

06-2008 SIX PRINCIPLES FOR NEW LIFE

Titus 2:1-8, 11-15

Do you have a habit you would like to break?

Do you have an attitude you would like to change?

This sermon is for you.

Benjamin Franklin once said:

If you take all your good habits and subtract all your bad habits,
the result is your contribution to society.

Our habits good or bad, define to some degree
our benefit to God and the people around us.

People want to change their habits or attitudes so much that they spend
Over \$50 million is spent every year on subliminal self help CDs and tape messages.
And there is no evidence that they work.

Ted Pollock, an expert in behavioral psychology,

“Good habits save effort, ease routines,
increase efficiency, and release power.”

Two men were talking and one asked the other,

"How long have you been working at that office ?"

The other man said: "Ever since they threatened to fire me."

Who we become isn't accidental,

The kind of person you are in five, ten, or twenty years

Is determined by the habits you have today.

Think about it.

Give up one teaspoon of cream in your coffee and lose 6 pounds a year,

Change to skim milk and lose 5 pounds in a year.

Give up one glazed donut a day and lose 25 pounds a year,

or switch to a medium sized bran muffin and lose 11 pounds in a year.

Skipping a teaspoon of butter on a daily bagel you're 11 pounds lighter,

Switch from regular to diet pop and loose 17 pounds in a year;

1.2 ounce chocolate bar a day saves you 12 pounds in 18 months.

There's nothing to it but to do it.

Add it up and if you weigh 160 pounds today, in a year you will only weight 75 pounds.

The most serious are the habits that affect us is in the mind, soul, and lifestyle.

Chip InGram in his book “Good to Great In God's Eyes”

offer an outline for change and I want to share that with

you this morning so we can become **more like Christ**.

1. PUT GOD FIRST - the principle of priority

Titus 2:11-12 Tells us that its the grace of God that Teaches us to

**“Deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly righteously and godly in
the present age. NASB**

When you put God first in your life,

Titus says: God gives you both the desire and the ability

To live sensibly righteous and Godly in the present age.

I know we can meet God anytime,
 Morning , noon, or night.
 What's more important is the attitude that drives you into God's presence.
 Christians thirst for God like **a deer pants for water. Psalms 42:1-2 Like we sang for our prayer chorus**
 They wait for him more than a **watchman waits for the morning Psalms 130:6**
 When we look at the lives of great men and women.
 You discover people who have found a way to put first things first.
 Because Satan knows if he can keep you off your knees,
 He can keep you in the squeeze.
 Believe me he will make your life suck the juice right out of you.

The Apostle Paul's advice from a prison cell was

¹As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3

The only way you're going to keep the unity of the Spirit is Spending time with God .

Matthew 6:33 Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

In my quiet times I have discovered that
 Spending time with God has brought more peace into my life than
 Anything else I have ever done.
 And a sense of Calm in the midst of the storms,
 And his presence in the midst of our fears.

II. TAKE OUT THE TRASH – principle of transformation

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." NASB

There is a negative command in this verse.
 It says Stop being conformed, or molded to this world.

When are we going to quit allowing the world
 To shape who we are.
 We need to get the trash out of our lives,
 That means the world's ideas, images, and values,

We have a trash container under our kitchen sink.
 That doesn't fill up every day, but it does day by day throughout the week.

SLIDE----That is the first principle of trash --it accumulates.

What we ate on Monday goes into the garbage,
 Tuesday it's some left over chicken, into the garbage,

Wednesday, veggies and moldy fruit.
 Friday, fish,
 Let me tell you by Saturday.

SLIDE ---The **second principle of trash—it smells**

Now the problem in society is not taking out the trash,
 It is recognizing the trash.

A lot of Christian are so homogenized with the world

SLIDE----That we can't discern what is trash anymore.

The things that God called trash,
 Unholy attitudes and behaviors, immoral lifestyles, unrighteousness,
 Have become very acceptable among many believers.

It's a sad day when the statistics for Christian
 On the issues of marital fidelity, honesty, spending habits,
 addictions, and pornography.
 Are not discernibly different from the world.

SLIDE----We have been unconsciously conformed to this world
 We eat and drink with the same abandonment as the world.
 We ingest the same novels and soap operas.
 Internet porn, Violent movies ,and video games.
 And wonder why we can't smell this trash anymore.

Just take a break for a week or ten days from the TV, and its talk shows,
 movies, video games and the Newspaper.
 When you come back you will see how these things smell like garbage.
 Things you hardly noticed before will suddenly appear blatantly sinful and distasteful.
 Help your kids to take a break.
 Suddenly turn off the kids cell phones at 9:00 at night.
 See what kind of havoc you will get
 But after a week, see what kind of peace will reign,

What trash do we have in our lives that we have accepted right now?
 If Jesus were to come, would we be uncomfortable with him smelling it?
 Roman 12:2 says: we are not to be conformed to this world, but transformed.
 Give God control of your life.
 And he will TRASHFORM you.

