

**NEIL T. ANDERSON
& RICH MILLER**

LETTING GO OF FEAR



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Chapter One

Restoring the Foundation

Everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.

Jesus, Matthew 7:24-27

In reality, the foundation upon which every one of us has built our lives is a mixture of truth, half truths, and outright lies. Adam and Eve were formed by God and placed in a perfect environment. The only fear object they had was God. The rest of humanity started out as “strangers and aliens” in a fallen world (Ephesians 2:19). We weren’t children of God; we were children of flesh and blood. We had no prior knowledge of God and His ways, so we naturally conformed to this world, relying on our own strength and resources. We learned to fear many things, but had no fear of God. The apostle Paul describes the nature of the natural person in Ephesians 2:1-3:

You were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Introducing a person to Christ is not helping a bad person become a better person. It is helping a spiritually dead person become one who is alive in Christ. That person was alienated from God and is now united with Him.

Believers are no longer “in Adam”; we are now “in Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:22; see also Romans 8:9). God “rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13). “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). “As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone” (Ephesians 2:19-20).

If all that is true, then why do born-again believers often struggle with the same old fears and anxieties?

Everything we learned while being conformed to this world is still programmed into our minds. Unfortunately, there is no delete button, which is why Paul wrote, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2 NIV). Paul implies that after conversion we can continue being conformed to this world. We can fill our minds with the same old media, believe the same old lies, and live according

to our old nature (the flesh). But Peter also advises otherwise: “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance” (1 Peter 1:14).

Stages of Human Development

How we conform to this world is different for every person. We are all shaped by our environment, and every child responds differently to it. We naturally learn the language of our parents and adopt most of their attitudes, which are more “caught” than “taught.” How we personally interpret the events of life lays the foundation for specific fears and anxieties. As an illustration, consider the following testimony we received at our office. As you read it, ask yourself these questions: How did this person get this way? What did she learn at an early age? What events shaped her life?

I have literally lived with crippling, chronic fear all of my life. When I was about seven years old, I had an experience in grade school that started my panic disorder. I was feeling very sick one day, and the teacher would not let me go home. I wanted to go very badly, but I felt trapped and experienced my first panic [attack].

From there on it became a constant cycle. The feelings as a young girl that I felt that day were so scary that I spent the rest of my childhood and teenage years doing everything I could to avoid them. It got so bad that I actually quit school in ninth grade and was tutored at home. Then, at about age 14, I committed myself to a children’s home for intense in-house therapy. It was either that or end my life.

It was extremely hard to live there, but it did break the fear cycle because they forced me to push through the fear to attend classes.

But when I returned home, it all gradually came back. I lived in my bedroom, which was my safe place. But

eventually I started waking up in the middle of the night with terrible, gut-wrenching panic [attacks]. It was awful, and my parents had no clue as to what was wrong with me.

I spent years visiting doctors and different specialists, to no avail. All my fear and panic stayed inside. I could be in a “number 10” panic, and most everyone around me would not even know. I think I felt such shame because of it. I didn’t want anyone to know that I was sick. It put so much stress on my family, and I hated being the problem.

Notice that she felt fear and anxiety for as long as she could remember. She also had a traumatic event that began a panic disorder, which precipitated a social anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders—and even minor struggles with anxiety and fear—are a product of our learning experiences and growth process.

Let’s analyze this process through the grid of Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory of development.¹ Although it is a secular theory that has been around for many years, it has proven to be helpful in understanding how a person “naturally” develops and the hurdles that must be overcome in order to continue growing to maturity. We will add Christian interventions that should happen for those raised in a Christian home.

Erikson says there are basic stages of human development. Each stage has a particular “crisis” associated with it. If that crisis is not faced successfully, the growth process is impeded, giving way to certain fears and anxieties. He observed the following eight stages after studying various cultural groups around the world:

Stage	Age	Psychosocial Crisis
1	Infancy (0 to 1½)	Trust vs. mistrust
2	Early childhood (1½ to 3)	Autonomy vs. shame, doubt

3	Play age (3 to 5)	Initiative vs. guilt
4	School age (5 to 12)	Industry vs. inferiority
5	Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. confusion
6	Young adulthood (18 to 25)	Intimacy vs. isolation
7	Adulthood (25 to 65)	Generativity vs. self-absorption or stagnation
8	Maturity (65+)	Integrity vs. despair

