

THE POWER OF
**RIGHT
BELIEVING**

7 KEYS TO FREEDOM FROM FEAR, GUILT, AND ADDICTION

JOSEPH PRINCE



New York · Boston · Nashville

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This book is lovingly dedicated to my daughter
and friend Jessica Shayna Prince.

*Many daughters have done virtuously,
but thou excellest them all.*

—Proverbs 31:29 KJV



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INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades, I have had the privilege of ministering to precious people from all walks of life. I have had the honor of meeting people in my congregation and at conferences around the world and hearing their stories. I can see them in my mind's eye even as I write.

Some of them brimmed with the exuberance that came with their release from condemnation. Others held back tears of gratefulness as they recounted addictions that had once shackled them with shame and the inability to do anything positive with their lives. For those whom I didn't get to meet in person, their letters and emails to me told their stories. Stories of liberation from a life of anxiety and depression. Stories of being rescued from the prison of fear. Stories of breaking loose from destructive habits.

I am deeply moved and humbled that God has used my messages, books, and television broadcast in some way to help these amazing individuals navigate their way to freedom.

But not all stories that I've come to know have had a happy ending. At least not yet.

As a pastor, I've also encountered many who are still struggling today. Some are bound by severe insecurities, trapped by eating disorders, or gripped by constant fears and recurring panic attacks.

Others have been held captive by years of chronic depression, fighting suicidal thoughts that strip them of their ability to function in their everyday lives. There are also those who are caught in a destructive cycle of addiction, some to alcohol and others to nicotine, drugs, or pornography. And sadly, some of these people are still desperately trying to claw their way out from under the burden of more than one of the above.

They all long for freedom and have tried everything, including psychological and psychiatric treatments. They have tried exercising their own willpower to the best of their abilities, only to find themselves even more entangled in their addictions and insecurities than they were before. Many have become financially drained from seeing psychiatrist after psychiatrist, doctor after doctor, counselor after counselor, spending thousands of dollars every month on consultation fees. They've taken all types of antidepressant and antipsychotic drugs, in addition to trying quick fixes of every imaginable kind. And they are no better.

Hearing stories like that always breaks my heart, and I remember asking myself this: What is the difference between those who have experienced their breakthroughs and those who are still trapped and bound by toxic emotions and addictions?

I believe the answer is simple but powerful: their *beliefs*.

Right believing always produces right living. When you believe right, you will live right.

You see, people are struggling to control their behaviors and actions because they don't have control over their emotions and feelings. They don't have control over their emotions and feelings because they don't have control over their thoughts. And they don't

have control over their thoughts because they are not controlling what they believe.

Put simply, if you believe wrong, you will struggle with wrong thoughts. Those wrong thoughts will produce unhealthy emotions that will lead to toxic feelings of guilt, shame, condemnation, and fear. And those wrong feelings will ultimately produce wrong behaviors, actions, and painful addictions.

What you believe is critical. And wrong believing is the trigger that starts you on a path of defeat. It is what keeps you trapped and drives you deeper and deeper into paralyzing captivity.

The good news is there is a way out of this vicious cycle of defeat.

The Power of Right Believing will teach you the powerful truths of God's Word to believe in His love for you. It will show you how God is for you and not against you. It will open your eyes to see how He is on your side, rooting for your success and propelling you toward your breakthrough with His love and tender mercies.

In this book, you will learn what God really sees when He looks at you as His beloved child, what it means to be completely forgiven, and how to have a confident expectation of good for your future and destiny in Christ.

You will read many amazing testimonies from people across America and around the world. Their lives were touched and transformed when they encountered the person of Jesus and allowed their minds to be renewed with right beliefs about their true identity in Christ.

To accelerate your learning experience, I have distilled the essence of the power of right believing into seven simple but practical keys that you can begin to apply every day in your life. These

keys are easy and highly effective Bible-based principles that will calibrate your mind to develop positive habits for right believing. The seven keys are:

- Believe in God's Love for You
- Learn to See What God Sees
- Receive God's Complete Forgiveness
- Win the Battle for Your Mind
- Be Free from Self-Occupation
- Have a Confident Expectation of Good
- Find Rest in the Father's Love

My friend, if you are struggling with some of the issues I mentioned earlier, I believe with all of my heart that as you set aside some time to read this book, you'll find inspiration, hope, and encouragement to break free from the crippling grip of all that has held you back. I am confident that you'll find the freedom and power you need to live your life to the fullest.

