



Week One

Opening Praying

God, thanks for being active in each of our lives. Help us to see and respond with what you have for us. Amen.

Talk It Over

This week's we talked a good deal about habits. Our Stop/Start series is all about us being open to stopping old behavior and starting new behavior. We want to be a church body that says "yes" to becoming like God. As we start looking at this topic today, let's look at these three quotes by Charles Duhigg:

"Habits, scientists say, emerge because the brain is constantly looking for ways to save effort."

"Change might not be fast and it isn't always easy. But with time and effort, almost any habit can be reshaped."

"Sometimes it looks like people with great self-control aren't working hard – but that's because they've made it automatic... Champions don't do extraordinary things. They do ordinary things, but they do them without thinking, too fast for the other team to react. They follow the habits they've learned."

- Tell us about a couple good habits you are thankful you have. When and how do you think these habits emerged? Feel free to reference more serious habits or to keep things light here.
- Tell us about a couple bad habits you'd rather live without. When and how do you think these habits emerged? Again, feel free to reference more serious habits or to keep things light here.
- Tell us about a couple good habits you often wish you had. Once again, feel free to reference more serious habits or to keep things light here.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

The Apostle Paul tell us that stopping old habits and starting new one habits is key to the Christian life; he highlights a clear distinction between leaving "old" ways of living and embracing "new" ways of living throughout his various writing in the Bible. With this mind, it's important to understand that a part of the transformation that happens to us because of our faith in Christ is an ongoing process. Saying 'yes' to God means entering into a life-long journey and process of becoming the person God created us to be.

- Have you ever been able to observe someone changing into a new version of themselves because of Jesus? Tell us about that transformation.
- In what ways do you feel you've become a new person since saying 'yes' to Jesus?
- Has anyone ever told you they noticed how you changed in a good way? Tell us about that experience.

Read Colossians 3:3-10 (NLT)

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Here is another quote on the topic of habits from Charles Duhigg: “Keystone habits say that success doesn’t depend on getting every single thing right, but instead relies on identifying a few key priorities and fashioning them into powerful levers... The habits that matter most are the ones that, when they start to shift, dislodge and remake other patterns.”

Keystone habits are like a logjam. When we pull out the right log the whole jam will come undone. Meaning, when we undo the right habit, replace it with a better one, we can often change so much so easily. It a keystone habit that changes everything — they charge our soul, redeem our past, help us rewire our brains, reorient our resources, and restore our relationships.

- Can you think of any “keystone” habits in your life that help you live well? What are those habits and why do you think they are so important?
- Can you think of any negative “keystone” habits that seem to have significant power to trip you up in life? Tell us about the power those habits have in your life and why you think they carry so much weight.

This week we specifically looked at three things we can stop to help us partner with God through our change process:

1. Stop telling lies. / Read Ephesians 4:14–15 (NLT)

One of the serious problems with telling lies is we can both quickly start to believe them or begin justify our broken choices.

- Tell us about a time you lied to yourself and you either started to believe the lie or you started to justify your behavior.
- Tell us about a time you chose to either not lie or stop lying about something. What was that process like for you?

2. Stop forcing change. / Read John 15:5 (Voice)

The Bible tells us that God doesn’t intend for us to work or earn our way into better living alone, but rather we are to partner with God through out change process. This happens best by connecting with him. The Bible tells us God’s ultimate desire us for us to seek him, be open to him, abide in him, live in him, or to life with him. It’s through our connection with him we best discover and become who we are.

- In your own words tell us the difference you’ve experienced between trying to change yourself and partnering with God through a change process.

3. Stop going back

This week we looked at the famous story from 1519 about Captain Cortés giving orders to his men to burn all the ships they had upon landing in Mexico from Spain. The reason behind the command was that Cortés knew retreat was easier when it was a real option. Looking at our own lives, and our own transform process, sometimes there are times when we need to “burn the ships” of our past or current ways to help us say ‘yes’ to moving forward in new ways.

- Are their any ships you need to burn in your own life to empower you to move forward well? It may be a distractions that consumes you, a relationship or job opportunity that you know is not honoring God, or an unhealthy or unrealistic dream you need to let go.

Closing Prayer

God, you know the details of our life. You know the areas of our life we need to outgrow in order to transform into our best selves. Help us to be open to stopping the right things and to starting the right things. Thank you for your loving guidance. Amen.