Infancy

Infants learn trust when parents provide the physical care and emotional nurture they need. Bonding is enhanced through breast feeding and loving human contact. Babies who are neglected in orphanages often fail to develop, and some actually die. If neglect or abuse takes place, the child may never overcome the fear of abandonment. That sets the stage for a lifestyle of mistrust, fear, and suspicion of others, including God. Common fears at this age are the fears of falling, loud noises, strange objects, and people other than their parents. Such fears peak before age two and then generally decline.²

What is neglected by the secular world is the spiritual significance of baby dedication or infant baptism, depending on your church doctrine. Parents should assume spiritual authority over the child, commit them to the Lord, and renounce any spiritual claim of ownership by Satan. Jesus's family set the example in Luke 2:22: "When the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord."

Early Childhood

In early childhood (the toddler years), children learn by exploring their world. They get into every drawer and cupboard. They become overwhelmed by things bigger than them, including dogs and cats. Two-year-olds want to know if they are loved and if they can have their

own way. Consistent discipline is a proof of our love that should answer the second question with a firm *no*, or there will be difficult teenage years ahead. Deep-seated insecurities can form in children who are not loved and protected at this stage.

Spiritual protection of our children is overlooked by secular theories. We have counseled a number of parents who have children experiencing nightmares and spiritual visitations as early as two years old. We received a glowing testimony of a mother set free from her own horrible childhood by going through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. She concluded by writing: “By the way, my four-year-old was heard growling in her closet. I led her through the prayers, and she is free. We have talked at great length about who she is in Christ and all that Satan is not. Sometimes I hear her in her room, saying, ‘I belong to Jesus and you have to leave me alone.’ She’s not having problems anymore either.”

Play Age

Play age is a time when children become creative. They color, paint, build things with blocks, and create games with animals and dolls. If creativity is squelched by confinement, ridicule, or lack of opportunity, children can develop a sense of personal guilt (“I have done something wrong”) and shame (“There is something wrong with me”). Shaming a child is an attack upon their character. If they become convinced that they are a bad person, they will take less risks, reveal less of themselves for fear of rejection, and will likely become emotionally inhibited. Fear of the dark, monsters, and injury can plague children of this age. Nightmares are more frequent than with toddlers.³

Children at this age often have imaginary friends. You don’t want to stifle their creativity, but a spiritually discerning parent needs to find out if that imaginary friend is talking back to the child, in which case the “friend” is not imaginary—and definitely not a friend.

One summer I (Rich) was teaching at a Bible conference in western Pennsylvania. All five members of our family were sleeping in the same room in an old house on the conference grounds. One evening,

as we were preparing to turn out the lights, our six-year-old daughter announced, “Daddy, I have an imaginary friend! Her name is Becca, and she is an orphan girl who lives in the house. She wants to come home and live in our house.”

Knowing how the enemy operates, I was instantly “on alert.” I prayed and asked God how best to deal with this situation. “Honey,” I began, “sometimes a bad angel puts on a costume and pretends to be something it isn’t. Becca is not a little orphan girl. He is a demon, and you have to tell it to go away, that it cannot be your friend and certainly is not welcome in our home.” I was a little angry!

Fortunately, Michelle understood what I was talking about and did what I urged her to do. Becca never showed up again. What if my wife, Shirley, and I had said to Michelle, “Isn’t that sweet, honey? Becca sounds cute.” The very course of Michelle’s life could have been altered at that moment.

A music director who attended our conference once asked about his four-year-old son. For the previous three months the child was terrorized every night and would come into the parents’ room, saying, “There is something in my room.” Of course they looked in the room and saw nothing. So they told the child to go back to bed. But if you saw something in your room at night, would you go back to sleep? It never dawned on them that their child was being harassed by the enemy. Thankfully, the situation was resolved and the child slept peacefully from then on. What would that child believe henceforth if there had been no resolution, and how would he deal with that fear? We will share more about the schemes of the devil in chapter 6.

School Age

School age (elementary) children are prime for discovering and developing the talents and abilities God has given them. Children at this age learn to play sports or musical instruments. They enjoy energetic accomplishment and competition. They may develop a keen interest in art and want to take lessons. If children lack opportunity or

encouragement to explore and enjoy life academically, artistically, or athletically, a sense of inferiority can develop. Children can feel like losers and struggle with a fear of failure.

