

Life Change from the Heart
“Step 1: Powerlessness Apart from the Spirit”
Romans 7:14-8:11
For the Week of October 2, 2016
New City Church of LA

GROW & SERVE GROUP GUIDE AND HOMEWORK

Get to know one another

- Share one of your most proud moments.

Pray

Review group covenant

- Review your group covenant

Encourage the group to go to the church retreat

Sermon Reflection

Life Change from the Heart is a sermon series on how God changes us from the heart through the gospel. According to Romans, the critical starting point for the gospel is the reality that we are all sinners. We have a sinful nature in us that drive us to do what we don't want to do, and not do what we really want to do. The gospel tells us that we are in bondage to our sinful nature. That is what the 12 Step Recovery Program calls “powerlessness” that leads to our lives being unmanageable. We are powerless to fix ourselves even if we try. It is only when we come to receive God's love and grace towards us that we can start our journey of life change from the heart. So, the first step to living by the Spirit is to acknowledge our sins and our powerlessness to fix ourselves.

Bible Study (45 minutes)

Read Romans 7:14-25.

1. Paraphrase what Paul is saying in your own words.
2. Have you experienced this powerlessness in your life? Share an example from your life.
3. What is the cause of this powerlessness according to this passage?

4. If the cause is our sinful nature, can we fix this ourselves? What happens when we try to fix this ourselves?

Read Romans 8:1-11.

5. Paul tells us in chapter 8 that the answer to the problem of powerlessness (v. 3) is Jesus Christ. How is Jesus the answer to this problem of powerlessness? How does Jesus lead us into this life in the Spirit?

Note: we will dig deeper into what this passage means later in the sermon series. Today's focus is on realizing our own powerlessness.

Step 1 Exercise

Write down one time you indulged (did something you didn't want to do) when you knew the occasion clearly called for abstinence (not to do it). This could be about an addiction or other sinful behavior/habit like anger, sexual sin, envy, resentment, hate, co-dependency, etc.

- a) A time I indulged when knowing that the occasion clearly called for abstinence was the time (Be specific about the occasion—when, where, event.):
- b) I knew I should not have because (What was the reason that you should not have indulged?):
- c) As a result, the consequences that followed were (What happened as a result of your decision to indulge?):
- d) Even though I knew I should not have, I indulged because (How did you justify your decision to indulge?):

If you feel comfortable, share what you wrote with one another.

Share with one another

Pray for one another, the church, and our neighborhood