

**WHY DO I DO  
WHAT I HATE?**



**GET FREE**  
from the Roots  
Sabotaging Your Life

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## STUDY GUIDE

# Why Do I Do What I Hate? Get Free from the Roots Sabotaging Your Life

## I. Authentic Victory (True Freedom) vs. Abstinence

- A. Authentic personal victory: An absence of battle and a consistent, maintenance-free positive result.
  - 1. Typical claim of victory: Suppressing or controlling external symptoms only. Examples:
    - a. Pharmaceuticals
    - b. Anger
    - c. Lust
    - d. Pornography)
  - 2. The lie that most of us believe: “Somehow if I exercise enough will power, self-effort and determination, I can overcome sin, fear, lack of confidence, negative habits, destructive emotional response patterns, and addictions.”
- B. Most of this self-effort is cloaked under the guise of repentance, prayer, and obedience to God.

## II. What Does Not Work

- A. Intense self-effort, will power, and determination does not work.
- B. Heart issues:
  - 1. Fear
  - 2. Lack of confidence
  - 3. Anger
  - 4. Bitterness
  - 5. Resentment
  - 6. Lust
  - 7. Abandonment
  - 8. Pride
  - 9. Depression
  - 10. Worthlessness
  - 11. Addictions
- C. Heart issues cannot usually be changed by:
  - 1. Repenting
  - 2. Trying harder
  - 3. Becoming more spiritual
  - 4. Praying more
  - 5. Memorizing more scripture
  - 6. Fasting
  - 7. Casting out demons
  - 8. Medication
- D. The reason dealing with heart issues by self-effort, will power, and determination does not work is:
  - 1. The primary problems that torment our lives do not reside in the intellectual realm.
  - 2. These problems reside in the experiential/emotional realm—the realm of the heart.
  - 3. In reality, self-effort is humanistic behavior modification. It is just me trying really hard to change myself and to discipline myself against my

own inner motivation.

- E. Believing that determination and self-effort will result in spiritual success puts us in a perpetual cycle of trying, defeat, and appearance management. We then either:
  - 1. Drop out of fellowship in defeat, or
  - 2. If we have any success at abstinence, we hide the inner battle and make false claims of freedom or victory.

### **III. False Beliefs Stemming from Self-Effort-Based Theology**

Self-effort-based theology says:

- A. It is my responsibility and ability to repent, turn from my sin and change. The problem: It leads to an endless, perpetual cycle of defeat.
- B. That if I confess my sin, I can be free from it. The truth:
  - 1. Confession only cleanses me from the defilement of the present situation. (1 John 1:9)
  - 2. Confession provides no solution for tomorrow's temptations, nor does it remove inner emotional lies.
- C. That if I choose to obey and apply truth, I will walk in victory. (Colossians 2:6)
  - 1. But authentic victory has nothing to do with my ability to live out of truth.
  - 2. I was redeemed by faith, and I must continue to walk by faith. (John 5:39-40)
- D. That if I memorize enough Scripture or learn more about the Bible, I can walk in victory.
  - 1. More knowledge does not constitute more freedom. (John 5:39-40)

2. Until Jesus frees us from the lies embedded at the experiential level (in the heart), we cannot appropriate truth on the intellectual level.
- E. Self-effort-based theology produces a false understanding of wholeness based on externals, which precludes authentic personal victory.
1. Spiritual maturity is equated with the one who has the best-looking presentation.
  2. It is assumed that those who are more biblically knowledgeable are more spiritually free.
  3. We have been trained to suppress and deny negative symptoms.

#### **IV. The Quest for Freedom in Christ**

- A. Why am I still defeated in this area of my life when the Bible says that I am a new creation in Christ? What does the new creation mean?
1. My *spirit* is a new creation.
  2. But my *soul* (my mind, will, and emotions) is in the process of being transformed. (Romans 12:1–2)
- B. My heart is full of emotional lies about God, self, and others that are deeply rooted in fear.
- C. My spirit and flesh war against each other for the capture of my emotions, mind, and will. (Galatians 5:16–17)
- D. My flesh acts on the lie to protect and comfort self and to eliminate the fear. (Hebrews 4:10)
- E. Only God's perfect love can eliminate fear. (1 John 4:18)

#### **V. What Truly Removes the Fear and the Lies**

*"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)*

*"Perfect love casts out fear." (John 4:18)*

- A. The truth and love referred to in these verses is not intellectual truth. Jesus is referring to truth and love in the inner man—emotional truth and experiential love in the heart.
- B. Why does the truth make me free? It eliminates and dispels lies.
- C. Where is the lie? Consider the two parts of your soul:
  - 1. The mind (intellectual).
  - 2. The heart (experiential / emotional).
- D. Example: Irrational fear:
  - 1. **“There’s a monster in the dark basement.”** Is this truth? Of course not. We know that intellectually, but does that stop the hair from standing up on the back of my neck and the adrenaline from pumping? No!
  - 2. **The reason you respond:** The lie is not in your mind. It’s in the emotional realm—your heart.
  - 3. **Does it help me for truth to come to me in my mind?** Not really. I already know the truth.
  - 4. Truth in the intellect doesn’t really help. It doesn’t set me free because the lie is not in my intellect—it’s in my heart.
- E. **Smoke, Fire, Fuel.** Whenever we find smoke, there must be a fire. And in order for the fire to continue to burn, there must be fuel.
  - 1. **Smoke:** Powerful emotional feelings coming from the heart are likened to smoke. These feelings are often not commensurate with the present circumstance. They are usually just an “emotional echo” from past wounding.
  - 2. **Fire:** The fire is the initial historical wounding experience, which has probably repeated itself in various forms many times through life.
  - 3. **Fuel:** The fuel is the emotional lie embedded with deep pain.
- F. Whenever that deeply embedded emotional lie is stimulated in my present circumstance, the fire lights again, and I experience a lot of smoke in my present circumstance.

- G. **Most people don't recognize the smoke.** They attribute the entire intensity of the present feeling to the present circumstance and blame the person who re-ignited the fire (frequently my husband / wife).

## VI. When Feelings and External Behavior Remain Unchanged

- A. As long as lies remain embedded emotionally in the heart, the feelings and external behavior will remain unchanged.
- B. Some very strong-willed people are able to curb and change some of their external behavior through sheer determination and elaborate "smoke management systems."
  - 1. Yet the battle inside remains.
  - 2. Again, **this is abstinence, not authentic personal victory.**
- C. The goal is not to manage the smoke. The goal is to identify the fuel and remove it.
  - a. When the fuel is removed, the fire dies for lack of it.
  - b. There is simply no more experience of "smoke" when this happens.
  - c. **This is true freedom and remains maintenance-free.**
- D. **You cannot do this yourself.**
  - 1. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can do this for you.
  - 2. Jesus is very willing to impart truth, love, and light into your emotional room (your heart) when there is an abundance of fear, lies, and darkness hiding there.

## VII. Summary

- A. Negative external attitudes, behavior, habits, and defeat occur in my life because my flesh has captured my soul. (Galatians 5:16-17)
- B. The above are a result of wounding or cursing experiences in childhood in which deep-seated emotional lies were deposited in my heart.

- C. I will never be free until my own heart lies are exposed, removed, and replaced on an experiential level with God's truth.
- D. The fear is embedded in each emotional lie and is rooted in lack of experiential love. (1 John 4:18)
- E. Self-effort and trying will not remove the fear or the lies.
- F. Only God's experiential love removes fear and lies and replaces them with truth.