

## Outline

### Our Problem

- Hereditary
- History
- Habits

### Romans 12:1-2

#### Why is it so hard to change?

- We didn't get here overnight
- "That's just who I am"
- We do have an enemy

### The Process of Making Changes – Romans 12:2

- Live in God's Power, not your willpower – Colossians 2:20-23
- Re-train your mental, and spiritual reflexes – 1 Timothy 4:7-8
  - \* Bounce your thoughts to His new thoughts – Philippians 4:8
  - \* Do good regardless of how you feel – 2 Thessalonians 3:4-6
  - \* Surround yourself with good training partners – 1 Corinthians 15:33
- Remember: Progress, not Perfection – Philippians 1:6; 2:13
  - \* One step at a time
  - \* One day at a time



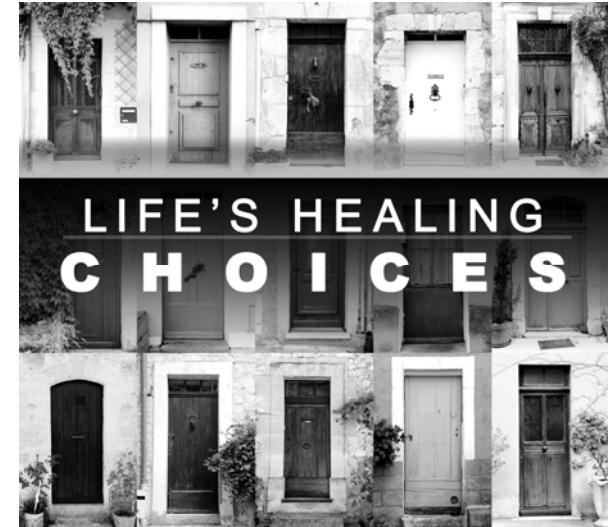
**NICEVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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*Come, Meet, Grow, Serve*

# CONNECT



### **Making Changes**

Rev. Jeremy Smith — Exchange, 9:32 & 11:00 a.m.

# CONNECT

...in Community

This week, we are discussing “Making Changes.” It has been said, “Some people will change when they see the light. Others change only when they feel the heat.” Also, “How bad does it have to feel before you change?” We don’t change during good times, do we? It is only in our hurts, habits, and hang-ups where God can get our attention long enough to reveal areas of our life to us that we need to seek forgiveness in and change. It’s not easy and it’s a choice! How will you respond?

meet

What is one area of your life that God is challenging you to make changes in that has been revealed to you during this study? Share with the group. Read Romans 12:1-2. Why is change important? What does it allow us to do?

grow

- Where do our character defects come from?
  - \* Heredity: What character defects do you see in your life that come from your parent’s make-up?
  - \* History: What is it in your past that has caused character defects in your life?
  - \* Habits: Have there been habits in your life that have caused character defects and pain in your life? If so, what?
- What makes it so hard to change?
  - \* Amount of **time** we have had these issues.
  - \* My **identity** can get confused with them.
  - \* They have a **pay-off**.
  - \* **Satan** discourages me.

Talk about these reasons as a group why we “don’t change” and which one you see in your life the most often.
- How can I change with God’s help?

Read Proverbs 17:24. Focus on **one defect** at a time.

  - \* Write down one defect : \_\_\_\_\_
  - \* Read Matthew 6:11. Focus on victory **one day** at a time.
  - \* What is one thing you can do **today** to be victorious in what you wrote down above: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Philippians 4:13. Focus on God’s power not willpower.

  - \* What is one practical way you can give God control of this area: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Philippians 4:8. Focus on what you want to change.

  - \* What is your attention on: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Galatians 5:16. Focus on doing good, not feeling good.

  - \* What is one area in which you can help others: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Proverbs 27:1. Focus on people who will help you.

  - \* List one person who will encourage you in this: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Philippians 1:6. Focus on progress not perfection.

serve

- Who is one person you can help in their struggle to change? \_\_\_\_\_

# CONNECT

...in Word

**Notice the text** | read the passage slowly and thoughtfully

**Engage the truth** | what do I see about God, His promise or command, life, sin, me

**Apply to life** | how does this passage apply to my life now

**Respond to God** | write a reflection, prayer, action, decision

**Day 1** Ephesians 4:23. Pray that God would change your thought process and put His thoughts in your mind. Exchange your thoughts for His.

**Day 2** 1 John 5:3, 4:19. What motivates you to obey God? What motivates you to love Him? Pray today and mediate on what Jesus did for you in dying on the cross. Allow His love and forgiveness to motivate your change.

**Day 3** Matthew 10:24-25. Who do you most desire to be like? If it is God then write down what He is like (His attributes). Thank God for His character traits and ask Him to change your character to His in that one area you are working on.

**Day 4** 1 Corinthians 10:13. No matter what your struggle, remember that God is bigger and that He can see you through. Today, what Hurt, Habit, or Hang-up is “front-and-center” in your life? Pray to God that He would see you through and grow you in this difficulty and then eventually use it to help others be drawn into His presence.

**Day 5** James 5:16. Who is that one person who is helping you that you wrote down on the opposite page, and who is the one person you are trying to help? Pray for both of them and their struggles to change to be like God. Call or meet with them both and share what God is doing in your life. Also, pray with them on the phone or in person.