



Starting Over Part 3 (Do a New Thing)

January 19, 2025

Series Summary:

1. Find a New Way (Starting Over Part 1))
2. Do a New Thing (Starting Over Part 2)
3. **Be a New Person (All Call)**
4. Live a New Way

Today's Text: 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Question: How do you become a new person and not just look like a new person?

Answer: Yield to God's influence in your life and avoid the negative side of Neuroplasticity

Note: Eight Wrong Answers to this question

1. Pray
2. Go to church
3. Give/ Tithe
4. Worship
5. Serve
6. Live Right
7. Change Your Clothing
8. Change Your Friends

I. The One Way You Become a New Person

1. You **must be in a relationship** with Christ ("if anyone is in Christ...")
2. You must **allow him to work in you** and change your behavior (Galatians 5:16-26)

- **16** I say, **walk (live) by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.**17** For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.**18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**19** The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and **debauchery; (Lasciviousness, unrestrained behavior)**
- **20** idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions **21** and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. You must allow his fruit to grow in your daily life

22 But the fruit (the physical outcomes) of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**23** gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**24** Those who



belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

II. Why So Many People Struggle to Become New People

(Some are Victims of Neuroplasticity)

Source: The Brain That Changed Itself by Norman Doidge

- I began a series of travels, and in the process I met a band of brilliant scientists, at the frontiers of brain science, who had, in the late 1960s or early 1970s, made a series of unexpected discoveries. They showed that the brain changed its very structure with each different activity it performed, perfecting its circuits so it was better suited to the task at hand. If certain “parts” failed, then other parts could sometimes take over.
- The machine metaphor, of the brain as an organ with specialized parts, could not fully account for changes the scientists were seeing. **They began to call this fundamental brain property “neuroplasticity.”**
- **Neuro** is for “neuron,” the nerve cells in our brains and nervous systems. **Plastic** is for “changeable, malleable, modifiable.”
- At first many of the scientists didn’t dare use the word “neuroplasticity” in their publications, and their peers belittled them for promoting a fanciful notion.
- Yet **they persisted, slowly overturning the doctrine of the unchanging brain.**
- They showed that children are not always stuck with the mental abilities they are born with; that **the damaged brain can often reorganize itself so that when one part fails, another can often substitute**; that if brain cells die, they can at times be replaced; that many “circuits” and even basic reflexes that we think are hardwired are not.
- **One of these scientists even showed that thinking, learning, and acting can turn our genes on or off, thus shaping our brain anatomy and our behavior—surely one of the most extraordinary discoveries of the twentieth century.**

Closing:

- *Would those around you say they “see your good works and because of that they want to glorify your father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).*
- *Are you letting sin reign in your mortal body and creating a neuroplastic cycle in your life? (Roman 6:12)*

Next Time: Live a New Way

Read Ahead: 2 Corinthians 5:17