



TASTE Reflection Questions
March 27, 2025

In His Image: Healing Our Self Esteem
Susan Brinkmann

*And remember, I am with you always,
to the end of the age. ~ Matthew 28:20*



1. What did you find most interesting about this talk? For example, her discussion about:

- Self-compassion vs. self-indulgence
- Self-criticism vs. Self-condemnation
- Using the 30-day prayer regime to become more disciplined to clear out everything less than possession

2. Susan offered us **PRAYERS TO BREAK INNER VOWS AND SELF CURSING**. This was a perfect follow-up to Elizabeth Leon's talk.

- How did you feel after the Prayers of Self-forgiveness, Prayers of Forgiveness of Others? Was it helpful?
- How did you feel about the Renunciations and Replacement of Lies?
- Is this something that you feel would be beneficial to say periodically?

3. Susan said that we are to love others as ourself. This implies that we are to love ourself. It is not a selfish or prideful love of self. Rather, it is an **AUTHENTIC LOVE** of self which is a recognition that we are a gift of God and showing mercy to ourself is deeply transformative.

- Were you aware of that scripture? How did Susan's talk help you to see that before we can love others, we must love ourself as God's beloved?
- How can we learn to accept ourselves with all of our foibles and love ourselves as God does?
- How do you feel about the research suggesting that learning how to love yourself in this healthy way makes you happier and healthier and more compassionate as a person?

4. Susan talked about the importance of learning how to **LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY**. She said that it is helpful to remember that those we find difficult to tolerate or accept, or those who have hurt or betrayed us are Children of God and prospective members of Christ's mystical body. He longs to shower them with His grace and mercy and through our unconditional love, we can be the Light of Christ to them.

- How would seeing these people as Children of God change your attitude towards them?
- If you have tried to "see as God sees," how did that approach affect your feelings towards them and your interactions with them?
- If not, what can you do to make a strategic choice to look past even unrepentant sinners and achieve a "merciful outlook"?

Prayer to Break Inner Vows and Self-Cursing

PRAYER OF SELF-FORGIVENESS

Gracious God, my heart is heavy with my own failures. I try to excuse them and explain to myself why they occurred, because I want to be free from the feeling that I am unworthy and incapable of being all that I can be. But I find it easier to accept your forgiveness than to forgive myself.

When I try to forgive myself, it seems I only remember and re-play my failures in my mind, and a sense of hopelessness floods over me.

Help me to know that my past actions are a part of my growing humanity and that even when I fail to live up to what is your will for me, every single moment can be lived anew. Remind me that refusing to forgive myself only keeps me from experiencing that newness. Assure me of the truth that by casting “my sins into the depth of the sea” (Micah 7:19b), you have freed me to discard them myself and live the next moment as if it were my first—for indeed it is. I ask this for the sake of your love – and in your most holy name, Amen.

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

Heavenly Father, I lift up to you now all the difficult people in my life. In the Name of Jesus Christ, I forgive them for upsetting me, for rejecting me and for hurting me. I forgive them for making me feel so alone, so unloved, so guilty and for causing me so much pain. I forgive them for all the horrible things that they’ve said about me, or spoken against me. I also ask you, Father, to forgive them and to bless their lives. Heavenly Father, please forgive me for holding a judgment against each of them and also for trying to control my life’s situation through inner vows and self-cursing.

Lord Jesus, please forgive me for making the following vows and curses when I said:

RENOUNCING THE LIES AND REPLACING WITH TRUTH

In the Name of Jesus Christ, I renounce and break each of these vows and curses. I declare them null and void immediately, no longer able to influence me in any way. By the sword of the Holy Spirit, I cut myself free from each of these vows and curses, and from all of their ill effects upon my life. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Immediately begin to replace these lies with the truth by memorizing what God says about you:

- I am significant. (1 Cor 12:27)
- I am valuable. (1 Cor 7:23)
- I am forgiven. (1 John 1:9)
- I am precious. (Proverbs 31:10, 1 Peter 3:4)
- I am capable. (Ephesians 2:10)

* These prayers are courtesy of the Missionaries of the New Evangelization
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