



## How Do I Defeat My Worst Enemy? Me!

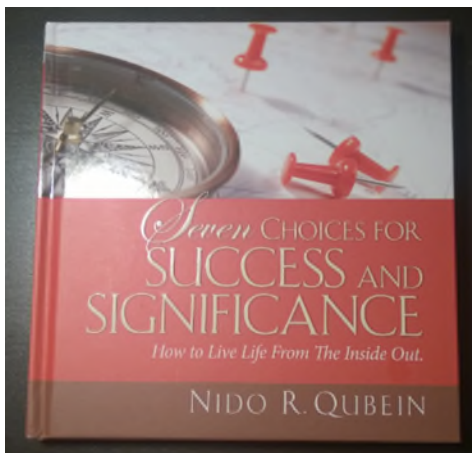
**Romans 7:24: (NASB) *Wretched man that I am!  
Who will set me free from the body of this death?***

In many ways, we are daily in a fight for our lives. There are so many choices that present themselves to us each and every day, many of which can distract and derail us from what is most important. The biggest factor that determines whether we stay on track with life or go down some rabbit hole of distraction and disruption is simply - me. Yup, I am the decision maker - the gatekeeper of my own mind and body - and I alone have the final say as to what kind of victory or what kind of defeat I will experience. Wait a minute! As a Christian, shouldn't I be subject to the will of God through Christ? Absolutely! Then why am I saying that I am in control? It is simple! I decide how much influence the will of God exercises in my life at any given moment and that makes ME my worst enemy! Great! Now what do we do? We learn how to identify, fight and win the battle!



**Defined, *Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage*, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen**

- *“Why do I do this to myself?” If you have uttered that phrase, you may be an unwitting victim of your own bad habits. Call it “getting in your own way,” call it “self-defeating behavior,” whatever you call it, if you have a goal, you can make sure it doesn’t happen with self-sabotage. Now, self-sabotage is any action that gets in the way of achieving your goals. There are a million ways we self-sabotage but some of the most common are procrastination, self-medication with drugs or alcohol, stress eating and interpersonal conflict. And actions like these are especially insidious because they’re relatively small. It’s just one argument, one trip to the fridge, one beer, and in the moment, they may even seem helpful. But, like a river eroding away rocks, over time, self-sabotage creates a Grand Canyon of self-defeat from which it’s hard to climb out.*



The seven points (they are actually chapter titles) in today's podcast come from a great little book titled, “Seven Choices for Success and Significance,” by Nido R. Qubein. You can find the book at [www.simpletruths.com](http://www.simpletruths.com).

### **1. Choose Transformational Patterns**

Even though we may live with fear, do we want to change?

Fear is a constant companion for most of us, which makes change harder and self-sabotage easier.



 Reason one - worth, *Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage*, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen

- *So, why indeed do we do this to ourselves? Well here are six big reasons: Reason number one is worth. You feel like you don't deserve to be successful. Ironically, many strivers work hard and aim high because they're trying to make up for a sense of inadequacy. But when their hard work and high standards lead to good things, material reward, status or power, they shoot themselves in the foot. Why? A little concept called "cognitive dissonance" gives us the answer. Basically, people like to be consistent. And usually our actions line up with our beliefs and values. But when they don't, we get uncomfortable and try to line them up again. That's why if we start to stack up some achievements, but think we're worthless, incapable, or fill-in-the-blank deficient, we pull the plug to get rid of the dissonance. It feels bad to fail, but not as bad as it does to succeed.*



We can be "secure" in our own misery!

**The following is the third time that Jesus called Peter, and this time Peter left his life behind permanently:**

**Luke 5:2-6,8,10-11:** (NASB) <sup>2</sup>and he (Jesus) saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>And he got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And he sat down and began teaching the people from the boat. (Jesus was already trusted and admired by Simon Peter and his brethren.) <sup>4</sup>When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch. <sup>5</sup>Simon answered and said, Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as you say and let down the nets. (Simon knows by now not to question Jesus.) <sup>6</sup>When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break... <sup>8</sup>But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man... <sup>10</sup>...And Jesus said to Simon, do not fear, from now on you will be catching men. <sup>11</sup>When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.



Jesus' invitation was too powerful to ignore, so Simon packed up his sinful self and followed him. When we are called, we come to the realization that we are sinful and need the merit of Jesus' sacrifice to make us acceptable to God.

