

# You Can Change

Extra Material

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# Chapter One

## What would you like to change?

### Summary

We all have things about us we'd like to change. God, too, has a big agenda for change in our lives. We were created in God's image to reflect God's glory. But, when we rejected God, that image was broken. Enter Jesus – the true image of God who perfectly reflects God's glory. God wants us to become like Jesus – to be 'glory-reflectors'. So God recreates Christians in his image. Seeing God's glory in Jesus by faith is what leads to reflecting God's glory like Jesus.

### Extra Reflections

#### A.

The Spirit sets us free to be like Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:17-18). *'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'* (Galatians 5:22-23). Think how we see the fruit of the Spirit illustrated in Jesus. Identify an example from the life of Jesus for each characteristic of the Spirit's fruit.

#### B.

'This holiness or consecration extends to every part of our persons, fills up our being, spreads over our life, influences everything we are, or do, or think, or speak, or plan, small or great, outward or inward, negative or positive, our living, our hating, our sorrowing, our rejoicing, our recreations, our silence, our speech, our reading, our writing, our going out and our coming in – our whole man in every movement of spirit, soul, and body. In the house, the sanctuary, the chamber, the market, the shop, the desk, the highway, it must be seen that ours is a consecrated life.' (Horatius Bonar)<sup>1</sup>

⇒ In which areas do you need to consecrate or re-consecrate your life?

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Exodus 34:29-35 and 2 Corinthians 3:16-18.*

How did Moses radiate God's glory? How do we reflect God's glory?

#### Day 2

*Read Luke 4:1-13.*

How did Jesus respond to temptation?

#### Day 3

*Read Luke 4:14-29, 42-44.*

What did Jesus come to do?

#### Day 4

*Read Luke 5:1-16.*

What did Jesus want his followers to do?

How does Jesus respond to people in need?

How does Jesus relate to his Father?

#### Day 5

*Read Luke 5:27-32.*

How does Jesus respond to marginalised people?

#### Day 6

*Read Luke 6:20-42.*

How does Jesus want us to live?

# Chapter Two

## Why would you like to change?

### Summary

Here are three common reasons why we want to change: to prove ourselves to God (so he will bless us or save us); to prove ourselves to other people (so people like us, or to hide our true selves); and to prove ourselves to ourselves (so we feel good about ourselves). None of these reasons really works because they put 'me' at the centre of my change project = sin. The great news is God proves us or justifies us through Jesus so we don't need to prove ourselves. God gives us a new identity and this new identity is the motive and basis for change. You are a child of the Father, the bride of the Son and the home of the Holy Spirit. The reason Christians should want to change is to enjoy the freedom from sin and delight in God that God gives to us through Jesus.

### Extra Reflections

#### A.

Take a look at the follow paragraph. I've taken some verses from the Bible and made them say the *opposite* of what they actually say. See if you can turn them back into what they *really* say. You can check by looking at Titus 3:5-8.

*We are saved by God's mercy plus the righteous things we do. We get rid of our sins and start on a new life with help from the Holy Spirit whom God generously gives us from time to time through Jesus Christ our Saviour. This is how we can prove ourselves and can have confidence that we will have eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to stress this teaching so that everyone will devote themselves to doing what is good.*

#### B.

'I do not know what you may think, but I can say that I cannot pray but I sin – I cannot preach to you or any others but I sin – I can do nothing without sin; and, as one expresses it, my repentance needs to be repented of, and my tears to be washed in the precious blood of my dear Redeemer. Our best duties are as so many splendid sins. Before you can speak peace in your heart, you must not only be made sick of your original and actual sin, but you must be made sick of your righteousness, of all your duties and performances. There must be a deep conviction before you can be brought out of your self-righteousness; it is the last idol taken out of our heart. The pride of our heart will not let us submit to the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But if you never felt that you had a righteousness of your own, if you never felt the deficiency of your own righteousness, you cannot come to Jesus Christ. There are a great many now who may say, Well, we believe all this; but there is a great difference betwixt talking and feeling. Did you ever feel the want of a dear Redeemer? Did you ever feel the want of Jesus Christ, upon the account of the deficiency of your own righteousness? And can you now say from your heart, Lord, you may justly damn me for the best duties that ever I did perform? If you are not thus brought out of self, you may speak peace to yourselves, but yet there is no peace.' (George Whitefield in 'The Method of Grace')

