



First, stop trying to change yourself through willpower alone, and start yielding to the Holy Spirit.

If you are struggling with a specific sin, a bad attitude, or a broken relationship, recognize that your willpower is not enough to fix it. True transformation comes from surrender, not striving. When you wake up tomorrow, before your feet hit the floor, pray a simple prayer of surrender.

Say, Holy Spirit, I have a new heart because of You, but I am weak today.

I cannot be the spouse, the parent, or the friend I need to be on my own strength.

Please move in me today...yield your agenda to His power.

Second, identify the idols that need washing away.

God promised to sprinkle clean water on us and cleanse us from all our idols. In our culture today, we might not bow down to little statues of wood and stone, but our hearts are still idol factories. We bow down to the idol of comfort, refusing to do anything that might be difficult or require sacrifice.

We bow down to the idol of approval, living in constant fear of what other people think of us.

We bow down to the idol of control, getting angry and anxious whenever things do not go exactly our way.

Take some time this week to ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Ask Him to show you what you are loving or trusting more than Him, and then let His grace wash those idols away.

You do not need them anymore.

Third, pay attention to the heartbeat of your new nature.

God promised to give you a heart of flesh, a heart that is soft and responsive to His touch.

When the Holy Spirit prompts you to do something, do not ignore it. Do not harden your heart.

If you are in the middle of an argument and you feel a gentle nudge to stop talking and apologize, that is the Holy Spirit moving you to keep His decrees.

Do it.

If you are at the grocery store and you feel prompted to encourage the cashier, do not brush it off as a random thought.

That is your new heart beating.

The Apostle Paul illustrates this perfectly in Galatians chapter 5. He tells us that when we walk by the Spirit, we will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

He says that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Notice that it is called the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of our hard work.

You do not get an apple by taping it to a dead branch.

You get an apple by making sure the branch is connected to a living tree, and the life of the tree naturally produces the fruit.

In the same way, as we stay connected to the **Promised Presence** within us, He will naturally produce the character of Jesus in our lives.