

## Change is Possible!

Scriptures used: Proverbs 7: 6-27 (NLT)

Book Reference: *The Principle of the Path* by Andy Stanley

### OVERVIEW

As we embark on another year, many of us are looking forward to making fresh new changes. But what has prevented us from making these changes in the past? Sometimes a change requires a 180° pivot. Discover how to gain the traction needed for persevering through life-change. We are reminded, CHANGE IS POSSIBLE! We may ask, "Is personal change REALLY possible?" Despite discouraging messages from people or experiences in your life about your inability to change, real, lasting changes possible, even if it has eluded you for a long time. The requirement for life-change is often not a miracle, but an insight. Biblical insight, which is reflected everywhere in our physical world, can change your perspective and equip you with the power and tools to change how you live your life.

### Key points:

BIG IDEA: (1) *THE CATALYST FOR LIFE-CHANGE IS OFTEN NOT A MIRACLE, BUT AN INSIGHT.*

- 1) Life-changes are possible for me! You may have heard self-talk or even others speak words of discouragement to you about making changes in your life. Being trapped in certain situations of our own making can be just that - a trap. None of us want to experience an ineffective life, and Phil. 4:13 reminds us the power of change lies in submitting our life choices to Jesus. God actually honors our struggles to change by providing **His power to change**. It is called, "Grace".
- 2) Catalysts for change can be hitting rock bottom or receiving insights about where the current path is leading us. Some of us must face the hard reality of our imminent death before we are willing to change. Others must look far ahead and recognize whether this is where we want to end up or not.
- 3) A path will take you to the same place every time. To leverage this principle, we must realize
  - a. direction, not intention, determines our destination;
  - b. we are often seduced onto the wrong path by (a) pursuit of short-cuts; (b) pursuit of false promises, which deceived us; and (c) misplaced priorities that displaced our values; and
  - c. the path itself is no respecter of persons.

We can be short or tall or young or male or whatever because the path does not care. The path will only do one thing, and that is to lead us to one destination - the end of the path. **Change often requires a different direction or path.** Seduction is a powerful word and accurate. Short-cuts are like all cuts - they wound us. False promises fool us. Setting aside our values for other priorities can distort the desired results we want to achieve. Warnings to us about our chosen paths are seen in Prov 3:6 and Deut. 5:33. We need to choose wisely.

- 4) Examination of the patterns in our lives and the priorities we choose (over our professed values) is required to arrive at real, lasting changes in our lives. This detailed thought process is the required hard work to make life-changes. If you don't do the hard work, you can't expect a different result. Jer. 6:16 tells us to stop at the cross-roads and look!

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR.** What new insights did you learn about making real, lasting changes in your life?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND.** A path will take you to the same place every time. A hard look is required to see the current paths you are trodding now. Which life path currently being followed must be changed to arrive at a different destination? What path is most important to change today?
- 3) **DO.** Change begins with one step. Select one path you want to change. Find 1 concrete action that you will take this week in response to the hope for a real, lasting and changed life. Tell your group what your first step will be.

### PRAYER