Where does humility fit in? Isn't it good to think lowly of ourselves? But humility can be taken too far to the point of sabotaging ourselves.

*Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man* - Jesus knew more about the sinfulness of Simon (later called Peter) than Simon knew himself. Simon was using his sinfulness as a cloak to protect himself from being exposed. His humility went overboard and initially prevented him from following Jesus. Humility has to be packaged correctly so it can help us run the race and not defeat us before we even start. We are not to take our own measurement of our self-worth to say, "I can't," using it as a crutch to not move forward.

 **Starting with the conclusion, *Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage*, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen**

- *Okay, how to stop sawing off the tree limb you're sitting on? Well, let's look down lower, to the proverbial root. However your self-sabotage manifests, strike it at the root, which is this: fear of failure. Now, I get a lot of raised eyebrows when I say that. Most people think of self-sabotage as fear of success. But deep down, fear of success isn't truly a fear of making it big, it's a fear of trying one's best and not succeeding, of being publicly humiliated as we worry, in the immortal words of WHAM! - that "Our best isn't good enough." (1980's pop band, their song "Everything She Wants") It's enough to make us take refuge in spiralizer infomercials on YouTube.*



*Solution:*

See your transformation through the sacrifice of Jesus and the eyes of God - He sees what you are, He will seize what you are and see it through to His glory - if you let Him!

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29:** (NASB) <sup>26</sup>For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; <sup>27</sup>but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, <sup>28</sup>and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no man may boast before God.

God's eyes are trained on different things than the eyes of men. Whose observations will you trust?

**It is great to choose change in my life,  
but what if I just do not have the energy to make it happen?**

This is an important question, because if we are honest with ourselves we must acknowledge that we are really broken and defective before God. Choosing to transform is a great beginning and must be followed up with actions that we, in our present broken state, can actually handle! This is not so easy!



The following audio clip is a powerful story of self-sabotage. In her Ted Talk, Beth Clayton has revealed how she learned to sabotage herself at the age of nine as a result of attending a dance class that ended in utter humiliation and failure. Since then her nine-year-old self has been “protecting” her from the possibilities of further humiliation from new opportunities.



**A smoking health coach, *Self-Sabotage, Beth Clayton, TEDxBroadway***

- *Years later a new dream was born and I found myself on the path of a health coach, and I was loving it and I was feeling empowered, and my business was booming. Opportunities were opening up for me and I started engaging in the oddest behavior. I started smoking again, which I hadn't done in years. This may seem like a small thing but because I was a HEALTH COACH, this just played into my saboteur's hands beautifully as she reminded me who I really was. And what would happen if people saw that? Luckily, I recognized this was happening, and I ran to my mentor to try and figure out how to stop it. I said, "Listen, there is this part of myself and I can't stand her. She tries to destroy everything. How do I kill her?" And she looked at me and she just started laughing. She was like, "Yeah, she's not going anywhere. She is here for good." "That," she said, "is the part of you that needs your love and acceptance the most and she is not shutting up until she gets it."*

We trap ourselves and then “prove” to ourselves that we could not have done it anyway.

## 2. Choose Energy Management Over Time Management

We all work differently and have different energy reserves. Let us focus on how we can live while we appreciate what *others* can do!



**Control, *Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen***

- *Reason number two is control. It feels better to control your own failure than to let it blindside you. When the possibility of failure is too hot to handle, you take matters into your own hands. Self-sabotage isn't pretty, but it's a dignified alternative to spinning out of control. At least when you're at the helm, going down in flames feels more like a well-controlled burn.*



...But you still go down in flames! We want to be in control, so we find a way to sabotage our growth, our next step, our ability to mature.

**When we read of the efforts displayed in this next text, we can easily be discouraged to the point of self-defeat, because we cannot live up to such a standard:**

**2 Corinthians 11:18,22-29:** (NASB) <sup>18</sup>Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast also... <sup>22</sup>Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

Paul's background was, in the eyes of men, laudable. What an accomplished Jewish man! But my background is not as great. If God calls us because of our background, I am doomed! Is that why God calls us? This paralyzes us so we do not move forward.

<sup>23</sup>Are they servants of Christ? - I speak as if insane - I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. <sup>24</sup>Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. <sup>26</sup>I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;

Paul's persecutions and sufferings for Christ were breathtaking! Mine are not! If God calls us because of our persecutions and sufferings, I am doomed! Is that why God calls us?

