

Listening and Talking . . .

I once heard a remarkable story about a vulture. It was a winter day on the Niagara River, near Buffalo, New York. This vulture was riding a carcass down the river while feeding on its prey. Its intention was to ride and feed on the carcass as long as it could, and then fly off to safety at the last moment just before the falls. But when the time came, the vulture tried to fly away only to discover to its horror that its claws had become frozen to the prey it was drifting upon. Unfortunately, the vulture plunged over the falls to its death. That vulture was made for the skies, but it was crammed in a cage of its own making, imprisoned and destroyed by the desires of its claws.

Like the vulture, our hands freeze to that which we feed upon, and though we are meant for the skies, we are crammed in a cage of our own making.

- It we feed on defeat, we are in a cage of negativism.
- If we are jealous or resentful, we are in a cage of hate.
- If we are hooked on alcohol or drugs or caffeine, we are in a cage of escapism.
- If we are self-centered, we are in a cage of selfishness.
- If we always maintain the status quo, we are in a cage of the closed mind.
- If we are anxiety-ridden, we are in a cage of fear.
- If we are constantly talking badly about other people, we are in a cage of gossip.

If we are frozen in one of these unhealthy attitudes that can weaken our souls, we are headed for a fall. We have lost our freedom! Are you letting stubborn pride or selfishness or resentment or closed-mindedness or jealousy or apathy cram you into a cage of your own making? You are meant for the skies! You are meant for greatness!

It's something to think about, isn't it? Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold. With all these thoughts as a backdrop, let's look together at these seven (7) devastating attitudes that can absolutely imprison us. **Please join me in a seven-week sermon series entitled, "Avenues to the Holy Spirit," beginning August 7 through September 18.** The Spirit of God, living within you as you abide in Christ, welcomes you, gives you peace, healing, and transformation.



One of my greatest spiritual tools is to sit in silent prayer every morning. Each day I pray to remain a victor, depend only on God's love, let God control me, treat others with a self-giving love, be open-minded, trust God more, and to not gossip. Keeping your eye on these seven attributes will definitely renew your life! They are the exact opposite of the seven debilitating characteristics mentioned above that will imprison you in a cage.

Blessings on all as we Journey together,
Pastor Tom Cici