

To Change How You Act, You Must Change This

Change requires new thinking. In order to change, we must learn the truth and start making good choices, but we also must change the way we think.

The battle for sin starts in your mind, not in your behavior. The way you think determines the way you feel, and the way you feel determines the way you act. If you want to change the way you act, you start by changing the way you think. In addition, if you want to change the way you feel, you must start with changing the way you think.

For instance, I can say, "I need to love my kids more," but that isn't going to work. You can't fight your way into a feeling. You must change the way you think about your kids, about your husband, about your wife, and that will change the way you feel, which will then change the way you act. The Bible says, "... and be renewed by the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23).

Let me sum it up this way: You are not what you think you are. Rather, what you think, you are. The battle to deal with those defects in your life that you don't like starts in your mind. If you want to change anything in your behavior or in your emotions, start with your thoughts and your attitude.

The renewal of your mind is related to the word "repentance." I know that's a murky word for a lot of people. They think it means something they don't really want to do or something painful. They think of a guy standing on a street corner with a sign that says, "Repent! The world's about to end!"

But repentance has nothing to do with your behavior. It's about learning to think differently. "Repent" simply means to make a mental U-turn. It's something you do in your mind, not

with your behavior. Changing the way you think will then affect your emotions and your behavior.

When I repent, I turn from guilt to forgiveness. I turn from hell to heaven. I turn from purposelessness to purpose in life. I turn from no hope to new hope. I turn from frustration to freedom. I turn from darkness to light.

That's the kind of change I need to be able to change the rest of my life. {eoa}

Talk It Over

- What do you watch or listen to that affects the way you think? Do those things help with the renewal of your mind?
- What do you say to God when you repent?
- How can you change the way you think about your relationships so you feel more love toward the people in your life? {eoa}

Rick Warren is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of , a global Internet community for pastors.

For the original article, visit .