<sup>27</sup>I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup>Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup>Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

Paul's heart and focus for Christ were laser-like! If God calls us because of our focus, I am doomed! Is that why God calls us?

Who do you think you are, trying to be a footstep follower of Christ?

 **Perceived fraudulence, Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen**

- Reason number three is perceived fraudulence. Now, as the stakes get higher and higher, you ascend to ever more rarified levels of education, take on more responsibility at work, or do something that raises your public profile, you feel you only have farther to fall. You think if you call attention to yourself by being successful, it'll be more likely that you're called out as a fraud. This is otherwise known as good ol' impostor syndrome. How does this manifest? Well you may do as little as possible and hope no one notices. Or you may push hard and go big, but worry you'll be revealed at any moment. Either way, feeling like a fake is a one-way ticket to procrastination. If you're faced with a task that makes you feel like a big fat fraud, it's a lot more appealing to check Twitter, research zucchini spiralizers or realize you've never made banana bread from scratch and, by gosh, seize the day and do that right now.



We can SO easily give up and give in - unless we actually see what role we are being called to play!

*Solution:*

**I can, by the grace of God do THIS!**



**While we may not be able to do “THAT,” we are very capable of doing “THIS:”**  
 1 Corinthians 12:22-26: (NASB) <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; <sup>23</sup>and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, <sup>24</sup>whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, <sup>25</sup>so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

We all have different talents and abilities. Those who are not “out in front” are still special. There is equality in the body of Christ - a member having more honor or less honor does not matter. This can be a “rescuing idea” from self-sabotage. We are not called to be exactly like the Apostle Paul. We are called to follow Jesus in the way we can follow him.

God NEVER calls us to the impossible! He DOES call us to that which we, by His grace, can do. He knows you already! He will call you to what you can do and not what someone else did do or can do or will do. Even if we are “low-energy” people, we can still focus our energy on service.

**We focus our energy on being transformed.  
 Does this get us out of our self-sabotaging pattern?**

Focusing the energy we have on those things that would transform us is a great place to start, but to leave self-sabotaging behavior behind we need to be far more specific. Next comes the *result* of focus and transformation: giving. As a Christian, there is no better way to express our genuine desire to be Christlike than to give!

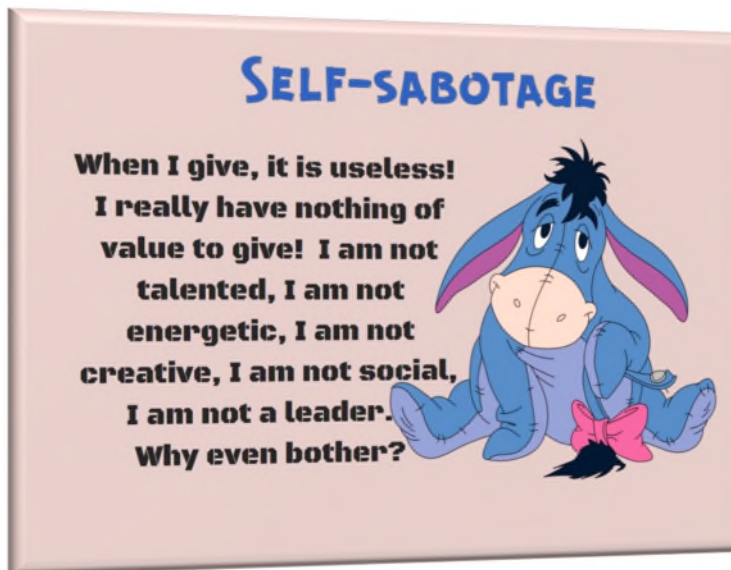
 **My nine-year-old protective self, *Self-Sabotage*, Beth Clayton, TEDxBroadway**

- *And I started to see it. I did, I started to see that my saboteur and my nine-year-old were actually the same. That my saboteur was just the armored second skin of my most exposed, most freaked out little kid. And her job was a noble one. It was to do or say anything that was going to keep that nine-year-old out of the proverbial dance studio, and I have been trying to overcome her and wrestle her. All she was trying to do was just keep me from feeling like the smelly kid who was wearing the wrong clothes, who didn't know her right from her left. And I realized it wasn't my job to overcome her, it was my responsibility to understand her. But, if I really wanted to get the plane off the ground, then I needed to invite her into the conversation about how to do so because anytime that I really want something she's going to be right there.*

We argue with ourselves and try to put that part of ourselves down, but it just springs back up. If we can begin to understand the sabotaging part of ourselves, we can now work through it.

