

It has been said that "You cannot perform in a manner inconsistent with the way you see yourself." You look in the mirror and there you are. Your life is in a rut and you know it don't you?? You see yourself in a rut and you perform in the rut you perceive yourself to be in. You know, doing the same old things over and over the same old way, with no enthusiasm, life is a bore and you are just existing till you die. The truth though is, where there is a will, there is a way.

In other words people are wasting their life and they are too lazy or defeated to change. **Robert Schuller** says "It takes guts to get out of the ruts." But many folks would rather think and act as **Zig Ziglar describes them**: Little men with little minds and little imaginations go through life in little ruts, smugly resisting all changes which would jar their little worlds.

Isn't it true, "Many people live their lives, as one person observed, the way we watch television, the program isn't that hot but we're too lazy to change channels." But maybe there is one person or one family that really does want to change. For you I want to think about

How to get out of your rut

Successful people, people who avoid the ruts in life are people of action. They know how to get things done. The fact is, Dreams and goals must be put into action if they're ever going to be taken care of.

Will Rogers once said, "Even if you're on the right track, you're going to get run over if you just sit still." It's very important that you learn to become a self starter, or in other words, a person of action.

Take the pastor for instance. How long would you let me by with not having something to share each week? And who comes each week and holds my hand and says now you gotta get something ready cause Sunday's almost here. I have to have the initiative to get things ready before I need them, don't I?

I don't dare get into a rut or I'd be without a job won't I? I would hate to be in the rut of waiting till the last minute to do things. James 2:17 clearly reminds us that *"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."* Part of life means, not just believing but also doing.

Unfortunately, there are very few self starters in life. I read one time, if more husbands were self starters, fewer wives would be cranks. The fact is, we tend to settle into ruts quickly, smoothly and easily. So to get out of a rut we may have gotten ourselves into lets look at

I. What motivates people to get moving?

Life begins when you get moving. The question is: what does it take to get you moving? What gets you up and going to do something about your life? I personally believe that one of the greatest, although not the only reason we stay in a rut is because, we are too lazy to want to get out of the comfort of that rut.

However, there are three very common things that can usually motivate us into changing ruts. The first is

A. Pain

It's not when we see the light, but it's when we feel the heat that we get moving. We get desperate. In the story of the prodigal son, he had to hit bottom. When he did, it says in Lk. 15:17 *"But when he came to his senses"*. We rarely change until we get desperate. How many of you delay going to the dentist until the pain's unbearable? Pain motivates doesn't it.

B. Pressure

Pressure motivates us to get out of a rut. Your boss says, "Improve your performance or you're fired!" Teacher says, "Get an A on this test or you fail the class!" That's pressure. Pain and pressure are tremendous motivators, while they last. The problem is, once the pain and the pressure subsides, we go back to our normal ways.

We go on a diet until we loose the weight but that doesn't permanently change our eating habits. We cram for the final until the final's over, but that doesn't change our study habits. You know what I am talking about don't you?

Sometimes pressure comes from circumstances. In I Kings 17: 3-7 , "God said to Elijah, The brook will supply you with water to drink' so Elijah went and stayed by Cherith Brook. After a while though, the brook dried up then the Lord said to Elijah, ' Now get up and go.'" Has that happened in your life? Didn't God promise to take care of our life? Yet all the bills are piling in and the brook's dried up! The fact is, God often uses finances to push us in a new direction. **Or rather**, a lack of finances.

C. Perspective

Paul, on the Damascus road, got a flash of insight, an inspiration, a new vision, a new perspective. Acts 9:3-6, *"Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice ' Who are you Lord?' Paul asked. 'I am Jesus now get up*

and go into the city and you'll be told what you must do. '" You see, most of us change when we get an "Ah-ha!" moment! "That's it! That's my problem! That's why I haven't been making it in life!" So once I have the motivation, now what do I do with it?

II. Five steps to get us moving once we are motivated. First, I need to

A. Assume responsibility for my own life.

There are three kinds of people in life. There are accusers, there are excusers, and there are choosers. **Accusers blame everybody else.** Their favorite phrase is, "It's all your fault!" They love to pass the buck. That isn't you is it??

We've actually been doing this for a long time -- from the very beginning of creation we've had accusers. You know, those people who want to blame everybody else for their failure. **Adam took it like a man; he blamed his wife.**

Then there are excusers. They have an excuse for everything -- why they justify their failure. "The reason I'm not making it is because when I was a little kid, my mom held me under the water in the bathtub and I developed all these resentments and therefore I'm a failure at life." **George Washington Carver said** "Ninety nine percent of all failures come from people who developed a habit of making excuses." **The fact is:** accusers and excusers are nothing more than just losers.

There's a third kind however, and they are known as -- **choosers**. They accept responsibility for their own happiness and when they make a mistake they admit it. Proverbs 28:13 says *"A man who refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful, but if he confesses and forsakes them he gets another chance."*

The key is to stop blaming others, and stop making excuses. Instead, when you've been in a rut -- admit it. The first step in getting out of a rut is to stop excusing our rut and assume responsibility for our life. ***I am in my rut because I choose to stay there***. Who are you blaming for your unhappiness? Who are you blaming for the rut your life is in? You alone can choose to get out of it, to change and be happy.

