



# breaking bad habits

Many of us have developed bad habits that lead us away from our goals. Bad habits – such as addiction to pornography or drugs, negative thinking, blaming others, procrastination, unforgiving, spending too much time on social media, and binge-watching on Netflix – over time can endanger our productivity and affect our values negatively. They distract, hinder, and prevent us from becoming the person that God wants us to be. The good news is we can break bad habits! To break BAD HABITS, we must be A.W.A.R.E.

## Assess

Overcoming bad habits starts with being aware and assessing how we live our life today. Are there any habits that keeps us from becoming the person we desire to be? What are habits that we need to give up or surrender so we can fulfill God's purpose for our life? Samson was a man chosen by God and had an amazing beginning (Judges 13). But he wasn't aware of his own weaknesses and bad habits. Samson easily gave into his fleshly desires, lust, and sensuality. He did not listen to warnings, even from his own parents (Judges 14:1-3, 16:1,4). He did not assess his habits and choices which eventually led to sad and tragic end. To assess our life habits means to humble ourselves, identify bad habits, and track the activities we are spending our precious time on. What activities should we stop doing? After figuring it out, we can take the next step.

## Want to Change

We must not only assess and acknowledge our problem, but we must also be willing to adjust and change the trajectory of our life for the better. Habits are like cobwebs, until they become iron chains that pin us down in addiction like what happened to Samson. Because he did not assess his life and was unwilling to change, he eventually lost his eyes, his ministry, and even the anointing, power, and presence of God. His bad habits cost him a lot – he became a prisoner both of his bad habit, and the enemies of Israel.

## Add a New Habit

To replace a bad habit with a new habit, we must understand the importance of cues. As we have learned from “the habit cycle”: habit formation starts with a “cue”, which leads us to “action”, which then leads to “rewards”. We must be aware of the cues

### this week's memory verse

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness...

ACTS 17:30-31



that trigger our bad habits and replace them with new cues that will trigger simple actions that develop good habits. We need to remember that while a bad habit may provide immediate gratification, it eventually leads to serious consequences. On the other hand, the rewards of good habits may take longer, but it promises long-term benefits. That's why, we need to be careful of every choice that we make, because our choices turn into habits and habits reap either bad consequences or long-term rewards.

## Remove the Trigger

The key to developing a new habit is to remove the trigger of bad habits. It may mean doing something different at a specific time, avoiding certain places, saying “no” to certain people, and finding better ways to uplift your mood. Once a trigger of bad habit is removed and replaced with better cues that develop good habits, we will be able to start living differently.

## 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 and mutual encouragement (James 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Colossians 3:16, etc.). Proverbs 13:20 reminds us to walk with wise (righteous) men, so ask let's ask ourselves: are we engaging with people who can help us overcome bad habits and build good habits with us? Are there people in our life who we are accountable to?

Ultimately, the best help we can give ourselves is to know the WHY of our life (to please God) and WHO we are (child of God). We want to BREAK BAD HABITS not just for ourselves, but more so for the glory and honor of our Heavenly Father!

### discussion questions

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

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


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


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