#### C.

'The secret of a believer's holy walk is his continual [return] to the blood of the [cross], and his daily [communion] with a crucified and risen Lord. All divine life, and all precious fruits of it – pardon, peace, and holiness – spring from the cross. All fancied sanctification which does not arise wholly from the blood of the cross is nothing better than Pharisaism. If we would be holy, we must get to the cross, and dwell there; else, notwithstanding all our labour, diligence, fasting, praying and good works, we shall be yet void of real sanctification ... The love of God to us, and our love to Him, work together for producing holiness. Terror accomplishes no real obedience. Suspense brings forth no fruit unto holiness. No gloomy uncertainty as to God's favour can subdue one lust, or correct our crookedness of will. But the free pardon of the cross uproots sin, and withers all its branches. Only the certainty of love, forgiving love, can do this.' (Horatius Bonar)

## D.

'Pornography, in its essential allurements, promises to quench our thirst. In other words, it promises satisfaction. And honestly, it does satisfy – but only for a short time. Pretty soon, we discover that we are 'thirsty' again, and as the years go by, we find that we are really never genuinely satisfied. That is because sin never purely satisfies! It depletes us, it does not fulfil us. I can recall going from soft-core pornography magazines to X-rated videos, to cyber sex with video cams etc. I thought if I could just see that perfect picture, or have the perfect sexual experience, that my life would be full and satisfied. This is the nature of sin. It takes us farther and farther, and, though it promises to satisfy, it never does satisfy eternally. This is why we keep coming back to it over and over again.' (Mike Cleveland)<sup>2</sup>

⇒ What Mike Cleveland says of pornography is true of all sin. Think of examples from your own life of the way sin draws us into slavery by offering satisfaction but always leaving us wanting more.

## Daily Bible Readings

### Day 1

*Read Romans 5:1-11.*

How are we made right with God?

What differences does being right with God make?

### Day 2

*Read Ephesians 2:1-10.*

What were we like before God saved us?

What must we do to be saved?

Where do good works fit in?

### Day 3

*Read 2 Peter 1:3-9.*

What must we remember if we want to be fruitful?

### Day 4

*Read Galatians 4:4-7 and 5:13-15.*

What does it mean to be free from sin?

### Day 5

*Read Ephesians 5:22-33.*

What has Christ done for his bride?

### Day 6

*Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.*

What's wrong with sexual sin?

# Chapter Three

## How are you going to change?

### Summary

You may have tried and failed to change in the past. What are you doing wrong? The answer is we often try to change ourselves through spiritual disciplines, codes of conduct or religious activity. None of this makes us like Jesus. We may indeed need to repent of our proud, self-reliant attempts at righteousness. Only heart change leads to lasting change because behaviour comes from our sinful hearts. Change is God's work. The Father is intimately involved in our lives so that our circumstances train us in godliness. The Son has set us free from both the penalty and power of sin so we now live under grace. The Spirit gives us a new attitude to sin and a new power to change. Change is in the DNA of those who have been born of God. So we're changed through faith.

### Extra Reflections

A.

'We never "get beyond the gospel" in our Christian life to something more "advanced." The gospel is not the first "step" in a "stairway" of truths, rather, it is more like the "hub" in a "wheel" of truth. The gospel is not just the A-B-Cs of Christianity, but it is the A to Z of Christianity. We are not justified by the gospel and then sanctified by obedience but the gospel is *the way we grow* (Galatians 3:1-3) and are renewed (Colossians 1:6). ... The main problem, then, in the Christian life is that we have not thought out the deep implications of the gospel ... The key to continual and deeper spiritual renewal and revival is the *continual re-discovery of the gospel.*' (Tim Keller)<sup>3</sup>

B.

'The Christian should resemble a fruit-tree, not a Christmas tree! For the gaudy decorations of a Christmas tree are only tied on, where fruit grows on a fruit-tree. In other words, Christian holiness is not an artificial accretion, but a natural process of fruit-bearing by the power of the Holy Spirit.' (John Stott)<sup>4</sup>

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Hebrews 12:4-11.*

What is the role of God the Father in changing us?