God intended for you to live with joy overflowing, peace that surpasses understanding, and an unshakable confidence in what He has done for you. It's time to let go of the life of defeat and step into a life full of victory, security, and success. Forget about merely dealing with the symptoms—the guilt, fears, and addictions. We are going after the root! If you can change what you believe, you can change your life! Now that is the power of right believing.

PART ONE

**BELIEVE IN GOD'S LOVE
FOR YOU**



CHAPTER 1

WHAT YOU BELIEVE IS POWERFUL

What you believe is powerful. If you can change what you believe, you can change your life! I have met many precious people who keep struggling to control their behaviors and actions. No matter how hard they try and how much effort, time, and resources they throw into the fight, like a beaten boxer they end up returning to their corners, their bodies defeated, morale crushed, and confidence shattered—trapped once again in guilt, fear, and addictions that simply refuse to go away.

Then the bell rings for the next round. The fight continues, and they unleash everything they have against their adversary. Left, right. Left, right. It seems like they are making progress. But then their opponent starts landing head shots, and each blow comes loaded with poisonous, condemning judgment:

Who do you think you are? Have you forgotten all those mistakes you've made?

Things will never get better. You should just accept your lot.

It's not going to work—you are just going to fail again!

Nobody loves you. You are all alone.

I've seen these deceptive tactics used too many times by the adversary. I've seen too many people try to move out from under the shadow of their past or break free from their addictions, only to end up succumbing to these lies about themselves, their identity, and their destiny.

That's the power of *wrong* believing.

Wrong believing puts people in a prison. Even though there are no physical shackles, wrong believing causes its inmates to behave as though they were incarcerated in a maximum-security penitentiary. They march inexorably to their dank cells of addictions. They allow themselves to be led into dungeons of destructive behaviors. They have convinced themselves never to dream of a better place, believing that they have no choice but to live in despair, frustration, and defeat.

Right believing, on the other hand, is a light that illuminates the path to freedom out of this prison.

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God Wants to Light Your Way

Now before you dismiss this as yet another book that claims that everything will work itself out if only you could think positively, hang on. This is not about human psychology. This is about right believing that is birthed out of a very personal and intimate relationship with a loving Savior and founded upon His Word that brings life and illumination. The psalmist says it this way: "Your

word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:105). The Message translation reads, “By your words I can see where I’m going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.”

My friend, God wants to throw a beam of light on your path today. Whatever you are struggling with currently, no matter how insurmountable your challenges appear, when you start believing right, things are going to start turning around for your good!

The breakthroughs you have been fighting to have for years can happen in a supernatural instant. I know this because I have counseled and prayed for many people who have told me about how their years of addiction to cigarettes, alcohol, or pornography just vanished when they allowed Jesus to come into their situations. They woke up one morning, and the desire for those things just wasn’t there anymore!

If we’re honest, we all have some measure of wrong believing in our lives. If you don’t believe this, all you need to do is ask yourself, “Have I often felt anxious, worried, or fearful that the worst would happen to me and my loved ones?” My friend, these negative, exhausting emotions are merely flags that indicate what we truly believe about ourselves, our lives, and God.

When we are fearful and worried all the time, we are living as if we don’t believe that we have a strong and able Shepherd who is tenderhearted toward us, who only leads us to good places, who protects us and lovingly watches over us. So if worrying or being fearful seems to be your natural default mode, what you need to do is to keep hearing and learning about how much God loves you and how precious you are to Him. The more strongly you believe this—

the more this truth gets a hold on the inside of you—the more it will change your thoughts and feelings and the less you will fall victim to unhealthy emotions and behaviors.

In varying degrees, we all have wrong beliefs in our hearts that need to be exposed to the truth of God’s Word. That’s why we need the Savior. Our wrong beliefs can only be demolished when they are exposed to His grace and the truth of His Word.

Knowing the Truth That Sets You Free

The very premise of this book is based on the oft-quoted verse that says, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). This is a verse that has been widely used, even in secular literature. But what does it really mean? What *is* the truth that sets you free?

It is essential we recognize Jesus said this to the Jews of His day. These were people who at an early age grew up studying and learning the law. Yet these people, much like us today, still battled with fears, anxieties, sicknesses, and all kinds of oppression, bondages, and addictions.

