



There is something in all of us that craves healthy and effective change and yet in other ways we fear, resist or can't maintain it. In this message, we look at the unhealthy and healthy motivations we have to change and how God's love for us can offer healthy change.

1. In your experience when have you found yourself frustrated because the determination to change wasn't enough to bring about change?
2. Sometimes we seek deliverance or emotional avoidance instead of processing the emotions of what we are going through. We tend to hide from ourselves, others and God. What has been your experience with this?

Effective change is an emotional and relational process. Read Job 2:11-13 as we take a closer look at this.

3. Share about a time when someone listened and joined you during a time of suffering. How did this help you?
4. Have you ever experienced someone trying to "fix you" or offer behavioral management advice during a time of suffering instead of feeling heard and safe? How did this make you feel?

Jesus is the ultimate example of "hearing and joining". John 1:1-2, 14 says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. [...] The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." In our problem of shame and suffering God's response was "Let me join you." Jesus came and bore humanity to walk this road with us.

5. Jesus' existence itself is such a beautiful example of emotional and relational joining that happens in healthy and effective change. Discuss this and how we can model this for ourselves and others.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." Christianity teaches our worth is not dependent on our actions or ability to change. We have worth and value simply because God's love for us is unconditional. However, in our human nature this can be hard to rest in.

6. In what ways have you been motivated to change in order to gain acceptance from others or God?

7. God's unconditional love for us can help us to view change as an opportunity for what is best for us, not something we should do in order to gain His acceptance. How does this truth help you trust Him in the process of change?

8. How does viewing the journey of change in this way for ourselves and others help create a **safe community** where anyone can discover, develop and deepen a relationship with Jesus?

Our ultimate hope for change comes from God's unconditional love that has endured since the beginning. This unconditional love was demonstrated to us through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He restored us from a life of shame to a life of value, and love. We can rest in the truth that we are fully known and fully loved and let others and God into the healthy change we desire. When we approach change not because we **MUST in order to become acceptable, but because we **CAN** in Christ, change becomes an opportunity and not an obligation.**

Leaders: If you have group members that want to invite a counselor in their desire for change, they can email tony@rockpointcc.org for a recommendation.