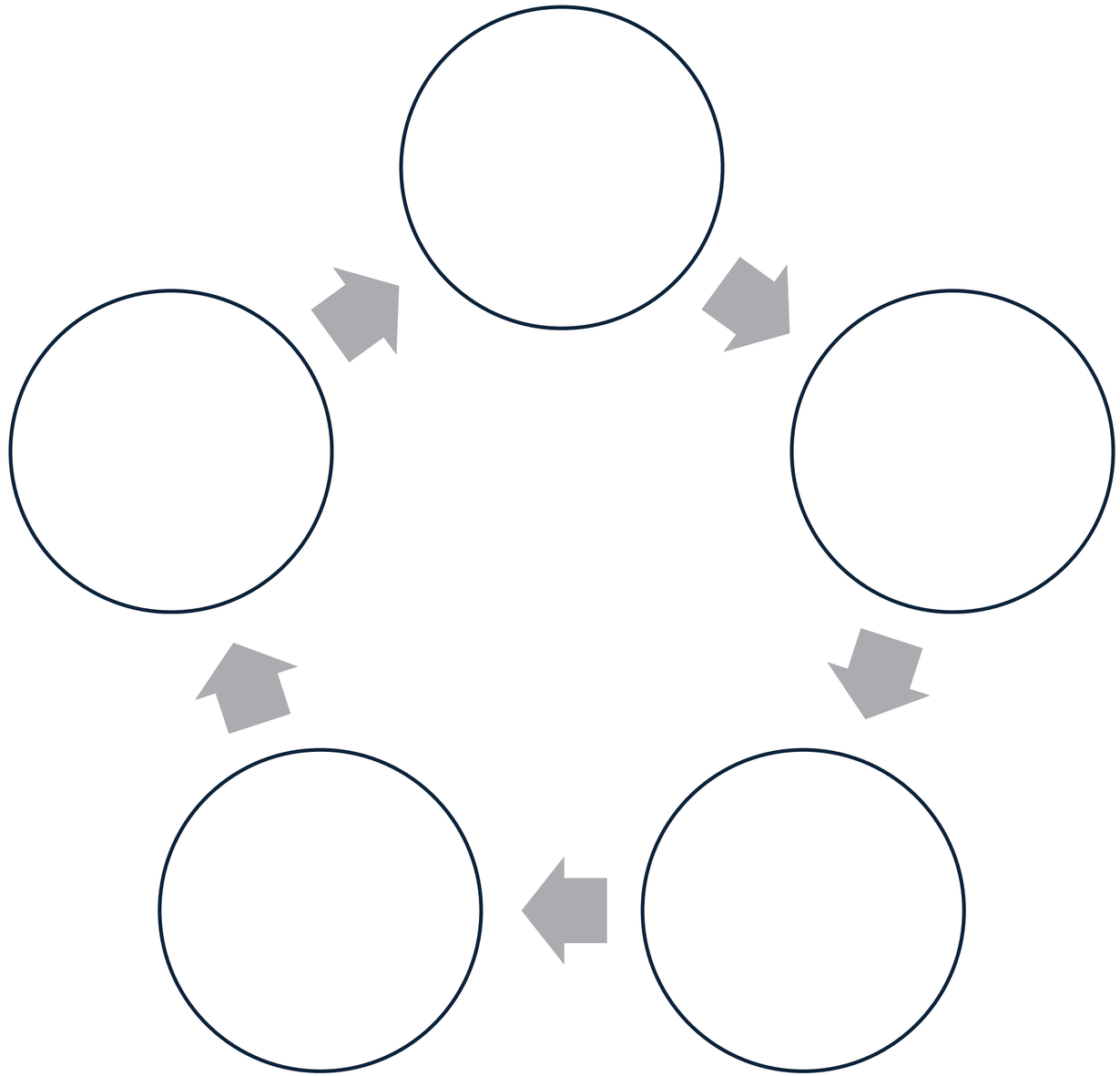
Session 1: How we change

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Never change?



A life of change!

The Christian life is one where change is normal:

- When we become Christians
- When we are sinning as Christians
- When we are suffering
- When things are going well

A life with existing evidence of change

The Christian life is a life one where we all have a testimony to share

And that is what some of you were (1 Corinthians 6:11)

A life with much left to change

The Christian life is one where the journey isn't over yet for any of us

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

So, what stops us pursuing that life of change?

The reluctance to change

- Sometimes we don’t see the need …
- Sometimes it takes time / energy we don’t feel we have …
- Sometimes change is hard …
- Sometimes change is embarrassing …
- Sometimes change is inconvenient …
- Sometimes change is costly …
- Sometimes it takes a long time …
- Sometimes we don't think we can …
- Sometimes we don't think God wants to help …

Self help in the process of change

- Resolutions
- Self-management techniques
- Books
- Courses
- Counselling
- Self-control

… a part to play but none provide the heart surgery we need

Real Change

- God’s work
  … *being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)*
- Our work
  - Personal responsibility
  - Corporate encouragement

A Biblical Model of Change

22 *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;* ***23*** *to be made new in the attitude of your minds;* ***24*** *and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness*. Ephesians 4:22-24

. Not simplistic!
. Nuanced … taking off individual beliefs / behaviours one at a time

Struggles with anger …

Behaviours	Self image / desires	Beliefs about God	Legacy of past
Anxiety	Useless	Remote	Hurt
Alcohol use	Entitled to some respite	Uncaring	Fear
Lash out	Need to protect self	Inactive	Loneliness

Taking off

- Spot what’s going on
- See the damage
- Desire to be different
- Choose a place to start – just one thing
- Repentance and faith

Repentance can be hard

- God is angry
- God is uncaring
- God is unable to sort a mess this big
- God wouldn't want to hear from me

Repentance is beautiful

Luke 15: 11-24 (the younger son)

- Acknowledging you’re in the wrong place
- Coming home
- Saying sorry
- Receiving a welcome

Putting on

- Thank God for his forgiveness
- Identify fruit of the Spirit needed
- Actively desire / pray for that to grow
- Be accountable for pursuing that fruit
- Encourage each other / hope hunting!

Being transformedby renewed minds

We become like the people with whom we spend time

- Bible verses about perseverance
- Bible verses about hope
- Bible verses about forgiveness
- Bible verses about call etc

… change happens as the Spirit-inspired words are applied to our Spirit-indwelt lives

And keep taking off / putting on / being transformed … it’s a lifestyle not an event

Changing together

- Not a solo pursuit
- We are taught so we can serve and speak with one another (Eph 4)
- Encourage
- Intercede
- Rebuke (with humility!)
- Gentle accountability
- Teach / sing / forgive / mentor and so much more …

Struggles with anger …

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Struggles with anger …

Behaviours	Self image / desires	Beliefs about God	Legacy of past
Anxiety	Gifted by a generous God	Remote	Hurt
Alcohol use	Entitled to some respite	Uncaring	Fear
Lash out	Need to protect self	Inactive	Loneliness

Change that is

- Slow
- Certain
- Christ-centred
- A tiny glimpse of the perfection to come