So what is this truth that Jesus was talking about, this truth that if His hearers knew, would set them free of all these destructive things? Well, it clearly cannot be the law because these people were already well-versed in the law. They were already observing the law as best they could, yet they could not find freedom in the law. Freedom, my friend, can only be found in His grace. When you believe

right in His grace and His love for you, the shackles of fear, guilt, and addictions will fall off.

Grace—Antidote for the Poisoned Mind

Grace is the truth that Jesus came to give us. His Word proclaims that “grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

In the original Greek, “grace and truth” are regarded as one item because the following verb, “came,” is used in the singular. Grace and truth are one and the same thing. Grace is the truth that has the power to set you free from fear, guilt, and all addictions—“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

It is the truth of grace and not of the law that brings you true freedom. The truth of the law only binds you. In fact, religious bondage is one of the most crippling bondages with which a person can be encumbered. Religious bondage keeps one in constant fear, guilt, and anxiety.

The good news is that grace came to set you free from the curse of the law. Grace is not a doctrine or theological subject. When Jesus talks about grace, He is talking about Himself. Grace is a person. Grace is Jesus Himself. “For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). The truth that has the power to fling wide open your prison doors is His grace. His grace is the antidote to counteract every poison in your mind! When you taste Jesus’ love and savor His loving-kindness and tender mercies, every wrong belief begins to dissolve in the glory of His love.

When you taste Jesus' love and savor His loving-kindness and tender mercies, every wrong belief begins to dissolve.

I've seen this happen over and over again, everywhere I go proclaiming without apology the unadulterated gospel of grace and the unceasing love of our Lord Jesus. When a person starts to calibrate his or her believing so that he or she receives with gladness God's lavish, excessive, and superabounding love, destructive mind-sets or strongholds begin to shatter. And in a supernatural instant, he or she experiences liberation from destructive habits, fears, and bondages. You can't process His grace logically in your mind—it needs to be experienced in your heart!

My friend, your freedom is found in rightly believing in His love, His grace, and His favor in your life. When you believe right about His grace, you will begin to live right. Right believing always produces right living.

God's Grace Uproots Wrong Beliefs

I met a lady at a conference where I was speaking. I wish you could have seen Kate for yourself. She was a confident and attractive young lady, with a face radiant and glowing. So I couldn't believe it when she revealed to me that she had been delivered from more than four years of alcohol addiction!

She had been a corporate highflier, but the stress of work and the strain of maintaining her success and image drove her to consume at least one liter of alcohol a day as a means of escape. Before long,

keeping up with the high-octane demands of her career became a constant struggle. Coupled with the self-imposed pressure to keep her veneer of success intact, this struggle pushed her deep into depression.

One thing led to another, and soon, besides being addicted to alcohol, Kate became dependent on a cocktail of strong antidepressants, tranquilizers, beta-blockers, and sleeping pills. She shared that she tried everything to beat the bottle. She made appointments with psychiatrists and psychologists, and even faithfully attended support groups for alcoholics. Through these endless appointments and meetings she experienced what she calls “a few bouts of recovery,” but they only lasted several days at best.

One day, Kate’s husband decided to take her on a holiday. This filled her with even more anxiety because she didn’t know how she was going to get her secret alcohol “fix” while traveling with her husband. Now, she had tried over and over again to quit drinking and was all too familiar with how the withdrawal symptoms had defeated her every time. Her hands would tremble and shake so vigorously that she couldn’t even hold a spoon to feed herself. She would feel faint and break out in a cold sweat and would constantly throw up and not be able to keep any food down.

All these symptoms would disappear with a drink or two, so she would sneak off to buy alcohol when she was supposed to be at the gym and guzzle hard liquor in secret when her husband was at work!

To the rest of the world, Kate appeared to have it all together. But she knew. She knew that she was trapped in the prison of alcoholism and there was no way out of this vicious cycle of defeat.

So after repeatedly trying to overcome her addiction without success, Kate was on the verge of giving up. But God had other plans. He led her to one of the leaders in my church who taught her to immerse herself in the Word and to keep praying in the Spirit. As she kept listening to my messages on God's grace, God began uprooting the wrong beliefs that had taken hold in her mind and replacing them with right beliefs.