#### Day 2

*Read Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-9.*

How does God use suffering to change us?

#### Day 3

*Read Romans 6:1-14.*

What is the role of the God the Son in changing us?

#### Day 4

*Read John 15:1-8.*

How does Jesus describe the role of God the Father in changing us?

How does Jesus describe his role in changing us?

#### Day 5

*Read Romans 8:1-17.*

What is the role of the God the Holy Spirit in changing us?

#### Day 6

*Read Titus 3:3-8.*

What is the role of the God the Holy Spirit in changing us?

# Chapter Four

## When do you struggle?

### Summary

God cares about our struggles. The Father sees our struggles, the Son experienced our struggles and the Spirit is with us in our struggles. Plus God does something about our struggles. One day he will bring them to an end. In the meantime, our struggles reveal our hearts. Circumstances often trigger our sin, but they don't cause it. The root cause is always our hearts and their sinful desires. We sin because we believe lies about God instead of believing God's word and because we worship idols instead of worshipping God.

### Extra Reflection

The heart is the home of our principles and the foundation of our actions ... The greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God; and the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God ... The heart is the source of all vital operations. It is the spring and origin of both good and evil, just as the spring in a watch sets all the wheels in motions. The heart is the warehouse; the hand and tongue are just the shops. What is in the hand and tongue comes from the warehouse of the heart. The other parts of the body only put into effect what the heart first contrives (Luke 6:45). So if our heart is not right then our actions will go wrong. (John Flavel)<sup>5</sup>

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Exodus 2:23-3:10.*

What difference does it make to know that God the Father sees our struggles?

#### Day 2

*Read Hebrews 2:14-18 and 4:14-16.*

What difference does it make to know that God the Son understands our struggles?

#### Day 3

*Read Isaiah 43:1-5 and John 14:16-17.*

What difference does it make to know that God the Spirit is with us in our struggles?

#### Day 4

*Read Jeremiah 17:5-10 and Luke 6:43-45.*

How can we produce good fruit in our lives?  
How do these passages describe our hearts?

#### Day 5

*Read Proverbs 4:18-27.*

How should we walk through life?

#### Day 6

*Read James 1:1-18.*

What is the role of suffering in the Christian life?  
What is the beginning of sin? What is the end of sin?

# Chapter Five

## What truths do you need to turn to?

### Summary

Behind every sin and negative emotion is a lie. Not many people think of themselves as individuals who believe lies! But every time we don't trust God or his word then we are believing something else = a lie. Life and freedom are found by trusting and delighting in the truth about God. Our problems are created by the gaps between what we believe in theory and what we believe in practice. We need to learn to preach the truth about God to our hearts. Here are four life-changing truths:

1. God is great – so we don't have to be in control
2. God is glorious – so we don't have to fear others
3. God is good – so we don't have to look elsewhere
4. God is gracious – so we don't have to prove ourselves

### Extra Reflections

#### A.

Keeping the heart, of all the works of religion, is the most difficult, constant, and important work. Heart-work is hard work indeed. To shuffle through religious duties with a careless spirit will not cost you much. But to set yourself before the Lord, and tie up your loose thoughts to a constant and serious attendance upon him – this will cost you something. To become skilled at praying with eloquent turns of expressions is easy. But to have your heart broken by your sin as you confess it or to have your heart melted by free grace while you bless God for it or to be really ashamed and humbled as you see God's infinite holiness and then to keep your heart like this when you have finished your duties will certainly cost you some groans and pains of soul. To repress the outward acts of sin and control the outward aspects of your life in a

respectable manner is no great matter. Even unbelievers, by the force of habit, can do this. But to kill the root of corruption within, to keep a holy rule over your thoughts, to have everything in our heart right – this is not easy. (John Flavel)<sup>6</sup>

#### B.

To know my Jesus crucified,  
by far excels all things beside;  
all earthly goods we count but loss  
and triumph in our Saviour's cross.

