

THE REALITY CHOICE

Life's Healing Choices – Rick Warren
Parts 1-3

"I don't understand what I do. For what I want to do I don't do, but what I hate to do, I do! . . . I know that nothing good lives in my sinful nature. I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." Romans 7:15, 18 (NIV)

Stress	Diet	Finances
Fears	Worry	Relationships
My overwork	Bad habits	Painful memories
Attractions	Anger	Perfectionism
Addiction	Dishonesty	Resentment
Regrets	Need to control	Compulsive thoughts

THE CAUSE: _____

"In the pride of your heart you say, 'I am a god . . .' But you are just a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god." Ezekiel 28:2 (NIV)

1st CHOICE: _____

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

I ADMIT I need help; that I'm powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

1. _____

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." James 4:6 (NIV)

"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you." Proverbs 28:13 (GNT)

2. _____

"We saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us, for he can even raise the dead." 2 Corinthians 1:9 (TLB)

"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule." Matthew 5:3 (The Message)

3. _____

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV)

"Admit your faults to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed." James 5:16 (TLB)

GROUND RULES

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

"When we were unable to help ourselves, at the moment of our need, Christ died for us." Romans 5:6 (NCV)

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THE HOPE YOU NEED FOR CHANGE

Life's Healing Choices – Rick Warren
Part 1

"God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!"
Matthew 5:4 (CEV)

"No one can live with a broken spirit." Proverbs 18:14 (NCV)

WHERE TO GET HOPE WHEN CHANGE SEEMS HOPELESS

1. REMEMBER GOD _____

"Those who forget God have no hope." Job 8:11 (TLB)

"Lord, when doubts fill my mind, when my heart is in turmoil, quiet me and give me renewed hope and cheer." Psalm 94:19 (TLB)

2. REMEMBER HE CARES _____

"I have hope when I think of this: The Lord's love never ends; His mercies never stop. They are new every morning." Lamentations 3:21-23 (NCV)

"He is like a father to us, tender and sympathetic . . . for He knows what we are made of—dust." Psalm 103:13-14 (TLB/GNT)

"God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us." Romans 5:8 (TLB)

3. REMEMBER HE KNOWS _____

"You know how troubled I am; You have kept a record of my tears." Psalm 56:6 (GNT)

"You have seen the crisis in my soul." Psalm 31:7 (TLB)

4. REMEMBER HE HAS _____

"What is impossible for men is possible with God." Luke 18:27 (GNT)

"When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he couldn't do but on what God said He would do."

Romans 4:18 (The Message)

"For God is at work within you, giving you the will and the power to achieve His purpose." Philippians 2:13 (PHILLIPS)

5. REMEMBER HE'S PROMISED _____

"I expect your help, for you have promised it." Psalm 119:81 (TLB)

"God cannot lie when He makes a promise, and He cannot lie when He makes an oath. These things encourage us . . . They give us strength to hold on to the hope we have been given." Hebrews 6:18 (NCV)

STEP 2

Earnestly believe that God exists; that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me recover.

"The Spirit that God gives us . . . fills us with power, love, and self-control."
2 Timothy 1:7 (GNT)

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LETTING GO AND LETTING GOD

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Parts 1-3

“God blesses those people who are meek.” Matthew 5:5 (CEV)

“The meek shall be satisfied.” Psalm 22:26

“The meek he will guide and teach.” Psalm 25:9

“The meek become wise.” Proverbs 11:2

“The meek will be filled with fresh joy.” Isaiah 29:19

MEEKNESS IS _____

HOW TO LET GO & LET GOD

MAKE JESUS _____ OF MY LIFE

“Stop quarreling with God! If you agree with him, you will have peace at last, and things will go well for you.” Job 22:21 (NLT)

Jesus: “Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am.” Matthew 16:24 (The Message)

“Give yourself to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will help you.” Psalm 37:5 (GNT)

ESTABLISH GOD'S WORD _____ FOR MY LIFE

“Place yourselves under God's authority.” James 4:7 (GW)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right.” 2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

“I have made up my mind to obey Your laws forever, no matter what.”
Psalm 119:112 (CEV)

“I will never lay aside Your laws, for You have used them to restore my joy and health.”
Psalm 119:93 (TLB)

EMBRACE GOD'S SPIRIT _____ FOR MY LIFE

“I will put My Spirit in you and enable you to live by my laws.” Ezekiel 36:27 (GW)

“Anyone who tries to live by his own effort, independent of God, is doomed to failure.”
Galatians 3:10 (The Message)

“You began your life in Christ by the Spirit. Now are you trying to make it complete by your own power? That is foolish!” Galatians 3:3 (NCV)

“I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me.”
Philippians 4:13 (GNT)

KEEP JESUS _____ OF MY LIFE

“We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete.”
Hebrews 12:2 (CEV)

“If I keep my eyes on God, I won't trip over my own feet.” Psalm 25:15 (The Message)

“Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track.” Proverbs 3:6 (The Message)

STEP 3

Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control.

