

Changing for God

Overcoming the Desire to not Deal
with our Sins

Why Christians Should Embrace Positive Change

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The Call to Perfection

1 Peter 1:14–16 - as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; **15** but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16** because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

Matthew 5:48 - Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Ephesians 4:13–15 - till we all come ... to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **14** that we should no longer be children, ... **15** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

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Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ... **15** Christ—**16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

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Romans 7:15–24 (NKJV)

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ... **24** O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

James 1:14–16 (NKJV)

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. **15** Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. **16** Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

Being Christ's Requires the Death of the Flesh

Galatians 5:24 - And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Luke 9:23–24 - Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. **24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

Luke 14:27 - And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Romans 6:11–14 (NKJV)

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. **12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. **13** And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. **14** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

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- Because even lawful things can end up with unhealthy power over us

1 Corinthians 6:12–20 (NKJV)

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. **13** Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ... **19** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **20** For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

How We Justify Sin and Avoid Change

Denial

Genesis 3:4 - Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

Rationalization

Genesis 3:5 - For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Minimization

Genesis 3:7 - Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

Avoidance

Genesis 3:8 - And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Blaming Others

Genesis 3:12–13 - Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” **13** And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Internalization

Genesis 4:13–14 - And Cain said to the LORD,
“My punishment is greater than I can bear! **14**
Surely You have driven me out this day from the
face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your
face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the
earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds
me will kill me.”

Our Defenses Make us Foolish

Proverbs 17:10 - Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.

Proverbs 9:8 - Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

Proverbs 10:17 - He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, but he who refuses correction goes astray.

Proverbs 12:15 - The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.

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Check Your Defenses

Healthy

- Setting aside painful thoughts or feelings in order to stick to the task at hand; Returning to those feelings at a more appropriate moment
- Thoughtfully and carefully analyzing problem behaviors without becoming overwhelmed by emotion

Unhealthy

- Refusing to face painful feelings or thoughts; Ignoring painful and dangerous feelings
- “Explaining away” problem behaviors; Retreating, with words and abstractions, from painful emotions

Check Your Defenses

Healthy

- Seeing a situation through another's eyes; Imagining how others feel
- Releasing negative emotions through positive channels like prayer, meditation, exercise, chores, sports, art and music

Unhealthy

- Unrealistically attributing objectionable feelings or thoughts to another person
- “Taking out” negative feelings on another person

Check Your Defenses

Healthy

- Attributing painful thoughts and feelings appropriately, to the environment, other people, or oneself—when justified

Unhealthy

- Blaming oneself for all problems

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- To talk to a faithful brother or sister about my problem

James 5:16–20 (NKJV)

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. **17** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. **18** And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. **19** Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, **20** let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

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- The help of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

Ephesians 5:8–14 (NKJV)

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), **10** finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. **11** And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. **12** For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. **13** But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. **14** Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”

Conclusion

- What sin is there in my life that I have been avoiding dealing with?
- Will I shine the light of God's word on it?
- Will I talk to a Christian I trust about it?
- Will I seek God's help in overcoming it?