Knowledge of all terrestrial things  
never our souls true pleasure brings;  
no peace, but in the Son of God;  
no joy, but through his pardoning blood.

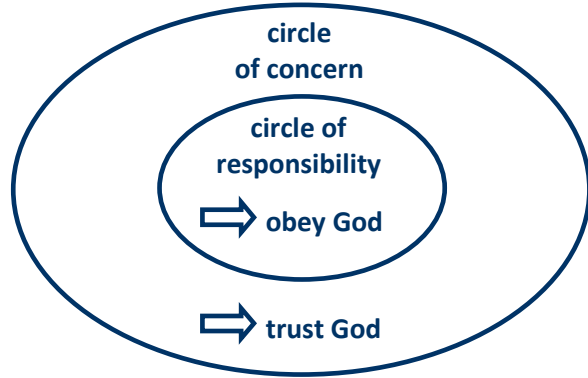
O could I know and love him more  
and all his wondrous grace explore,  
I would not envy man's esteem,  
but part with all and follow him. (Richard Burnham)

#### C.

'How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose ... ! You drove them from me, you who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood, you who outshine all light, yet are hidden deeper than any secret in our hearts, you who surpass all honour, though not in the eyes of men who see all honour in themselves ... O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation.' (Augustine)<sup>7</sup>

**D.**

Paul Tripp talks about our circle of responsibility and circle of concern.<sup>8</sup> The circle of responsibility contains those things that are important to me and which I can influence. Around this is a wider circle – the circle of concern. This contains things that are important to me, but beyond my ability to change.



<i>circle</i>	<i>contents</i>	<i>examples</i>	<i>my duty</i>
circle of responsibility	things that are important to me which I can change	being a godly spouse, parent, child, friend and church member	to obey God
circle of concern	things that are important to me which I cannot change	love from a spouse, conversion of a friend, financial security	to trust God

Think about your life. What belongs in the circle of concern? What belongs in the circle of responsibility? Do you have anything in the wrong circle? What behaviour is this leading to?

- ⇒ putting things that should be in the circle of responsibility into the circle of concern ⇒ shirking responsibility
- ⇒ putting things that should be in the circle of concern into the circle of responsibility ⇒ worry or manipulation or over-busyness

**Daily Bible Readings**

**Day 1**

*Read John 8:31-36.*

How are we enslaved? How does the truth set us free?

**Day 2**

*Read Psalm 27.*

How should the truth that God is great affect our behaviour and emotions?

**Day 3**

*Read Psalm 31.*

How should the truth that God is big affect our behaviour and emotions?

**Day 4**

*Read Psalm 84.*

How should the truth that God is good affect our behaviour and emotions?

**Day 5**

*Read Psalm 73 and Hebrews 11:1-12:3.*

How should the truth that God is forever affect our behaviour and emotions?

**Day 6**

*Read Psalm 103.*

How should the truth that God is gracious affect our behaviour and emotions?

# Chapter Six

## What desires do you need to turn from?

### Summary

We sin because we desire or worship idols instead of God. The Bible talks about 'the sinful desires of our hearts'. Whenever a desire controls our hearts it has become an idol. It can be a desire for a good thing which has become bigger than God. We need to turn from our sinful desires to worship and serve God = 'repentance'. Repentance is a life-long, continuous activity of weeding out the roots of sin from our hearts. We repent by faith as we believe God is bigger and better than our sinful desires.

### Extra Reflection

'People tend to think of sins in the plural as consciously willed acts where one was aware of and chose not to do the righteous alternative ... This instinctive view of sin infects many Christians and almost all non-Christians ... The Bible's view of sin certainly includes the high-handed sins ... But sin also includes what we simply are, and the perverse ways we think, want, remember, and react.

'Most sin is invisible to the sinner because it is simply how the sinner works ... The core insanity of the human heart is that we violate the first great commandment. We will love anything, except God, unless our madness is checked by grace.

