**THIS OR THAT**

**PART 4: Birth of A Habit**

**PERSONAL NOTES**

OPEN

1. Welcome to our online campus
2. Palmer Park Update:
3. NEXT SUNDAY – I will be here – bring your relatives!
4. Last week we talked about Breaking Bad – by planting GOOD.
5. I want to pick up where we left off.
6. Remember our goal:
7. We started this series with 61 days until January 1
8. We want to hit 2016 in full stride at peak performance!
9. We are just 40 DAYS from January 1!!!

**Hebrews 12:1-2a**

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

1. What is standing between you and your destiny?? The “race marked out for you.”
2. What do you want to already have in place by the time 2016 arrives?
3. Last week we found that the key to a transformed life is a transformed mind.

**Romans 12:2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

1. Today – PART 4: THE BIRTH OF A HABIT – HOW TO BUILD HEALTHY HABITS IN OUR LIFE
2. The word “HABIT” tends to have negative connotations.
3. Tons of GOOD HABITS we do every day in our lives without truly “thinking about it.”
4. It has become part of our DNA, our culture and our character.
5. EX: I always put toothpaste on my toothbrush.
6. EX: Putting on a seatbelt – don’t really “think” about it. I just do it.
7. EX: Men – it is habit to put the toilet seat down.
8. EX: I always open or hold the door for others.
9. EX: When I pull out of my driveway every morning I cover my wife and kids in prayer.
10. When you look to 2016 - What are the bad habits you want to kick? Go in CLEAN and FREE!
11. What are the good habits you want to build?
12. What are the personal disciplines you want to add?

They say habits are formed within 21 – 64 days

* some take longer than others
* EX: Drinking Water (dropping soft drinks, etc) takes 21 days

1. That means you and I have plenty of time.
2. In 40 DAYS – you could be the person you WANT to BE!!!
3. Here are some of the top New Year’s Resolutions – that we are going to knock out NOW!!! What’s yours?
4. Living by a budget – reduce spending – pay off debt
5. Eating healthy
6. Losing weight
7. Quit Smoking
8. Quit Drinking
9. Get organized
10. Spend more time with family
11. Help others
12. Cut back on the use of electronics

HABIT FACTS

1. Habits are a part of God’s design. But the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy.
2. God is the one who made our brains the way they are and how they function.
3. HIS intention was for us to have healthy habits that governed our life and automatically sent us down the road of success.
4. The enemy takes what God meant for good and turns it against us – to steal from us.
5. Bad habits steal our time, our money, and our relationships. They COST us!
6. Habits will help you or hurt you.
7. Habits will take you forward in life or put you in reverse.
8. They will work FOR you or AGAINST you.
9. What we are going to learn today: Is HOW to give birth to NEW and HEALTHY habits.

HERE’S WHAT TAKES PLACE . . .

1. Habits emerge because the brain is always looking for ways to be more efficient.
2. Therefore when it sees a repetitive behavior it moves that action out of the conscious to the sub conscious.
3. EX: Your morning routine in getting ready for work. You could say, “I do it without thinking.”
4. Habits are stored in the region of the brain called the “basal ganglia”– the lower back of the brain.
5. Versus having to process and decide – the brain creates a short cut – to save brain activity.

* EX: Getting ready in the morning: We all tend to follow the same routine, order, and schedule without consciously asking ourselves – “what do I do next?”
* EX: Driving to work – I don’t consciously remember to turn – I go on auto pilot – and my brain is praying, thinking about appointments or returning phone calls.
* EX: “Eugene” a memory patient back in the 1990s
* He suffered severe memory loss from an illness which caused damage to the portion of the brain for memory function.
* He could only retain new information given to him for a couple of minutes. Then it was gone.
* Yet – he could take a two mile walk around his neighborhood and get back to his house on a daily basis.
* HOW? The daily routine was built into his mind as a habit as he and his wife walked the exact same route everyday!
* One day when she wasn’t feeling well and didn’t want to walk – he disappeared. She panicked!
* If you stopped him on the street and said where do you live – he couldn’t tell you.
* But from that day on – he would take a walk by himself and get back with no problems – a Habit was formed!

1. Studies show that up to 40% of our daily function is directed by our habits.
2. That is a lot of power! For good or evil??
3. What if we were to create healthy, godly, and biblical habits in our life?
4. As we read in Hebrews – “We throw off those things which entangle us!”
5. We need a brain makeover. Build healthy habits in our life so we can run the race God has set out for us! So we can WIN!!!

**Philippians 3:18-19** For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

1. The more disciplined we are in our habits the more productive our life will be.
2. When we build healthy habits into our life it will cause us to be more productive, highly disciplined, less stressed, and reap greater rewards in life.
3. We can now reach our fullest potential.