It is always appropriate to encourage children to explore, enjoy healthy activities, and develop their God-given talents. However, an overemphasis on excelling in these areas can set them up for identity problems in adolescence. If they only receive positive affirmation for “performing” in an activity, they get the message that their value comes from what they do and not in who they are. Building up a child’s character should be preeminent, or the child could end up becoming an insecure and shallow athlete or artist who is able to perform, but is riddled with insecurity.

Adolescence

An identity crisis surfaces in early adolescence. Identity confusion often takes place before identity achievement.⁴ In other words, the young person may vacillate from one role to another (for example, from athlete to clown to serious student to party animal and back again) for a number of years before settling the issue. The aggravating thing for parents is that adolescents are adept at playing the chameleon, switching roles to meet the expectations of those they are around. How they act at home or church may be very different from how they behave in school. The greatest anxiety of adolescence is the fear of rejection by peers. The failure to establish a firm foundation of who they are is the origin of many social anxiety disorders.

Early adolescence has been referred to as the “age of accountability.” Ideally, these young people are transitioning from being children of flesh and blood to being children of God. Studies on cognitive development have shown that a twelve-year-old has matured enough physically to think like an adult. They are fully capable of understanding who they are in Christ and what it means to be a child of God. Recall that Jesus was twelve when He wandered away from His parents, went into the temple, and amazed the teachers with His understanding (Luke

2:42-47). Mary said, “Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You” (verse 48). To which Jesus replied, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?” (verse 49). Catholic, Orthodox, and some Protestant churches have confirmation around the age of twelve. In Judaism, children have their *bar* or *bas mitzvah* on their thirteenth birthday.

After years of helping Christians all over the world resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts, we noticed that every struggling adult Christian had one thing in common. None of them knew who they were in Christ, nor understood what it means to be a child of God. If “the Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16), why weren’t they sensing that? When inner conflicts are resolved through genuine repentance and faith in God, Christians do become aware of God’s presence, and most experience a peace they have never known before. How many anxiety disorders could be averted if we helped early teens connect with God in a liberating way? They should be able to say with confidence:

In Christ...

I Am Accepted

John 1:12	I am God’s child.
John 15:15	I am Jesus’s chosen friend.
Romans 5:1	I have been justified (forgiven) and have peace with God.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord and one with Him in spirit.
1 Corinthians 6:20	I have been bought with a price—I belong to God.
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of Christ’s body, part of His family.
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint.

Ephesians 1:5 I have been adopted as God's child.

Ephesians 2:18 I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:14 I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.

Colossians 2:10 I am complete in Christ.

I Am Secure

Romans 8:1-2 I am free from condemnation.

Romans 8:28 I am assured that all things work together for good.

Romans 8:31 I am free from any condemning charges against me.

Romans 8:35 I cannot be separated from the love of God.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God.

Philippians 1:6 I am assured that the good work God has begun in me will be finished.

Philippians 3:20 I am a citizen of heaven.

Colossians 3:3 I am hidden with Christ in God.

2 Timothy 1:7 I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.

Hebrews 4:16 I can find grace and mercy in time of need.

1 John 5:18 I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me.

I Am Significant

Matthew 5:13-14	I am the salt and light of the world.
John 15:5	I am joined to Christ and able to bear fruit.
John 15:16	I have been chosen by Jesus to bear fruit.
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ's.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am a temple of God, where the Holy Spirit dwells.
2 Corinthians 5:17-18	I am at peace with God, and He has given me the work of making peace between Himself and other people. I am a minister of reconciliation.
2 Corinthians 6:1	I am God's coworker.
Ephesians 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenlies.
Ephesians 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Ephesians 3:11-12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Young Adulthood

Knowing the unconditional love and acceptance of God paves the way for young adults to develop intimate personal relationships. When they're aware that they are forgiven, they can walk in the light and have fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7). Such fellowship can be defined as the ability to relate to another person's deepest hopes, needs, and fears, while being vulnerable in return.⁵

Adulthood

Adulthood should be a time of productivity and fulfillment, and it likely will be if the right foundation has been laid. The house begins to crumble with age if the foundation is faulty. Unresolved issues from the past can keep piling up—and so can the medical bills, leading many to a midlife crisis. Obesity, alcoholism, and the use of opioids is pandemic due to an increase in anxiety disorders and depression.