'People do not tend to see sin as applying to relatively unconscious problems, to the deep, interesting, and bedeviling stuff in our hearts. But God's descriptions of sin often highlight the unconscious aspect. Sin – the desires we pursue, the beliefs we hold, the habits we obey as second nature – is intrinsically deceitful. If we knew we were deceived, we would not be deceived ... Sin is a darkened mind, drunkenness, animal-like instinct and compulsion, madness, slavery, ignorance, stupor. People often think that to

define sin as unconscious removes human responsibility. How can we be culpable for what we did not sit down and choose to do? But the Bible takes the opposite track. The unconscious and semiconscious nature of much sin simply testifies to the fact that we are steeped in it. Sinners think, want, and act sinlike by nature, nurture, and practice.' (David Powlison)<sup>9</sup>

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Genesis 3:1-7.*

Why did Adam and Eve commit the first sin?

#### Day 2

*Read Ezekiel 14:1-8.*

Where do we find our idols?

#### Day 3

*Read James 4:1-10.*

What's the cause of anger and fighting? What's the remedy?

#### Day 4

*Read John 6:25-35.*

What does the crowd want? What does Jesus offer?

#### Day 5

*Read Ephesians 4:17-24.*

What is the cause of sin? What is the remedy?

#### Day 6

*Read Romans 8:1-17.*

What role do Jesus and the Spirit play in setting us free from sin?

What role are we to play in living free from sin?

# Chapter Seven

## What stops you changing?

### Summary

The main reason we don't change is our pride and self-reliance. In our pride we excuse or minimise or hide sin. Taking responsibility for our sin leads to repentance which in turn leads to forgiveness and freedom. Another reason we don't change is that we don't really want to. We want to avoid the consequences or shame of our sin, but still love the sin itself. We need to keep coming back to the cross. The cross humbles us and brings us near to God.

### Extra Reflection

#### A.

The gospel, applied to our hearts every day, frees us to be brutally honest with ourselves and with God. The assurance of his total forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ means we don't have to play defensive games anymore. We don't have to rationalize and excuse our sins. We can say we told a lie instead of saying we exaggerated a bit. We can admit an unforgiving spirit instead of continuing to blame our parents for our emotional distress. We can call sin exactly what it is, regardless of how ugly and shameful it may be, because we know that Jesus bore that sin in his body on the cross. With the assurance of total forgiveness through Christ, we have no reason to hide from our sins anymore. (Jerry Bridges)<sup>10</sup>

#### B.

In the Christian life:

- humbling is the way to exaltation
- dying to self is the way to new life
- poverty is the way to wealth
- grief is the way to joy

- hunger is the way to satisfaction
- selflessness the way to self-fulfilment
- shame is the way to glory
- folly is the way to wisdom<sup>11</sup>

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Genesis 3:8-15.*

How did Adam and Eve avoid taking responsibility for their sin?

#### Day 2

*Read 1 Samuel 15.*

What excuses does Saul make? What does Samuel make of those excuses?

#### Day 3

*Read 2 Corinthians 7:10-11.*

What are the characteristics of true repentance?

#### Day 4

*Read Psalm 51.*

What are the characteristics of David's repentance?

#### Day 5

*Read 1 Peter 4:1-11.*

What is the attitude to sin of the world? What should be our attitude?

#### Day 6

*Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.*

What warning should we take from God's people in the Old Testament?

What hope is there for us when we face temptation?

# Chapter Eight

## What strategies will reinforce your faith and repentance?

### Summary

Though we can't change ourselves through laws and disciplines, there are strategies we can and should adopt to reinforce faith and repentance. We shouldn't sow to the flesh = avoiding anything that provokes or reinforces our sinful desires. Instead, we sow to the Spirit = strengthening our desire for God. We do this through the means of grace = the Bible, prayer, community, worship, service, suffering and the hope of eternity.

### Extra Reflection

#### A.

Consider the following verses: Joshua 1:8; Deuteronomy 8:3; Psalm 1:2-3; Jeremiah 15:16; John 6:48-51; 17:17. What action do they commend? How can you put it into practice?

#### B.

Do you make the most of the 'means of grace'? Are there any of the following things you could do? Identify three things you want to start doing or do differently to strengthen your faith.

