

TAKING OFF AND PUTTING ON

The process of becoming more like Jesus is never completed in this lifetime. The gospel has set us free from the penalty of sin and is setting us free from the power of sin. One day we will be free from the very presence of sin. Until then, God's grace constantly compels us to fight the presence of sin that still remains in our lives and to pursue holiness. However, our fight with sin is not about changing our behavior, but allowing grace to change our hearts, leading to new behavior. Grace helps us take off old sin and put on new holiness. Ultimately we want to fight sin, so that the gospel of Jesus will be glorified in our lives and in the world.

Read Colossians 3:8-14.

Discuss: What are we called to put off? What are we called to put on?

Read Romans 8:13.

Discuss: What are we to do by the power of the Spirit?

A Battle Plan of Grace

Confess sin

Once our sin has been made known to us, it's important to spend time confessing our sin to God in prayer. (1 John 1:9) (Ps. 32:5-7)

It is also helpful to confess our sin to Christian brothers and sisters in community. (James 5:16)

Read 1 Peter 5:6.

Discuss: What must we do before we can begin receiving God's powerful grace to change?

Identify the lie

The bible teaches that our actions flow from our hearts. So when fighting sin, we have to get to the root cause of sin. We have to choose to stop believing the lie of sin. (Matthew 15:18-19) Ask "What is my heart really after when I'm doing _?" OR "Why am I believing that this action/sin will give me what God's truth will not give me?" Things like control, comfort, significance, and pleasure are at the root of what we desire to find in our sin. We are choosing to believe that these things satisfy more than God. (Romans 1:25)

Read Matthew 4:1-10.

Discuss: What was Satan trying to get Jesus to believe?

Replace the lie with truth

Once we have asked the hard questions of our hearts, we must renew our minds to believe the life giving truth of God's word. Find specific scripture where God shows how His design, not our desire, is better for us. Allow God's word to replace the lie we believe. (John 8:31-32) (John 17:17)

Read Ephesians 5:26.

Discuss: How does Jesus sanctify His church?

Constantly dig into God's word to find and store (i.e. memorize scripture) truth to renew your mind.

Apply grace to respond

Since we have been justified by the grace and blood of Jesus, we have forgiveness for our sin. From that grace we now have the freedom to act on the truth of God's word, instead of the lie of our heart. (Romans 6:14) (Galatians 4:24)

Read Titus 2:14.

Discuss: Why did Jesus give Himself to redeem us?

Personal Application

When was the last time you confessed your sin to God and your d-group?

What do you feel is the "lie you are believing" in your heart underneath your current sin struggle?

With what truth from God's word do you need to replace this lie?

How does God's grace help or encourage you when fighting sin?