### **3. Choose to Give**

There is nothing more liberating than giving to others, for in so doing we position ourselves to focus with sincerity on the needs of others.



It is not even worth it. We have already decided the conclusion before we started.



As a kid, I was told I was shy. So, I would not do anything other than be shy. I would not be on a podcast, for example! Rick, are you shy?



Actually, I am. That might be strange, but I have no fear of a large audience, but put me in a one-on-one conversation and I want to hide. You have to understand that part of yourself to be able to “get” that part of yourself to be able to work with you. And it can work with you! Giving is the best way to do it, because giving means focusing on somebody else.

**Romans 7:21-23:** (NASB) <sup>21</sup>I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. <sup>22</sup>For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, <sup>23</sup>but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Discouragement due to our weakness is SO easy to find.

*Solution:*

**God already knew what I have to give, and He called me BECAUSE of it!**

Whatever is wrong with you, God knew before He called you. He sees in us the ability to stand, follow His will and the potential we have to do something great. Potential develops through difficult, harsh trials as we go through our experiences.

**Mark 12:41-44:** (NASB) <sup>41</sup>And he sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. <sup>42</sup>A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. <sup>43</sup>Calling his disciples to him, he said to them, Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; <sup>44</sup>for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.



It did not matter that she did not have a lot - she gave what she could. This is one of the strongest points in dealing with our self-sabotage. God's accounting is based on who and what we are and what we can do with our circumstances. He measures abundance by the size of our heart and spiritual intentions - not the grandiosity of our gift!

If you are not talented, energetic, creative, social or a leader, it is okay, God will use whatever you are anyway? You do not have to be all those things?

YES! My worst enemy is me, because I see my flaws and neglect to look at my potential. God sees my flaws through the eyes of my potential. He will guide us to experiences that will help us to get to that potential.

**Familiarity, Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen**

- Reason number four? Familiarity. Again, people like to be consistent. Time and time again, we even choose consistency over happiness. If you're used to being neglected, abused, ignored or exploited, it's oddly comforting to keep putting yourself in that position. You've probably been there your whole life, and while you're not happy, the devil you know is preferable to the devil you don't.

**4. Choose to be Authentic**

Who you are is not your past, but it is your present state of grace and forgiveness.



**I know the depths of my imperfect human nature -  
I cannot get away from it.**

Romans 7:24-25: (NASB) <sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

*Solution:*

**Place your love of God through Christ in the forefront of your heart, mind, soul and strength.**

**God's command to Israel had it right:**

Deuteronomy 6:4-9: (NASB) <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup>You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup>These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. (The next verses focus on loving God with your mind.) <sup>7</sup>You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when





you rise up. <sup>8</sup>You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>9</sup>You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

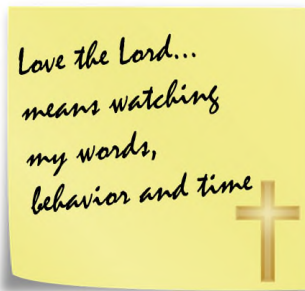
Observant Jews take this very seriously and literally wrap themselves with what is called a “phylactery” or “tefillin.” It is a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah, secured by leather bands on the head and around the arm.



Many Jews have a Mezuzah on their doorpost, a decorative case with the “Shema Israel”

(Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One...*) prayer tucked inside.

This reminds them of their faith when they go in and out of their homes.



There is also a figurative application of this - put the word and will of God in front of you wherever you go. We need spiritual sticky notes! Load your life up with reminders to bring you back to loving the Lord with your heart, mind, soul and strength.



Follow Christian Questions on Instagram for daily affirmations and inspiration!

It is deeply authentic to actively seek God in all of our ways, for it is HIM we serve. To deal with the depth of our imperfect nature, we need to focus on that above.

**Focused energy, transformation, giving and authenticity. What does all of this do to self-sabotage?**

Focused energy, transformation giving and authenticity all bring us to a place of balance. When we are truly balanced we are able to wrestle the steering wheel of our lives away from our own personal saboteur (that would be me) and begin to drive our lives in accordance with God’s will.



