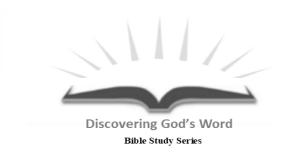
Enough's Enough!





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Learn how you can reach a point where you say, "Enough's Enough," stop living for sin, and start living for God

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Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Study Number: DGW182

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My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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Enough's Enough!

Jesus taught a parable and said, "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living" (Luke 15:11-13).

Like this younger son, we have all spent the blessings our Heavenly Father has given us on our own selfish desires. For, we have all sinned and fallen short of glorifying God in our lives (Romans 3:23). Now, we must reach a point in our lives when we say, "Enough's enough!" It is time to stop wasting our lives living for sin and start living for God!

You must decide that you have spent enough of your life living for sin. 1 Peter 4:3 expresses that sentiment exactly when it says, "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries." Now, it is time to wake up from your spiritual slumber and start living for God!

Listen to Romans 13:11-14. "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife

and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

So, enough of your life has been wasted in the darkness of sin. But, how do you wake up and recognize this so as to actually change the way you are living? I believe that we can learn from the prodigal son. There was a definite turning point in his life when a "light bulb" went off in his head and he said, "Enough's enough!," stopped wasting his life, and started living in the way that he should. Therefore, in this lesson, we want to observe what it was that made this man change so that you can wake up out of sin and make the changes you must make while there is still time!

Recognize Where You Are At

Sometimes the reason people remain in their sins is because they do not honestly assess where they are. They manage to deceive themselves into thinking that they are enjoying life where they are. So, they see no need to make any changes. Therefore, in order for you to wake up from sin, you must take an honest look at where you currently are.

"But when he came to himself"

There was a "light bulb moment" in the prodigal son's life. I believe his turning point happened in Luke 15:17. Jesus makes the simple statement, "But when he came to himself...." The implication is that the prodigal son had not been at himself in the way that he had been living.

Evidently, he just got caught up in the pursuit of his own desires. While he was with his father, he probably thought the "grass looked greener on the other side" and wanted to "experience life" by living for himself. So, he demanded his share of his father's inheritance early and went his own way.

Rather than managing the things his father had given him responsibly, he "wasted his possessions with prodigal living" (Luke 15:13). "Prodigal living" is simply the idea of wasteful, riotous, and reckless living. We might say that he

"threw caution to the wind" and just made his life about having "a good time."

Whether it was accurate or not, his older brother said that the prodigal son had wasted his father's inheritance "with harlots" (Luke 15:30). Regardless of *how* he spent his father's inheritance, it was not responsible. And, while he was "living it up," he probably enjoyed himself.

But, reality finally set in and he came to himself. Luke 15:14-16 says, "But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything."

The decisions that he had been making finally caught up with him. Although he could have continued to deceive himself, make excuses, or blame other people, he came to himself. He finally ran out of his inheritance and found himself in need, as a famine hit. Interestingly, he tried to make it on his own by joining himself to a citizen of that "far country" to help feed the pigs. Yet, he reached a point where he would have *gladly* eaten the pig food and no one gave him anything to sustain his rebellious lifestyle!

Now, he could see where the decisions he had made had gotten him. Now, he didn't see all the things he was doing as being enjoyable. Now, he recognized that the grass was not really greener away from his father. Now, he recognized that he had given up the good life in his father's house.

Where are you now?

In order for you to say, "Enough's enough!," stop living in sin, and start living for God, you must recognize where you are while you are living in your sin. But, like the prodigal son, you must not make excuses, blame other people, or try to justify yourself in any way. Instead, you must look at your situation honestly and recognize that you are the one who is fully responsible for your actions (even if you have been negatively impacted by others along the way)!

Whenever the apostle Paul was writing to Christians, he described their former condition when

he said, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:1-3).

If you are still living in sin, this is where you are — whether you realize it or not! So, you must wake up and see your condition for what it really is. The devil has been successful in deceiving you so that you put your own earthly desires above obeying the Heavenly Father. Now, you are spiritually dead because you have separated yourself from Him through your sins. In doing so, you have separated yourself from all the spiritual blessings He only provides for those who are children.