- make the Bible part of your daily routine
- turn to the Bible when you feel tempted or under pressure
- listen to the Bible being read on CD or on the internet
- study the Bible regularly with another Christian
- write out Bible verses to meditate on during the day
- memorise Bible verses – especially ones that counter the lies behind your sins
- carry a New Testament with you so you can read it in idle moments
- read a book that helps you understand the Bible or inspires you to live as a Christian
- make prayer part of your daily routine
- pray when you feel tempted or under pressure
- pray regularly with another Christian
- attend the meetings of your church
- make the most of the Bible teaching in the church
- meet up with other Christians throughout the week
- talk with other Christians about your struggle with sin
- encourage other Christians with the truth
- make praise part of your daily routine (even if you can't sing well)
- listen to Christian music that strengthens your faith
- thank God throughout the day for his blessings
- find ways of serving people
- volunteer for a church or community project
- regard your suffering as a gift from God
- comfort others with the comfort you have received in suffering
- think and talk often of heaven

# Daily Bible Readings

## Day 1

*Read Galatians 5:16-17 and 6:7-8.*

What does it mean to sow to the sinful nature?

What does it mean to sow to the Spirit?

## Day 2

*Read Matthew 5:29-30 and 1 Corinthians 6:18-20.*

What type of action is Jesus telling us to do?

What does it mean to 'flee' sexual immorality and other sinful desires?

What might this look like in your life?

## Day 3

*Read 1 John 2:15-17.*

What should our attitude be to the world around us?

## Day 4

*Read Psalm 1.*

What is the result of listening to lies about God?

What is the result of delighting in the truth about God?

What 'voices' are there in your life? Which have most influence?

## Day 5

*Read Psalm 19.*

How does David describe the word of God?

How does David describe the effect of the word of God?

What does David pray for?

How will David be kept from sin?

## Day 6

*Read Colossians 3:1-10.*

How does thinking about the new creation help us live now?

# Chapter Nine

## How can we support one another in change?

### Summary

God has given us the Christian community to help us change. We reinforce faith by reminding one another of the truth. We reinforce repentance by holding one another accountable. To combat the deceitfulness of sin, we need to do this on a daily basis by sharing our lives together and we need to be communities of grace in which we can be open with one another.

### Extra Reflection

What stops you having change-oriented relationships?

<p><i>I'm too busy</i> Are you busy because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you want to be in control?</li> <li>• you want to prove yourself?</li> <li>• you want the most from life?</li> <li>• you worry about what others think?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trust God's reign</li> <li>- trust God's grace</li> <li>- think about eternity</li> <li>- fear God more than people</li> </ul>
<p><i>I don't need help</i> 'I don't like to trouble other people' or 'I want to manage on my own' or 'I don't want to be dependent on others'?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- repent of your pride and accept God's provision of the Christian community</li> </ul>
<p><i>I'm afraid of what might happen</i> Do you avoid close relationships because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you fear being vulnerable?</li> <li>• you fear being exposed?</li> <li>• they might get messy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trust God's care</li> <li>- trust God's grace</li> <li>- put love before comfort</li> </ul>

*I've got enough problems of my own*  
Do you think mainly about what other Christians can do for you? Are your conversations with Christians about you?

- repent of your self-centredness and start serving others

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Day 1

*Read Hebrews 3:7-19.*

How and why do we need to encourage one another daily?

#### Day 2

*Read Hebrews 10:19-25.*

Why do Christians meet together?

#### Day 3

*Read Ephesians 4:1-13.*

How and why should we keep the unity of the Spirit?

Why has Christ given gifts to each one of us?

#### Day 4

*Read Ephesians 4:11-16.*

What does it mean for us to grow together?

How are we to grow together?

#### Day 5

*Read Ephesians 4:14-25.*

What does it mean to speak the truth in love?

Why is it important to speak truthfully to our neighbour?

#### Day 6

*Read Ephesians 4:26-5:2.*

How should we serve one another in the Christian community?

# Chapter Ten

## Are you ready for a lifetime of daily change?

### Summary

Only Christians are free not to sin because we have new controlling desires from God. But the old sinful desires and habits linger on so the Christian life is a battle and the battlefield is our hearts. Change involves a lifetime of daily struggle. Faith and repentance are not one-off events. They are daily disciplines practised over a lifetime. But there is always hope. Change is possible – there's no reason to give up or to plateau. And change is certain – we will reap an eternal harvest. Until then, we are righteous sinners = always in need of change and always accepted by God.

