

# God's Plan for Dealing with Habits

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We've all experienced how hard it is to break a bad habit. People try all sorts of creative techniques to get free from unwanted behavior or thought patterns, often with little success. God understands how powerful the grip of bad habits can be, and because he doesn't want us to remain stuck, he has provided some effective ways to overcome these patterns.

## Stop believing the lies

Bad habits are often rooted in faulty thinking. We're looking for satisfaction, stress-relief, or excitement, and we have been deceived into thinking that our habit will provide these for us. As long as we continue to believe these lies, we'll remain stuck in unhealthy habits. When the Bible describes patterns of sinful behavior, it reminds us that these begin in the mind.

*[Related Topic: [Learn to Identify the Lies You Believe](#)]*

**Ephesians 4:17-22** *With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity. But that isn't what you learned about Christ. Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.*

Scripture teaches that the reason the Gentiles, or non-believers, were full of sin was because their minds were confused, full of darkness and deception. Their faulty thinking led them to bad habits. So the first step to combatting bad habits is to begin to stop believing the lies of Satan and instead fill our minds with the truth of God. This happens as we regularly take in God's Word and discuss it with others.

## Embrace the reality of your new life

After many failed attempts at breaking a bad habit, it is easy to start to believe that it's impossible. We can take on a defeated attitude, like there is no hope. But for those who are in Christ, nothing could be farther from the truth! When you trusted in Jesus, he made you a new person. Part of that new identity is having the power of God living in you that can break any stronghold of sin in your life.

*[Related Topic: [Your Identity in Christ](#)]*

*[Related Topic: [The Power of Union with Christ](#)]*

**Ephesians 4:23-24** *Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.*

The truth is that we have a new nature, one that was created to be righteous and holy, now we just need to live out who we really are. We need to take on a victorious attitude that believes in the reality of our newness and starts to

live like it.

## Replace bad habits with good habits

This is where we move from attitude to action. If you want to stop a bad habit, replace it with something good. When you feel that trigger that usually leads you to a bad choice, don't just try to ignore it, intentionally make a different choice that will actually bring the satisfaction you're looking for. This is exactly how God instructs us to change our lives.

*[Related Topic: The Right Response to Sin]*

*[Related Topic: Sin and Sanctification]*

**Ephesians 4:25-29** *So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil. If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*

As we actively replace our bad habits with good ones, we start to experience the real joy that God intends for our lives. As you embark on God's plan, remember to be motivated by love for, and relationship with, God, not fear and shame.

**Ephesians 4:30** *And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.*

As a Christian, we are secure in our relationship with God and he will never abandon us. Let this love and mercy from God lead you to try and honor him more and more with your life.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.
2. What is a funny example of something you have tried, or heard someone else try, to break a bad habit?
3. What are some of the most common bad habits, and what are the lies people believe about them?
4. Read [John 17:17](#). How do we practically fill our heart and mind with truth instead of lies?
5. Why is having an attitude that believes you really can change so important?
6. Read [2 Corinthians 5:17](#). What does it practically mean that in Christ we are a "new creation?"
7. Think about some common bad habits. What are some practical examples of positive habits that could replace these bad ones?
8. How can love for God practically motivate us to change?
9. Write a personal action step based on this conversation.