Maturity

Finally, a person's years of maturity ought to be filled with a deep experience of joy from a life invested in the kingdom of God. This sense of contentment comes from the realization that they have paved the way for the next generation, sharing the wisdom of a life well lived.⁶

For too many senior citizens, however, there is a deep bitterness of soul, a disgust of self, and despair over life, according to Erikson. A sense of uselessness, meaninglessness, and fear of death can turn the twilight years into a nightmare. In other words, they “walked after emptiness and became empty” (Jeremiah 2:5).

Though the eight stages of development can overlap and vary in length of time, their sequence is fixed.⁷ The crisis stages of mistrust, shame, guilt, inferiority, confusion, isolation, self-absorption, and despair reveal a faulty foundation, which can be rebuilt in Christ if we are willing to humble ourselves, repent, and believe the gospel.

Although we are most vulnerable to certain fears and anxieties at various stages of life, anxiety disorders can develop at almost any age. For example, the fear of abandonment could have its onset in the life of an adult or senior citizen due to a painful divorce or neglect by grown children. The fear of rejection by others could happen in middle age as the result of humiliation before fellow employees and termination from a job. Traumatic experiences occur at any age and can send even well-adjusted individuals into a tailspin of fear and anxiety.

Defining Phobias

There are three categories of controlling, irrational fears: specific phobias, social phobias, and agoraphobia.⁸ As the name implies, *specific phobias* are irrational fears of specific situations or objects, such as people, snakes, spiders, heights, enclosed places, etc.

Social phobias involve the fear of being watched, embarrassed, humiliated, rejected, or scorned while doing something in the presence of other people. A common example of this type of phobia is the fear of public speaking. This type of fear would also apply to the Christian who is afraid to share his or her testimony, or to witness to an unbeliever. Other examples would include the fear of eating in public, using public restrooms, and meeting new people.

The typical means of coping with social phobias is called “phobic avoidance,” the attempt to eliminate threatening circumstances from one’s lifestyle. This obviously poses real problems if the individual is afraid to go to work or school. School phobia is a problem for some children who are unwilling to leave the security of home/parents and take the risk of coping with the perceived threatening environment of school.

Agoraphobia is when a person is afraid to be alone or in a situation in which help or escape would be difficult to find.

In the testimony shared earlier in this chapter, the woman evidenced a serious case of phobic avoidance by eventually quitting school and being tutored at home. She was suffering from social phobia. She had been so frightened and humiliated by her teacher that she established a pattern of doing everything she could to avoid that kind of pain again. It became so severe that she “lived in [her] bedroom.” Although her testimony doesn’t say this, it is likely that she became agoraphobic after the onset of her panic attacks. At any rate, fear was the controlling mechanism in her life.

Beyond Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Since faulty and traumatic learning experiences are the basis for

anxiety disorders, it would only logically follow that what has been learned has to be unlearned. Irrational thinking has to be replaced with rational thinking. Lies have to be replaced with truth. A crumbling foundation has to be rebuilt. Secular theorists are aware of this, and seek to rebuild people's foundations by helping them get in touch with reality and think rationally. The most common intervention is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

CBT is based on the premise that people are feeling what they are feeling and doing what they are doing because of what they have chosen to believe. Therefore, if you want to help people change how they feel and behave, you need to help them change what they believe. We basically agree with that premise, because that is the central theme of repentance. (Repentance literally means a change of mind.) But CBT is not enough by itself for three critical reasons.

First, "natural people" can change how they feel and how they behave by how they think or what they believe, but that doesn't change who they are. The problem is, "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Paul warns us to "walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God" (Ephesians 4:17-18). If you want the truth to set you free, you have to know *who* the Truth is, not just *what* it is. Even a Christian therapist applying CBT with the words of Christ but without the life of Christ will not be lastingly effective.

Emotions are essentially a product of your thoughts, and every behavior is a product of what you have chosen to believe, because every action is preceded by a thought. You don't do anything without first thinking it. The thought process may be so rapid that you are barely aware of it. "For as he thinks within himself, so he is" (Proverbs 23:7). The mind is the control center, and you are transformed by renewing it. People don't always live according to what they profess, but they all live according to what they have chosen to believe. James says, "I will show you my faith by my works" (2:18).