**Colossians 2:5** (Paul said) For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. NIV

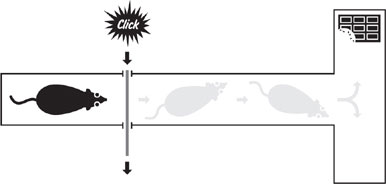
1. Why are some people more successful than others???
2. They have built the character habits and traits that ALLOW them to succeed!
3. I believe most people WANT to succeed – It is their heart’s desire.
4. YET – most people aren’t really willing to CHANGE in order for success to be possible.

So how do habits work?

1. In January Pastor Mike and I were at a Pastor’s Conference in Dallas and we heard one of the speakers named Dr. Charles Duhigg
2. He wrote a book called, “The Power of Habit”
3. Today I will be sharing some insights from his research.

HABIT FORMING

1. Back in the 1990s they were actually able to attach a probe to the brain of a rat so they could track the brain activity to learn how habits formed.



1. They put a rat in a “T-SHAPED MAZE” (On screen - PPT)
2. When there was a “CLICK” the door would open.
3. The first time down the maze the rat’s brain activity was at its peak. Sniffing, looking, searching, and smelling.
4. At the end of the tunnel there was a “T” with chocolate to the left. The first couple times the rat went both directions and finally finds the chocolate and gets the reward.
5. They repeated this activity over and over again.
6. The more the rat REPEATED the event the greater the change in the brain activity.
7. AND – the quicker the RAT went down the maze and turned left to receive the chocolate.
8. HERE’S WHAT HAPPENED after one week:

* When the RAT heard the “click” – It had high brain activity, then as the rat goes down the maze the brain activity dropped off radically – to the same level as during sleep.
* Then when it hits the chocolate – the brain waves went high again.
* The rat no longer “processed the path” it became automatic!!
* So automatic that the brain went on “autopilot.”

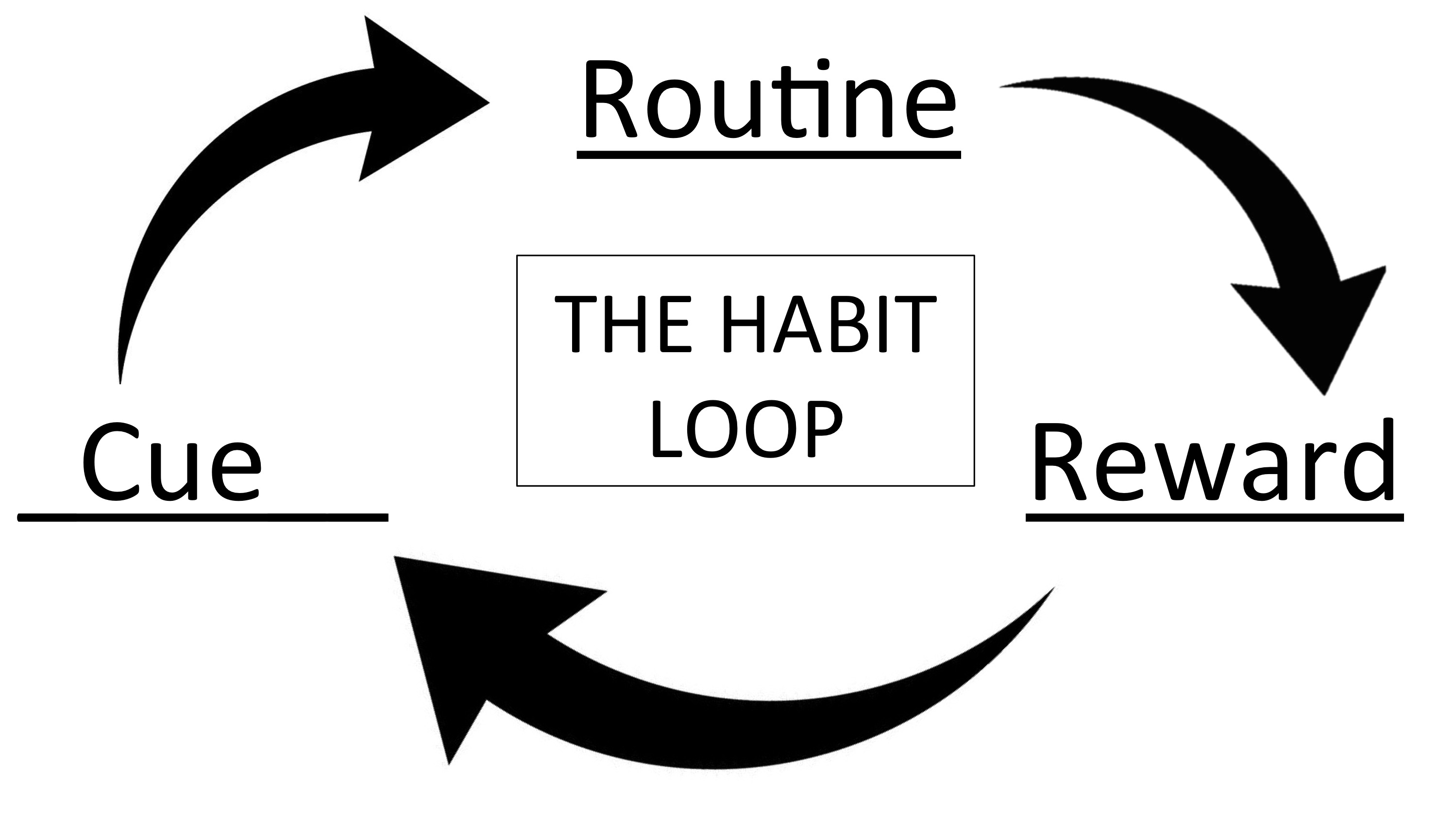
Great Dean – what does a rat and all this have to do with church? My Faith? And Christianity??

