

Six Keys for Changing Yourself

We are talking about six keys for changing yourself. This series is about dismantling the wall between you and God. God has His part and you have your part. Today, we are going to talk about your part. There are certain things that you can do that aid in this process and make it go faster.

That is what you really want; the change to occur as quickly as possible. I am not telling you it will not be hard in places, even painful, but I am telling you it will hurt so good, if you can say it that way at the end. You will be able to say, "I am so glad that I did that because look at where I am now."

We all know how hard change is. It is probably the hardest thing you have to do. God knows that. God knows how hard it is to really change and yet He knows what kind of help you and I need to have that happen. Who did He send to do that? The Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God that lives inside of you when you have asked Jesus to forgive you of all of your sins and be your Lord and your Savior like we talked about in the last lesson. Because of that, God has given us someone (the Holy Spirit is a person) with a special power, a special ability, to change us in the most miraculous ways. Praise God, He has provided it for us.

We are going to talk about these keys for changing yourself. (Look at this picture of these keys. Do you remember the verse in the Bible that Jesus says "I have given you the Keys to the Kingdom?"

Have you ever wondered what that was all about? It is about a lot of things in the Kingdom of God. One of the keys in the Kingdom of God is the key to yourself and to changing yourself. I am going to go over these keys with you.

What is the first key? Remember, it is going to unlock you. What is it? Our experiences in life do not have complete control over our lives. Is that a good thing to know? The things you have gone through do not have control over your life. Even if you are sitting in a prison cell right now, you can still become the man or woman that God intended for you to be. No prison is big enough to keep God out. No prison in your life is big enough to keep God out. Your experiences in life do not have control over your destiny.

The second key is for things to change, you have to change. There is a part you have to play in it.

You are going to have to change. You are going to have stop doing things that have been destructive and you are going to have start doing things that are constructive, that will help you. So the second key is for things to change, you have to change.

What is the third key? If you keep on doing what you have always done, you are going to keep on getting what you have always gotten. In other words, you are going to keep on getting the same results. That is kind of insanity to keep doing the same things and hoping it will change. It is not going to change, whether it is in your marriage or in your relationships. You are just going around in a circle. I have people tell me all of the time, "Betty, I have tried to change. I have tried to change."

Really? What different things have you tried? "Nothing really. I just kept doing what I have always done." You are not going to change. What about the key that I am talking about right now? Maybe you have tried three things and they did not work. That does not mean you give up. You do not quit until you find the one that unlocks the door into your life, into your past. You do not ever quit. Have you ever said within yourself, I will until? What does that mean? I will keep at this thing until I am different, until I am changed. Can you imagine how much God prizes the person who thinks like that? Think about it. I will until, Lord. I will keep on until it is over, until I am changed. Remember that key.

What is the next key, number four? When the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change, you will change. That is one of those you have to think about. When the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change, you will change.

What is the fifth key? Quit playing the blame game.

What is the sixth key? Nothing really happens until you take responsibility for your own life.

Let us talk about this. (Look at this first picture. Do you see people blaming this man? Oh my goodness, would you not hate to be that man? Everybody is mad at him. Everybody is sounding off at him. Everybody is infuriated with him. One man blaming another man.) They are angry too. "You did it. You did it. It is all your fault. You caused it. You did it." That fifth key I was talking about is quit playing the blame game. What is the blame game? For you, it is when you say it was everybody else's fault. I am blaming everybody else. It was not my fault. It was God's fault. It was my boss's fault. It was the fault of the people I work with. It was my friend's fault. It was my pastor's fault. It was the judge's fault. It was the sheriff's fault. It was my lawyer's fault. Until you get to the place that you take ownership, this is what I did; I did this. It was my fault. God cannot really help you. He cannot step in and help something that you will not even admit. One time I had a car wreck and I was doing the dumbest thing. You will not even believe this. I was probably going 20 mph. I did not stay stopped at stop sign like you are really supposed to. I just kind of eased on through it and I hit a car that was going pretty fast and it spun the car around. I was so afraid that I had really hurt somebody. When you are afraid of what the consequences might be it is really easy to make excuses. This happened, that happened, this and that. I said to myself, "You just say what really happened." I went up to her. "Are you okay? I am so sorry. It was my fault." I was scared to do that. Just like you might be scared to admit that whatever happened in your life, it was my fault. God stepped in and did the most wonderful thing for me. I know He did that to say to me, "Betty, I am proud of you because you admitted that it was your fault." Folks, it is really hard to take the blame yourself. In today's world, almost nobody does it. When you hear somebody say, even in a big important serious situation, it was my fault, I did it, I was wrong. Do you not admire them? The opposite of that though is saying, everything is my fault. It is just as bad to say that. It is not true. Everything is not all your fault. I will tell you something you may not know. If you have ever been a victim of sexual abuse, you have a tendency to always think in any situation, it was my fault. I am the one that is wrong. I do not know why but it goes with it. Today, we are talking about how to do the blame game right.

