

Law or Grace Responses

Here are some responses to life circumstances that will help you to establish new self-talk.

SITUATION	LAW RESPONSE (Performance)	GRACE RESPONSE (Identity)
The temptation to yield to an immoral sexual opportunity	God says I should not do this. Even though I want to do it, I must say “no” to my desires, grit my teeth, and obey God. Holiness demands that I resist this opportunity, or God will punish me.	Despite feeling tempted to sin, I am crucified with Christ and have died to sin. These urges stem from indwelling sin, but I choose not to yield to them. I can resist these desires because I am in Christ, who gives me victory. I trust that God will meet my needs.
A failure or mistake	Why did I do that? What’s wrong with me? I’m so worthless! I always mess things up! I am such a failure! I need to do better! I do not measure up to what God expects of me, and I know He is not pleased with me! I have probably disappointed Him or made Him sad. I ought to do better! My failure is a poor witness for Christ! God will love me more if I do more!	Failure can be painful, but it helps me grow in humility. My identity and self-worth are rooted in Christ, not in my performance. Embracing mistakes allows me to be a witness for Christ and demonstrates the peace and joy I find in Him. Despite failures, I recognize my worth as a saint and walk in forgiveness, understanding that I remain acceptable to God.
A family member or someone repeatedly hurts and irritates me	This person bugs me! I can’t believe they have hurt me like this. I don’t know why God doesn’t change this person! I’ve got to hold my temper and try to forget about it! God requires me to forgive 70 X 7, so I guess I have no choice but to ignore what is happening to me! I should act like a loving person to be a good Christian.	I feel angry because of their actions, but I view this as a chance for Christ to express His life through me. As a new person in Christ, I choose to forgive others, even when it’s difficult. I plan to ask God for His perspective on this person and understand their hurt. I will seek opportunities to bless them and consult the Lord about any necessary confrontations in love.
Someone has inconvenienced me.	How frustrating. I had plans for my day, and now this. All I can think about is how late I am.	Relationships and other people are more important to me than the plan of how I walk through my day. My time is your time, Lord. I give up the right to have things go my way. Maybe you have led this person or this situation into my life as a divine appointment. I choose to set my mind on the way you go before me in everything. And even if I am late, I trust you are going before me in that, too.
I put my foot in my mouth	What kind of idiot says what I just said? What in the world is wrong with me? All I ever do is hurt people. I guess I should just shut up from now on.	Although I tried to say the right thing, and it came out wrong, I did my best. I reject the false standard of perfection. My words don’t define my worth; I trust God’s love and compassion to shine through me. There is no condemnation in Christ, and I won’t condemn myself.

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My spouse never listens to me	Why in the world can't my spouse 'get it'? Don't they understand how important this need is to me? I guess I don't matter to them after all. After all that I do for them, this is how they repay me. I guess I just have to figure out how to make them "see." Meanwhile, since love is patient and kind, I'll have to try harder to be those things even though I secretly want to make them pay.	I understand that both my spouse and I both have lies and flesh that trigger one another. I choose to rely on the fact that all of my needs are amply met in Jesus Christ and not one person can be expected to meet them. I am not the fourth member of the Trinity. I can trust the Holy Spirit to show my spouse what they need to know. Since I have Christ, who is love and patience, I can choose to walk in the manner of who is already inside of me. This is consistent with my new identity.
I am passed over or ignored	Of course, this is how life goes—it always does! I can't believe they did not see all of my hard work. I guess I'm just invisible and insignificant. Obviously, others can be successful, but not me. Why should I even bother trying anymore?	It surely hurts to be passed over and not noticed. But, I do not live by results—I leave those up to Father God. Although others do not always treat me fairly, I am honored, seen, and loved by my heavenly Father. He is my defender and vindicator. He holds my reputation. I will keep being assertive, knowing my success belongs in the Lord's hands.
Someone close to me has rejected me	What's wrong with me? I guess I'm nothing but a problem to other people. Why can't people ever love me as they should? I don't think I can be okay. I guess I should just stop trusting people ever again.	I am the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. I know it is better to take refuge in the Lord God than to trust in man to provide unconditional acceptance. I have full confidence that Father God will never leave or forsake me. I trust Him as my source of OK'ness. I have the resurrection power to respond to this rejection in the same manner as Jesus Christ. I can pray for, love, and bless this person who hurt me. I surrender them into the Lord's loving hands.
Financial funds are tight	I never have enough money. I don't know how in the world I will make ends meet. I obviously am not tithing the right way. Maybe I should give more to God so He will give me more.	All of my needs are met in Christ. I trust Him to provide financially for me. I give to the work of the Lord out of gratitude for what He's already done for me, not compulsion. I am supernaturally blessed with everything in the person of Jesus Christ.