

## GOOD CHOICES NOW – MORE OPTIONS LATER

If we only think about making wise decisions as something we will begin sometime in the future, that future will never come. We must arrive at a point of commitment to a different pattern of habits and choices now if we want to create positive options for the future.

Changing habits requires getting out of the comfortable routines of the way we live and beginning to think about our choices in new ways. The reason most changes of habit fail is the mindset with which we approach them. We attempt the change, while underneath we continue to long for the comfort of that old habit; that extra piece of pie, that television show, or that new toy.

In order to maintain new habits, we must change what we desire. Will power alone is only useful for a short time. Successful change requires that we willingly let go of that old habit, set it free and wish it well. We have to let go of secretly wanting the habit back.

Some important areas where changing habits today can have huge payoffs in the future include:

**Finances** – Developing the ability to earn more, applying discipline to spending choices, seeking better employment opportunities, saving more and investing wisely all impact future options. They affect retirement plans, giving to your church or charity, deciding where you will live or where your children go to school.

**Relationships** – Investing more time and energy to strengthen relationships with friends and family helps those relationships withstand times of strain, absence, financial stress and disagreement. Making decisions that increase your investment with those close to you will improve your quality of life, as well as theirs.

**Health** – Making a lifestyle of keeping off extra weight and maintaining good health enable you to have more energy, live longer, do more activities, and be more productive. This increased energy can open doors to improved relationships, a better attitude, and even greater financial opportunities.

**Spiritual Growth** – Feeding your relationship with God as a daily routine will give you greater reliance on Him during difficult times. As with any relationship, nurturing your connection with God increases your confidence that you are not alone when you need support.

**Mental Alertness** – Watching less television, reading more, interacting more with others, taking on mental challenges and responsibilities will keep you mentally sharp. Improved alertness will better prepare you to respond to opportunities, as well as create them.

When we shift our focus from our desire for the comfort of old habits, to making choices which represent wisdom and would be pleasing to God, we are acknowledging His right to reign in our lives and His sovereignty over our secret desires. Relying on His strength in our weakness and focusing on the future He has for us are the keys to maintaining a commitment that goes well beyond will power.

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