

A Better Way to Beat Bad Habits and Behaviors

Bad behaviors, bad habits, bad moods—most of us try to beat anything bad in our lives with modified actions.

We reprimand ourselves, “I should quit this/stop that,” then set out to follow some strict regimen of dos and don’ts.

Why Dos And Don’ts Don’t Do It

The problem is when you try to modify behavior, victory is short-lived. Most of us know this when we attempt a strict diet. Though you might succeed for a while, the more you focus on what you shouldn’t eat, the more it consumes your mind until you fall to it again.

The reason this happens is spiritual: “The law gives sin its power” (1 Cor. 15:56, NLT).

You see, God never intended law (following dos and don’ts) to be the means to overcome anything. No, He intended law to show why you can’t rely only on your own strength. He intended it to demonstrate your need for Jesus.

That’s why any attempt to use law to fix yourself is futile. It only proves you can’t do it on your own.

How To Really Beat Bad Behaviors

Obviously, for our physical, emotional or spiritual health, there are behaviors and habits we should stop. So what’s the solution?

In a word: Bad behaviors come from bad beliefs.

Rather than strive to replace bad behaviors with better behaviors, begin to conform your beliefs to who you are and

what you have in Christ.

These truths are excellent places to start:

- “I am a child of God” (see Galatians 3:26).
- “I am a new person” (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).
- “I am the righteousness of God” (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- “I am loved unconditionally” (see Romans 8:39).
- “I am complete” (see Colossians 2:9–10).
- “I am God’s masterpiece” (see Ephesians 2:10).

(These truths are so foundational to real victory that I put them on a mirror cling to keep them in front of me as much as possible.)

Beliefs Influence Behaviors

While there are no quick fixes to long-term change, a strict regimen of dos and don’ts definitely don’t do it. In fact, it might just leave you worse than when you began.

Undoubtedly, it takes intention. But as you align your mind to God’s Word, everything else begins to get in line—and stay in line. As the apostle Paul put it, “Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think” (Rom. 12:2, NLT).

(Want more understanding about how this works? Watch my teaching, “Your Greatest Protection Against the Enemy.”){eoa}

Kyle Winkler is the creator of the popular *Shut Up, Devil!* mobile app. His latest book is *Activating the Power of God’s Word: 16 Strategic Declarations to Transform Your Life*. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Connect with him on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Learn more about Kyle by visiting his website, .

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