

## What Stops You from Changing?

What stops you from changing?

- **Love of** \_\_\_\_\_ (**\_\_\_\_\_**)

Romans 3:9-18

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many people say: "I can't believe I've done it again."

Ed Welch: "Perhaps the person is mad at himself for repeating the same sin over and over again. This is actually a veiled form of pride that assumes he is capable of doing good in his own power. He is minimizing his spiritual inability apart from God's grace."<sup>1</sup>

Jerry Bridges: "God wants us to walk in obedience-not victory." Our problem, he explains, "is that our attitude toward sin is more self-centered than God-centered. We are more concerned about our own 'victory' over sin than we are about the fact that our sins grieve the heart of God."<sup>2</sup>

Self Reliance says, " \_\_\_\_\_ "

- \_\_\_\_\_

Self Justification says, " \_\_\_\_\_ " This statement embraces one of three strategies: Excusing, Minimizing, or Hiding Sin.

- Excusing Sin

Gen. 3:11-13:

We blame other people and we blame our circumstances: context, upbringing, personal history or biology. Take for example the person who just got really angry:

- Context: It was unfair. You'd have done the same thing if you were in my situation.
- Upbringing: I learned my anger from my father who I take after.
- Personal History: You'd be angry too if you'd have been through what I've been through.
- Biology: It's just the way I am. I'm hotheaded.

Jerry Bridges states, "When I say I am defeated by some sin, I am unconsciously slipping out from under my responsibility. I am saying something outside

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<sup>1</sup> Edward T. Welch, *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2001), 170.

<sup>2</sup> Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1978), 20-21.

of me has defeated me. But when I say I am disobedient, that places the responsibility for my sin squarely on me. We may, in fact, be defeated, but the reason we are defeated is because we have chosen to disobey.”<sup>3</sup>

James 1:13-14

- Minimizing Sin

“Oh, it’s not that bad.” “It’s just a white lie.” “At least I’m not like him/her.”

- Hiding Sin

Proverbs 28:13

We like our reputation, so we hide our sin.

Chester says, “Think about it: we’re prepared to choose sin, reject God, abandon freedom, and even risk hell rather than have people think badly of us.”<sup>4</sup>

Jerry Bridges states, “The gospel, applied to our hearts every day, frees us to be brutally honest with ourselves and with God. The assurance of His total forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ means we don’t have to play defensive games anymore. We don’t have to rationalize and excuse our sins. We can say we told a lie instead of saying we exaggerated a bit. We can admit an unforgiving spirit instead of continuing to blame our parents for our emotional distress. We can call sin exactly what it is, regardless of how ugly and shameful it may be, because we know that Jesus bore that sin in His body on the cross. With the assurance of total forgiveness through Christ, we have no reason to hide from our sins anymore.”<sup>5</sup>

What’s the answer to pride?

Micah 6:8

Isaiah 66:2

- **Love of** \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

What’s the answer to loving sin?

Matthew 5:29-30; Colossians 3:5; Romans 13:14; Ephesians 6:13-17; 1 Timothy 6:12.

- **A Cross Centered Life**

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<sup>3</sup> Bridges, *Pursuit of Holiness*, 84.

<sup>4</sup> Tim Chester, *You Can Change* (Wheaton, Crossway, 2010), 123.

<sup>5</sup> Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace* (Colorado Springs, NavPress, 1994), 22-23.

Chester states, “When we go to the cross, we see our God dying for us. If you let any other god down, it will beat you up. If you live for people’s approval or your career or possessions or control or anything else and you don’t make it or you mess up, then you’ll be left feeling afraid, downcast, or bitter. But when you let Christ down, he still loves you. He doesn’t beat you up; he died for you.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Chester, *You Can Change*, 128.