When it was time for her to leave for the holiday, even though she was filled with trepidation and almost backed out of the trip at the last minute, she decided that she would go. She asked the Lord to help her keep her eyes on Him instead of trying to overcome the withdrawal symptoms. She was determined to enjoy her time with her husband and to give thanks to Jesus for every blessing, no matter how small.

Kate told me that throughout the trip, she just kept resting, praying in the Spirit, and listening continually to my messages on her iPod. To her amazement, she didn't suffer any symptoms. And you know what? It has been more than two years since that trip, and she has never taken another drop of alcohol. Hallelujah!

She admitted that while the thought of having a drink does come to her once in a while, she believes that God has given her the strength to resist the temptation. And by His grace, she knows that she will never give in to the bottle again!

My friend, in a supernatural instant, four long and treacherous years of addiction to alcohol disappeared for Kate. She didn't know it then, but God was freeing her from her addiction (and much more) by filling her with the Spirit as she looked away from her problem and kept her eyes on Jesus. She also shared how she had

discovered recently that the answer to her drinking problem was in God's Word all this time: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

I applaud this young lady for having the courage to share her powerful story with me. I pray that her testimony will encourage, inspire, and give you hope.

A Jesus-Encounter Can Free You Supernaturally

You may be asking, "How can this be? How does four years of alcohol addiction just disappear like that? How could such a powerful craving just lose its hold in such a short time?"

The answer is simple but powerful.

Kate allowed God's love to invade her mind as she listened to grace-based messages on her iPod that were full of Jesus and His love. When you allow God's love to saturate your mind, it doesn't matter what wrong believing, fears, or addictions are keeping you bound. His grace will begin to break them down. That is what happens when you have an encounter with your loving Savior. Everyone who encounters Jesus never leaves the same. He came to set the captives free.

Listen to what Jesus says: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).

My friend, I want to tell you that whatever you are oppressed

with, Jesus came to set you free. It could be a debilitating physical condition, or like Kate, whom I met at the conference, you may be entangled in an addiction that has imprisoned you for years.

Whatever you are oppressed with, Jesus came to set you free.

Whatever your condition, however long it has kept you bound—two years, ten years, thirty years—know this: *God can set you free in a supernatural instant.* He who created time isn't time-bound. He who in a fraction of a second turned water into the finest aged wine can bypass natural processes and accelerate your deliverance from any bondage!

I know of many people who struggled with addictions for decades. But once they had a supernatural encounter with Jesus, they just woke up one morning and found themselves free, with none of that familiar urge or desire to engage in their negative behavior anymore. Frank, who lives in the state of Maryland, wrote to me and shared how he was set free from drug addiction. He had been told that “once an addict, always an addict,” and he had believed it.

But when he came to know the truth about the life-transforming love and grace of Jesus through one of my teaching resources, it just destroyed the chains that bound him. He shared, “Man, I could have jumped through the roof when I discovered that all I had to do was accept the finished work of Jesus and His grace! After thirty years of drug addiction, I thought that there was no hope for me. But praise Jesus, I am now drug-free, and I'm in a good grace-

preaching church with my wife, who has also been set free of her drug addiction.”

My friend, that is the power of right believing!

God’s Truth Triggers Your Deliverance

The moment Kate and Frank began to hear and believe the right things about God, it triggered their deliverance in an accelerated fashion. Knowing the truth was the catalyst. Contrast this with those who focus on living right without paying attention to believing right. Sadly, they only experience transient breakthroughs to the extent their willpower, self-control, or discipline persists. But those who focus on and believe the truth about God experience lasting freedom effortlessly. Jesus certainly wasn’t kidding or exaggerating when He said that knowing the truth sets you free.

Jesus has the truth that you need, that you’ve been searching for. He is *the way*, *the truth*, and *the life* (see John 14:6). In love, He willingly laid down His life at the cross to set you free. That’s what this book is all about—transforming what you believe through the power of His sacrificial love and eternal truths. I’ve endeavored to make these truths as accessible and plain to see as possible for you. As you read the words, Scriptures, and stories of real people who have been set free by simply believing these truths about God and what He says about them, I pray that you will encounter God’s grace like never before. And as you meditate on these truths, I am confident that you will be walking in freedom sooner than you think. Your liberation is at hand!

With God There Is Always Hope

Dear reader, I don't know what your hurt is today, and I don't know what exactly you are struggling with. I just want you to know that God loves you. No matter how many mistakes you have made in your life, no matter how dark, how dire, and how desperate the circumstances seem, I have a message for you: It's not over. Don't throw in the towel!