### Extra Reflection

Here's a summary of our ten questions. Read Galatians 5:1-6:10. Where do you see these truths reflected in Galatians?

1. *What would you like to change?*  
The change that matters is becoming more like Jesus so we reflect God's glory.
2. *Why would you like to change?*  
We change to enjoy the freedom from sin and delight in God that God gives to us through Jesus. We don't change to prove ourselves.
3. *How are you going to change?*  
God changes us through the work of Christ for us and the work of the Spirit in us. We can't change ourselves through rules and disciplines.

4. *When do you struggle?*  
Our struggles can trigger sin, but sin is caused by the thoughts and desires of our hearts.
5. *What truths do you need to turn to?*  
We sin when we think or believe a lie instead of trusting God. Change takes place as we turn to God in faith, embracing and delighting in his greatness and goodness.
6. *What desires do you need to turn from?*  
We sin when we desire or worship an idol instead of worshipping God. Change takes place as we turn from idolatrous desires in repentance.
7. *What stops you changing?*  
We don't change because we don't accept responsibility for our sin or because we don't really want to give up our idolatrous desires.
8. *What strategies will reinforce your faith and repentance?*  
We need to say 'no' to whatever might provoke or strengthen our sinful desires and say 'yes' to whatever might strengthen our new, Spirit-given desire for holiness.
9. *How can we support one another in change?*  
God has given us the Christian community so that we can change together by speaking the truth in love to one another to reinforce faith and repentance.
10. *Are you ready for a lifetime of daily change?*  
Change is a lifelong, daily struggle that will end with an eternal harvest of holiness.

## Daily Bible Readings

### Day 1

Read Titus 2:11-15.

How can we say 'no' to ungodliness? How should we encourage one another?

### Day 2

Read 1 Peter 5:5-11.

What does Peter tell us to do? What encouragement does Peter give us?

### Day 3

Read 1 John 1:5-2:2.

What lies does John talk about? What truth does he give in the place of those lies?

### Day 4

Read 1 John 3:1-3 and Colossians 3:1-5.

What will we be like when Christ appears? What should we do now?

### Day 5

Read Galatians 5.

Does this passage remind you of any lessons you have learnt reading this book?

### Day 6

Read Galatians 6:1-10.

Does this passage remind you of any lessons you have learnt reading this book?

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Horatius Bonar, *God's Way of Holiness* (Evangelical Press, 1864, 1979), p. 10.
- <sup>2</sup> Mike Cleveland, *The Way of Purity* (Focus, 2007), p. 8.
- <sup>3</sup> Tim Keller, 'The Sufficiency of Christ and the Gospel in a Post-Modern World'.
- <sup>4</sup> John Stott, *Christ the Controversialist* (Tyndale, 1970), p. 143.
- <sup>5</sup> Adapted from John Flavel, *Keeping the Heart* (Christian Heritage, 1999), pp. 7, 10.
- <sup>6</sup> Adapted from John Flavel, *Keeping the Heart* (Christian Heritage, 1999), pp. 19-20.
- <sup>7</sup> Cited in John Piper, *When I Don't Desire God* (Crossway, 2004), p. 16.
- <sup>8</sup> Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* (P&R, 2002), pp. 250–255.
- <sup>9</sup> David Powlison, *The Journal of Biblical Counselling* 25:2 (Spring 2007), pp. 25-26.
- <sup>10</sup> Jerry Bridges, *The Disciple of Grace* (NavPress, 1994), pp. 22-23.
- <sup>11</sup> See James 4:7-10; Luke 14:11; Mark 8:34-38; Matthew 5:3-12; 1 Corinthians 1:18-24.

# You Can Change

1. What would you like to change?

2. Why would you like to change?

3. How are you going to change?

4. When do you struggle?

5. What truths do you need to turn to?

# *Change Project*

6. What desires do you need to turn from?

7. What stops you changing?

8. What strategies will reinforce your faith and repentance?

9. How can we support one another in change?

10. Are you ready for a lifetime of daily change?