1. I’m so glad you asked!!!!
2. FIRST: Too often we function on autopilot in our own lives with bad habits. We say, “It’s just the way I am. God made me this way.”
3. SECOND: We are going to break the bad habits.
4. THIRD: We are going to BUILD HEALTHY ONES!
5. When we renew our mind to God’s Word our FAITH, DECISIONS, and CHOICES will become an automatic response versus debating, “Should I or shouldn’t I?” “This or That? ”
6. I want FAITH to be a habit!
7. I want PRAYER to be a habit?
8. I want FORGIVENESS to be a habit in my life!
9. I want GENEROSITY to be a habit in my life!
10. I want EXCELLENCE to be a habit in my life.

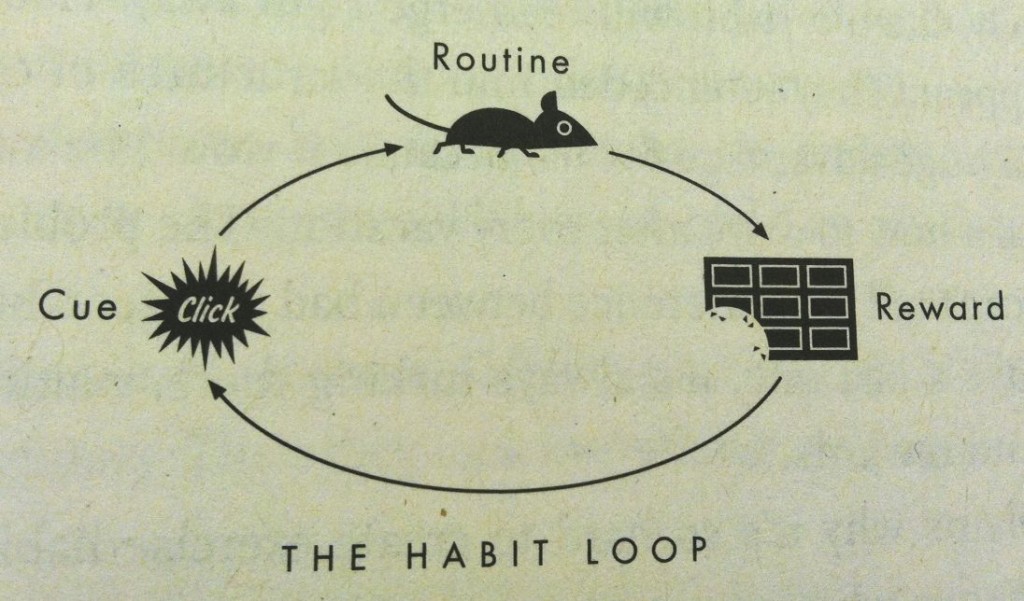
**Proverbs 18:9** (MSG) Slack habits and sloppy work are as bad as vandalism.

HABIT FORMING: Habits are formed in a three-loop step.

1. First there is a “cue.” (or trigger)
2. Then there is a “routine.” (or behavior)
3. Followed by a “reward.”



EX: Review the mouse diagram



1. EXAMPLE: Brushing Teeth
2. In the early 1900s tooth decay was rampant. Only 7% of Americans brushed their teeth.
3. A man named Claude Hopkins took on the MARKETING for the new “Pepsodent” tooth paste.
4. How did he get all of America to start brushing their teeth??? He created a CRAVING that empowered The Habit Loop
5. **The CUE: Tooth film.** “Rub your tongue across your teeth. You’ll feel a film?
6. **The ROUTINE:** Brush with Pepsodent to remove the film
7. **The REWARD: A prettier smile, white teeth, and no fuzzy film.**
8. \*\*\*\*Only 7% of Americans brushed their teeth. 10 years after Pepsodent came on the market– 65% of Americans brushed their teeth
9. Without the habit loop our brains would shut down, overwhelmed by the busyness of our daily life.
10. Why is the habit loop so important?

