

MAKING THE HARD CHANGES

The Fight of Faith: Round 3

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Where do my character defects come from?

- 1) Sin.
- 2) My **GENES**.
- 3) My unmet needs.
- 4) My **STRENGTHS** unrestrained.

Why is it so hard to change my character defects?

- 1) Because I've **HAD THEM** so long.
- 2) Because I **IDENTIFY** with them.
- 3) Because they have a **PAYOFF**.
- 4) Because satan works hard to **DISCOURAGE** me from change.

Ephesians 4:21–27 (NLT)

²¹ Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that is in him, ²² throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, corrupted by lust and deception. ²³ Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. ²⁴ Put on your new nature because you are a new person, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy. ²⁵ So stop telling lies and tell your neighbor the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. ²⁶ And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

PRINCIPLES FOR PERSONAL CHANGE

1. CHANGE REQUIRES REALIZATION.

Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that is in him (21)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16–17, NLT)

2. CHANGE REQUIRES ACTIVATION.

throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, corrupted by lust and deception (22)

“...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12–13, NIV)

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8–9, NIV)

3. CHANGE REQUIRES CONSIDERATION.

Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes (23)

Think→ Feel→ Act

“Let this same attitude and...mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5, AMP)

4. CHANGE REQUIRES PERSISTENT FORMATION.

Put on your new nature because you are a new person, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy (24)

“And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.” (2 Corinthians 3:18b, The Living Bible)

5. CHANGE REQUIRES COOPERATION.

So stop telling lies and tell your neighbor the truth, for we are all [belong to each other] (25)

“You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you.” (Proverbs 28:13, GNB)

“By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2, NCV)

6. CHANGE REQUIRES MANAGING TEMPTATION.

And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil (26-27)

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13, NIV)

LAST THOUGHT
WHAT WILL IT TAKE BEFORE YOU BREAK?