

ILLUSIONS: I'M NOT POWERLESS!

Scripture used: [Genesis 2:8-22 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This week, Pastor Hurmon began a series called "Illusions." Illusions are false or misleading impressions of reality. They are like artificial worlds created inside our own minds, almost like a virtual reality. Many illusions contradict truths that the Bible tells us about who we are and what we are capable of. These illusions undermine and destabilize our lives, our families, and our communities. We end up trapped inside these illusions, blaming everyone and everything around us instead of taking responsibility. We act like victims and avoid living the impactful, fulfilling lives that God intends for us. The illusion of powerlessness began with Adam in the Garden of Eden when humanity was first given the power to choose. God gave us this power so we would develop an authentic relationship with Him. Far from being powerless, we actually have the superpower of choice no matter the circumstances. That's why we must confront this illusion: to tap into the blessings of a "with God" life!

KEY POINTS

- 1. Change begins internally, not with the external world.** Many of us say things like "If my life was better, I would be a better person." Maybe the issue is our spouse isn't attractive enough, or our job doesn't pay well enough, or our car isn't nice enough. Whatever the specific reason, it is actually an excuse. Life could be perfect and we would still find ways to complain. How do we know? Because that's what happened with Adam! He lived in the nicest place in the world. He had important, fulfilling work to do. And he had the perfect spouse, literally customized for Him by God. Adam had no excuse for his rebellion against God, and yet he made the wrong choice. We're just as broken, so don't believe the illusion of powerlessness that tells us we need the external world to change for us to have power.
- 2. God gave us the superpower of choice.** In all of creation, there is nothing else except humanity that was made in God's image and likeness. Humans are the only creation given free will. That means God gave us the ability to choose right or wrong, good or evil. This is the special foundation that was laid so we could freely build an authentic relationship with a loving God. It was this free will that allowed Adam & Eve to disobey God and eat the fruit from the one tree that was forbidden in all of the Garden of Eden. When they were caught, however, they immediately began acting as if they didn't have a choice. The illusion of powerlessness was already taking hold.
- 3. Choose to live a "with God" life, no matter the circumstances.** Of course, most things that happen in life are outside our control. We can't choose our parents, or the country where we were born, or the challenges facing society. We do get to choose how we react, though. That is the opposite of powerlessness. God can turn around any situation. Even when we are surrounded by evil, we can still choose to do good. There is always an option to prayerfully act in accordance with God's will.

DISCUSSION

- 1) HEAR** - The world is full of messages that undermine our sense of choice. We are tempted to throw up our hands, to feel overwhelmed, and to give in to despair. This is not what God tells us to do. In [Philippians 4:13 \(NLT\)](#), we are told that all things are possible with God who strengthens us. The improbable and even the impossible can become reality! In what parts of your life are you tempted to feel powerless, or that you have no choice? What choices actually exist, even in that area?
- 2) UNDERSTAND** - Pastor Hurmon challenges us with two profound questions to ask ourselves as a follow-up to the sermon. First, "where is the illusion of powerlessness at work in my life?" Second, "how can the power of choice, with God, make a difference?" Consider [Genesis 2:8-22 \(NLT\)](#) and all the circumstances that Adam had going for him. Do easier circumstances make good choices harder or easier? Do difficult circumstances make good choices harder or easier? As you discuss, and consider the trade-offs between both easier and more challenging circumstances, consider ultimately the many factors that develop our character and our ability to make good choices. How does the "with God" life develop our character?
- 3) DO** - Transformation comes from doing, not just from hearing. We must prayerfully affirm "with God, I am not powerless!" Listen for God's guidance and take action in a specific area where the illusion of powerlessness is undermining your life. Join us next Sunday as we continue the "Illusions" message series!