Habits!

Part 2

v24n3

Definition of **habits**: usual physical or mental condition; an action so often repeated as to become a fixed **character**istic or tendency; an addiction.

Definition for **character:**individuality; the sum of traits and habits that make up a person’s mental and moral being.

            One will seldom think of or acknowledge that their usual physical as well as mental condition prior to being born again, was that of their being spiritually dead, and in opposition to God. (He that is not with Him, is against Him). It does not matter how good one may think they were or are, without Christ in their life, they cannot be pleasing to Father. (Matthew 7:21-23). Prior to a relationship with Father by and through Christ Jesus, sin was the daily routine of one’s life. This was the lifestyle or pattern that one adapted to their life, it was an actual way of living.

It was by one being repetitive with sin and its nature, that caused a person to be in a state of constant rebellion against God and His word. Not only did one become accustomed to sin, but they worked at it, they did it over and over until they became proficient at it (sin). One seldom gives thought of to how hard they had to work and apply themselves, to allow bad habits or sin to become so firmly rooted in their life.

 It was not until one recognized that sin was in their life, by hearing His voice in accordance with the Word, that one could realize that they had need of a savior, or that they could acknowledge that they were in fact a sinner.

Romans 10:9*, That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*. (KJV)

            It is when one can acknowledge that which Jesus Christ accomplished in and on their behalf (Christ Jesus died for you while you were yet in sin. Romans 5:8), that one is able to receive the grace of God by faith. One becomes that new creation in Christ (2Corinthians 5:16-17), for it is by the Spirit of Christ, that new life is brought into our spirit being. A person’s nature changes from being spiritually dead, to that of being made spiritually alive by Christ. But then, what does one do at this place or stage in their life?

For so long we spoke what we wanted to, when we wanted to, and now one is learning that death and life is in the power of the tongue. Now one has to re-train their way of speaking, and when to speak. One has to re-train their way of thinking, so that their thoughts are in line with His thoughts. Thus, why one has to learn to be as Jesus Christ was, speaking only those things they hear Father speak. Doing only those things which He saw Father do. Jesus of Nazareth set the pattern or way of life that we too can follow, if we are willing to be led by the Spirit of truth into all truth (for His Word is truth; Christ the power and wisdom of God), which then is able to lead one to eternal life.

 When one’s heart is settled within His Word, and you have renewed your mind to stay in agreement with Him, then you will want to speak those words which are pleasing to Him. Although the old nature will try to rise up from time to time, one must always be ready, prepared in and by the Word of truth, to cast down any thought or imagination that tries to raise itself against the knowledge of God.

As one learns to continue in the faith; then it becomes essential that one maintains the good habits or traits that one has begun to develop by and through His Word. Neglecting the good habits or traits, will allow the old nature to rise up, and eventually regain a foothold in your life.

Ephesians 4:22-24 *to put away, in regard to your former mode of life, your original evil nature which is doomed to perish as befits its misleading impulses, 23 and to get yourselves renewed in the temper of your minds and clothe yourselves 24 with that new and better self which has been created to resemble God in the righteousness and holiness which come from the truth.* (Weymouth translation)

            Let us look at a few of Adam Clarke’s comments concerning this.

By the destruction of the body of sin, our old man, our wicked, corrupt, and fleshly self, is to be crucified; to be as truly slain as Christ was crucified; that our souls may as truly be raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, as the body of Christ was raised from the grave, and afterward ascended to the right hand of God.

 [That ye put off] And this has been one special part of our teaching, that ye should abandon all these, and live a life totally opposite to what it was before.

 [And be renewed in the spirit of your mind] Their old mode of living was to be abandoned; a new one to be assumed. The mind is to be renovated; and not only its general complexion, but the very spirit of it; all its faculties and powers must be thoroughly, completely, and universally renewed. (From Adam Clarke Commentary)

Let us look at a few of Barnes comments on this topic of the old nature.

            [Concerning the former conversation] The word "conversation" here means conduct-- as it commonly does in the Bible; The meaning here is, "with respect to your former conduct or habits of life, lay aside all that pertained to a corrupt and fallen nature." You are not to lay "everything" aside that formerly pertained to you. Your dress, and manners, and modes of speech and conversation, might have been in many respects correct. But everything that proceeded from sin; every habit, and custom, and mode of speech and of conduct that was the result of depravity, is to be laid aside. The special characteristics of an unconverted man you are to put off, and are to assume those which are the proper fruits of a renewed heart. (From Barnes' Notes)

 1 Peter 1:13-16 *Therefore gird up your minds and fix your hopes calmly and unfalteringly upon the boon that is soon to be yours, at the re-appearing of Jesus Christ.14 And, since you delight in obedience, do not shape your lives by the cravings which used to dominate you in the time of your ignorance,15 but--in imitation of the holy One who has called you--you also must be holy in all your habits of life.16 Because it stands written, <"You are to be holy, because I am holy.">* (Weymouth translation)

Let us look at Barnes notes concerning theses verses in 1 Peter.

The Christian is to be as different from what he was himself before conversion as he is from his fellow-men. He is to be governed by new laws, to aim at new objects, and to mould his life in accordance with new principles. Before conversion, he was:

(a) supremely selfish; (b) he lived for personal gratification;(c) he gave free indulgence to his appetites and passions, restrained only by a respect for the decencies of life, and by a reference to his own health, property, or reputation, without regard to the will of God; (d) he conformed himself to the customs and opinions around him, rather than to the requirements of his Maker; (e) he lived for worldly aggrandizements, his supreme object being wealth or fame; or, (f) in many cases, those who are now Christians, gave indulgence to every passion which they wished to gratify, regardless of reputation, health, property, or salvation.

Now they are to be governed by a different rule, and their own former standard of morals and of opinions is no longer their guide, but the will of God.

[According to the former lusts in your ignorance] When you were ignorant of the requirements of the gospel, and gave yourselves up to the unrestrained indulgence of your passions. (From Barnes' Notes)

What habits are controlling your life, this day?

That you may know Him,

In the service of Jesus Christ.

Larry Gazelka

Copyright © 2002 Built Anew Ministries all rights reserved