are covered under the saving, purifying, cleansing, healing and loving blood of Jesus!

I think of the cleansing blood of Jesus in another real-life applicable way. My husband and son love snakes. (Yes, I know this freaks many women out, but believe it or not I even hold them and find them very calming! Oh, the things we do for our children! It's funny – when people hear that we have multiple snakes as pets, the first thing they usually say is, "Well, I'm not coming to your house!" My first thought is always, "That's great, because I don't remember inviting you in the first place!")

One of the things Rick and Pierce have purchased for their little guys is a spray called Mite Off. If you catch a snake from the woods, they will most likely have tiny little mites on their body which will ultimately get under their scales and kill them. To save the snake, you spritz that sucker down with the Mite Off until all of the mites are dead. This will literally save the snake's life.

We are the same way! We are covered with sin and consumed by things that will destroy us. But, Jesus' blood cleanses us and kills all of our "mites!" His blood literally saves our eternal soul and is here now to bring us peace, joy and freedom!

IT STEALS YOUR JOY AND ROBS YOUR PEACE OF MIND

Do you know a joy-killer? Sure you do – we all do. There's a true saying that always makes me laugh, "Everyone bring sunshine into our lives...some when they enter, and others when they leave!" My prayer is that you have surrounded yourself with people who bring happiness into your life!

But think of a person who just seems to suck all of the joy out of your moment. They bring you down and you don't look forward to spending time with them. If you can avoid being around a real person in your life like this, then you certainly can avoid carrying an emotional or spiritual weight in your life like this! Living with any kind of internal decay like fear, guilt, anxiety, or anger in your life only robs your joy.

If you are like me, you go to great lengths to protect your physical body and valuables. You lock your house, set your alarm and don't leave your assets on your lawn to be taken. Why will we take the time to protect our physical valuables, yet allow our emotional, spiritual and mental valuables to be stolen? It's such an oxymoron, isn't it? We lock our car doors when we go into the movies, yet we leave our mind open for Satan to wreak havoc upon. We take the time to check and make sure that we have our expensive i-Phone when we leave a restaurant, yet we won't stop to discipline our priceless mind and set necessary healthy

boundaries around our invaluable time.

Protect your joy. Guard your peace. How do you do this? You identify your areas of vulnerability. Just like you know how to protect your wallet, car and home, you must know how to protect your joy, peace and time. When memories, emotions or feelings of guilt arise, it is your job to rebuke them and replace them with Godly, positive thoughts. Only you can do this. God is there to give you the wisdom and strength to overcome ANY spiritual attack, bad memory, bad habit or negative feeling, but it is your job to think it, speak it and then act upon it. You can do this! Rebuke guilt or anything that is stealing your joy and then repeat a Scripture such as Philippians 4:13, “I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me.”

IT OPENS THE DOOR FOR FEAR AND OTHER DEMONIC ATTACKS TO ENTER

In 1991, the movie Backdraft was released. In the film, they show how important it is to keep doors closed during a fire. If you open the door, even just a little bit, oxygen will come racing in and make the fire rage; thus causing a huge backdraft that can kill anyone in the area. This is exactly what happens in our lives when we open doors that should remain shut. When we take our eyes and focus off of God, we stop looking at our life through God’s eyes. We then open ourselves to fear, panic and defeat.

In our book, *ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living*, Rick wrote an excellent chapter called, “Conquering Fear.” In it he wrote, “Concern is wisdom, worry is useless. It saps you of your energy and focus, drawing your attention away from the positive possibilities and onto the improbable negatives. ***Worry is the Satanic distraction of the Christian mind away from the promise of God’s Word and onto the counterfeit power Satan claims to have over our everyday lives.*** It is how he hamstrings us into inaction and defeat, often before we even begin. Worry is often accompanied by his friends, Doubt and Disbelief. Sometimes Panic rides shotgun on this posse of defeat. Panic will cloud your mind, choke out the reason and make you react without thinking through the action.” Focus your energy on positive things that bring true joy, peace and change in our world. And remember Colossians 3:17, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men.”

I know I’m married to this man so I’m biased, but I LOVE this!!! I especially love the sentence in bold print above because it is so true. Any distraction of our Christian mind takes our eyes off of the promises of God’s Word and puts our focus toward the negative and false power Satan tries to make us think he has. It’s such a waste of time! Do not allow a fateful backdraft to attack you in any area of your life. Know your enemy and know how and when he attacks you and your family. Focus your energy on what you can control and the positive choices you can make for you and those you love. This will keep your mental and emotional doors strong as you move forward!

ULTIMATELY, IT CHANGES THE OUTCOME OF YOUR LIFE’S PATH

Recently we used our GPS to take dinner to a family. We punched in the street address, but didn’t put in the city. I thought it seemed like we were driving forever, but blindly trusted the GPS as we drove across town. We’d never been there before, so I figured the little machine stuck to my windshield must be correct! Well, an hour later we were in a really random neighborhood that had the right number on the mailbox but had the wrong people inside!

Thank goodness I had their number, and after calling the family we realized that we had driven to the wrong city. The street address was correct, but the GPS took us one way when we were trying to get to a completely different part of town. Frustrated and irritated over the waste of time and gas, we turned around and headed towards them, finally making it to the correct home.

If this scenario was frustrating, think about how devastating it would be to live life like this! Imagine living your life where your choices always seem to waste your time, energy, money and mental strength. That would be terrible! And yet, so many people live their lives this way. They live with overwhelming guilt and shame, which then causes them to make choices that take their lives in negative directions.

This is such an unnecessary tragedy. God could have a completely different plan for your life, yet guilt can cause you to make decisions that alter His perfect plan. Do not allow anything to get in the way of you being able to hear God's voice! No sin, person, memory, or wrong done to you...nothing should hinder you from living the full and free life that God designed for YOU!

Allow God to be your ultimate GPS! He gives you an awesome promise in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the thoughts and the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome." What an encouraging and empowering assurance for you and I today! There is no need to freak out, lose sleep, be depressed, beat yourself up or carry unnecessary burdens when we know that our Creator is in control and will lead us and guide us every step of the way!

I want to leave you today with a power-packed verse. This is my prayer for you as you live your life guilt free! Romans 15:13, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

In Him,

Tanya



Tanya Curren is the co-founder of Boundless Limits International, a ministry of encouragement and empowerment. She is also the co-author of **ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living** and the **ON COURSE Life Application Study Guide**, which has been distributed worldwide. In 2004 Tanya Curren was in a life threatening coma for 8 days as a deadly infection ravaged her body. Given two hours to live, she survived only to face the ordeal of a painful three year recovery. She is the author of **Broken Places, The Proverbs Devotion Guide, Embracing Change & Conflict**, and several other CD's. In her conferences and seminars, Tanya shares with others the life-lessons she learned through her journey to restoration. Tanya travels and speaks at local, regional and international venues, and is passionate about guiding others to have a personal, real relationship with Jesus Christ.