**5. Choose to Live Life in Balance**

This can be more difficult than it sounds, for it is really easy to choose a life that *looks* balanced with chaos under the surface rather than a life that really *is* balanced. Balance brings peace!



Handy scapegoat, *Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage*, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen

- Reason number five: For a handy scapegoat. If things don't work out (or when they don't work out, because that's the only option, right?) we can blame the sabotage instead of ourselves. "Of course he left me, we argued all the time." "Of course I failed the class, I didn't start my term paper until the night before." These reasons, while true, are more superficial, and therefore easier to swallow than the deeper reasons we only believe to be true. "Of course he left me, the real me is unlovable." "Of course I failed the class, I'm incapable of understanding this stuff."

We do not want to take the potential God sees in us and try to prove it is "less."

If I pretend to be balanced, I will look and feel good and that is all I need.

Self-sabotage



Even though Israel had it right, some found a way to mess up the instructions by focusing on "looking the part":

Deuteronomy 11:13,17-19: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul...<sup>17</sup>Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain...<sup>18</sup>You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>19</sup>You shall teach them to your sons.

God told Israel several times His word needed to be kept in front of them at all times. Symbolically we need to have God's will and God's word constantly surrounding us.

The Pharisees took these (and other) Old Testament verses and expanded them to their detriment:

Matthew 23:1-3,5-7: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying: The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; <sup>3</sup>therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them...

They blew the instructions out of proportion because they could look holier than others. These were empty actions.

Do not do according to their deeds - Follow the Law, but do not do what the scribes and Pharisees actually DO. This was a powerful indictment of taking on the look of being balanced but being unbalanced on the inside. Jesus plainly called it out as hypocrisy.

<sup>5</sup>But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. <sup>6</sup>They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup>and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men.

The leaders did these actions out of personal pride, not to serve God better. What began as a way to remember God in all things became a way to forget God in all things.



We can do that by pretending to be something we are not. Do we hide under the cloak of outward appearance, only to later use it as proof of our unworthiness? This steps on the potential God sees in you.

**What my nine-year-old self needs, *Self-Sabotage*, Beth Clayton, TEDxBroadway**

- *But now when I'm hijacked by her past pain, when I want to crash the plane, I have new tools. I try to visualize her and when I do, I mean, she's pissed off, she's angry, she's intimidating, but when I really see her and when I breathe her in, she starts to transform and crumble to that little nine-year-old heap. I can see her pink bathing suit, I can see her plaid stretch pants, and as the adult in this situation, it is my job to go and sit with her and put my arm around her. And I ask her a question, "Short of crashing the plane because we're not going to do that, what do you need from me?" And when I ask her that question she tells me pure and simple, she says, "Lady, if I am going to go back into that dance studio, I need to know that there's nothing wrong with me and I need to believe it. And if I'm going to go back in, I need you to hold my hand. If I am going to go back in, I need you to have my back if I get hurt like that again."*

*Solution:*

**Honesty - with yourself and with others -  
as how we look is not what we necessarily are.  
Realize God HONESTLY knows your frame and called you anyway!**

God knows how broken you are and sees your potential.

Romans 12:2: (NASB) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Our transformation is, by God's grace and spirit, the renewing of our minds and opens the door to our ability to understand who we are and who we can become. That is part of what God wants us to understand.

**Remember our theme Scripture?**

Romans 7:24: (NASB) *Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*

**Here is what comes after:**

Romans 8:1-4: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>*Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.*

As wretched as we are, we have been forgiven. Because of his sacrifice, we are not under condemnation any longer. Paul is telling us we have the opportunity to claim balance in our lives - not because we are so great, but because Jesus and his sacrifice are so great. Now we have to believe in the forgiveness.

<sup>3</sup>*For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

Because of Jesus' sacrifice, God sees us as balanced before Him.



