

## Habits

By Keith Cassill (KC)

Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house, where the windows of his upper room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Phrase: \*Habits are hard to break. From the early 17th century, there was the idea, expressed by Rev. Watson C. Blake, that, Bad habits are like a comfortable bed; easy to get into, but hard to get out of.

\*Breaking a habit: To stop a routine, bad behavior or addiction.

Since a habit is something that is so ingrained in one's psyche that it is done without thought, there needs to be a very strong force to change it. Thus, a verb as strong as break is required. When someone breaks a habit, he or she finally, after much effort, stops doing something in which he or she has become accustomed to doing for a long time. It is often said that you should form a new habit as a way to break your old one, as breaking habits for the sake of breaking habits is quite difficult.

Phrase: \*Old habits die hard. (origin unclear)

Definition: The longer you do something, the more ingrained it becomes, and the harder it is to change.

Quote from Benjamin Franklin: It's easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it.

From KC:

We all have habits whether we want to admit it or not. Notice that I didn't say good or bad habits. However; the idea is to develop good habits. In this case let's especially focus on developing good spiritual (Christian) habits. Developing good physical habits is also a wonderful idea and can have an affect on our spiritual lives. However; the spiritual is going to take precedence. Here is a good scripture reference: 1 Timothy 6:7-8.

Can you provide an example of some physical habit and how it can positively or negatively impact our spiritual lives? Please respond in the comments.

The idea of good vs. bad seems logical and easy to define. It also seems like the choice is obvious. However; it can be very difficult to live it out in real life when it comes to recognizing what is truly a good or bad habit. The reason for that is, because if we are honest with ourselves, the way in which we decide what is good or what is bad is determined many times by our own mind, will or emotions. That is not because what is right or wrong is that confusing. It is because of what we have accepted as right or what we accept as wrong. Judges 21:25. It takes knowing God's word and being willing to allow God's Holy Spirit to convict us of what is right or

what is wrong and then allowing God to make the changes within us. Recognizing bad habits and replacing them with good habits is a God thing. Here is an example from scripture: Psalm 139:24.

As the reference in Breaking A Habit stated, habits once they are developed become automatic. That means that we need to be intentional when it comes to developing good habits. If we simply live without the goal of developing good habits, bad habits will surely develop and become commonplace. What we learn to accept in our lives is a direct result of the influences that we have in our lives and the habits that follow. Just watch a very young child with their parents. You will see them mimic even the least noticeable action of the parent. The father or mother may pick up a fork a certain way. You may see the child copy exactly the same hand posture. What are some examples that you have seen? Please put your examples in the comments.

Recognizing and appreciating good habits:

Have we ever paid attention to what someone in our lives is doing that is consistently good? Have we ever praised them and thanked them for the good habit(s) that they have? Chances are, No. We tend to quickly recognize bad habits in other people while we ignore our own bad habits. I dare to say that sometimes we have the same bad habit that we can't stand in someone else. We just don't want to recognize it. I guess that it is human nature. However; we love to be praised and we can encourage each other by recognizing those things that many times we take for granted. Children especially need praise. They will do almost anything to earn it. Let's try to recognize that and build them up in that way. I also don't see anything wrong with recognizing our own good habits that we have developed and give ourselves a little pat on the back from time to time. Great job! Keep those good habits going.

Procrastination:

Have you ever heard someone say, "I will get around to it when I feel like it?" Whatever it was probably never got done. Feelings are so unpredictable and they do not offer a good foundation for doing what is right. The best time is now. Any good jokes about procrastination?

Bad habits:

A goal of developing bad habits is always an option, but there is no wisdom in that. Although there are individuals who have made it their goal to do so. Those individuals are defined as fools according to the bible.

Do you remember when you were asked what you wanted to be when we grew up? I doubt that any of us responded that we wanted to be a heroin addict. Or that we wanted to grow up and be put in prison for some crime. I have always taught our kids that if you do what is "right" you will be blessed. If you do what is "wrong" there will be consequences. I believe that is true for all of us. The unfortunate thing is that we can become so used to what we have accepted that is wrong that we have also become used to living with the bad consequences. That is a scary and sad thing. And I would say that we have all done it. So when we are talking about bad habits in

this lesson together we are really defining that as worldly habits or anything that is not productive in our spiritual growth to become more like Christ.

There is also a danger in having a void. Matthew 12:43-45

This is especially true for a new Christian. It is important to begin to grow in the Lord and become solid in our faith.