“The payoff for meekness...is plenty and honor and a satisfying life.”
Proverbs 22:4 (The Message)

“Don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too.
Live one day at a time.” Matthew 6:34 (TLB)

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THE TRANSFORMATION CHOICE

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Parts 1-3

5 PHASES GOD USES TO CHANGE US JACOB

1. _____

“Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying, ‘Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father.’ And Jacob noticed that Laban's attitude toward him was not what it had been.”

Genesis 31:1-2 (NIV)

“The messengers returned to Jacob and said, ‘We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, with an army of 400 men!’ Jacob was terrified at the news.” Genesis 32:6-7 (NLT)

“Then Jacob prayed, ‘O God . . . O Lord . . . I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you've shown me . . . save me I pray . . . for I am afraid.’”

Genesis 32:9-11 (NLT)

REALITY CHOICE:

Realize I'm not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing & my life is unmanageable.

“God blesses those who realize their need for him.” Matthew 5:3 (NLT)

2. _____

“Jacob got them safely across the brook Jabbok along with all his possessions. But Jacob stayed behind and was left all alone in the camp, and a Man came and wrestled with him until dawn. When the Man saw that he couldn't win the match, he struck Jacob's hip and knocked it out of joint at the socket.”

Genesis 32:23-25 (NLT/The Message)

“Before Jacob was born, he struggled with his brother; when he became a man, he even fought with God.” Hosea 12:3 (NLT)

HOPE CHOICE:

Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to him, & that he has the power to help me recover.

3. _____

“Then the man said, ‘Let me go, for it is dawn.’ But Jacob panted, ‘I won't let you go unless you bless me!’” Genesis 32:26 (NLT)

COMMITMENT CHOICE:

Consciously choose to commit all my life & will to Christ's care & control.

“Do not let any part of your body become a tool of wickedness, to be used for sinning. Instead, give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.”

Romans 6:13 (NLT)

4. _____

“The man asked him, ‘What is your name?’ ‘JACOB’, he answered.”

Genesis 32:27 (NIV)

Jacob = “deceiver/manipulator”

HOUSECLEANING CHOICE:

Openly examine & confess my faults to myself, to God, & to someone I trust.

5. _____

“Then the Man said, ‘Your name will no longer be Jacob, but ISRAEL . . . Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, ‘It is because I saw God face to face.’” Genesis 32:28-30 (NIV)

Israel = “Prince with God”

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

TRANSFORMATION CHOICE:

Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask him to remove my character defects.

“The sun rose as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.”

Genesis 32:31 (NLT)

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THE GROWTH CHOICE

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Parts 1-3

I reserve a daily time with God for Bible reading, self-examination, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

*"Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
2 Peter 3:18 (GNT)*

HOW TO CONTINUE GROWING

1. _____
"And now, dear children, continue to live in fellowship with Christ." 1 John 2:28 (NLT)
"Everyone who lives in union with Christ does not continue to sin." 1 John 3:6 (GNT)
"Continue praying, keeping alert, and always thanking God." Colossians 4:2 (NCV)

2. _____
"The truly happy people are those who carefully study God's perfect law that makes people free, and they continue to study it. They do not forget what they hear, but they obey what God's teaching says." James 1:25 (NCV)

"If you continue in my Word, then you are my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32 (KJV)

3. _____
"I do not mean that I am already as God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal, but I continue trying to reach it and to make it mine. Christ wants me to do that, which is the reason he made me his." Philippians 3:12 (NCV)

"No, I'm still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven." Philippians 3:13-14 (NLT)

4. _____
*"Let us examine our ways and test them, and return to the Lord."
Laminations 3:40 (NIV)*

*"If we examine ourselves, we will not be examined by God and judged in this way."
1 Corinthians 11:31 (NLT)*

5. _____
*"Be alert. Continue strong in the faith. Have courage, and be strong."
1 Corinthians 16:13 (NCV)*

"Do not be fooled. Bad companions ruin good character." 1 Corinthians 15:33 (GNT)

6. _____
"We are confident that God will continue to rescue us, since you are also joining to help us when you pray for us." 2 Corinthians 1:10 (GW)

"We should not stop gathering together with other believers, as some of you are doing. Instead, we must continue to encourage each other." Hebrews 10:25 (GW)

7. _____
*"I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again."
Philippians 1:6 (NLT)*

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THE SHARING CHOICE

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Parts 1-4

"Blessed are the peacemakers." Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

*"God was in Christ, offering peace and forgiveness to the people of this world. And he has given us the work of sharing his message about peace."
2 Corinthians 5:19 (CEV)*

THE SHARING CHOICE:

I choose to yield myself to God to be used to bring the Good News to others, by both my example and by my words.