Although you may been experiencing some of the pleasures that are involved in sin currently, you must wake up and recognize that they will not last. They are only "passing pleasures" (see Hebrews 11:24-26, Matthew 6:19-21, and 1 John 2:15-17). You must learn to take a deeper look at your life and see the void sin has left.

Physically, you must realize that sin has not given you everything it may have promised. Rather than having better relationships with others, you may be hurting other people through your selfish and sinful activities. Rather than having fun, you may always be afraid of getting caught. Rather than being happy, you may find that the "joy" you experience only lasts for a brief time and that the things you found to be pleasurable at first are not near as pleasurable now.

Spiritually, you are dead. Even if you do enjoy the physical part of your life, you are missing the most fulfilling part of your life: An inner peace that comes from *knowing* that you have a Heavenly Father who is pleased with how you are living your life and the joy that comes from serving such a loving Father. Instead, you live every moment of every day either denying that He exists, deceiving yourself into thinking that He approves of your life, hoping that

He approves of your life, or knowing that He does *not* approve of your life.

Whether you have never become a Christian or whether you have been a Christian in the past and have went back into sin, you must come to yourself by recognizing where you are at. Take off the "blinders" Satan has convinced you to wear and honestly look at the sad condition of your life. Don't just look at the passing pleasures of sin. Train yourself to look deeper and see your entire life as it really is!

Recognize Where You Are Heading

Since sin involves passing pleasures, Satan does not want people looking "down the road" to see where sin leads them. If they do, he knows they will not like what they see. So, he wants them to only focus on the pleasurable things they may be experiencing currently. Therefore, in order for you to wake up from your sin, you must take an honest look down the sinful road you are walking on and see where it leads you.

"I perish with hunger"

After wasting his inheritance with wild and reckless living, the prodigal son "came to himself' and said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!" (Luke 15:17). Although he should have recognized earlier that his wasteful living would have gotten him to this point, it was better late than never! He finally recognized that the way he was living his life would not result in good things for him.

Although he "lived it up" and probably had a "good time" with his wild living, it had gotten him to a destitute condition. But, he could have kept trying to fight it. He could have remained rebellious and thought, "I'm not going back to my father in this condition. Then I will have to admit that I was wrong in leaving." He could have kept trying to find a way to make it on his own.

Yet, he looked down that road. He saw what was at the end of it. Actually, he was honest with himself and made a comparison between the options that were available to him.

First, rather than deceiving himself to think that this was just a little setback, the prodigal son recognized that he would perish if he stayed on the road he was on. It was unsustainable. He could see that he would not be able to continue his rebellious lifestyle and survive.

Second, he also honestly evaluated the alternative. Rather than looking down on his father's house, he saw that even his father's hired servants had enough food to eat — and then some! Their commitment to serving his father had put them on a path that resulted in life.

Where are you headed?

In order for you to say, "Enough's enough!," stop living in sin, and start living for God, you must recognize where you are headed whenever you are living in sin. Sin always lead you somewhere. And, sin is not just about the physical pleasures you get to experience. Instead, sin always has consequences. It has been said that sin takes you further than you wanted to go, keeps you longer than you wanted to stay, and costs you more than you wanted to pay.

First, you should consider where your sin leads you *physically*. It sets you on a path that promises true fulfillment, but never delivers what it promises. It often brings physical consequences that haunt people for the rest of their lives. Sin can result in jail time. Sin can result in a lifetime of guilt and shame. Sin can ruin your relationships. Sin can break trust with the people who mean the most to you. Sin can result in physical disease and death. Sin can ruin your reputation. Sin can make it difficult for you to find a job. Sin can lead to habits that enslave you to some physical thing (i.e. drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, etc.). Sin can result in other people being influenced to live in the same sinful kind of ways (especially your children).

