

BREAKING BAD HABITS

JANUARY 23, 2022

WORSHIP

Open The Eyes of My
Heart, Grace That Won't
Let Go, Yet Not I But
Through Christ In Me

WELCOME

Name one bad habit you
have and share if you
remember how you
developed that habit.

WORD

JUDGES 16:4-6, 20-21, 28

⁴ After this it came about that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵ The lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see where his great strength lies and how we may overpower him that we may bind him to afflict him. Then we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver."⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you..." ²⁰ And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him. ²¹ Then the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he was a grinder in the prison. ²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes..."

Many of us have developed wrong, bad habits that lead us away from our goals; it distracts, hinders, even opposes us from our desired outcome. Who you want to become is affected not just by the good keystone habits you have decided to develop, but also of the bad habits you choose to retain. These doesn't just refer to wrong things like addictions (porn, or drugs), sinful habits, and the like – it also includes negative thinking, blaming others, procrastination, even the subtle things like being critical, unforgiving, and spending too much time on social media or binge-watching movies and series, cancel culture, and the like. These habits over time can endanger your productivity and even affect your values negatively. What is one habit you need to change because it is hindering or sidetracking you from becoming the person God wants you to be? You can break bad habits! Bad habits do not need to define you. As our memory verse says, "... **on the other hand, discipline yourselves for the purpose of godliness...**" (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Remember, our identity emerges out of our own habits. To break BAD HABITS, we must be A.W.A.R.E.:

1. ASSESS

Analyze and assess what's happening in your life today. You must be conscious about your current habits. Begin with the foundation: who do you want to become? Any habit that will impact what you want to become negatively will become hindrances and are things you need to surrender. Don't be in denial – face reality. You need to remember that direction, not desire or goals determines your destination. Samson was chosen by God and had an amazing beginning (Judges 13). But Samson had a weakness, and he wasn't aware of his own bad habits. The Bible gives us a glimpse in Judges 14:1-3 how Samson acted on his own fleshly desires despite reminders and warnings from his parents. Samson gave in to sensuality. It was like a regular thing for Samson, like in Judges 16:1 and 4. Despite knowing it was enemy territory, he gave in to his own lust. He should have **assessed** how this will impact him eventually! We must learn to humble ourselves and track what we are doing like the time we spend on any activity, and how, by compounding it, these activities can waste our precious time. After figuring it out, you take the next step:

2. WANT TO CHANGE

You must be willing to admit there's a problem. It is one thing to know, but another thing to want to change. To do this, you must understand the problem. For example, pilots know the 1-degree deviation and its danger and effects to their flying. The root problem is that 1-degree off, and you can end up miles away from your destination. Habits are like cobwebs, until they become iron chains that pin us down in addiction similar to what happened to Samson, who had no idea of what was coming. Because he did not want to change, he eventually lost his eyes, his ministry, and even the anointing, power, and presence of God. His bad habit cost him a lot – he became a prisoner both of his bad habit, and the enemies of Israel.

BREAKING BAD HABITS

JANUARY 23, 2022

WORD

3. ADD A NEW HABIT

Studies have shown that if you just focus on removing bad habits, the more you will fall in them (**principle of fixation**). As we have discussed the habit cycle (cue – action – reward), remember that we need to replace this with better cues, easier actions, and look forward to better rewards. Bad habits have immediate rewards so it is easy to choose them, while good habits' rewards usually take a long time. Keep in mind that there will be consequences to every choice you make!

4. REMOVE THE TRIGGER

There are 5 major triggers: **time, place, people, events, and mood** that signal us to do bad habits. The key is to remove the trigger – it may be doing something different in a specific time, avoiding a certain place, saying “no” to certain people, and finding better ways to uplift your mood. It may mean removing something. It all starts with the trigger – once this is removed and replaced, you will be able to start living differently. Once you commit to something better, like choose a different trigger, and detox yourself from things that lead you towards the bad habits that take you off-track. This is the principle of replacement – it works best with adding a new habit. We must also make sure we see the reward clearly to make the good new habit stick!

5. ENGAGE OTHERS

Research has shown that the influence of our social circles is powerful. God has given us the gift of community – in our church we have discipleship groups where we practice accountability. If we belong to a group of people doing good things and pursuing good habits, we will be encouraged to do the same. **Proverbs 13:20** reminds us to **walk with wise (righteous) men** - so ask yourself, are you engaging with people who can help you overcome your bad habits and build good habits with you? It is almost impossible to develop the right habits if you are surrounded with people whose habits are opposed to what you want to happen. The picture presented by **Proverbs 7** – how we are lured by temptation (wrong place, wrong person, wrong time) – is likened to an ox led to the slaughter (**v.22**). Going down this road is dangerous and that's why we are reminded to help **one another** over 140 times in the NT (**James 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Colossians 3:16**, etc.).

Ultimately, the best help we can give ourselves is, as mentioned last week, to stick with our **WHY** and **WHO**. We want to **BREAK BAD HABITS** not just for ourselves, but more so for the glory and honor of the King of kings! The quest to change revolves around who you wish to be – making small changes helps you achieve that identity!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What is that ONE habit that you need to replace or let go that hinders you from becoming all that God wants you to be?

2. Setting It Right.

What is that ONE habit that you want to develop to overcome your bad habit?

3. Living It Out.

Who in your life are you accountable to that can truthfully correct or admonish you?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people who find it hard to obey the Lord because they are entangled with the affairs of the world. Pray that the Lord will open their eyes to bad habits that are hindering them from coming to Him. Invite them to have an accountability group with you that they may find a community where they can be encouraged to develop good habits and get rid of bad ones. Share Christ with them so that they may know the WHO and the WHY of breaking bad habits encouraged to develop good habits and get rid of bad ones. Share Christ with them so that they may know the WHO and the WHY of breaking bad habits.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
 A God-centered Philippines
 Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
 Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
 Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

Worship and Training Center
 Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

Deeper intimate relationship with God
 Righteous living
 Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

1 TIMOTHY 7b-8

discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;⁸ for bodily training is just slightly beneficial, but godliness is beneficial for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.