Take out the trash

III. DO YOUR OWN DISHES -- principle of responsibility

²Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. ³Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Titus 2:2-3

Way too many men and children think their home is a restaurant.
 Where you come sit down and are served.
 When we don't get what we want.
 We complain... point fingers.

SLIDE----How many of us were raised with mother who cooked for us, served us,
and always did the dishes for us?
No matter how busy their schedule or how tiring their day.
Mom always worked up to bed time cleaning up, doing the washing, ironing,
And getting things ready for the next day.

I was 25 newly married,
When Donna straightened me out that it wasn't the
Dish fairies that came out at night and did the dishes,
Cleaned the house and folded my clothes.

We usually don't make a conscious decision to
Expect others to clean up our messes.
It's a habit.
But behind that habit is the assumption that it
Is up to someone else to make our life work.

When it doesn't we look around for someone to blame.,
It's my parent fault.
The system let me down.
My boss is unreasonable.
The government isn't fair.
The teachers are too mean.
On and on...

Do your own dishes.
It's our spiritual responsibility before God
To wash our own dishes,
Launder our own clothes.
Clean our own room,
God calls us to be accountable for our own messes.
It's not the government's responsibility.
So don't pile all your dirty dishes in other people sinks.
You do your own dishes.

Jesus said:

**He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful in much; and he who is
unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Luke 16:10 NASB**

Until we learn to own up to our obligations
We won't be faithful in the larger issues of God's kingdom.

Christians not only do their own dishes,
but we do dishes for others as well.
When I borrow a car,
I return it clean and with a full tank of gas.
When I get something out of the refrigerator, I put it back.
When I open a kitchen cupboard door, I close it.
When I take off your pants, I hang them up.
When I get out of bed I make it.
An amazing number of marital problems are solved by this principle.

As well as a lot of relational conflicts we have with other people.

How many bosses have said,
 “He isn’t the smartest person in the office,
 But we just can’t live without him.”
 Do your own dishes.

IV WRITE IT DOWN-- Principle of Clarity

Proverbs 20:5 A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out.

Before you go to the grocery store, what do you do?
 Make a list.
 Then you’re not wandering around one aisle or the next.
 You save time and money and
 You come home with what you need.

How many of your dreams, plans, purposes that are deep inside us ,
 Would never have seen the light of day,
 Had it not been for a friend who sat down and drew it out of us,
 There is no substitute for Godly counsel,
 But Writing down your ideas is a great way to get your thoughts out in the open.

I have learned to write down my thoughts and ideas.
 When I see them’ on paper, they take on new light,
 Think of all the questions we have:
 Where should I go to school?
 Who should I marry?
 Where should I work?
 Should I take this job or wait for another?

Once we have begun to write things down.
 we take them out of our mind
 And open it up for other thoughts.

I am amazed that what I journaled 6 years ago about a new facility is now fulfilled.
 Not just for my family,
 But for our church.
 For our community.
 Write it down.

V. DO IT NOW-- Principle of inertia.

Proverbs 24:30-34

30 I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment; 31 thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. 33 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest - 34 and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man. Proverbs 24:30-34

Thorns, weeds, and broken walls are signs of neglect.
 When we put off for tomorrow what we should do today,

We end up with a rebellious teenager.
 If we discipline a child when he's two,
 Society won't have to discipline him when he's twenty-two.
 Learn to attack life now.
 Bend the spirit of that two year old,
 And you won't have to break it at 16.

Most of us live a life full of good intentions and broken promises.
 But it never quite happens.
 Get into the habit of paying your bills today.

One night's homework doesn't seem so bad,
 But having to do a week's homework on Sunday night is overwhelming.
 One load of laundry doesn't seem so bad,
 But two weeks of laundry seems insurmountable.
 Clean one room today.
 But if you have to clean the whole house on Saturday,
 It's overwhelming.

Attack life by doing today's work today.
 And you will feel a lot better about tomorrow.

VI. TURN IT OFF - Principle of Restoration

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹¹Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience. Hebrews 4:9,11

Did you notice it said it takes effort to rest?
 Rest doesn't come easily for us.
 But we all need a break
 We need to turn off the cell phone, the television
 The computer,
 The schedule
 Take a break.
 This is a huge faith issue.

Can we trust God to take care of those who obey him?
 He takes care of us even if we choose to close our business on Sunday.

“Chick-fil-A” is a restaurant chain that has resisted Sunday openings.
 They choose to be closed every Sunday.
 In spite of this loss of business on Sunday,
 They are thriving,
 The same is true for “Hobby Lobby”
 These Christian owners have trusted God.
 God clearly hasn't let them down.
 But is prospering them..

If you can't rest on Sunday, choose another day.
 Turn off the phones, the pagers,

Shut down the computer.
Look back on your week with thanksgiving.

And enjoy God's creation and the people he has given you.

So can you identify one bad habit that you have never gotten rid of?
Or some habit that you are convinced will come back to bite you?
Write it on a sheet of paper
Tell yourself that it has to be broken.
And then began the task: to live with new principles.

**Put God first,
Take out the trash,
Do the dishes,
Write it down.
Do it now,
Turn it off.**