



Part 4: Not Crazy, Just Complicated

INTRODUCTION

We all have conflicting emotions and we often find ourselves doing the exact opposite of what we actually want to do. Does this mean we're crazy? No. It just means we are complicated and have to spend some time being curious about our thoughts, emotions, and actions. And if this feels daunting, realize that it's not about trying harder, but about choosing connection with God.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Have you ever had two or more strong, conflicting desires? Have you experienced opposite emotions at the same time? Give some examples.
2. Talk about a time when you set out to do one thing and ended up doing exactly the opposite. How does it make you feel that even Paul experienced this struggle?
3. When you think of yourself as someone made up of parts and whose parts sometimes do messed up things, how does this impact how you see yourself as a whole? Is it any easier to receive Paul's words that there is now no condemnation in Christ Jesus? (See Romans 8:1)
4. Is there part of yourself you need to embrace, instead of deny or hate? Brennen Manning says in his book, *Abba's Child*, "Hatred of the imposter is actually self-hatred. Self-hatred always results in some form of self-destructive behavior. Accepting the reality of our sinfulness means accepting our authentic self." What might it look like to embrace this part?
5. What might it look like to live out of your new "operating system?"

THIS WEEK

The next time you do exactly the thing you're trying not to do, spend some time being curious about your behavior and the motivation behind it. Ask yourself, "Why did I do that?" or "Where did that come from?" Ask God to reveal anything from your past or present that is currently influencing your emotions or behavior. Invite Him into the situation, knowing that this process isn't about trying harder, but about staying connected to God.

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:1-2