

Old Habits “Die Hard”

A man taking a walk with his grandson through a wood stopped and pointed to four plants.

The first was a tiny sprout. The second had rooted itself quite firmly. The third was a small shrub. The fourth had grown into a well-developed sapling.

The grandfather said to his teenage grandson, “*pull up the first plant.*”

The youth pulled it up easily with his fingers.

“*Now pull up this second plant*” the grandfather told the youth.

The young man obeyed and with a slight effort the plant came up roots and all.

“*Now pull up the third*” continued the elderly gentleman.

The youth pulled with one hand, then with both hands. After a struggle and much sweat and straining of muscles, the plant finally yielded.

“*Now try the fourth*” said the grandfather.

The youth pulled at the trunk of the sapling with all of his might, but hardly a leaf shook.

“*I can’t move it!*” exclaimed the youth in great frustration.

The grandfather then explained why he had asked his young grandson to try to pull up these four differing plants.

“Our habits, good or bad, are just like these four plants. When they are young and small, we can cast them out of our lives, but when they are left to grow and hardened eventually it will become impossible for us to eradicate them out of our lives.”

I think we can all learn from this little story.

The way we allow ourselves to think is important.

It is all too easy, if we are **not** on our guard, to form habits of negative thinking.

Thinking on things of little or no lasting worth, letting our thoughts wander aimlessly.

Constantly entertaining a certain thought will lead to performing some act.

If this act is repeated again and again over time, it gets deeply rooted inside of us and becomes a part of our basic character.

James 1:14-15 [NIV] *“but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*

If this habit is evil and sinful it will eventually lead to our eternal death.

Now is the time to face up to our bad habits and seek to root them out before they become so big we cannot remove them.

Philippians 4:8-9 [NIV] *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”*

Make sure that we are constantly thinking on things that are good and pure, for such thoughts will grow into good habits and become part of our character.

The end result of such thoughts will be a happy, abundant and eternal life.