

Module 1 Lesson 5

Our Response

KEY IDEA

Real and lasting change in marriage begins with heart change, not behavior change. Only God can transform our hearts, but we must cooperate with His Spirit.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Luke 6:43–45 – “...Each tree is recognized by its own fruit... For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”
- 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
- Ezekiel 36:26 – “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you...”

LESSON & NOTES

HOW CAN I CHANGE (ME)?

We need _____ change

Accept R _____

“We can’t change our hearts by ourselves, we need a _____.”

The 4 R’s

1. R _____

2. R _____

3. R _____

4. R _____

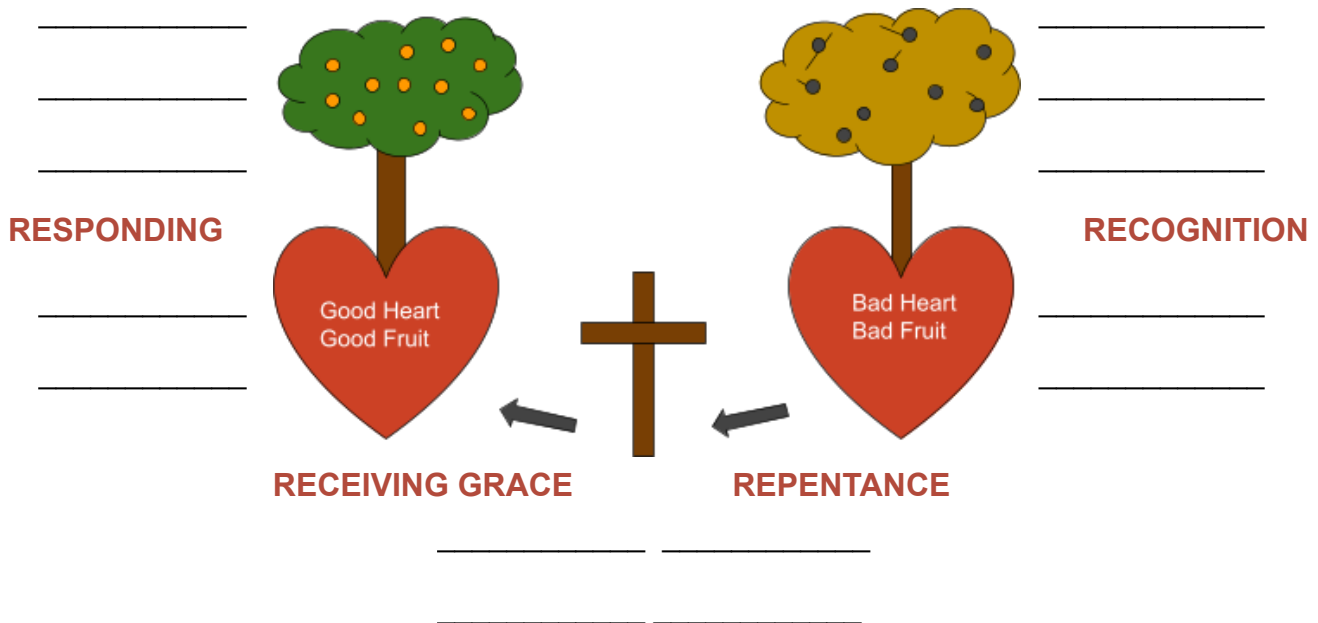
KEY POINTS

- Heart change leads to lasting behavior change
- We are responsible only for our own actions—not our spouse’s
- Christ alone changes the heart; we cooperate with His Spirit
- The 4 R’s of transformation: Recognize, Repent, Receive, Respond

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Below is a **Biblical Counseling Model of Change from CCEF** (CCEF.org). Choose one area in your marriage that you would like to change. List the present bad fruit on the lines to the right of the tree. Next to the Bad heart, list possible heart motives that produce the bad fruit. Next, list several scriptures below the cross that would help address the “bad heart.” The spaces next to the “good heart” are the motives and desires that will then lead to the good fruit, which can be listed to the left of the corresponding tree.



In order to move from Bad Heart / Bad Fruit to Good Fruit / Good Heart it is essential that we repent of our sins - to repent of the Bad Heart. In the video, I listed 4 R's to help with the process:

1. Recognition of sin. 2. Repentance. 3. Receiving Grace. 4. Responding in Love & Grace.

Lasting Changes only occur with heart changes.

Let's look at each of these 4 R's for a better understanding. As we read these steps, we'll be moving from the right to the left side in the diagram.

1. Recognition of Sin: Recognition of sin is really two-fold. The first step in recognizing sin is understanding that your action was sinful and that the sinful action came from a wicked heart. No one made you do this act. No one forced you to do it. You wanted something and you acted in sinful ways to get it.

Owning up to your sin means you accept full responsibility of your part, and you recognize that this is the reason Christ died on the cross. Your sin placed him there (So did mine).

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HeartWork Pg 2

The second aspect of the recognition of sin is to understand sin's impact. In other words, there are consequences for your sins, and often, it is other people who bear the weight. Like physical wounds, when your actions cause emotional wounds and cut deep, it takes time for the other person to heal and to trust again. Be patient and understand that your sins made an impact on them.

2. Repentance: 2 Corinthians 7:10 states there are two types of sorrow - godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow (the recognition of sin) leads to repentance whereas worldly sorrow is sadness for getting caught and is shallow, at best. Worldly sorrow is behavior change, but not heart change. It is simply to keep the peace and move on.

Godly sorrow, in contrast, leads to salvation (with Christ, and can save your relationship!). When there is recognition of another's pain, a godly sorrow combined with a compassionate response to your spouse's healing can be a game-changer. Godly sorrow leads to a permanent change in behaviors because there is a change of heart.

3. Receiving Grace: If you genuinely seek forgiveness from God, He will forgive you and remember your sins no more. You will not have to beat yourself up over the head anymore. You are favored by God because of who He is, not because of what you've done. It may take your spouse some time to work through it, but that is OK! Give them space and focus on #4.

4. Respond in Love and Grace: In Matthew 3:8, Jesus states to "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." Now, with this grace that you've received from God in #3, give that to your spouse. Be patient with them as they heal from your sins. Continue to favor them even if they are not responding well to you or may sin against you. Let His grace empower you to value them even if you are not being valued. This isn't easy to do, but it will lead your marriage to better grounds.

Additionally, ask God for help to keep your heart focused on Him and to avoid returning to sin. Some may need accountability partners, mentors, or counselors to speak with to avoid sinning in the same way against your spouse.