

Christian Character Building Messages

The Dynamics of Biblical Change

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I. Introductory Remarks.

My desire in this message is to not only impart to you the need, motivation and desire for Biblical change, but also some very practical steps that are involved in the transformation God desires for each one of us.

- **The Christian life is a life of transformation and change.**

2 Corinthians 3:18 *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

The Christian life is not **static**: It is a life of change. Each stage of our walk with God involves us with constant moving change, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.

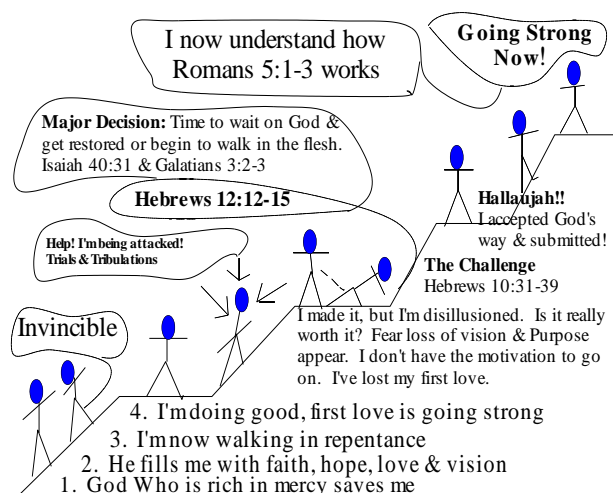
- **Active response to God's will involves constant change.**

His will is progressive by nature meaning we must constantly adapt to changes in our lives where the will of God is leading us.

Many Christians fail to respond to change as God directs because of two primary reasons: 1) They lack the motivation to change, 2) they desire to, but they are not quite sure how to appropriate the changes.

Illustration: Why Christians initially have an easy time going through the process of changing and then it becomes harder.

Hebrews 10:31-32 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.³² But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings:*



Hebrews 10:35-39 *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷"For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

II. **Motivational Keys that are Needed to Help Initiate Change.**

1. Our Desire to **Change** Is Something That Pleases the Lord.

In our desire to have a walk that is worthy of our calling we see in the passage below that we are to walk in lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another etc. To have a walk that encompasses these attitudes involves submitting ourselves to the changing process that God has ordained for our lives.

Ephesians 4:1-3 *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

- **The greatest thing Jesus can say to you when you enter into eternity is "Well done, good and faithful servant."**

Matthew 25:23 *"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

2. Change Brings Forth a **Greater** Measure of Our Spiritual Inheritance.

Since change is an act of obedience, we reap blessing upon blessing when we respond to God in obedience.

1 John 3:22 *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.*

- **Having a heart to change as God directs us to, helps to maintain His joy and peace in our lives.**

Romans 14:17 *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

If we are not walking as he directs us to, then we are not in right standing with Him and we lose our joy and peace.

- Listed below are just a few of the by products of our inheritance that we receive through our obedience to submit to the changing process in our lives.

Joy vs. Grief

Peace vs. Trouble

Hope vs. Fear

Happiness vs. Misery

Love vs. Hatred

Plenty vs. Poverty

Health vs. Sickness

Forgiveness vs. Resentment

This is a major portion of the Promised Land that God has given to us as New Testament Christians. These promises should motivate us to bring forth the kind of fruit God desires in our lives. Let us be like Abraham who did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief.

III. The Practical Dynamics of Biblical Change.

1. We must Maintain a Proper Attitude Towards Change.

- We must keep in mind that God is the Potter and we are the clay.

Isaiah 64:8 *But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.*

- We must allow God to do with us whatever He desires. Biblical change will not come until we place ourselves in God's hands in this manner.

Jeremiah 18:1-6 *The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ²"Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." ³Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. ⁴And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. ⁵Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ⁶"O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"*

2. Learn to Recognize the Symptoms that Represent a Need for Change.

1. Having a feeling of being **unsatisfied**
1. Having a feeling of being resisted.
2. Having a feeling of **uselessness**.
3. Having a feeling of lacking
4. Having a feeling of being out of date with the move of God.

If you have any one of these feelings, it's probably a good indication that you have a need for Biblical change in your life; because the Christian life is not static, it is a life of change.

3. Understand What True Godly Sorrow is and How it Works to Your Benefit.

There must be a godly sorrow for your sinful condition, realizing that failure to respond to Biblical change is sin.

James 4:17 *Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 *Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. ¹⁰For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. ¹¹For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

4. Seek to Walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

It is when we are walking in the Spirit; praying, reading and meditating in the word, worship, keeping our mind stayed on the Lord, that we are more sensitive to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. As we experience the conviction of the Holy Spirit we are more motivated towards the changes the Lord is requiring of us.

It is when we are not walking in the Spirit that our heart grows cold and unable to be motivated towards change in any way. The downward spiral from here leads

us to the symptoms that were discussed earlier in the lesson.

5. We must Understand How Habits and Life Patterns Work.

Luke 11:24-26 *"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'²⁵"And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. ²⁶"Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."*

- A **bad** habit must be replaced by a **good** habit.

Breaking old habits will not be permanent without putting on new ones. Putting on is hypocritical as well as temporary, unless it is accompanied by putting off.

Colossians 3:5 *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

Colossians 3:12 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*

- **Habits are part of our makeup.**

Whenever we do something long enough it becomes a habit. Habits can be very difficult to change because they have become unconscious responses. eg. putting on shoes, brushing teeth, flossing, new job, etc. If you take time to develop new habit patterns they too, will become unconscious responses.

- **The key to change is to start becoming aware of your habit patterns.**

Allow God to reveal them to you and also all iron to sharpen iron. If they are sinful, call them sinful and begin repenting.

- **You must focus on and practice the new habit with diligence, exercise and a sense of fervency.**

2 Peter 1:5-10 *But also for this very reason, **giving all diligence**, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸For if these things are yours and abound, you will be*

neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

Example: How do baseball or football players or any athlete do what they do so well? By practice, disciplined practice until it becomes second nature.

1 Timothy 4:7-8 *But reject profane and old wives' fables, and **exercise yourself toward godliness.** ⁸For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.*

- **It is by reason of use that our senses are exercised to make the proper Biblical responses.**

Hebrews 5:14 *But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by **reason of use have their senses exercised** to discern both good and evil.*

- **Change will not take place automatically.**

Change must be exercised. These Hebrews had received a lot of teaching from God's Word, but they had not used it and thus neither had they profited from it.

If you practice what God tells you to do, the obedient life will become a part of your life in Christ. It will be second nature to you. There is no simple, quick, easy way to achieve instant godliness. We must work out our salvation in fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:12 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling;*

Isaiah 1:16-17 *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, ¹⁷Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.*

IV. Concluding Remarks.

We all have the capacity to change and learn new things. The question is do we have the motivation and the understanding to do it. May God bless you as put on the new man who is being created by Jesus Christ.

Journal Notes

- 1. What was the primary truth you received from this lesson?**
- 2. How will this truth be applied to your life?**
- 3. What stage are you at according to the illustration on the first page?**
- 4. What do you need to do to get to the next stage?**
- 5. Which motivational key is needed most in your life?**