

What Are the Chances?

Completing even seemingly
small personal improvements
is typically far more difficult
than we imagine and plan for –
therefore we should give God (and ourselves!)
more credit for every small change made.
Sayings from Beulah State University

Yes, the odds of successfully accomplishing even easy lasting changes are low (about 12%); what hope, then, can we have for making hard or impossible changes “stick” long-term and lifelong?

There is realistically a single way in which the odds of making impossible Better changes is statistically easier than easy or hard changes. Let’s look at this paradox.

<u>Easy</u>	<u>Hard</u>	<u>Impossible</u>
12%	<1%	?

A very big mistake non-Christians make (because they are not in Christian “circles”) is thinking very few people REALLY believe (successfully acting on these beliefs to accomplish Better) when, in fact, there are many many millions that routinely do so. Thus, the non- or nominal-believer (in the end the same thing) do not consider the easier impossibilities possible. It is likely that if some of these many people knew the extent of Christ’s reach and influence they would take Him more seriously, seek Him and research the evidence supporting the claims of the vast number of Christian disciples, throughout history and even today, testifying of His great Grace and its power working through them to do the otherwise impossible.

Yes, the very best (most talented, strongest, smartest, richest . . .) non-believers can beat the low odds above for making easy, and even hard, changes in life, but they are not able to break-through the impossible challenges the far less talented, strong, smart, rich . . . Grace-seekers and -finders routinely and “naturally” do. The non-believer lives in the low odds paradigm of doing the best they can and as a result, making permanent improvements very unlikely for even seemingly easy changes.

While it seems incredible, the odds of doing the impossible, when we have/with Grace, are higher than doing what is easy or hard without Grace. That is the point of Grace: allowing us to experience what God wants to do to make us humanly/impossibly Better:

1. Saving us,
2. Sanctifying ALL true believers in concurrently making us more Christ-like ^{2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 2:6, Romans 6:11, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Ephesians 4:22-24, Ephesians 5:1-2, 1 John 3:2-3 . . .} and completing the good works He specifically and personally plans for each Christian. ^{Eph 2:10}
3. Glorifying us at death with eternal life in His presence. ^{Ro 8:29-30}

Grace being the necessary means of accomplishing these impossibilities.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ^{Eph 2:8-10}

Grace makes the otherwise impossible, possible and, in fact, necessary for eternal salvation.

For a key theme of the *Bible* is that the best of mankind is not pleasing or acceptable to God – the best of the best will not save anyone. To be saved we must find a righteousness apart and outside ourselves:

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Ro 3:22-24

“I don't understand,” many people will logically say. “Doesn't God judge based on the final results with the highest achievers (the nicest, those doing the most and best . . .) most pleasing Him?” We will likely think so if our spiritual “diet” consists of the sermons of many professing preachers and their followers. Yet, a simple reading of the *Bible*, especially the *New Testament*, will reveal this is NOT true. Instead God starts with the “poorest” specimens (morally, mentally, financially, lacking self-control . . .), points them towards Better (NOT the best they can do) and gives them Grace to do what, for them, is otherwise impossible so they are saved.

Yes, a very big mistake non-Christians make (because they are not in this circle) is thinking very few people REALLY believe (acting on these beliefs) when, in fact, there are many millions seeking God, in His Word, prayer, and through other means of “connecting” with Him. If they knew how many people find Christ as their guide in life they might take Him more seriously. Everyone in this position would be wise to consider and correct this mistake before it is too late.

For it will not take too long, if God and Grace are sought, to get to a point that, while there remain many questions and lack of personal confidence, seeing some impossibilities accomplished will provide the faith to continue with Christ because it will be obvious turning back to the world, that NEVER gives anything, is futile. For the world only takes, takes, takes and enslaves without providing any meaningful help, hope or rewards (and certainly none for eternity).

Everyone hears voices seeking to lead them in one direction or another. As God is sought in His written Word and Prayer-Word (as we turn towards and hear Him as many millions consistently do on a day-to-day basis) His Voice will become stronger and clearer and the many, very often contradictory, inconsistent, misleading and damaging voices of the world will be seen as the danger and foolishness they are.

Those who do not “run” in serious Christian circles don't realize just how many people are seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness – they take false comfort in the errors that nobody really takes this stuff seriously, “God can only expect that I do the best I can . . .” following a blind crowd on a dead-end road of no hope or help, to their final ultimate and eternal destruction.

I had rather try and fail (finding I am wrong and have to change again – which is the case fairly regularly for any Christian) than passively be a part of the norm that lives with no ultimate purpose, enthusiasm or joy!

What are the chances of a good ending on this literal dead-end path?