



HOW PEOPLE
CHANGE

Sanctification and Growth in the Christian Life

He is the one we proclaim,
admonishing and teaching
everyone with all wisdom, so that
we may present everyone fully
mature in Christ.

Colossians 1:28

To be sanctified is to have your faith simplified, clarified, and deepened. You need God. You know God. You love God. You see life, God, yourself, others more truly. And to grow as a saint is to grow in actually loving people. How other people are doing matters increasingly to you. You care. You help. Becoming more holy does not mean that you become ethereal, ghostly, and detached from the storms of life.

It means you are becoming a wiser human being. You are learning how to deal well with your money, your sexuality, your job. You are becoming a better friend and family member. When you talk, your words communicate more good sense, more gravitas, more joy, more reality. You are learning to pray honestly, bringing who God really is to the reality of human need. And to grow in holiness does not mean you now talk in hushed tones and every third sentence quotes the Bible.

It means you live in more clear-minded hope. You know the purpose of your life, roll up your sleeves, and get about doing what needs doing. You are honestly thankful for good things. You honestly face disappointment and pain, illness and dying.

David Powlison

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5. We view change atomistically, not as a process
6. Forgetting our final destination

4 building blocks
for gospel growth

Change's destination:
heaven

What is the storyline of the Bible?

1. Creation

2. Fall

3. Redemption

4. Consummation

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Revelation 7:9-10

Therefore, preparing your minds for action,
and being sober-minded, set your hope fully
on the grace that will be brought to you at
the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:13

Positive personal change begins to take place when my dreams of change begin to line up with God's purposes for change. Leaving behind goals of personal comfort and self-fulfillment, I begin to reach out for Christ, desiring to be more and more like him each day. As I do this, I become more and more prepared for my ultimate destination—eternity with him.

Paul David Tripp

Change's power:
marriage to Christ

The 'Gospel-Gap'

2 Peter 1:3-9



Past
Forgiveness

Here & Now

Future Hope

Many believers live a 'gospel gap' in their lives: They have some sense of the past forgiveness of our sins and the future promise of heaven but without understanding or experiencing the power of the gospel in the present. The monotony of life lulls us to sleep, and we miss the miraculous presence of Christ.

Paul Tripp & Tim Lane

Familiarity with sacred things has a
dreadful tendency to make men
despise them.

J.C. Ryle

Change's location:
the heart

What can the heart do?

think

remember

know

discern

see

meditate

grieve

love

give

turn

pray

rejoice

sing

be faithful

be upright

seek God

repent

believe

What can the heart do?

fear

hate

lust

become

proud

deceive

set up idols

become

hard

3 principles about our hearts:

1. There is a root and fruit relationship between our heart and our behavior.
2. Lasting change always takes place through the pathway of the heart.
3. Therefore, in personal growth and ministry, heart change is always our goal.

Sin isn't only doing bad things, it is more fundamentally making good things into ultimate things. Sin is building your life and meaning on anything, even a very good thing, more than on God. Whatever we build our life on will drive us and enslave us. Sin is primarily idolatry.

Tim Keller

A good thing becomes a bad
thing when it becomes a ruling
thing.