Maybe you are struggling with some dark thoughts right now. Perhaps even thoughts of suicide have crossed your mind. Well, I can tell you it isn't over. There is hope. There is help. God loves you so much. He wants to throw a beam of light on your path today, just like He did for Kate who was enslaved by alcohol for years. The mistakes of your past need not determine your future. God can give you a new beginning, a fresh start, and cause all things to work out for your good!

The mistakes of your past need not determine your future.

Pastor Prince, you don't understand. How can I expect God to help me since I'm not a "religious" person?

That makes two of us!

There is not a religious bone in my body. I'm not here to talk to you about a religion. I'm here to show you a God who is alive, who cares, who breathes, who loves, who in many ways has been misrepresented and misunderstood. There is so much wrong believing about who God is.

Presenting the Real God

I want you to put aside whatever you may have believed about God, whatever you may have heard about Him or seen about Him. Allow me, through this book, to introduce the real Jesus to you, for this is where it all begins. Not the religious Jesus you may have heard about growing up, but the real Jesus who walked along the dusty streets of Jerusalem and upon the raging waters of the Galilee.

He was the one whom the sick, the poor, the sinful, the down-and-out, and the outcast instinctively gravitated to and felt at ease with. He was God in the flesh, and He manifested God's tangible love. In His presence, those who were imperfect didn't feel fearful of Him or sense judgment or condemnation from Him. A far cry from what many of us have been taught about God.

Jesus kept His harshest words only for those who were perfect in their own estimation. If you look carefully at all the biblical accounts of Jesus, He really didn't get along well with the religious folks of His day, who were known as Pharisees. They paraded around, their noses in the air with a holier-than-thou attitude. Although they would never admit it, they were extremely arrogant and cruelly judgmental.

The Pharisees were critical, faultfinding, legalistic, pretentious, bigoted, and most of all, ignorant. They made loud claims about their piousness for God. Yet when they stood in the very presence of God Himself, they were too self-occupied to recognize Him. God was with them in the flesh, but they did not worship Him. Instead, they scorned Him and on many occasions even plotted to kill Him.

Unfortunately, their “descendants” are still around today! Perhaps you’ve encountered them and have felt the heat of their scorn, condemnation, and judgment.

But the God they speak of is not the God whom I personally know. You don’t have to be “religious” to have access to the God whom I know. In fact, the less “religious” you are, the better. So I am asking you to throw out every idea, concept, and picture that you may have of a “religious” Jesus. The real Jesus didn’t come to bring a new religion. He didn’t come to be served and waited upon. No, He came to serve, and serve He did.

You don’t have to be “religious” to have access to God.

The real Jesus created the universe with one command and orchestrated the paths of each planet so that none would collide. He had every right to demand service from those He created, yet He supplied service. He kneeled down and with His own hands washed the grime and filth from His disciples’ feet. Those same hands would later be pierced with coarse nails at the cross, and He would, with His own blood, wash us of the grime and filth of all our sins by taking them upon His own body. What a far cry from the condemning, judgmental, faultfinding God that many have portrayed Him to be!

Believe in a God of Grace

Many today believe in a “religious” God. They believe that God is against them when they fall short, that He is angry with them when

they fail, that fellowship with Him is cut off when they make mistakes. They believe that God is perpetually unsatisfied with them, waiting impatiently to be appeased. They imagine a God who is constantly judging them for their weaknesses, shaking His head in abject disappointment at their mediocrity or never-ending failures. They believe that they are not good enough for God and will never be good enough for Him.

It's no wonder then that instead of running to the one true solution, they run in the opposite direction when they are hurting. So there is a great deception, a powerful, wrong belief about God that has trapped many in the vicious cycle of condemnation, guilt, fear, defeat, and addiction.

My friend, the God I know is a God of infinite grace. He is repugnant to the "religious," but gracious and irresistible to those who are hurting.

No matter what you are going through today, whatever addictions may be binding you, right believing can and will set you free. Start with believing this powerful truth:

God is a God of grace and forgiveness. He loves you very much, and He doesn't hold your mistakes against you.

Begin to believe in His love for you and your entire life will be transformed. Right believing always leads to right living. If you can change what you believe, you can change your life!

If you can change what you believe, you can change your life!