Second, we are not the Wonderful Counselor. We can't set a captive free, nor can we heal the wounds of the broken-hearted. Only God can do that. The presence of God is the basis for Neil's book *Discipleship Counseling* (Bethany House, 2003). God is the one who "may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:25-26). The Holy Spirit can lead people into all truth. Nothing will be complete or lasting if God isn't an integral part of the process. Rebuilding the foundation with better sand won't help a house last against the storms of life. The house has to be built upon the rock.

Third, no use of CBT will be complete or effective if we ignore the reality of the spiritual world. Irrational fears are rooted in lies, and Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). If you are paying attention to a deceiving spirit, you are believing a lie. Tearing down mental strongholds is a spiritual battle. "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV).

The testimony shared earlier in this chapter has a second half that illustrates the spiritual battle for the mind:

I was not raised to know God. I searched for Him when I was 14, when I felt that I could not take it another minute. But I had no one to whom I could go. I tried praying to Him to help me, but felt that He was so far away. If He created me, I couldn't understand how He could allow me to live in such misery.

From then on, I felt anger and bitterness toward Him. I chose not to seek Him.

I eventually got married and, of course, my crippling fear did not get any better. It changed a lot as I got older,

probably because I had to learn how to fake it even better. I hated when friends would want to camp out for an evening because I still couldn't do it. But I would pretend. I would tell them, "Sure, what time and where?" But then the panic would set in and I would scramble for excuses to get out of it.

My sister was a Christian and was committed to praying for me. She prayed for 12 long years, never giving up. Praise God! I finally called her in the middle of the night after an evening of misery, feeling again that I could not take living inside this jail anymore. There was a world outside of me that I could never really touch or feel, and it killed me.

I wanted life so badly. And I wanted to be free, so I called her in tears and asked her how to find this Jesus she kept telling me about. She prayed with me on the phone, and I spent the rest of the night reading scriptures she had given me. They all referred to freedom in one way or another.

Freedom! I felt such hope. That started my journey of renewal. I spent all those years in such crippling fear, fear of fear. It was not knowing that scared me so bad. I learned about what physically happens when we fear something. I continued learning about anxiety and fear and what they can do. Understanding these things was what really set me on the road to peace.

I live today with chronic irritable bowel syndrome because of all the years of hiding in panic. My nerves are pretty shot inside. But my head and my spirit are at peace. I still struggle with going on long vacations. The old tapes still try to run in my head, but I override them with the truth. The truth being that Jesus is with me all the time, and I have nothing to fear.

Indeed, "I can do all things through Christ who

strengthens me” [Philippians 4:13 ΝΚΙΥ]. I found that verse when I first became a Christian, and I still rely on it today. Praise God!

Processing *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* enables you to bond with God, your heavenly Father. It removes the guilt and shame and establishes your identity in Christ. No one is inferior or superior to one another in the family of God. All the psychosocial crises are overcome in Christ. When personal and spiritual conflicts are resolved, you will be able to face the fears and anxieties that cripple so many people.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the faith foundation for us so different from the faith foundation that Adam and Eve had?
2. If we are new creations in Christ, why do we still struggle with the same old fears and anxieties? How can we change that?
3. What stood out most to you in the stages of development?
4. When did you discover who you are in Christ?
5. What are the three main categories of phobias?
6. What is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and in what way(s) is it compatible with Christianity?
7. Explain the three issues that separate the secular use of CBT from the Christian application of CBT:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

The Steps to Freedom in Christ

Counterfeit versus Real

The first step toward experiencing your freedom in Christ is to renounce (verbally reject) all involvement (past or present) with occult, cult, or false religious teachings or practices. Participation in any group that denies that Jesus Christ is Lord and/or elevates any teaching or book to the level of (or above) the Bible must be renounced. In addition, groups that require dark, secret initiations, ceremonies, vows, pacts, or covenants need to be renounced. God does not take lightly false guidance. “As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people” (Leviticus 20:6). Ask God to guide you as follows:

Dear heavenly Father, please bring to my mind anything and everything that I have done knowingly or unknowingly that involves occult, cult, or false religious teachings and practices. Grant me the wisdom and grace to renounce any and all spiritual counterfeits, false religious teachings, and practices. In Jesus's name I pray. Amen.