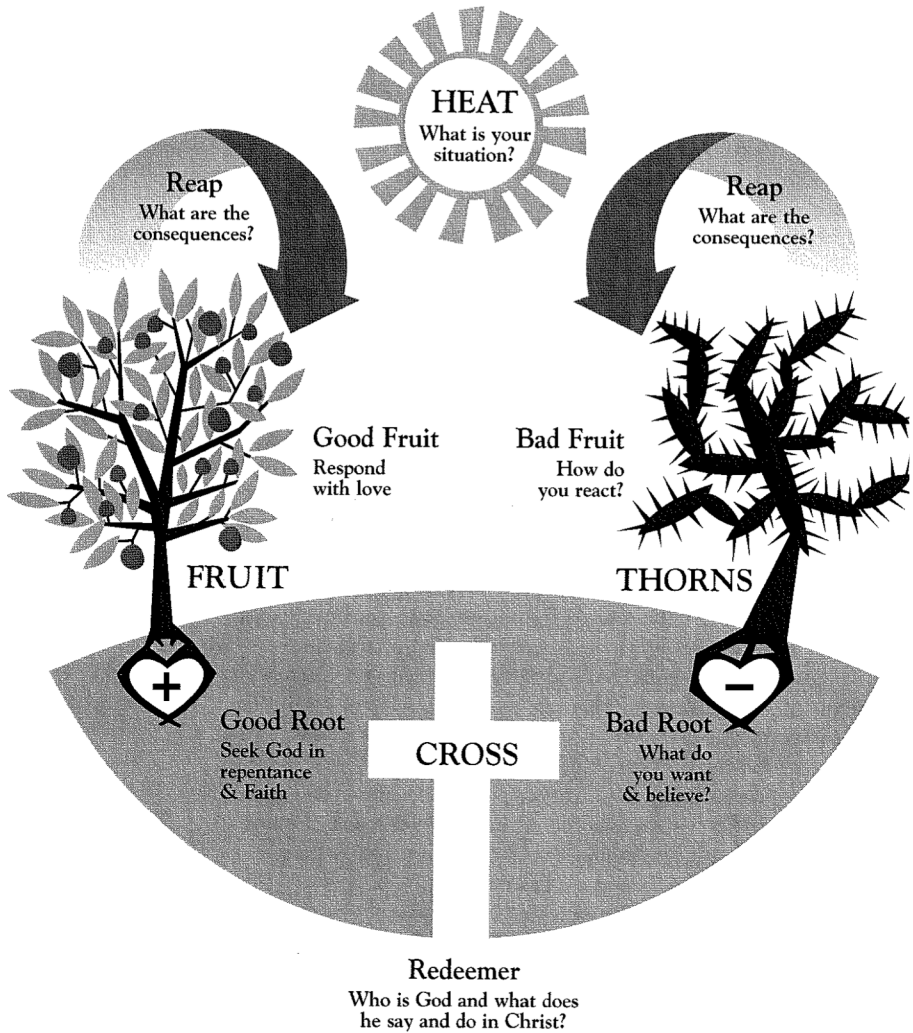
Paul Tripp

How do you begin to identify idols of the heart?

- What things, people, or environments make you happy or joyful?
- What happens when those things, people, or environments are taken away or changed?
- When times get tough or hard, I turn to _____.
- When times are good and peaceful, I turn to _____.
- I am most known for this.
- What do you daydream about?
- What do you find pleasure in?
- How often do you look at your phone?

THE BIG PICTURE

Jeremiah 17:5-10





HEAT

What is the HEAT in your life?

- What's your situation?
- What's your circumstances?
- What are your blessings?
- What pressures are you facing?
- What's in your world? Suffering, death, sickness?
- Who is opposing you? Who is supporting you?
- What forces of darkness are arrayed against you?

