

Healthy Habits

As Christians, God commands us to take dominion over our bodies and our minds. While we have the “right to do anything,” we know that “not everything is beneficial” (1 Corinthians 6). We are also compelled to abstain from the ways of this world and to be “transformed by the renewal of [our] minds” (Romans 12:2). Yet, we also know that in our sinful nature, we are powerless to exercise complete control. Even the Apostle Paul lamented his inability to consistently refrain from doing what is not good (Romans 7:14-25). Some of these things – particularly those that appear to be inconsequential – are habits.



Our habits influence us significantly. They affect what, how, how much, and why we do the things that we do. Gandhi claimed, “Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, your values become your destiny.” Eventually, we will reap rewards or consequences of these connections. Thankfully, we have influence.

Habits – You have a Choice

Many people do not realize that they can influence this process through intentionally revamping their own thoughts, words, actions, and habits; however, you must believe that you can. Free will gives us the power to choose what we shall do; yet, unhealthy habits bind our ability to choose those things that would be God honoring. In contrast, through Scripture, the guiding Holy Spirit, the example of Jesus, and the Father’s will, we can (re)gain freedom in our habits, and thus live a more fruitful, God honoring life.

Forming Habits

Highly effective Christian students will examine and adjust their habits. Old habits are hard to break (particularly bad ones), and new habits are hard to form (particularly good ones). Many habits form unintentionally (again, particularly the bad ones) while other habits can form in a purposeful manner. Essentially, habits form through repeated intention and commitment to a new behavior and reinforcing that behavior. Once your brain becomes accustomed to the new behavior and receives some benefit from it, your brain will prompt you accordingly. Habits take approximately 20-30 days to form.

Reading Resources

Atomic Habits by James Clear

7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Sean Covey, Jim Collins

Tiny Habits by BJ FOGG, PhD