

The Key to Having the Life You've Always Wanted

All of us have some sort of dream or vision—areas of our lives where, with God's help, we want to better ourselves or achieve more.

Maybe it's to get in shape or have better physical health. Maybe you want greater financial stability or greater success in your business. Or you may be believing for greater ministry opportunities.

Whatever your goals are, there's one thing for certain—it will be almost impossible to get there without discipline and self-control.

There was a time in my life when I would think, If I eat one of those chocolate chip cookies, I'll have to eat a dozen. Why? Because I had no I had absolutely no faith in myself ever changing.

But here's the truth: We can change. By the grace of God, we can begin making right choices and developing new habits that will help us enjoy a better life.

Know Your Power Source

First and foremost, living a disciplined life and establishing new habits requires a lot more than just will power.

I'll never forget the time I heard a teaching about the power of words. That day, I left church and said, "That's it! I'm going to shut my mouth and not say one bad thing. I'm going to discipline myself!"

You can probably guess how that turned out. Actually, I did manage to keep quiet, but then I realized I was depressed. The Lord spoke to my heart and said, "You shut your mouth, but

nothing on the inside has changed.”

Here’s the lesson: Even when God asks us to do something, we still cannot do it successfully unless we lean on Him. John 15:5 has changed my life. It says, ” ...Apart from Me you can do nothing” (NAS).

Take a little time each day to read God’s Word and talk to Him in prayer. Some of my greatest breakthroughs have been the result of simply sitting quietly in His presence, knowing that I can’t do anything if He doesn’t make it happen.

You Can’t Have the “Perks” Without the “Works”

Years ago, people were expected to work at their jobs for a long time before getting raises, vacation and special benefits. Today, these things are expected up front. I’m all for people having great benefits, but there’s a sense of entitlement today that actually can hurt us.

I believe a lot of people want the “perks without the works.” In other words, they want to have all of the good results without having to discipline themselves or take any of the responsibility to get them.

College football coach Vince Lombardi famously said that he was going to teach his players how to discipline themselves so they could have what they said they wanted to have.

You see, although today we can microwave a meal, there’s no such thing as “microwave Christianity.” Actually, I like to call God’s process “The Law of Gradual Growth.” Why? Because little by little, as we make right choices, the Lord brings us to the place we need to be.

Yes, in the beginning, disciplining yourself will be difficult. It won’t feel good, and you won’t like it. But every time you make a choice to do the right thing, the next time it gets a little easier. And you get one step closer to

your goal.

Truth or Consequence?

The Bible teaches us that wise people think about the consequences and care more about later on than right now.

Yes, you can live a lazy, undisciplined life and still go to heaven. But you won't have peace, you won't be happy and, worst of all, you won't glorify God with your life the way He intended.

I encourage you to start viewing discipline and self-control in a whole new way—as helpful keys to good health, peace, prosperity, great relationships and the satisfaction of fulfilling your purpose.

And remember, whatever your goal is—whether it's to get in good physical shape or change a negative attitude—you have what it takes. So start drawing on God's grace to help you achieve it. As you do—little by little—you'll begin to live the life God has for you ... and find more freedom, more success, and more fulfillment than you ever could imagine.

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