“When a habit emerges, the brain stops fully participating in the decision making. It stops working so hard, or diverts focus to other tasks.”

CHANGING A HABIT

* Interesting fact:

Golden Rule of Habit Change: “You can’t extinguish a bad habit, you can only change it.”

* With time and effort, almost any bad habit can be replaced with a good one.
* The longer a habit is in place the more time it takes to change it.

1. Identify the bad habit.
2. Identify the cues and rewards of the habit.

* Track when the urge hits? Time?
* What is happening in my life the moment the cue hits? Fear? Stress? Anger?
* The cue could be a location, time of day, other people, certain emotional triggers
* If you can identify the CUES and REWARDS then you can change the routine most of the time.
* What is the reward I am pursuing? What is the end result after I “do the routine of the habit?” Relaxed? Less Stress? Happy?
* EX: Good Habit – When I exercise I feel a sense of accomplishment, a better self image, positive, and rejuvenated.

1. Find a replacement behavior and routine.

* When you change the routine – you change the habit.
* The CUE and the REWARD stay the same.

BAD HABIT: Eating unhealthy snacks

1. Cue: Craving for a snack Reward: Satisfy the hunger
2. Routine: Change the routine from eating processed foods to eating fruits or vegetables. 30-60 days you will be healthier and probably 10 pounds lighter.
3. NEW improved Reward: You got to eat something and you will feel better as you have more energy and lose weight
4. Repetition is vital.
5. Associate with people of like habits.

**1 Corinthians 15:33** (NKJV) Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

1. Opposite is true: “GOOD company corrupts BAD habits.”
2. In order for a habit to stay changed, people have to believe that change is possible, and this belief often emerges with the help of a group or community!

EXAMPLES OF CHANGING A BAD HABIT:

BAD HABIT: Stop snacking at work

1. Is the reward you are seeking to satisfy hunger or interrupt boredom? Or could it be social – I want to go talk to people in the break room?
2. ROUTINE CHANGE: Get up from your desk and take a walk.
3. Give yourself 3-4 minutes on the internet.
4. Go and associate with co-workers without the snack.

BAD HABIT: Alcohol

1. Intoxication and puking typically isn’t’ the desired reward.
2. REWARD: It offers escape, relaxation, companionship, an emotional release, or blunting the anxieties.
3. What is an alternative routine or behavior?
4. AA meetings provide the companionship without the bar scene
5. AA - 90 meetings in 90 days – create a new habit in your life.
6. The key is finding alternative ways to deal with the emotions or stress.

REPLACE: Going to the gym and working out. Building a new hobby into your life – fly fishing.

BAD HABIT: Looking at Porn

1. What is the cue and what is the reward? Surprisingly it is not always physical / sexual.
2. It’s an escape from the realty and pain of the real world.
3. It’s beating loneliness or boredom.
4. Another non-sexual reward for men is the respect and admiration they get from an attractive woman.
5. The guy creates his fantasy world to believe – “that woman” wants him and admires him.
6. One of the rewards he is looking for is to build his self-esteem!
7. WOMEN: A very HIGH percentage of men are insecure and have a low self-esteem. You can impact that!
8. MEN - CHANGE THE ROUTINE:
9. What is an alternative behavior to give you the reward?
10. Re-direct your focus and attention.
11. Self Image: Read the Bible and declare out loud what God says and believes about you!
12. Lonely: Call a friend – talk to your wife.

CLOSE

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1. In your notes this morning there are some Family Discussion Questions – talk them over today and tomorrow.
2. I want all of us to BIRTH some new habit this week!
3. KEY – discovering the cues and rewards – then changing the routine!
4. KEY – if we do them consistently enough a habit will be formed.

* EX: MESSY CAR – I eat and drink in my car – just like many of you. But I created a habit – every time I get out of my car I remove all of my trash = CLEAN CAR!!

1. My goal is to actually BUILD more GOOD Habits into my life!
2. NEXT WEEK – We are going to talk about KEYSTONE HABITS / BUILDING HEALTHY HABITS These are habits that influence our other habits and have a profound impact on the big picture of our life.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the bad habits you each want to change?
2. Discuss what are the cues and rewards?
3. Discuss what would be alternative routines or behaviors.

What are some good habits you want to initiate between now and New Year’s Day?