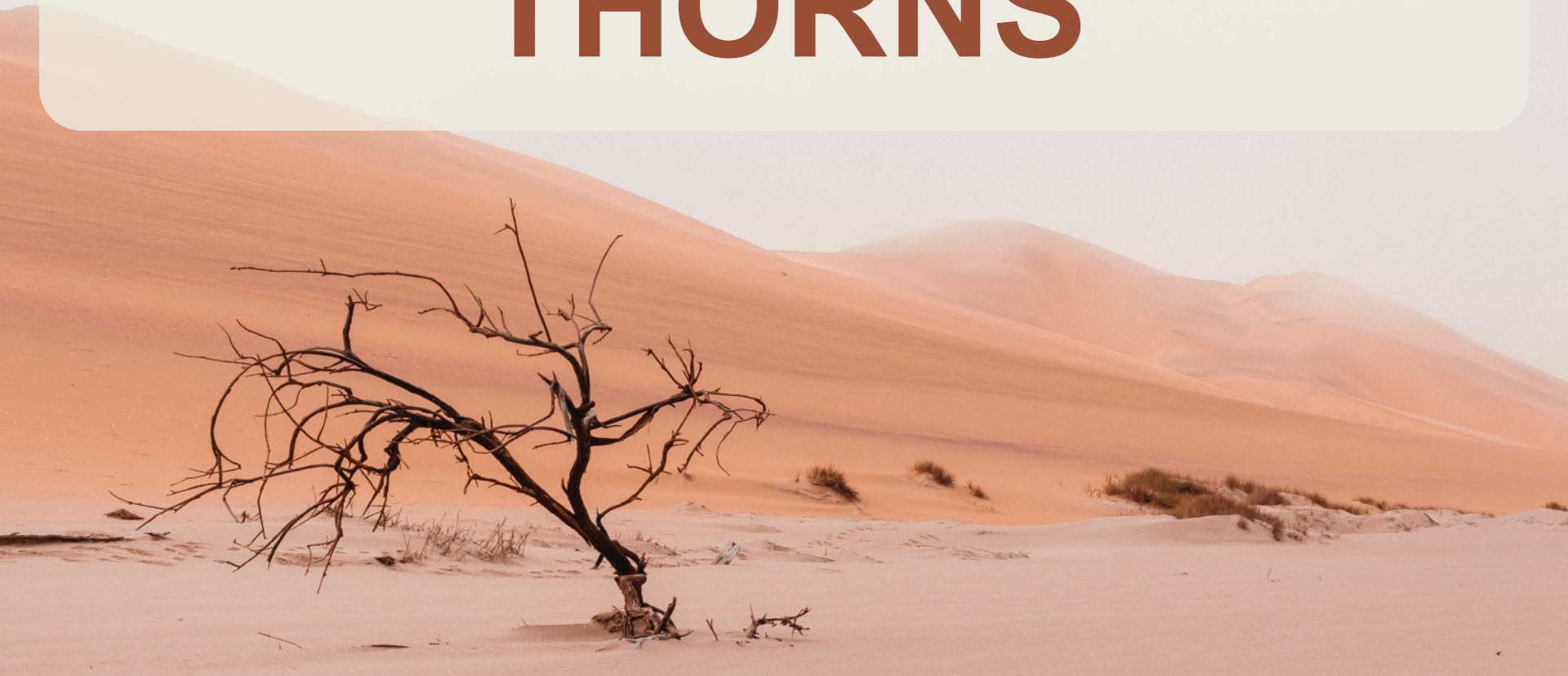
Psalm 88: Man's View of the Heat

1. vs. 1-2: uncontrollable crying
2. vs. 3-5: deep inner despair; feels as if he has been to hell
3. vs. 6-7: God has put him in this predicament
4. vs. 8a: all his friends are gone
5. vs. 8b: trapped and helpless
6. vs. 9-12: feelings of dying and no one comes to help
7. vs. 13-14: God has turned His back on him
8. vs. 15-17: bad things always happen to him, and nothing ever changes
9. vs. 18: he wakes up every morning in a dark world

James 1:2-5: God's View of the Heat

1. vs. 2: trials are certain
2. vs. 2-4: trials are beneficial
3. vs. 5: we need wisdom from God

THORNS



You and I are never really passive. We are always acting, reacting, and responding to the heat in our lives.

Paul Tripp

Common excuses to explain thorn-bush
responses:

NATURE



Our bodies exercise primary influence over our thoughts, decisions, and behavior.

NURTURE



Our environment/family of origin exercise primary influence over our thoughts, decisions, and behavior.

While external conditions can be very influential in our lives and should not be ignored, the Bible says that they are only the occasion for sin, not the cause. Difficulties in life do not cause sin. Our background, relationships, situation, and physical condition only provide the opportunity for our thoughts, words, and actions to reveal whatever is already in our hearts.

Paul Tripp & Tim Lane



CROSS & FRUIT

Galatians 2:20

1. The Redemptive Fact

2. The Present Reality

3. The Results for Everyday Living

Putting it all together:

- Moses and the Wilderness Generation

And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3



Creating Loving Relationships

Keith Herman (1993), *Reassessing Predictors of Therapist Competence*: A therapist's personal characteristics and character more determinative of success as a therapist. Six determinative qualities:

- maturity
- love
- genuine concern
- empathy
- humility
- vulnerability

Research has repeatedly shown that the single most curative factor in therapy isn't simply the technique employed, or the therapeutic approach (from psychoanalytic, to cognitive-behavioral, to humanistic), but the relationship between client and therapist that develops during the course of treatment. Whether, deep down, the therapist is providing a corrective parenting experience, an unprecedented emotional release and resolution, or (somewhat more narrowly) the knowledge or skills requisite to the change requested by the client, ultimately it's the relationship that principally determines the success of this unique professional engagement.