True story from KC

One of the saddest things that I saw in ministry happened many years ago with a young couple who had just accepted Christ and were just baptized. We were at their home and the husband commented that it was great becoming a Christian! Especially because you don't have to change anything. He lived out that way of thinking and is paying the price for it today. He continued to be caught up in drugs and many other things that would ruin his life. He continued his bad habits, bad influence and it destroyed his life and had a damaging impact on his family. It's true that we come to Christ just as we are, but God loves us too much to leave us there.

Good spiritual habits

Let's take a look at the good spiritual habits that God has already helped us establish and keep that going. Make a list of a few of them.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Examples of good spiritual habits:

- prayer & petition
- bible study
- praise & thanksgiving
- serving others
- being thankful
- Lord's Supper
- Fellowship
- worship (defines more of what is real, because it is the way in which we should live our lives, not just attending a religious service).

What are some other good spiritual habits that can be developed?

What about Christianity being real and not just going through the motions?

A fair question would be: Are these good spiritual habits that we just mentioned happening on their own right now? Or do we need to make time and be intentional about them? There is honestly no reason that we can't be real and have real intent. The more good spiritual habits that we can develop in our lives will help us with being real in our faith. We must Love the Lord

with all our hearts, soul, and mind. Not because of a command, but it is the real thing to do. The right thing that we want to do. It is intentional. John 14:15 The problem when we hear the word command our defense system can kick in. Obeying what God commands is a result of our love, dedication, and obedience to Him. The results are always good, because the results come from God.

There is a term that I heard our pastor use many years ago. And it simply goes like this: "Right by reflex." Another way put is that we are the essence of our surroundings. Or we are what we eat. Some other phrases: Garbage in garbage out. We reap what we sow. With every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. What are some other phrases that you can come up with? Please put them in the comments. Anyways, the good spiritual habits that we develop will play an important role in the real world. As we deal with situations that come up in our lives our reactions will be "Right by Reflex." We will in fact be reacting opposite of our human nature, because of our spiritual growth. When someone takes your parking space or cuts in front of us in line are just a few examples. Please share some other examples that you can think of in the comments.

What should we do next?

- Have the courage, humility and honesty to identify bad habits (make a mental note or actual notes of what they are)
- Take a look at ways to replace bad habits with good ones (utilize our time in a way that will snuff bad habits out) Write down good habits that we want to develop and put them immediately into action.
- Prayer and confession (pray, pray, pray) Always pray first.

There are good habits that affect our physical nature that we can develop. If we neglect taking care of our physical body there can be bad consequences. We should never neglect the spiritual either. Hebrews 2: 3

Let's begin:

Life is busy, so let's be realistic. It just isn't going to work to attempt to make major changes all at once. Hence the New Years Resolution. That expensive treadmill usually becomes an expensive clothes hanger. Let's make a goal chart, but just pick one good habit to develop. It would be especially good if we can find one bad habit and replace it with a good one. Over time once we have that good habit in place we can work on the next. And so forth. Baby-steps would be a good way to look at it. What about Bob reference of course. lol

Let's begin making a list of good habits that we want to develop. It may be a good idea for us to start out with easy ones first. Baby-Steps... Let's start by identifying five. After that we can narrow it down to one. If a goal is daily bible study, maybe we should start by downloading an app that gives us a scripture of the day. It is better to have one scripture a day sometimes than having a long drawn-out bible study. Our minds have difficulty processing too many things at a time. I really believe that it is a good idea to have our bible handy, somewhere within reach of daily routines, maybe at the table. My dad said to always take it wherever you go. That would be

an awesome habit to get into. Just like a soldier would not be without his gun, we can have God's word right by our side.

let's not beat ourselves up either if we miss a day or we get off track. We need to make sure the next day or very soon that we get back on track. It is even better to make a goal not to miss a day. However; we are not perfect and life can get in the way.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My first goal is daily prayer. I have a black book with names of family members and people that we know or have met. It has names of our doctors, neighbors, friends, etc. I want to be more consistent and pray every day using my book as a reference.

Let's list five good physical habits that we can develop. Our physical bodies are important, because they are referred to as God's temple. I believe that we need to take that very seriously. We can do the same as the spiritual habit and develop one at a time. (My first goal is losing weight, so I need to develop some good goals about exercise and my eating habits). I really need your encouragement and would appreciate it greatly! Go ahead and come up with five of your own. Begin by focusing on the most important one first.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

I hope that we can work together on developing good physical and spiritual goals. Originally I was going to just focus on spiritual goals. However; we are spiritual beings in a physical body. Until this body is changed by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is forever to be praised! Hebrews 10:25. Schedule

\*The following phrase references are from: [writingexplained.org](http://writingexplained.org) › Phrase and Idiom Dictionary

(Come now and let us reason together)

Isaiah 1:18