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Key Verse: *“It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you are safe.”*
(Proverbs 29: 25 GNT)

Social media has a bright side and a very dark one. Some use it as a means of encouraging people. Others criticize, condemn, even bully. Learning to receive feedback, positive and negative, is very important. In all cases, we must consider the source. People who take to personally everything others say about them voluntarily lock themselves in *prison* and sit there as their cell gets darker and smaller.

Keys for breaking out of your prison:

1) ***Stop listening to the lies.*** Satan is the chief liar and accuser of men. Don't let him tell you who you are or are not. For Christians, that role belongs to the Holy Spirit. Satan and fellow assassins exist to bring destruction and death. Jesus came to bring life—abundant and eternal. (John 10: 10)

2) ***Start listening to (and believing) the Truth.*** When the world reminds us of our failures, remember this: if you are in Christ, you are a son of God Most High—a joint heir with Jesus—worth dying for. No matter how far we fall, God never stops loving us. Jesus is the *friend* Who sticks closer than a brother.

3) ***Start reading the Word of God and own every word of His promises.*** Too many people do not spend time daily in the Word of God. They spend more time reading the WSJ or sports page. Start studying your Bible and own the words. Make them personal. Stand on the promises of God and bring them up to Him every time you think He needs reminding. As you leave your prison, remember this:

“It is not who others say you are, but who God says you are that matters.”

“Not So” Social Media & Addiction

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Key Verse: *“A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.”* (Proverbs 25: 28 ESV)

No walls or boundaries describes social media. Addiction to SM is on the rise in staggering numbers. Consider these survey stats. 60% keep cell phones on—next to them in bed; 50+% check emails during the night, and the “average” person spends two hours on SM daily. That equates to more than five years of your life.

Can you imagine what your life and the church would be like if Christians spent even half that time in communion with our God through prayer or reading His Word? Talk about life-altering and world-changing! Too many people, addicted to this cultural phenomenon, allow others to overly influence or control their lives—often destructively.

An Encouraging Word. *Self-control* is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, given freely to those who seek it. If you find yourself among these dreadful statistics, get out now. Turn off the phone or computer and stop letting other people define you. If you are in Christ, He has clearly done so. *You are a son of the most-high God, fully loved, and precious in His sight no matter where you are right now. Your Father cares for you and wants to see you become the man He designed and accomplish all He purposed for you.*