"I pray that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you and will bless you with peace! . . . The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. He comforts us when we are in trouble, so that we can share that same comfort with others in trouble. We share in the terrible sufferings of Christ, but also in the wonderful comfort he gives." 2 Corinthians 1:2-4 (CEV)

WHAT CAN I SHARE TO HELP OTHERS?

1. _____
*"Sometimes it takes a painful situation to make us change our ways."
Proverbs 20:30 (GNT)*

*"I am glad . . . not because it hurt you but because the pain turned you to God."
2 Corinthians 7:9 (TLB)*

TO HELP OTHERS I MUST BE HONEST ABOUT . . .

• **MY** _____
*"We have spoken frankly to you; we have opened our hearts wide."
2 Corinthians 6:11 (GNT)*

• **MY** _____
"Each of us must bear the faults and burdens of his own. For none of us is perfect!" Galatians 6:5 (TLB)

• **MY** _____
*"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst."
1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV)*

• **MY** _____
"I have the desire to do what is right, but I cannot carry it out . . . I keep on doing the evil I don't want to do." Romans 7:18-19 (NIV)

• **MY** _____
*"I do admit that I have fears- that when I come you'll disappoint me and I'll disappoint you, and in frustration with each other everything will fall to pieces."
2 Corinthians 12:20 (The Message)*

2. _____

• **I LEARNED** _____
"We were crushed and overwhelmed...and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us . . . and he did help us!" 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 (TLB)

• **I LEARNED** _____
"It was the best thing that could have happened to me, for it taught me to pay attention to your laws!" Psalm 119:71-72 (TLB)

• **I LEARNED** _____
*"Remember that in God's plan men and women need each other."
1 Corinthians 11:11 (TLB)*

"Two people are better than one... If one falls down, the other can help him up. But it is bad for the person who is alone and falls, because no one is there to help." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NCV)

3. _____
"We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God." Romans 8:28 (NLT)

"(They) intended it to harm me, but God intended it for good." Genesis 50:20 (NIV)

4. _____
"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

Who will you tell?

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WHAT DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS AND WHAT BUILDS THEM

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Parts 1-3

"Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other."
Romans 12:5 (GW)

1. _____ DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS

"What causes fights and quarrels? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but you don't get it." James 4:1-2 (NIV)

"Selfishness only causes trouble." Proverbs 28:25 (GNT)

_____ BUILDS THEM

"Look out for one another's interests, not just for your own." Philippians 2:4 (GNT)

"The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—and ignoring God—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, and eternal life." Galatians 6:8 (The Message)

"Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness." Galatians 5:16 (The Message)

2. _____ DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS

"Pride leads to arguments." Proverbs 13:10 (TLB)

"Pride will destroy a person: a proud attitude leads to ruin." Proverbs 16:18 (NCV)

"First pride, then the crash- the bigger the ego, the harder the fall." (The Message)

_____ BUILDS THEM

"Live in harmony, be sympathetic, love each other, have compassion, and be humble."
1 Peter 3:8 (GW)

"Be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves . . . your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God." Philippians 2:3, 5-6 (NCV/NLT)

3. _____ DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS

"The fear of human opinion disables." Proverbs 29:25 (The Message)

Adam: *"I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."* Genesis 3:10 (NIV)

_____ BUILDS THEM

"Love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid . . . it shows that his love has not been perfected in us." 1 John 4:18 (NLT)

"All who proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them . . . We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in him. God is love . . . And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid."

1 John 4:15-17 (NLT)

4. _____ DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS

"To worry yourself to death with resentment is a foolish, senseless thing to do."

Job 5:2 (GNT)

"Since my heart was embittered and my soul deeply wounded, I was stupid and could not understand." Psalm 73:21-22 (NABRE)

"Look after each other . . . Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you, for as it springs up it causes deep trouble, hurting many in their spiritual lives."

