



1. Read Romans 7:15-24. Have you ever experienced what Paul describes in this passage? Can you give an example? If you experience what he describes here, does it mean that you are not a Christian? Why is it significant that the Apostle Paul said that he experiences this condition? Will we ever be free from this experience?
2. Pastor Rick said that the first two steps to getting unstuck is to stop where you are and to get a different perspective of your life and what you are doing. Why are these two steps necessary if we are going to make lasting changes in our life? Read 2 Corinthians 4:18 and Matthew 6:25-34. What perspective do these two passages say we must adopt in our lives?
3. Many times we believe that we can change our behavior by simply trying harder to modify our behavior. Do you think this works? Why or why not? Can you give an example from your life? What did Pastor Rick say is the true way to permanent change? Read Galatians 5:16 and Zechariah 4:6. What has God given us as Christians that we must tap into in order to change?
4. Read Proverbs 19:20. Pastor Rick said that one of the best ways to gain a new perspective on our lives is to seek advice from wise people. He said that we should listen to what they tell us we need instead of what we want, what does that mean? Do you have a spiritually mature person in your life that you have given them permission to tell you things you may not like to hear? How could you find such a person if you don't?
5. There are four main habits that we must practice as Christians if we are going to change and grow spiritually, do you know what they are? Which of these do you practice regularly? Which of them do you need to work on in 2025? One of the best ways to begin doing these things regularly is to give someone in your life permission to hold you accountable for doing them. What do you think this means? Do you have someone like that in your life? Challenge: Find an accountability partner this year that you give them permission to hold you accountable for the changes you want to make spiritually in 2025.

## ANSWERS

- 1. Paul's description of the battle he had with his flesh, his sinful nature, is the norm for all of us because God does not remove our sinful nature from us when we become believers. In fact, if a person does not experience this battle, that would be a sign that he is not a Christian. If the Apostle Paul, perhaps the greatest Christian of all time, experienced this, then we should not be surprised that we have the same struggle against sin. It is what forces us to choose to be in fellowship with God on a daily basis. We will not be free from this struggle until we are in heaven.*
- 2. It has been said that you cannot discover the path to where you want to go until you first know where you are now. This is true spiritually. You cannot figure out a path to change until you stop and honestly recognize where you are spiritually right now. This starts with an honest self-evaluation, or more accurately, an evaluation by God of your heart. You must stop and let God show you what you are doing wrong so that you can make corrections. This is the new perspective you must have. It begins with an evaluation of what you really believe is important in life. Do you really believe that having an eternal perspective on your life and making doing God's will your main goal is the best thing you could do in life? Or do you simply give lip-service to those ideas? We get so caught up with the little details of life that we forget the big picture—that we are going to live forever and only that which lasts forever is really important in life and must become our number one goal.*
- 3. You cannot defeat the sinfulness of your human nature by your own will power. It may work on a short-term basis, but it will not bring long-term change. You will not succeed in making lasting change by your own strength. The true way to change permanently is that you must trust more, not try harder. God has given us the Holy Spirit to live inside of us to provide the strength and power to change. It is only as we yield ourselves to His control and rely on Him and His power within us will we see lasting change, but even then we will fail at times because we are not perfect. The way we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit is by yielding our will to do what we want to God ; we give Him our right to determine what we do. God's Word is what shows us what we should be doing and in what areas we are not. A Spirit controlled person is a Word controlled person.*
- 4. It is human nature to crave the things that our sinful nature wants us to do. When people point out the areas of our lives in which we are doing the bidding of our sinful nature and not God's will, we get angry and resentful because we are prideful. Yet that is exactly what we need, we need people who care about us and are willing to tell us the things about us that we do not want to hear, the "hard" things. It is extremely hard for us to truly see ourselves honestly and we need a perspective outside of ourselves to help us see ourselves honestly. You need someone in your life that you give permission to have those hard conversations with you. Your church or your small group is the place to begin searching for a person like that.*
- 5. The four things we must do habitually as Christians are: a. Spend time in God's word daily; b. Pray continually; c. Give of our time, talents and treasure consistently; and d. Have fellowship with other Christians regularly. Determine which area or areas you need to improve and then give someone in your small group permission to ask you regularly how you are carrying out your goals in these areas. That becomes a way to motivate yourself, because which of us likes to tell others that we are failing?*