In these six keys for changing yourself there is another thing that people do; blaming God. It is God's fault. God killed my little brother. God killed my mother. God killed my husband. God killed my wife. They got cancer and God killed them. No, if God had done everything people blame Him for and He was a human, He would be in the penitentiary for sure. God did not do all of that bad stuff. We live in a world that has so much sin in it. It is not heaven yet. In heaven, God did it all and you can enjoy every bit of it. Do not blame God for these things that happen. Even if you say, "Betty, I prayed and it did not happen, so God did do it." No, he did not. Anything that God says no to you for, it is always for a higher yes. It is always for a better thing. You may not see it at the time but there is a good reason, just do not blame God for all of the crime, all of the bad things, all of the sickness. What does the Bible say about God? What does the Bible say about the devil? Jesus said, "The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. I came that you might have life, abundant life." Do not get that mixed up. At the same time, if it is your fault, accept it.

(Look at this other picture. This is a man so angry at God.) Have you ever felt that way, just angry at God? You can remain emotionally unhealed but you will never go forward and you will be stuck where you are for the rest of your life. You do not want to ever have the "buts." Yeah, but; well this happened, but; I will never this, I will never that. I just cannot help it. I cannot help myself. I am just that way. I am just made that way. No, if it is a sinful action God can change you and He can heal you. He can take that wall down between you and Him. I will tell you something I see happen to people. They can go through something so traumatic that they become emotionally paralyzed at a certain age. Have you ever seen a man that is maybe is 36 years old and he acts like a teenager or you see a woman that is 55 and she still cries like a teenager cries when she cannot get her way? What happened? Why would a person be like that? It is because there was a hurt that occurred to them in their emotions when they were that age that they appear to be; like if they were a teenager and something bad happened then.

How do you get healed? How does God heal this in you? How does He take this out of this wall between you and Him? You allow God to go back and show you that experience, how it hurt you, how it scared you, how it emotionally stopped you from growing, right there. You allow God to walk through that experience with you. For instance, if one of your parents died and maybe you never got over it, maybe you never grew up, maybe you still are there. God can go back and touch you right there. You can ask you, "God, I think I am frozen emotionally at a certain age and I cannot seem to get out of it. Show me how to do it. Walk me through it because I want to be healed of it. I want to go on and mature." I have seen people do that and the most amazing thing happens after they do that with God. You can watch them and every few weeks they are older than they were. You can

tell it. Every few months there is a significant difference in them. There even comes the day that they are actually their age. They are where they are supposed to be emotionally.

When you have this anger and this blame and you are not using these keys to change yourself, what are some of the signs that you have not changed and you need to change? One of them is self-pity, wallowing in self-pity. One of them is fear. You are paralyzed by fear. Fear rules your life. Another is negativity. Negative attitudes. You cannot seem to get out of them. When you look at life, everything is black. Nothing is going to work out, never has worked out, is not going to work out, and God can set you free from a negative attitude. There is somebody watching this show right now and you have just said, 'You are talking about me.' I want to tell you something. God is going to talk to you right this minute and tell you, 'You want that out of your life? I can take it out of your life right now if you say to me that I am sick of it and I want to change. I do not want to be like this anymore.

Take my negative attitude and replace it God, replace it.' Will He do it? Yes, He will even take away your hopelessness about your future. Have you learned yet? It does not matter how much you have messed up. It does not matter at all. All you have to do is repent; truly repent and have Godly sorrow for what you have done. Get down on your knees and say, 'My life is hopeless without you.

It is so messed up. God, I have so many bricks in that wall I do not know if it can ever come down. It feels hopeless.' God says, 'Oh no. I am the God of all hope. I am the God of all comfort. I can do what no man can do for you.'

Another is pride. 'I do not need any help. Nobody has ever helped me. Nobody is ever going to help me. I am going to do it all by myself. I do not need God. I depend on myself.' Do you know what will happen to you? Pretty soon you will run out of gas. You will run out of the pride gas. I saw a man just do it. He was so full of pride and so full of 'I am a self-made man and I can do it. I can take care of myself. I am good at this. I am good at that. I am good at this and I am good at that.'

He came to me and he said, 'I do not know what has happened to me.' I could tell it when he walked into my house. I could tell. He stumbled. He just kind of shuffled along. I asked him, 'What has happened to you?' He said, 'I do not know why I am here but I know I am supposed to be here.

I do not feel like I can do anything. I do not know what has happened to me. I have always thought that I could take care of myself. I could do anything. I am at a place in my life that I cannot.'

I said, 'I know what you need.' He said, 'I had a feeling you did and that is why I called you and that is why I am here.' I told him, 'You need Jesus. You need a good dose of Jesus.' He said, 'I thought you would say that.' I said, 'You know, you do not even want to try to make it on your own.