B. Believe I can change

Stop saying "I can't" and start saying "I can". Of the following **question**, The person who says "I can't" and the person who says, "I can", ***who's right?*** **The fact is, they both are** because, Attitude determines ability.

That takes a reprogramming of your mind. **Success starts in our mind -- how I see myself, not how others see me.** God came to Moses, and Moses said, "You've got the wrong guy! I'm a nobody. You can't use me." God came to Gideon, "You've got the wrong guy! I'm the youngest kid in the poorest family in the smallest tribe!" **He had an inferiority problem.** God came to Jeremiah, "I'm just a teenager!" It's typical when God wants to use somebody the first thing we do is put up excuses saying, "I can't! You've got the wrong guy. I can't do it!" Mark 9:23 "Everything is possible to him who believes."

What would you like to change about your life, to get you out of the deadly rut you find yourself in? Whatever it is, first you've got to accept responsibility for it. Then, second, you've got to believe it can be changed and this is a matter **of your thinking.** If you don't think it can be changed, you might as well forget it! The results, sadly will be, you will find is that one day your rut will become your grave. You see the only difference between the two is just the depth.

Think of it like this, if you run along in your rut long enough you will die, and those who remain will find that they have been in their rut long enough to make it deep enough for their grave. So they can just throw a little dirt in on it, once you die in your rut and the job is done

C. Clarify what I really want

You write down specifically how and what you want to change. Apparently there are less than 5% of Americans that actually have their goals written down. Yet they say that same 5% are the top achievers in the nation. James 1:8 *"A double minded man is unstable in all he does."* He's saying that the problem is, a lot of people can't make up their minds. They don't know what they want. They can't decide what they want in life. Lets be honest at this point by saying it like this.

If you want to stay in your rut, then don't gripe about the boredom it brings. Just stay there and wallow in self pity and depression but don't put it over onto others. However, If you want out, then set the goal of getting out and get to work on it now, not later, and you can do that by making up your mind to do it.

D. Don't wait for ideal circumstances

A lot of people are saying, "I'm going to change but the time isn't right yet. I'm waiting for..." and they have their excuse. **The key is, Don't wait for ideal circumstances.** Ecclesiastes 11:4 in the (Good News) says *"If you wait until the wind and the weather are just right, you will never plant anything and never harvest anything."*

Thinking about waiting for the perfect time. Think about this. Perfectionism does a couple of things to us.

1. It produces procrastination. "It's not the right time" To always say it is not the right time is honestly saying I like my rut, I am comfortable in it and too lazy to change.
2. It paralyzes potential. "If I can't do it perfectly then I'm not going to do it!"

Again I would suggest that it is nothing more than laziness and excuses. If you want to get out of a rut, assume responsibility for your own life, believe it can change, clarify what you want, and then don't use the excuse of waiting for ideal circumstances.

E. Fire away. Do it now!

The Husband says: "I'm aiming to change!" The Wife responds: "It's time to pull the trigger there pal" People are always aiming, "One of these days I'm aiming to make a difference in my life." Great. Pull the trigger! Three words that can change your life - Do it now!

You see again, I believe that always aiming is another form of laziness. Proverbs 27:1 reminds us *"Never boast about tomorrow.* Lets apply that to pulling the trigger. We shouldn't presume on the future should we? We're not even guaranteed the next hour, much less the next 24 hours. So whatever I'm going to do, I'd better do it now correct?

If I have it in my head only to aim, then my real aim is to stay in my rut. But if I am going to aim at getting out of my rut, then I need to pull the trigger, and I need to do it today. When we say "one of these days" we're really saying "none of these days".

A man by the name of James Aubrey wanted to be a writer. When he died he had this written on his tombstone, "He slept beneath the moon, he basked beneath the sun, he lived a life with `going to do' and died with nothing done." How sad!

The greatest tragedy in life is to waste your life. Everybody's got great dreams, *and we should dream,* but dreamers only, are a dime a dozen. It's the person of action. Faith without action is worthless. You've got to get it in gear. Get moving.

So if you are here and you are serious about getting out of the rut, that is becoming your grave, ask this of your self

What do I really want to change in my life?

What is my plan to do it? Write it down. And thirdly,

When am I going to get started? There's not a better time than right now.

Finally, Pull the trigger!

Observation: It's like deer hunting. If you only aim, it is guaranteed that you will not get the buck. However, if you pull the trigger you still might miss but you will be infinitely closer to getting him than if all you do is look through the scope and sigh and say oh well, next year. **Right??**

As we begin to wrap this up think about this: The worst mistake I can make in life is to delay committing myself to Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 6:2 "Today is the day to be saved!" not tomorrow. Some of you have been thinking about it for weeks, months, maybe even years. Today is your day!

- As a matter of fact why not choose today by reading a few more lines, agreeing with what they say and do what they tell you needs to be done and you can move from the rut and grave of defeat to the mountain of victory

Christian, Today is your day for getting out of the rut you find yourself in, **if you really want to**. Whatever your decision, don't delay. **Remember** it is your life to choose or lose. It's your life to enjoy and employ, not just dislike and detest. What will your choice be ?

For the one in the rut here is your chance

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)