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## How to Change Your Life?

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A woman had four husbands. She divorced all of them because they turned out to be drunks and womanizers. How did she end up with four such men? She met them at a bar on ladies night.

A drunk wants to get off the bottle. Yet he continues to visit with his same drinking buddies at the local bar. He is perplex by his inability to stay sober.

A young man has problems with temptations of a sexual nature. He watches R-rated movies with nudity. Then he looks at magazines with immodest pictures. He ogles girls jogging down the sidewalk and also goes to the beach where he is around half naked women. He spends time alone in his girlfriend's apartment. This young man wants to change and stop fornicating, but he cannot figure out how to flee fornication.

A family cannot seem to get up and attend morning worship, even though they know they should. Yet, they spend Saturday nights staying out late at Six Flags, the movies, watching TV, going to a ball game and generally staying up too late.

A couple has problems with saving money. They want to save, give and spend it wisely, but they find themselves constantly in debt. Several credit cards are maxed out. If they see something they want they buy it. They will not save up for anything. They think they have to have the newest of everything. If their neighbors, friends or co-workers have it, they have to have it too.

A good sister sincerely wants to study the Bible more. "I sure wish I knew the Bible like old brother so and so." When it comes to Bible classes at church, she never prepares. When it comes to the preaching of the sermon, she never follows along in her Bible or even listens to the lesson. She reads novels and the newspaper She watches TV and stays on-line until the late hours of the night. For some strange reason she just cannot increase her Bible knowledge.

A preacher has a strong desire to become a soul winner. He believes that he can help lead many of his friends and co-workers to the Lord. He has yet to even set up a Bible study. This preacher talks with people about sports, politics, even the weather, but he never finds time to bring up the subject of Christ.

From the reader's perspective there are no

real surprising outcomes in the previous examples. The biggest problem with making a change in life is to start changing the little things that will make a difference. No one should expect to get different results by doing that same things the same way they always have. So life is like Mark Twain who said, "To cease smoking is the easiest thing I ever did. I ought to know because I've done it a 1000 times."

The Bible is filled with similar examples of those who had difficulty making changes. The children of Israel for centuries had a problem with idolatry. From the golden calf through the period of the Judges with the two calves of Jereboam and the Baal worship of Ahab and Jezebel they struggled with graven images. Their struggle with sin did not end until God sent the ten tribes into Assyrians captivity in 722 BC and the Judah into Babylonian captivity in 586 BC. When the remnant returned to the promise land they never had a problem with idol worship again.

While being lead through the wilderness by Moses the Israelites had a problem with murmuring. They complained and grumbled until that entire generation died in the forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

Samson, one of the judges of Israel, constantly had a problem with sin. The divinely mandated Nazarite vow demanded he not cut his hair. Samson was a He-man with she trouble. He was strong enough to defeat hundreds of Philistine soldiers, but he was unable to withstand his lust for Philistine women.

To help Israel come to repentance God sent a multitude of prophets. One by one they killed them. Stephen said, "*You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angles and have not kept it*" (Acts 7:51-53). Even with this stern rebuke they were unable to change. Instead, they took Stephen out and stoned him to death.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

#### Stop Procrastinating!

A congregation had a problems with several members who were always ten to fifteen minutes late for services. The elders came up with a plan to solve

the tardiness. All they needed to do was to start services fifteen minutes later. They soon found out that the problem could not be resolved. The tardy members were still ten to fifteen minutes late to services. You see procrastination is not about having more time, but having the right attitude about the use of time.

Procrastinators keep planning to make plans to change, yet never mature beyond the planning stage. God is more concerned with what we are doing with the present and not the thousand fancy fairy tales we have planned for tomorrow. Planning is important, but mere planning never got the job done. "*So teach us to number our days, That we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom*" (Psalm 90:12).

#### Stop Making Excuses

Anyone can find an excuse if they really want to find one. The excuse may even seem plausible on the surface. I have dozens of excuses why I do not eat sweet potatoes. For example, all sweet potato eaters will die. All those who eat them will get sick soon or later. All excuses aside, the fact is I just do not like sweet potatoes. (I don't like yams either, but I yam what I yam). Most people never get around to changing their lives because they really don't want to, it is easier to make excuses.

#### Get Motivated

Once a drunk stumbled into a cemetery and fell into a newly dug grave. He could not climb out so he laid down to sleep it off. Later a man was taking a short cut through the cemetery when he fell into the freshly dug grave. It had just rained so the sides of the grave were very slick. He tried to the point of exhaustion to get out. Finally, he decided to just sit down in the corner (alone he thought) and wait for help to come in the morning. Just then drunk spoke up and said, "You can't get out of the grave can you?" The man made it out of the grave in a single leap.

With the proper motivation great and radical changes are possible. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle. It all began with the appearance of Jesus on the road to Damascus. The prodigal son returned to his father's arms and home. He first had to hit rock bottom in a pig sty.

#### Remember, You Reap as You Sow

Remember "*whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh*

reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (Gal. 6:7,8). You cannot sow tares for the devil throughout the week and expect to reap the fruit of the Spirit on the weekend. Giving an hour a week to truly studying the Bible will not be enough to change your life 168 hours a week. Many want to spend eternity in heaven but they do not want to spend more than one hour a week worshipping God. Discipleship requires a daily cross (Lk. 9:23).

**Rely on Christ's Strength**

Paul believed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). The woman who touched the hem of Jesus garment found the power to be healed of her infirmity. Getting in touch with Jesus will help others find the means to make changes in their lives.

**Resolve to Change Today**

Joshua didn't have the children of Israel make changes next week or next year, he said, "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:14). When the Gospel was presented to the lost in the book of Acts they were not told to wait a month or a week or even a day to be baptized. The Pentecostians, the ethiopian, Cornelius and his household, Lydia and her household, the Jailor and his household, etc. all obeyed the Gospel immediately. To change one's life demands immediate action.

**Go Through a Metamorphosis**

A boy once noticed a moth struggling to emerge from its cocoon. He felt the need to show mercy and help it. So he took a pair of scissors and carefully cut open the cocoon so the moth could come out with ease. However, the moth seem swollen and lethargic. It could not fly and within twenty-four hours it was dead. The moth needs to struggle through the small opening in the cocoon. By doing so the fluids were squeezed out of its wings allowing it to fly.

To change a carnal man into a spiritual man requires struggle. Paul wrote, "that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on

the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24). This is not accomplished by being like every one else, but by being "transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1,2). This transformation is the metamorphosis of the Christian. He has a new manager in his heart, he has a new family, he has a new citizenship in a new kingdom, he has a new King, he has new riches laid up in heaven, he has a new name, etc.

Change is possible so long as the change agents are Christ and His Word in the heart of the saved. Begin you transformation today. To change your life into that of a Christian you must believed in Christ. Act on that belief by repenting of your sins, confessing Jesus as Lord and Christ before men, and being baptized into water to wash away our sins (Acts 22:16).

You are Invited to attend the

**Forum Terrace  
Church of Christ**

which meets at

**2446 Arkansas Lane  
Grand Prairie, Texas 75052**

Phone: 972.641.4351

Internet: [www.fourmterrace.com](http://www.fourmterrace.com)

**Service Times**

**Sunday**  
Bible Study.....9:30 am  
Worship Service.....10:30 am  
Worship Service.....5:00 pm

**Wednesday**  
Bible Study.....7:30 pm

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by Daniel R. Vess