

TWO WHISPERS, TWO RESULTS

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How many times do you laugh about a season of life that you are SO glad is *over*?! Like dating, your first job, junior high, the years you spent finding yourself. Usually you can spend hours with old friends laughing and reminiscing until the tears are freely falling and sides are aching because your face cannot contain the hilarity of it all — and this is the best ab workout you've had in months.

You gotta love those bittersweet "I can't believe I did that" moments. We've all said it. Either with those laughter tears or with a deep sigh and maybe even a groan. **When you're working out your faith, entering the journey into an awareness of who you are in light of who God is, this can be a crazy little place. Because all of a sudden there is an enlightened understanding of how life is meant to be done with a**

central set of values that likely didn't exist in your world before.

So while God is gently molding you into the person he created you to be, so that you get the freedom to enjoy life at its fullest measure, there are some growing pains involved. And you hear two different whispers as you begin the journey of managing the person you are or were from the person you were created to be. Because **once you commit your life to Christ, you are a new creation.**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." — 2 Corinthians 5:17

You are not the same person that you were without Jesus in your life. Sweet friends - *this is awesome!* If you were a pretty fantastic person to begin with, awesome. The rest of us are parading around like we won the lottery — except better.

So back to the two whispers thing...

When you become aware of the life-changing power of knowing Jesus, be aware that along with the beauty of this incredible relationship, it's wise to be aware that **Satan just lost a huge battle over you. So now, his goal is to paralyze you from:**

a) reaping the benefit and joyfully knowing God intimately now;

b) being useful.

One way that he does that is in whispers and shouts serving as reminders of the person that you once were, in an effort to redefine your new character. **The effort is to bring shame.** And the tricky thing is that all of what is offered isn't complete nonsense, but in some way, kind of makes sense to us. "I can't believe I did that..." This whisper brings shame, regret, paralysis, depression, a lack of confidence. Here's another key distinguisher - **it's really general.** There's not much you can do about it, it doesn't call you into something better, and it doesn't empower you. Wallowing in this whisper renders you useless because when your eyes are focused on lies, how can you see the truth?

On the other end of the spectrum, you hear from God — the one who loves you, pursues you, longs for relationship with you, and who offers every "good and perfect gift (James 1:17)," and who loves offering words that breathe life. This can be affirmations or redirections. Parents - you get this. We call our children into life, and our words are offered with purpose. **When God brings something difficult to mind, it**

has a *purpose*; to drive conviction, course correct, strengthen and protect you. When he whispers, it highlights something very *specific*, something we can control — *there is something we can do about it*. God's goal is not to change the past, it's to grow you. His words drive courage, conviction, prompt action and build confidence... it is *loving*. When you focus on this whisper, you are better for it.

Do you see the difference? God's whispers are productive, Satan's are counterproductive. God's whispers breathe life. Satan's whispers take us off-course, they are ultimately devastating.

We are wise to evaluate a whisper that is pushing us in a particular direction to determine where it's coming from, in order to respond the right way. The better we get at recognizing the new creation that we are, the more comfortable we get with our stories, because we know who we are and we trust the one who holds the pen of life and knows us by name.