What is the point of that when you have a loving God who cares so much about you and wants to help you? He is so wise. He is so understanding. He is so powerful. Would you not like to do it better than you ever thought you could do it?' He said, 'Well, sure.' I told him, 'You need Jesus.'

He said, 'Okay.'

What is the danger of blaming other people? I am talking about in this lesson that you have to change yourself. What is the danger of blaming other people? What if they do not do anything?

What if they do not change the way they are acting, the way they have done things? What if they never apologize to you? What if they never make it right? There is such a danger in blaming other people for our problems. There is no way out. They are in charge and you have to wait for them to do something. We do not want to do that do we? I have a question to ask you. How are you now going to respond to life? How are you going to do it now? We are talking about now. We are not talking about your past. We are going to get you free from your past. You are going to lay all of that behind you. You are not going to drag it with you everywhere you go, letting it affect every choice you make, every decision you make, everything. No, we are going to let it go.

Here are some things you are going to have to do to change yourself. Are you ready? The first one; is it your fault or is it their fault? You are going to have to really truly determine that. Maybe it is a little of both. Figure out what was your part and figure out what was their part. What do you do with the part that was your part? First of all you forgive yourself, then you repent. You just say, 'Lord, I did this. It was my fault. I am so sorry.' Forgive yourself. Everybody makes mistakes. You are going to make some more. You know that there was only one perfect person in this whole world, this whole universe, and it was not you. You are just like me and you are like everybody else. You are going to make mistakes. We have a God that says I will help you anyway. Truly determine whose fault it was. What if it was their fault? 'Betty, it really was their fault.' You are going to have to forgive them. I do not care how bad it was, you are going to have to forgive them. You are never going to walk free if you do not. I will have a lesson on how to forgive yourself and others. It is coming up. We will talk about it. You have to accept, if it is your problem, it is. If it is their problem, it is. If it is your problem, name the baby. Do not just say, 'Well, I was wrong.' No, you say exactly what you did. I caused that situation to happen with my mouth I did that. I made the decision to do that. I knew not to do it and I did it anyway. Name the baby. God already knows what you did anyway, just agree with Him. Then, you say, 'God, tell me what to do now. God will tell you. Sometimes, you have to go back to those people in your past and make amends. You think, 'Oh, I

Sometimes, you have to go back to those people in your past and make amends. You think, "Oh, I do not want to do that." Do you want to change? Do you want to walk into your destiny? Do you want to walk into your new life? You are going to have to put the past in the past and not carry it into your present. If you have guilt or shame or something you have done, you may have to go back to those people. If you do, let me tell you how to pray. "God, I will do it. Tell me exactly what to say to them. Let it happen when it is the best time for them. Let me see it through their eyes what I did and then let me ask for true forgiveness with great sincerity and then you will be free." You are responsible to God for your life, the good and the bad. Nobody can affect God's will for your life but you. You could even be in a car accident and be a paraplegic and all you can do is move your mouth and that is it. God can still do His destiny for you. How do I know that? If you have ever heard of a lady named Joni Eareckson Tada, she had an accident early in life as a young person. She has been a paraplegic all of her life. She is a great artist and a great speaker. She can draw with her tongue. I know another person. His name is Nick Vujicic. He was born with no arms, no legs, no feet, nothing but a trunk and this little tiny flipper foot. Do you know that man goes all over the world speaking? They have to sit him up on a little table and he says, "God has told me to go around the world hugging people. I have no arms to hug you. Would you come and hug me and receive the love of God?" Do you know how much people need that? Besides that, he went to college and got a degree. Nothing can stop the will of God for your life except you. You saying, "I am not going to forgive. I am not going to change. I am just going to be like this. I cannot forgive myself."

There are all of these keys to changing yourself and you can still have the most wonderful life. If you are 70 years old or 80 years old and you say, "I have never done the will of God for my life. I know I have not." God says you still can. You are not too late.

Look at this Scripture. "Come now. Let us reason together. Though your sins be like scarlet they can be white as snow, though they are red as crimson they can be like wool. If you are willing and obedient you will eat the best from the land. If you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

In conclusion, you need to think about this. Nothing really happens until you take responsibility for your own life. Even if you do not have the answers, even if you do not know what to do, even if you do not have a clue, you can change your life by cooperating with God and by telling Him, "I am going to cooperate. I am going to go through all of these lessons with Betty. I am going to do everyone the best I can."

Let us talk about a prayer for taking responsibility. Are you ready? Admit you are wrong. Identify them. Name the baby. Be specific. Repent. Yield yourself to God again and healing will come. Look at this Scripture. "Come now. Let us settle this." It is that same Scripture. Let us settle it. "Though your sins are like scarlet I can make them white as snow. Though they are red like crimson I can do it if you will only obey Me you will have plenty. Do not turn away and refuse to listen. You will be devoured by the sword of your enemies. I, the Lord am speaking to you."