

## Lord, Help Me Change!

Have you ever wanted to change but couldn't seem to get there? At times, you even thought you had changed but when faced with the same circumstances you found that you were still the old you. In frustration, you decided that you could never change so you quit trying. Yet inwardly you are crying because you cannot seem to rid yourself of the same old burdens, the same old emotions, the same old thoughts, or remembering all the stuff you wish you hadn't said or done. Like a bad dream that will not end, so are these old things that want to keep you bound.

The beloved King David of Israel fought the same internal battles and sang about them in the book of Psalms. He talked of his inability to overcome the inward struggles of rejection, defeats, failures, and mistakes. His siblings had rejected him, his closest confidants had betrayed him, his children were messed up – and even his son Absalom tried to take his kingship. David also made the mistake of having Bathsheba's husband killed in battle so he could have his wife, and David's baby died because of it. David had so many regrets and sorrows, and so many times that he had to repent for the things he had done. Like David, we cannot change our past, but what we do have is our "right now," the present tense of our life. We already know that we are pretty much powerless to change people, but we *can* focus on us. So don't allow your past mistakes and what others say to govern your today. That will only bring more pain and regrets. Learn that they are responsible for their thoughts, and you cannot change them– but it doesn't have to control your thoughts and who you really are.

Years ago, as I prayed to live life without regrets a revelation came: "Regrets are never as real as in hell." I realized that in hell there is no opportunity to change decisions or ways. Second, that regrets in life will surely come but we can change it while in this life. Honestly, we have all failed, but that *is* the path to our successes. No one ever has succeeded without the lessons from their failures. So, know that the regrets you have only come to define your character and to teach you how to overcome.

The path to real change is repenting to God, forgiving of others, and yes, even forgiving yourself. Know that God will never set you up for failure, but he will use your failure to draw you into His loving arms. Truthfully, God has already forgiven you, He just waits for you to come to Him and ask for His help. Second, you must admit that you are fallible, and that you will make mistakes. Accept the fact that you are human and learn how to forgive yourself. You may have thought, "I should have known better! I hate myself for saying or doing ...!" yet God has already said that He loves you no matter what. He knew that you would fail and that you would need Him. He is right here ready to heal and help you change – your thoughts, ways, emotions, and motives.

The Bible says, "*Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 2:5). So every time you think a thought about your past that you don't like, choose to give that thought to Christ. Years ago, I got tired of my old thought life and said, "God I don't want this thought!" (Like it was an object), "I'm tired of carrying this! You carry it." After that He really did lift off of me the weight of those past events, struggles, burdens, old emotions, and bad things I had done. So, I say, "Give it to God. He can carry it way better than you can."

Dear Jesus,

I pray for those who have old thought patterns, memories, and regrets that have taken over their lives. May they receive your love which supersedes all their past failures and mistakes. Truly they can do nothing about their past, but they have today – today is a present *you* gave to them. You delight in covering all their mistakes and you can make every regret seem minor in comparison to who they really are. They were created by you, and for you, and you love them despite who they have been. That is their past, not their present or future. May they will no longer feel defeated, frustrated, isolated, or forgotten. You know exactly where they are because you are right there with them. I am for certain that you are changing their hearts and their thoughts of being loved and accepted because you love them with an everlasting love! May they release their thoughts to you and accept the person you designed them to be! I declare no more struggles – for their change is now!

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