



REVIEW:

LIE: I AM NOT FULLY LOVED
TRUTH: GOD LOVES YOU

LIE: I MUST DO MORE
TRUTH: THE WORK OF MEASURING UP IS FINISHED

LIE: I CANNOT CHANGE
TRUTH: GOD IS CHANGING YOU

Were there any times in this past week when you were tempted to justify your fears or behaviour based on the lie, “that’s just who I am”?

Can you spot times through this past week when you gave into the lie that you cannot change and are bound to your failings?

- Did you feel insignificant this week?
- Did you give in to an old sinful habit?
- Is there an addiction you have not been able to break?
- Did you let an insecurity limit your actions this week?
- Did you resist something this week simply because it involved change?
- Did you justify your tone or sarcasm as just part of how you relate?
- Did you feel unlovable this week?
- Were you discontent with how you look?
- Did you sinfully react to someone without thinking about your actions?
- Did your emotions control your decisions this week?
- Did you feel like giving up on something this week?
- Did you feel unworthy this week?
- Did you minimize the seriousness of sin this week?

Everyone hates change! Change throws our world into the realm of the unknown and potential chaos. Even when change is good, we resist it because we feel a little out of control. When we do want to see change, we get frustrated because it takes so long and we become impatient. As a result, often our attempts to create change fail and nothing seems to change within us.

What are some things you have tried to change about yourself in the past but failed in the attempt?

If we can't change ourselves and God doesn't force change on us, how do we experience change?

Read through the following verses and discuss what it teaches about the change process.

Hebrews 12:2-4 (NIV)

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴ In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

What does it mean to fix your eyes on Jesus?

To fix your eyes on Jesus means that you keep him in perspective in everything you do. As you focus on your relationship with him, he will create change within you. The more we learn of Jesus, the more we will begin to pattern our lives after him, as opposed to the pattern established by our sin nature.

List all the things you can think of that Jesus embraced as a result of trusting God, which our old pattern would have avoided?

- Coming to earth and leaving the comforts and praise of heaven
- Acting as a servant as opposed to a powerful king
- Teaching truth in a way that caused others to reject him
- Choosing an itinerate ministry as opposed to waiting for people to come to him
- Being rejected by all in authority
- Staying quiet while unjustly accused
- Suffering death on the cross when he was innocent

How does Jesus' example, create an incentive for change in our lives?

James 4:8 (NIV)

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

What does James mean when he talks about being double-minded?

We are double minded when we choose to embrace two opposing ideas. As Christ followers, we say we believe what God says about us, life and holiness, yet we still cling to the lies that Satan has thrown our way. The result of believing and living according to a lie is that we have wandered away from Jesus and experience painful consequences.

Because we believe and value the lies, we let them determine our choices, our behaviour and our reactions. The solution is to turn back to Jesus. When we turn to him, he will turn to us and embrace us and he will replace those lies with his truth. However, we are still responsible to apply those truths to our lives.



How do we “come near to God”? Whose court is the ball in, ours or God’s?

James implies that we must take steps to move toward God. Since we are the ones who have stepped away from God, we need to take steps to return to him. God will not force us – he wants us to come willingly, to *choose* him. This occurs, not only when we first accept him as our Lord and Saviour, but also during our ensuing relationship with him. To “come near to God” means to spend time talking with him, praying, conversing with him throughout our day, listening to him through reading the bible and meditating on scripture, obeying him, doing what Jesus did and listening to promptings from the Spirit.

The next time we feel that God is not changing us (or not changing us fast enough), we might want to consider how near we are coming to God.

James 1:22-25 (NIV)

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

In what ways might we be guilty of reading the word and then forgetting what we have read?

What are some practical ways we can remember and act on God’s truth as we go through our day?

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NIV)

22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

How can we take off our old self, put on the new self and change the attitude of our mind? Why is our attitude so important?

Ephesians 5:18 (NIV)

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV)

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.



What determines whether the Holy Spirit makes a change in our life or not?

Everything comes down to a matter of choice. Will I surrender my will to the will of the Holy Spirit, or will I stay in control? When the Holy Spirit prompts either through scripture or our conscience, we are responsible to be obedient to that prompting. If we reject the prompting and embrace the same old sinful pattern, we will not change. If we obey the prompting, the Holy Spirit will empower change in our lives.

What are we to do if the sinful pattern is too powerful to resist?

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Hebrews 2:18 (NIV)

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Do you have an example of a time when God helped you overcome a sinful pattern in your life? How did the victory come?

What are some practical helps when you struggle with a deeply embedded pattern?

When a sinful pattern is deeply established, one critical key to success is accountability. We often avoid accountability due to shame and a fear of others discovering what we are truly like, but accountability give us support, encouragement and prayer when we struggle to succeed on our own.

God's family is truly the "body of Christ". If Christ wants to come alongside you to help strengthen you, he will do it through his body. You simply need to be willing to be vulnerable and transparent with those you think could support you.

REVIEW OF THE FREEDOM PROCESS

1) Identify the LIE

How can we identify times we are buying into the lie that we cannot change?

- a) When we expect people to adapt to or accept our style of interaction**
These are the times when we say "That's the way I am. Deal with it."



b) **When we continually fall into the same sin**

We fall into the same sin either because we do not really want to change or we try to change in our own strength apart from the Holy Spirit and the help of others.

c) **Frustration of others**

If numerous people share the same frustration with us, chances are there is some truth to what they are saying. Our fear of inadequacy prevents us from sincerely listening to others and we get angry and defensive. As a result, people do not feel we are safe to talk with or address concerns.

d) **When we have not grown spiritually**

When we think we've gone as far as we're going to get, we stop moving forward. At these times we stop growing spiritually as we are resistant to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

2) **CONFESS the Lie to God**

3) **Affirm the BIBLICAL TRUTH**

Why is affirming the biblical truth so critical?

4) **Correct any UNGODLY ACTIONS**

James 4:17 (NIV)

Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

It is strange to think that doing nothing could qualify as an ungodly action. What types of ungodly actions might we need to correct from our past week due to the lie "I cannot change"?

5) **LIVE OUT the truth.**

Have you seen the time lag between when you believed a lie and when you confessed it getting shorter?

Have any of you found freedom with regard to any expressions of the lies?