Second, you should consider where your sin leads you *spiritually*. While I believe sin carries physical consequences, it is the spiritual consequences of sin that are truly devastating. So,

you need to take an honest look down the road and see where your sin leads you spiritually.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Those who live in sin cannot be part of the kingdom of God and inherit all of the blessings God has prepared for those who are part of His kingdom! These are the blessings of Heaven, the inheritance that is "incorruptible and undefiled, and that does not fade away" God has reserved for those who are His children (1 Peter 1:3-4).

And, not only will your sin cause you to miss out on all the joys of Heaven, but you will also be punished for all eternity. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 says that when Jesus returns with all His holy angels, "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

Then, Revelation 21:8 says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." This punishment will be in a place the Bible calls "Hell." It is a place of unimaginable torment and is pictured as a lake that is burning with fire and brimstone. It is eternal "death" because it is eternal separation from God. And, there will be no end to the punishment that will be experienced.

So, you must take an honest look down the road and evaluate whether your sinful choices are worth what is waiting for you later on! And, while you try to make this evaluation, recognize Jesus knows that nothing and no one is worth the consequences of sin! He asked, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

Jesus said that there are only two roads you can walk on during your life (in Matthew 7:13-14). One is a narrow path few people walk on that leads to everlasting life in Heaven. The other is a wide path many people walk on that leads to everlasting destruction. The narrow path is difficult because it requires sacrifice and obedience. The wide path is easy because it does not require anything of you except to live how you want to live. Yet, they do not lead to the same place. Therefore, you must honestly consider where the path you are walking on leads you!

Recognize You Are Not Living Like You Should

There is a way you should and a way you should not live. There is a standard of right and wrong. But, Satan does not want you to recognize that you are living in a way that is wrong. Instead, he wants you to be deceived into thinking that there are many different standards of "right" and wrong" and you can live in whatever way *you* believe is right. Therefore, in order for you to wake up from your sin, you must recognize God's standard of right and wrong and recognize that you are not living according to it.

"I have sinned"

As the prodigal son considered where he was and where he was heading, he also recognized that he had sinned. He said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants" (Luke 15:18-19).

This man could have tried to justify the way he had lived his life that put him in his destitute condition. He could have determined to go back to his father and say that he just had a difference of opinion with his father. He could have demanded that his father apologize for his "old-fashioned ideas." He could have used the worldly ideas he had now gained to say that he was right for how he had lived.

Yet, the prodigal son recognized that he was wrong. He knew he had sinned against Heaven and against his father. There was no way to prove himself right in this matter. He was wrong – and was now experiencing the consequences of his sins.

But, I want you to appreciate how big of a hurdle this must have been. He had convinced himself that there was a better way of living (or else he would never have left his father). And, he could have refused to admit his failure to himself. He could have "dug in his heels" and come up with all kinds of excuses as to why things didn't work out the way he had probably imagined.

If he had done that, he would not have changed his life around. It required this honest and humble assessment of his past decisions to bring about a change. He had to honestly and truly recognize that there is a right and a wrong way to live – and that he had lived in the wrong way!

What do you need to change?

In order for you to say, "Enough's enough!," stop living in sin, and start living for God, you must recognize that there are sinful things you need to change in your life. So, you must recognize that there is a way that is right and a way that is wrong. You cannot continue thinking that your opinion of what is right and wrong is good enough to guide your life!

You must come to realize that God's "word is truth" (John 17:17). Every other standard for living life on this earth fails in some way. For instance, Jeremiah 10:23 says, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps." Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death."

Whenever you have tried to live according to your own ideas in the past, the result has *always* been sin. The only way that you can find forgiveness of your sin and the opportunity to be right with God is if you find and follow the truth that originates with God. Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Now, like the prodigal son, this is not always an easy thing to do. You may have convinced yourself that you know better than God and that your way will result in a better life than what God promises. For whatever reason, you may have doubted the promises that God made or the law that God has given. Or, perhaps you had just never been taught the way of truth.

Regardless, in order to wake up from sin and say, "Enough's enough!," you must humbly listen to the word of God and compare your life to it. Then, whenever you recognize that you have sinned (as the Bible says that we have all sinned, Romans 3:23), you must have the humility to say that God's word is true and that you have been deceiving yourself. Therefore, you must say to yourself, "I have sinned!"

It is only when you come to this realization of your sin and experience godly sorrow for your sin that you will work to make any real changes. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11 says, "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

So, stop fighting against God's truth! You will not be able to win a fight against it. God's word will stand forever and you will be judged by it one day (John 12:48). Therefore, you should just humble yourself today and recognize that you have conducted your life in a way that is wrong so that you can make the changes that you need to make. Living in a state of denial does not help anyone!

Recognize There's A Way To The Father

Once you recognize that you are not in a place you desire to be, you are not headed to a place you want to go, and that you are not living in the way you should, you need to recognize that there is hope. For, if there is no hope for you when you recognize all of these things, then there would be little reason to make changes to your life (except to change your

physical circumstances). Therefore, in order for you to wake up from your sin, you must recognize that there is a way back to the Father.

"I will arise and go to my father"

Consider what the prodigal son said in Luke 15:18-19 again. "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."

He knew that he could not fix the problem by himself. He had tried. And, the way he was trying to live his life just was not working out. He knew that it was better for him to be with his father (and that he should have never left the father).

Then, not only did he know this to be true, but you should recognize that he knew the way back to his father. Remember that this son "journeyed to a far country" (verse 13). He got a very long way from his father – both in terms of physical distance and what his father stood for. But, no matter how far away he went, he still knew the way back.

Whenever the "light bulb" went off in his head and he realized the foolish way he had been living, he determined to go back to the father. Although he had wandered far away, he had not forgotten what it was like to be in his father's house or how to get back to him. If he had not remembered this, he would have perished with his hunger in a wilderness of rebellion.

Do you know the way to the Heavenly Father?

In order for you to say, "Enough's enough!," stop living in sin, and start living for God, you must know the way to the Heavenly Father. And, thanks be to God that no matter how far you travel away from Him, there is always a way back while you have life in your body and understanding in your mind! God has paved the road back to Him and is working to call you home!

To find the way back to your Heavenly Father, you must only look to Jesus. Whenever Jesus was telling His disciples that He would be leaving them and going to Heaven, Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5). Then, Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

The road that God has provided back to Him is paved with Jesus' blood. For, Jesus was sent by the Father to this earth in order to provide the sacrifice necessary for the forgiveness of sins. The fact of the matter is that you could never have returned the Father except by the blood of Jesus Christ! Nothing you could do could ever have covered the sins you have committed. You would forever be separated from God and suffer eternal punishment in Hell.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is what teaches you about this Way! Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." So, as the gospel of Christ is preached to you, God is trying to call you to Himself (2 Thessalonians 2:14).

If you have never become a Christian, the gospel of Jesus Christ tells you how to become one so that you can have your sins forgiven through the blood of Christ. First, the gospel requires that you hear the saving message of the gospel (Romans 10:17). Second, the gospel requires that you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 8:24). Third, the gospel requires that you repent of the sin you have committed (Acts 17:30). Fourth, the gospel requires that you confess your faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10). And, fifth, the gospel requires that you be baptized (immersed) in water for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38).

If you have been a Christian in the past but have turned back to sin, the gospel of Jesus Christ tells you how to come back to God and have your sins forgiven through the blood of Christ. First, the gospel requires that you repent of your sin (Acts 8:22). Second, the gospel requires that you confess your sin to God (1 John 1:9). Third, the gospel requires that you ask God to forgive you (Acts 8:22). Then, after being forgiven by God, the Bible also helps you recognize the need to confess your sin to those who are aware of your sin (see James 5:16 and Luke 17:3-4).

Yet, you need to know that even when you do everything the gospel requires of you, you are still not worthy to be the son (or daughter) of God. Just like the prodigal son recognized he was not worthy to be called the son of his father any longer, neither are you. Instead, Jesus said, "when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). However, like the father of the prodigal son, your Heavenly Father will count you as one of His sons/daughters whenever you come to Him in faithful obedience through Jesus, the Way!

Make The Necessary Changes

Each one of these four steps were crucial to the prodigal son coming to himself and saying, "Enough's enough!" He had to recognize where he was. He had to recognize where he was heading. He had to recognize that he had sinned. And, he had to recognize that there was a way back to his father. But, he did not stop there. Instead, the final step in his transformation was to actually make the changes that were necessary. Therefore, in order for you to turn your life around, you must recognize that you must actually make the necessary changes in your life.

"And he arose and went"

Listen to the rest of the parable (as it pertains to the prodigal son): "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry" (Luke 15:20-24).

It is one thing to come to an honest realization of your mistakes yourself. It is another to actually humble yourself enough to admit your mistakes to others. He could have fussed and fumed. He could have demanded that the father take him back on his own terms. Yet, the prodigal son recognized that this was the only way back to the father and out of the mess he had made of his life. So, he "swallowed his pride" and did what was necessary. Although he was ashamed of what he had done, he did not allow anything to prevent him from going to his father.

Then, I want you to notice the response of his father. You notice that his father was looking for his son. Although his father had not forced his son to stay, he was eagerly anticipating his son's return. And, when he returned, his father celebrated! He had no interest in humiliating his son. Instead, he was glad that his lost and dead son had returned to him!

Will you make the necessary changes?

In order for you to say, "Enough's enough!," stop living in sin, and start living for God, you must actually do what the gospel requires of you and go to your Heavenly Father – on His terms. Just knowing the right things or admitting your sinfulness to yourself is not enough. Instead, the gospel requires that you be a doer of the word and not a hearer only (see James 1:22-25). You must use God's word as a mirror to evaluate your life and correct whatever is lacking.

Then, there is no room for pride in making your life right with God. You cannot return to God by fussing, fuming, making excuses, and trying to justify yourself. You cannot demand that God takes you back on your terms. You must swallow your pride and humble yourself in God's sight. James 4:6-7 says, "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.' Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

In all things, you must put your own selfish desires aside and simply determine to yield yourself in obedience to God (as He has given you instructions in the gospel's message). Yet, even some who realize all the things we have been studying about in this lesson will not take this step to actually

do what God has required them to do in order to be right with Him. Consider a few examples.

There was a rich young ruler who wanted to be saved, but he went away sorrowful because he was not willing to do what Jesus required (read Matthew 19:16-22). There was a governor named Felix who knew the truth, but waited for a more convenient time to obey the gospel (read Acts 24:22-27). Then, there was a king named Agrippa who knew the truth, but said that he was almost persuaded to become a Christian (read Acts 26:24-29).

Yet, you must not be *almost* persuaded to obey what the gospel requires you to do to be right with God. Instead, I hope that you will be *altogether* persuaded and take the required steps to be right with God! And, you must not delay. If you delay, you may never find the time you will say, "Enough's enough!" and make your life right with God. Instead, you must recognize that God says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Conclusion

Are you away from God right now? If so, you are the prodigal son/daughter and God wants you to return to Him! He has paved the road back to Him with the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, He is waiting for you to come to yourself, to say, "Enough's enough!," to stop living for sin, and to start living for Him. Won't you come to Him today? There will never be a better time than right now!

Study Questions

Have you ever spent the blessings of your Heavenly Father on your own selfish desires? Do you think you have wasted enough of your life on such things?

1. Recognize Where You Are At

Where did the prodigal son recognize he was at?

Where are you now?

2. Recognize Where You Are Heading

Where did the prodigal son recognize he was heading?

Where are you headed?

3. Recognize You Are Not Living Like You Should

What did the prodigal son recognize about how he had been living?

What do you need to change?

4. Recognize There's A Way To The Father

What did the prodigal son recognize about his father?

Do you know the way to the Heavenly Father?

5. Make The Necessary Changes

What did the prodigal son do after he recognized all of these things?

Will you make the necessary changes?