**Focusing on balance leads us to more self-sabotage elimination tools**

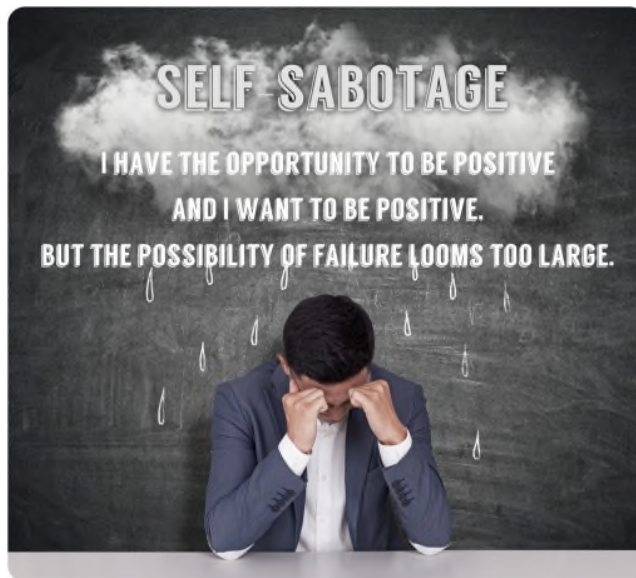
The further we go with the whole idea of managing our self-sabotaging tendencies the better off we are, as the whole self-sabotage thing never quits. Our best approach is to be so well-equipped that the best sabotage efforts will pale in relation to our anti-sabotage preparations!

**Sheer boredom, Six Reasons Why We Self-Sabotage, Dr. Ellen Hendriksen**

- *Reason number six: sheer boredom. Once in a while, we self-sabotage simply to push buttons. We pick a fight, cause drama, get a rush. Of course, this isn't random - we do all things for a reason. Here, sabotage recreates a familiar feeling of instability and chaos. Plus, if we're stuck at the bottom, we might as well wield some power while we're there, right?*

**6. Choose to be Positive**

"Be positive" is one of the most overstated statements made by self-help gurus. While it is true, this choice can become a genuine choice only when we have put the previous steps in order. Being at this point is a true victory against constant self-sabotage tendencies.



**Matthew 6:28-30:** (NASB) <sup>28</sup>And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, <sup>29</sup>yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. <sup>30</sup>But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!

God has you in His hand. Trust that above and beyond your own conclusions. No matter who you are, life brings challenges and challenges typically bring worry and doubt. Worry and doubt bring the temptation for self-sabotage.

*Solution:*

**Reset your mind on things above - pray, praise and appreciate. Instead of replaying your failures, repeat your blessings.**



**Philippians 4:6-8:** (NASB) *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

*If there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things* - this can help undermine self-sabotage tendencies. When we consciously change what we will think about (think about spiritual sticky notes), it puts things in a perspective that allows us to make progress.

Just as God commanded Israel, we also should carry His grace and His will with us at all times.

### **7. Choose to be a Risk Taker**

When built upon the six previous chapter titles, risk taking defies self-sabotage.

My father died when I was six years of age. If I had the power to change one thing in my life, I would much rather have had a dad - to read me a book, sing me a song, throw me a ball, take me to the circus, or talk with me man-to-man. But, that was not my fate. I learned that out of adversity often emerges abundance.



What does that mean in life? It's a concept best illustrated by the koi fish...

If you put a koi fish in a fishbowl and give it food and water, it never grows to more than two inches in size. But if you put it in a pond, it grows to a foot in size.

*The koi fish grows proportionately to the environment in which it lives.*

Think about it. When the koi fish is in the fishbowl, somebody is giving it food and water. It has no demands placed upon it. It has no adversity. It is in a comfort zone. It is content.

The moment you take the koi fish out of the fishbowl and put it in a pond, the water is deeper and colder. It takes more for the koi fish just to survive. By necessity, it has to grow bigger and stronger so it can deal with its environment.

(Source: “Seven Choices for Success and Significance,” by Nido R. Qubein)



### The parable of the pounds:

**Luke 19:20-23:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>Another came, saying, Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; <sup>21</sup>for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow. <sup>22</sup>He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup>Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?

God does want us to be risk takers. As a footstep follower of Jesus, we are required to step out of our fishbowl.

*Solution:*

Take spiritually-minded steps in faith  
so that God's blessing is with those who truly seek Him!

**Romans 8:35,37-39:** (NASB) <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword... <sup>37</sup>But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus gave his life for the purpose of eternity. He calls us to follow him for the same purpose - the eternal good of all of mankind. We cannot positively contribute to eternity if we spend our everyday in self-sabotage. We disallow our potential by heading it off at the pass. We have to be careful to understand how important it is to understand all the steps needed.

Follow the steps and become a mature, strong follower of Christ.