Hebrews 12:15 (TLB)

_____ BUILDS THEM

"You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

"Once our lives were full of resentment and envy. But then . . . Christ saved us—not because we were good enough to be saved but because of his kindness and love—by washing away our sins and giving us the new joy of the indwelling Holy Spirit . . . all because of what Jesus our Savior did so that he could declare us good in God's eyes." Titus 3:3-7 (TLB)

The Lord says, "Forget what happened before and do not think about the past. I am going to do something new . . . I will make rivers on dry land." Isaiah 43:18-19 (GW)

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THERE'S NO RECOVERY WITHOUT PRAYER

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Parts 1-3

EXAMPLES OF PRAYER CAUSING RECOVERY

1. WHEN THE ISRAELITES GOT IMPATIENT & REBELLIOUS

"Then the people grew impatient on the way and they began to murmur and complain against God and Moses. Why did you lead us here? . . . We hate where we are, and we hate the food! . . . So God sent poisonous snakes to punish them and many became sick and died from the bites. Then the people confessed 'We have sinned...PRAY FOR US!' So Moses PRAYED for them . . . Then God told Moses to make a bronze staff . . . and when those who'd been bitten looked (in faith) to Moses' staff they recovered!" Numbers 21:4-9

WITH PRAYER WE CAN RECOVER . . .

2. WHEN JEROBOAM WAS UPSET HEARING A HARD TRUTH

"So King Jeroboam stretched out his hand in anger against the Man of God who had told him the truth and it instantly became paralyzed . . . The king cried out 'PRAY FOR ME!' So the man of God PRAYED to the Lord, and the king recovered the normal use of his hand!" 1 Kings 13:4-6

WITH PRAYER WE CAN RECOVER . . .

3. WHEN HEZEKIAH WAS TOLD HE'D NEVER RECOVER

"In those days King Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. Isaiah the prophet went to him and said, 'The Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die. You are NOT going to recover!' BUT Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and he PRAYED, pleading to the Lord, 'Remember Lord, how I've walked before you faithfully with wholehearted devotion and I've done what is good in your eyes.' And Hezekiah wept loudly as he prayed. Then, before Isaiah had even left the king's court, God's word came to him again: 'Go back and tell Hezekiah 'I've heard your PRAYER and I've seen your tears. You WILL RECOVER and I WILL heal you . . . I'm going to add fifteen years to your life! ALSO I'm going to deliver you and this city from Assyria's domination.' . . . so Hezekiah recovered."

2 Kings 20:1-7

"After Hezekiah's recovery, he wrote a prayer of praise . . . You restored my health and I am fully recovered with a fresh infusion of life! But it was good for me to go through all those troubles because throughout them all, you held tight to my life! You never let me tumble over the edge into nothing. But my sins, you did let go of, you threw them behind your back!" Isaiah 38:9-17

WITH PRAYER, WE CAN RECOVER . . .

4. WHEN TWO BLIND MEN CRIED OUT TO JESUS

"Two blind men were sitting by the roadside when they heard that Jesus was passing by. So they cried out, 'Lord, have mercy on us!' The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they prayed even louder 'Lord, have mercy on us!' . . . Jesus stopped and said, 'What do you want me to do for you?' They said 'We don't want to be blind anymore! Give us sight!' With deep compassion, Jesus touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and they followed him."

Matthew 20:30-34

WITH PRAYER WE CAN RECOVER . . .

5. WHEN PETER HAD HIS MASSIVE PUBLIC FAILURE

(Predicting Peter's fall) Jesus said: "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you just as wheat is sifted. BUT I HAVE PRAYED FOR YOU, Simon, so that your faith may not fail. And WHEN you have recovered, it will be your job to strengthen your brothers." Luke 22:31-32

WITH PRAYER WE CAN RECOVER . . .

6. WHEN JOB LOST LITERALLY EVERYTHING

"After the Lord had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz, 'I'm angry with you and your two friends, because you did not speak the truth about me, the way my servant Job did. Now I want you to make a sacrifice . . . and JOB WILL PRAY FOR YOU! THEN I will answer his prayer and not disgrace you the way you deserve . . . So Job's 3 friends did what the Lord told them to do, and the Lord answered JOB'S PRAYER. Then, when Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored Job's health and prosperity, and Job recovered twice as much as he had before his pain."

Job 42:7-10

OUR RECOVERY IS ONLY COMPLETE . . .

Jesus announced his mission on earth by reading from Isaiah 61:1-4

“God's Spirit is on me. He's chosen me to preach the good news to the poor, to announce freedom to those held captive, to give recovery of sight to the blind, to set the burdened and battered free, to proclaim that this is the time of God's Favor!”

Luke 4:18 (The Message)

The rest of Isaiah's prophesy adds:

“And to heal the brokenhearted . . . to comfort all who mourn . . . and to give beauty for ashes and joy and gladness instead grief! . . . Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will restore the devastated places, and they will renew the ruined cities!”

Isaiah 61:1-4 (GW)

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