

Talk It Over

HABITS
(Week 2)
Starting

SMALL TALK

1. What does your daily routine look like? Are there things you do so often, you don't remember doing them?
2. Which of your systems are working well? Which need some work?

VIEWPOINT

3. **READ Daniel 6:10.** Which system did Daniel turn to? Which system do you think you would have turned to?
4. **READ 1 Kings 8:46-51.** Why did Daniel develop the habit of praying to the East?
5. **READ Zechariah 4:10.** How will you start small this week?

GETTING PERSONAL

6. Based on who you want to become, what's one habit you want to start?
7. How does understanding the Habit Cycle help (Cue, Routine, Reward)? What will be the cue for your new Routine? How can you make it more obvious and easy?

- After I _____ I will _____

MAKING PROGRESS

8. One of our core statements is: "Don't Do Life Alone." Discuss as a group how you can support each other as you put new habits and systems into place.

January 12, 2020

STARTING

Series: HABITS (week 2)

Why should we think about starting a habit?
I've failed before, why try again, I just feel bad because I'll fail again.

"The difference between who you are and who you want to be is what you do."

--Charles Duhigg, The Power of Habit

Not what you know. Knowledge uninvested is wasted.

Researchers estimate that 40 to 50 percent of our actions on any given day are done out of habit.

James Clear, Atomic Habits

We are creatures of habit.

Have you ever driven somewhere and automatically turned toward work when you weren't going to work? Habit.

How many of you are sitting today where you were sitting last time you were here? Habit.

Have you ever automatically driven home and you can't remember anything about that drive? You have no memory of it. You were on auto pilot habit mode. You could actually think about something else.

Have you ever had to turn around to check if you remember to shut the garage door? Was it shut? Habit.

Much of what you normally do isn't a result of conscious choices but a result of daily habits.

What would happen if we made gratitude a habit? We would become grateful happier people.

Keep a daily gratitude journal Write down one thing you are thankful for each day ... What you appreciate, appreciates.

Darren Hardy, The Compound Effect

Last week we learned that we aren't failing because we have the wrong goals, we are failing because we have the wrong system for arriving at those goals.

I. Based on who you want to BECOME, what one habit do you need to start?

WHY? Connect it to meaning.

Chasing a bigger WHY is motivating:

REVIEW: Goals don't determine success, your system determines success.

So, lets take a look at one example of a smart system. A good habit. Now this is going to be looking at things from a spiritual perspective.

The example is Daniel. There is a book in the Bible by his name. You can look it up in the Table of Contents. A fascinating book.

***Daniel 6:3 (NIV)** Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities*

that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

Why in the world did Daniel stand out? What was it that made him who he was? The Babylonians took over but they decided to choose the best of the best from the Jewish culture, and teach them Babylonian culture, and utilize their gifts. Daniel was picked. Now, he has been rising and rising in the eyes of Babylonian Leaders, but by the time we arrive at Daniel 6, Daniel has been serving a foreign nation while in exile now for 70 years. In fact, the Babylonians are no longer in charge, they have been taken over by the Medo-Persians, and they have seen his giftedness and their king wants him in his administration! This isn't received well by the medo-persian leaders. There was something in the life of Daniel that caused him to stand out from the 120 top leaders around. Before we answer the question of what made him stand out, let's look these new Jealous leaders are cooking up against Daniel.

***Daniel 6:4 (NIV)** At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.*

***Daniel 6:5 (NIV)** Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."*

They decided that the only way they were going to be able to trip him up was by tripping him up over his system. His system was making him incorruptible, then, let's just make his system out of bounds. So, they convinced the King that for a period of 30 days nobody would be allowed to pray to any god except to the King who they believed to be one of the gods.

So, these leaders were going to cause his faith to be his failure. In other words his Jewish faith and faithfulness was making him very successful, trustworthy and incorruptible, let's just make his prayer practice illegal this month, then we've got him. Right?

The King didn't see it coming. He thought it sounded like a great plan for him to be elevated to the lofty position of the only recipient for worship and adoration. He signed the law. Then this is what we read.

Daniel 6:10 (NIV) Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Daniel's goal was always to please the one true God. It made no difference to him with the law change. He stayed with the system he established for himself. He had Pre-DECIDED his habit was to pray 3 times a day, so he continued, and they arrested him and threw him in a den filled with starving lions. You can read the rest of the story for yourself.

Daniel's one key habit was a system, and it was what made him who he was. He wanted to be Godly, God fearing, God honoring man. He lived faithfully according to his pre-decided systems. This system had HUGE results.

Daniel got the bad news and did what? *“gave thanks to God just as he had done before.”* He didn't do this only when it was convenient. He lived a habit, a system of time spent with God. This was very important to him.

Why did he face Jerusalem?

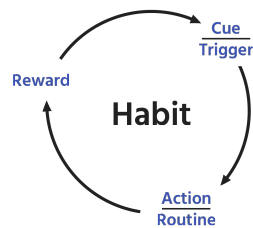
Because of King Solomon's prayer 400 plus years earlier as recorded in his "Bible".

1 Kings 8:48-50 (NIV) ...and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their ancestors, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name; {49} then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause. {50} And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their captors to show them mercy;

He was following a prescription for their predicament as described in his Bible! Daniel has been doing this now for 70 years. He has risen through different regimes, from the Babylonian through the Medo-Persian take over. He has already seen results repeatedly.

Never underestimate how our God can start something big through one small habit! Our God loves to take small acts of faithfulness and do something special through those things.

II. HOW TO START A NEW HABIT.



A. ***Make it OBVIOUS.***

NOT obvious: I think I'd like to exercise more this year.

Obvious:

- **Time, Location:** “I will do _____ at _____ in/at _____”
- **CUE:** I will do _____ after I _____.

Example: “After I make my coffee I will do my Bible and Prayer Plan”.

Make the cue/trigger obvious. If we want to change what we do, then we're going to change what we see.

- If you want to take vitamins every day, put the vitamins out the night before you go to bed so when you eat breakfast (ding!) there's the trigger or cue; I'm going to take the vitamins.
- If you want to be someone who is reading every night before you go to bed, take your book, put it out on the pillow at the beginning of the day. At the end of the day, you see it (ding!) There's the trigger, it's really, really obvious.

B. Make It ATTRACTIVE

Example: Coffee, fire (dark cold winter), Hike with my dog (light warm summer)

Example: Exercise: Audiobook, Friend, or Group

C. Make it EASY

- **Pray:** Ask for help.
- **Start small and build from successful consistency.**
- **Prime your environment to make future actions easy.**

EXAMPLE: First establish the habit of reading the Bible a every day. Get that habit going first in a small way. Then build from there. Your appetite increases. Get a streak going on your YouVersion Bible app. Use a plan. This makes it

easy. Choose a short plan to complete first. Start small and let it grow from there. Your appetite will grow.

D. Make it SATISFYING.

WARNING:

Don't let past good behavior be an excuse for present bad behavior.

"I've been exercising so I can eat more desserts..."

"I've been doing good so I can skip a few days".

Momentum is disrupted, making the habit harder.

CONSISTENCY AND MOMENTUM MAKES IT EASIER not harder:

Momentum is a powerful thing. Stopping and starting makes habits very hard.

Don't break the chain.

If you missed a day, get right back to it, don't miss 2 days.

Track It. This by itself is a reward reinforcement. Over time take note of any rewards and results.

All winners are trackers... You cannot improve something until you measure it... Professional athletes are particularly big trackers... Tracking will revolutionize your life.

--Darren Hardy, The Compound Effect

Zechariah 4:10 (NLT) Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin...