

HOW DO PEOPLE CHANGE? PART 2

We and Our Counselees Are Responsible to Exert Effort Towards Change

- A. Some wrongfully stop with the indicative, declaring what God has done for us in Christ, while neglecting the imperatives of what God calls us to do.
- B. What is the use of biblical imperatives (God's law)?
 1. God's law shows us our need for Christ who alone meets God's standard and provides the righteousness we lack. *Gal 3:24; 2:16; Phil 3:9*
 2. God's law also shows us how He desires His redeemed people to live. *1 Thess 4:1; Eph 5:10; John 14:15*
- C. Biblical Examples
 1. Immediately after telling us to consider our identity in Christ, Paul exhorts us to take action against the lusts of the flesh. *Rom 6:12ff*
 2. Jesus tells us what we must do in order to abide in Him. *John 15:1-11*
 - Have His Word in ourselves. *John 15:3, 7*
 - Seek His glory in prayer. *John 15:7*
 - Obey His commandments. *John 15:10; 14:15; 1 John 2:6*

- Love the brethren. *John 15:12-13, 17; 1John 2:10*

3. The typical pattern in many New Testament epistles is to begin with the indicative as the basis for the imperative. *Rom 12:1ff; Eph 4:1ff; Col 3:1ff*

4. Our responsibility and God's work in us are placed side by side. *Phil 2:12-13; 4:13*

5. The New Testament is filled with specific exhortations to actively fight sin and to faithfully and diligently pursue righteousness.

- Put off sin (repent). *Matt 5:29-30; Eph 4:17, 22, 25, 28, 29; Rom 6:12-13a*

- Put on righteousness. *Eph 4:24, 25, 28b, 29b; Rom 6:13b, 19c; 12:1ff*

6. It is not enough to merely hear God's word or even to agree with it. We must do what God commands. *Matt 7:24-27; Jas 1:22*

D. Our motive for obedience is crucial.

What Determines When and Whether Change Takes Place?

A. We experience a variety of outcomes in our counseling.

B. Sometimes change doesn't take place in the life of a counselee because he/she is not regenerate.

John 15:2, 6; Phil 1:6; 1 John 2:3-4; Matt 7:16ff

C. Personal revival is like corporate revival: God sees fit to sovereignly work in powerful ways in the lives of His people at certain times. *John 3:8; 15:5; Ps 71:20; 85:6*

D. God uses various means to accomplish change.

1. His Word is a powerful agent for change. *2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12-13; Ps 119:25; John 15:7*

2. We should pray for God to revive us and our counselees. *Ps 119:25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159*

3. Sometimes the Lord brings circumstances into our lives to change our course. *Ps 119:67, 71; Heb 12:4-11; John 15:2; Jas 1:2ff*

4. Sometimes God sends a Nathan to admonish us. *Rom 15:14; Gal 6:1-2; 2 Sam 12*

Conclusion

A. God wants us to change and to bear fruit for His glory. *John 15:8*

B. The gospel is the key to change.

1. Understand your union with Christ. *Rom 6:11*

2. Abide in Christ. *John 15:1ff*

3. Delight in Christ. *Isa 55:1-2*

C. We are responsible to exert effort to change.