**So, how do I defeat my worst enemy? Me!  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!**



**And now even more to think about...  
only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!**

More information on the errors of the Pharisees in Jesus' day regarding the Old Testament command to always keep the Law in your life at every turn...

First, one of the Old Testament texts that they were striving to keep:

### **First section of the Law - consecration of the firstborn:**

**Exodus 13:1-10:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me. <sup>3</sup>Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the LORD brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten. <sup>4</sup>On this day in the month of Abib, you are about to go forth. <sup>5</sup>It shall be when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall observe this rite in this month. <sup>6</sup>For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. <sup>7</sup>Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders. <sup>8</sup>You shall tell your son on that day, saying, it is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt. <sup>9</sup>And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. <sup>10</sup>Therefore, you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.

### **Second section of the Law - sacrificing of the firstborn:**

**Exodus 13:11-16:** (NASB) <sup>11</sup>Now when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you, <sup>12</sup>you shall devote to the LORD the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to the LORD. <sup>13</sup>But every first offspring of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. <sup>14</sup>And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, what is this? then you shall say to him, with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. <sup>15</sup>It came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem. <sup>16</sup>So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as phylacteries on your forehead, for with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.

The fact that the remembrance of the Law is mentioned twice did get their attention. The problem was that over time, their zeal to do what God said turned into a zeal to have others notice how well they did what God said!

### **Jesus called this out:**

**Matthew 23:1-12:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying: The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; <sup>3</sup>therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. <sup>5</sup>But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. <sup>6</sup>They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup>and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. <sup>8</sup>But do not be called Rabbi; for one is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. <sup>9</sup>Do not call anyone on earth your father; for one is your



Father, He who is in heaven. <sup>10</sup>Do not be called leaders; for one is your Leader, that is, Christ. <sup>11</sup>But the greatest among you shall be your servant. <sup>12</sup>Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

**Luke 20:45-46:** (NASB) <sup>45</sup>And while all the people were listening, he said to the disciples, <sup>46</sup>Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets.

Here is some commentary on how they polluted the simple commands of God. This commentary only focuses on the way they dressed so they could call attention to themselves.

**Luke account:** *which desire to walk in long robes - the rule for the length of a scholar's garment:*

(Source: John Gill's Exposition of the Bible) "his flesh must not appear under his garments, as the light linen garments, and the like, they make in Egypt; nor must his garments be drawn upon the ground, as the garments of proud men, but must reach to his heel, and his glove must reach the top of his fingers."

According to this rule, the garments of the doctors were to be so long as to cover the whole body, even down to their heels, but were not to be any longer; and by this it appears their garments were very long; but they did not always go by this rule; some had their garments so long as to have a train after them; see Gill on "Matthew 23:5."

**Matthew account:** (Source: John Gill's Exposition of the Bible) Verse 5. But all their works they do for to be seen of men, etc. All their prayers, alms deeds, and fastings were all done in a public manner, that men might behold them, and they might have applause and glory from them: they sought neither the glory of God, nor the good of their fellow creatures, nor any spiritual advantage and pleasure to themselves, in their performances; they neither attended to moral duties, nor ceremonious rites, nor the traditions of their fathers, any further than they could be seen by men in them, and keep up their credit and esteem among them. Hence, they make broad their phylacteries: these were four sections of the law, wrote on parchments, folded up in the skin of a clean beast, and tied to the head and hand. The four sections were these following, namely the "first," was Exodus 13:2-11 the "second," was Exodus 13:11-17 the "third," was Deuteronomy 6:4-10 the "fourth," was Deuteronomy 11:13-22. Those that were for the head, were written and rolled up separately, and put in four distinct places, in one skin, which was fastened with strings to the crown of the head, towards the face, about the place where the hair ends, and where an infant's brain is tender; and they took care to place them in the middle, that so they might be between the eyes. Those that were for the hand, were written in four columns, on one parchment, which being rolled up, was fastened to the inside of the left arm, where it is fleshy, between the shoulder and the elbow, that so it might be over against the heart. These, they imagined, were commanded them by God, in Exodus 13:16, Deuteronomy 6:8 whereas the sense of these passages only is, that the goodness of God in delivering them out of Egypt, and the words of the law, should be continually before them, in their minds and memories, as if they had tokens on their hands, and frontlets between their eyes; but they understood them literally, and observed them in the above manner.

**Are we guilty of the same kind of behavior?**