Leon Seltzer, Ph.D.

Why don't we get involved in relationships?

- Messy and complicated
- Takes too much time
- Easier to rely on “relational substitutes”
- Fear of being rejected
- Fear of being known
- Fear of being known, and not loved

- Fear of needing to be vulnerable
- Pridefulness
- Unrealistic expectations
- Preconceived ideas about other people
- Blame it on our personality
- Shallowness of our faith and life
- Indifference/lack of love

We want ministry that doesn't demand love that is, well, so demanding. We don't want to serve others in a way that requires so much personal sacrifice. We would prefer to lob grenades of truth into people's lives rather than lay down our lives for them. But this is exactly what Christ did for us. Can we expect to be called to do anything less?

Paul Tripp

We psychiatrists have been given an impossible task. Our medications are sometimes able to alleviate symptoms, though they often come with side effects. But we cannot give people what they really need. People need meaning and relationship.

Dr. Steven E. Hyman

What does it mean to know
people?

Two of the most dangerous words
in the life of the church are,
“I’m fine.”

Sam Allberry

3 aspects of truly knowing people

- Listen well
- Ask good questions
- Wait/interpret answers

Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.

David Augsburger

Listen well

- Listen with your posture

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- Listen for God-talk

But though our talk was casual and sporadic there was never anything simple about it. Even a light "How are you" was a nuanced question, without it seeming to be; and my invariable answer ("Fine") he could read easily enough without my having to spell anything out. And though he seldom pried or questioned, I felt he had a better sense of me than the various adults whose job it was to "get inside my head"

Donna Tartt, *The Goldfinch*

Ask good questions:

- Ask open-ended questions

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- Remember that certain kinds of questions reveal certain kinds of information
- Ask a progressive line of questions, in which each question is based on information uncovered in previous questions
- Ask people to clarify what they mean with concrete, real life examples of the terms they have used

Wait and interpret their answers:

- Answers about God

Wait and interpret their answers:

- Answers about God
- Answers about themselves

Wait and interpret their answers:

- Answers about God
- Answers about themselves
- Answers about the change process

Wait and interpret their answers:

- Answers about God
- Answers about themselves
- Answers about the change process
- Non-verbal answers

John 4:

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

#1: Start with what's in front of
you

Jesus faced the same obstacle that threatens to sabotage all counseling relationships from the outset: conflicting goals between the person wanting help and the person offering it.

Conflicting goals often pit hurting people and their would-be helps against each other in a fruitless struggle of wills.

Kevin Huggins

When pressed, hurting people can usually put into words their immediate goal for coming for help—get the person or things that’s causing their distress to change. But few can tell you what they hope these changes will ultimately accomplish for them—the ultimate difference they think it will make in their lives. They’ve spent little time thinking about what their souls thirst for even more than these things.

Kevin Huggins

#2: Take people as they come,
not as you want them to be

#3: Listen and learn their
ultimate concern use it to build a
gospel bridge

#4: Speak truth in love

Speaking Truth in Love



Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:15-16

Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.

Wounds from a friend can be trusted,
but an enemy multiplies kisses.

Proverbs 27:5-6

Love moves toward people, even if that means confrontation. It doesn't leave them alone in their suffering or in their selfishness. Sometimes people are so paralyzed that unless we intrude, unless we break through both of our natural reserves, we can't love them.

Paul Miller

The reorientation of a human being
never comes via pat answers or
quick fixes.

David Powlison

You can't say everything all at once—and you shouldn't try. Say one relevant thing at a time.

When Jesus talks with people, He is astonishingly concrete, direct, and specific. By saying one thing—not everything—He is always challenging, always rearranging our life, always nourishing to those who are listening.

David Powlison

How do you speak truth in love?

- Prepare your heart and thoughts
- Remove any logs in your own eye
- Know the situation
- Remember you're in it for the long haul
- Remember you are an instrument and mouthpiece, not the change agent

Revelation 2—3

Jesus and the 7 Churches of
Asia Minor

Contact Information:

Jonathan Holmes

jholmes@parksidechurch.com



[jonathanholmes](https://twitter.com/jonathanholmes)



facebook.com/jonathanholmes1

www.fieldstonecounseling.org