The Lord may bring events to your mind that you have forgotten, even experiences you participated in as a game or thought was a joke. The purpose is to renounce all counterfeit spiritual experiences and beliefs that God brings to your mind. Begin this Step by processing the following ten questions:

1. Do you now have, or have you ever had, an imaginary friend, spirit guide, or “angel” offering you guidance or companionship? If it has a name, renounce it by name. **I renounce...**
2. Have you ever seen or been contacted by beings you

thought were aliens from another world? Such deceptions should be identified and renounced. **I renounce...**

3. Have you ever heard voices in your head or had repeating, nagging thoughts such as “I’m dumb,” “I’m ugly,” “Nobody loves me,” “I can’t do anything right”—as if there were a conversation going on inside your head? If so, renounce all deceiving spirits and the lies that you have believed. **I renounce...**
4. Have you ever been hypnotized, attended a New Age seminar, or consulted a psychic, medium/channeler, or spiritist? Renounce all specific false prophecies and guidance they offered. **I renounce...**
5. Have you ever made a secret covenant or vow to any organization or persons other than God, or made an inner vow contrary to Scripture, such as “I will never...”? Renounce all such vows. **I renounce...**
6. Have you ever been involved in a satanic ritual or attended a concert in which Satan was the focus? Renounce Satan and all his works and ways. **I renounce...**
7. Have you ever made any sacrifices to idols, false gods, or spirits? Renounce each one. **I renounce...**
8. Have you ever attended any counterfeit religious event or entered a non-Christian shrine that required you to participate in their religious observances, such as washing your hands or removing your shoes? Confess and renounce your participation in false worship. **I confess and renounce...**
9. Have you ever consulted a shaman or witch doctor for the purpose of manipulating the spiritual world to place curses or seek psychic healing or guidance? All such activity needs to be renounced. **I renounce...**

10. Have you ever tried to contact the dead in order to send or receive messages? Renounce such practices. **I renounce...**

Continue this Step using the following *Non-Christian Spiritual Experience Inventory* as a guide. Then pray the prayer following the checklist to renounce each activity or group the Lord brings to mind. He may reveal to you counterfeit spiritual experiences that are not on the list. Be especially aware of your need to renounce non-Christian religious practices that were part of your culture growing up. Prayerfully renounce them *out loud* if you are working through these Steps on your own.

Non-Christian Spiritual Experience Inventory

Check all that you have participated in.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Wicca | ☐ Out-of-body experiences |
| ☐ Ouija board | ☐ Black and white magic/the Gathering |
| ☐ Bloody Mary | ☐ Paganism |
| ☐ Charlie Charlie | ☐ Reiki |
| ☐ Channeling/chakras | ☐ Occult games such as "light as a feather" |
| ☐ Magic eight ball | ☐ Reincarnation/previous life healing |
| ☐ Table or body lifting | ☐ Mediums and channelers |
| ☐ Spells and curses | ☐ Mormonism |
| ☐ Freemasonry | ☐ Mental telepathy/mind control |
| ☐ Tarot cards | ☐ Christian Science |
| ☐ Automatic writing | ☐ Church of Scientology |
| ☐ Astrology/horoscopes | ☐ Nature worship (Mother Earth) |
| ☐ Palm reading | ☐ Unitarianism/universalism |
| ☐ Silva mind control | ☐ Hinduism/transcendental/
Yoga meditation |

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Blood pacts | ☐ Fortune telling/divination |
| ☐ Sexual spirits | ☐ Buddhism (including Zen) |
| ☐ Séances and circles | ☐ Islam |
| ☐ Trances | ☐ Witchcraft/sorcery |
| ☐ Spirit guides | ☐ Bahaism |
| ☐ Clairvoyance | ☐ Spiritism/animism/folk religions |
| ☐ Ancestor worship | ☐ Rod and pendulum (dowsing) |
| ☐ Hypnosis | ☐ Jehovah's Witness |
| ☐ Satanism | |

Once you have completed your checklist, confess and renounce every false religious practice, belief, ceremony, vow, or pact that you were involved in by praying the following prayer aloud. Take your time and be thorough. Give God time to remind you of every specific incident, ritual, etc. as needed.

Dear heavenly Father, I confess that I have participated in specifically name every belief and involvement with all that you have checked above, and I renounce them all as counterfeits. I pray that You will fill me with Your Holy Spirit, that I may be guided by You. Thank You that in Christ I am forgiven. Amen.