

Stepping into Healthy Habits with Jesus

Real personal change is hard. It means we leave old attitudes and habits behind, trusting there are new ones to be gained. It means forsaking the familiar landscape for a new, undiscovered territory. It means being ruthlessly honest, relentlessly persistent, and courageous in a life-or-death kind of dedication. Because it is. Real change.

This is not about the latest diet or a ten-point exercise plan or some prosperity scam. Nothing superficial. This is about making changes in the way you see and experience life itself in the long haul. So the house of cards we call “New Year’s Resolutions” must fall for what Jesus would call “a house built upon a rock”. God desires our fulfillment and well-being. But this requires a deep and solid foundation. Jesus is our loving “foreman” and we must actively participate in that reconstruction project called My Life.



There are four *essential processes* that accompany the construction of healthy habits and an abundant lifestyle:

1. **Grow in AWARENESS** – Learning to be a more conscious human being means allowing the Holy Spirit to lead you into real Truth. Left to our own egos, we are all great truth-fabricators. We stretch the truth to meet our own perceived needs. We manipulate. If change is to take place, we release our own small view of life for God’s much bigger one. Develop a habit of letting Jesus show you new truth about your own thoughts and actions, a truth that will set you free from old destructive patterns. This is the essence of prayer. Listen. Breathe.

And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides." Mark 4:24

2. **Choose the ONE THING** – In any given moment, learn to discover what is *most* important. Where does God want to direct your attention? What is of the greatest value where you are right now? Part of this comes from finding out what Jesus generally values most (Bible, community, prayer, all help). We often forfeit God’s specific “best” for a generic “good”. This is about excellence that will align our living with God’s movement in our lives. Seek His guidance in all circumstances.

But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42

3. **Move with God’s PERFECT TIMING** – Wisdom is knowing to do the right thing *at the right time*. We look at our watches and feel pressure. That’s chronos time. God moves in our lives to bring healing and restoration *when we are ready to receive it*. That’s kairos time. God’s Spirit is always moving with a particular momentum and purpose. That’s why the Apostle Paul encourages us to “walk in the Spirit”. We slowly learn to match our “cadence” with His. Timing takes time! It’s the difference between scoring a diving catch in the end zone, a home run over center field, or the sales pitch landing a million-dollar account... and coming away empty-handed. A plan can be great and its execution flawless but if the timing is off, you come away with a big zero. Learn the subtle signs of God’s *kairos* in your life. They are there.

There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven-- Ecclesiastes 3:1

4. **Stoke the fires of MOTIVATION** – There are two basic motivators in life: FEAR (wanting to move away from someone or something) and LOVE (wanting to move toward someone or something). Jesus’ basic motivator was a facet of love called COMPASSION. He allowed the fire of his life passion to be stoked by His Father’s passion and to be intimately touched by the (often dysfunctional) passions of those around him. His heart was moved by the struggles of others. Compassion can be our prime motivator for personal life change too. Like Jesus, we can intentionally link to what God is passionate about and connect with the broken passions of others and ourselves. It really begins with cultivating self-compassion, rooted in Jesus’ unfailing love for us. Practice, practice, practice!

For the love of Christ controls us, ... 2 Corinthians 5:14

The path to life begins with a profound dying. Our ego’s agenda must be scrapped. Easy to say – hard to do. Most of us (Christians or not) are used to calling the shots with our egos, dressed up in religious or rationalizing language. Jesus says that stuff has to die in order for us to discover “life of the ages”. This is our bold “leap of faith”. It is nothing less than a leap into the arms of Jesus. Trust Him to form your healthy habits, little by little, as you learn to walk with Him each day. Let the Biblical stories and the personal stories of your faith community encourage you to risk it all for the adventure of a lifetime!



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