

When It's Time to Close the Door

Part Three

Text: Proverbs 23:7

Intro: When the US economy was trudging along at about 1% growth a year, many politicians said that this was the new normal. People believed it and acted according to their beliefs. This brings me to the third part of our series, the new normal.

- I. Proverbs 23:7.
 - A. Pain by nature is a sign or signal that something is wrong and action of some kind is required.
 1. However, some people have become acclimated to their misery.
 - a. It is like a dull ache that you have grown accustomed to living with.
 - b. It has become the new normal.
 2. Neuroscience research has discovered that your mind actually develops something like hardwiring that causes a person to think and behave automatically.
 - a. So when your hardwiring has adapted to accept some sort of “stuck reality,” you will live out being stuck there.
 - b. It becomes your new normal.
 - B. Learned Helplessness discovered by Steven F. Maier and Martin Seligman.
 1. They did some experiments on dogs. Without going into all of the details, they had three groups of dogs. Nothing was done with the first group of dogs (control group). The second group of dogs were placed in a cage with an escape panel. This group was repeatedly shocked with electricity. By pushing the escape panel with their noses, these dogs were able to escape the shocks. The third group of dogs had no escape panel. As a result, the dogs in the third group could neither escape or turn off the shock. No matter what they did, the third group could not escape the shocks.

Next, the researchers put all three groups of dogs in one shuttle box. A shuttle box has two compartments. The first compartment's floor was lined so that it would carry an electric shock. The second compartment was made an area safe for the dogs. The cages were separated by a very low barrier the dogs could leap over.

The control group that did not receive any shocks were placed in the shuttle box and shocked. They jumped over the barrier into the safe area. The second group of dogs, who pushed against the panel to escape the shock in the first experiment, were placed in the shuttle box. When they were shocked, three of the dogs looked for an escape panel. When they couldn't find one, they jumped over the barrier to escape the shocks. The group of dogs that couldn't escape the shocks gave up. Six out of eight dogs didn't try to make it into the safe zone. They had to think there was no hope. They had learned to be helpless.

- Learned helplessness will cause you to give up and believe there is no hope.
2. Three P's of the learned helplessness model.
 - a. Personalized- I am bad at this
 - b. Pervasive- Everything I do, or every aspect of the business is bad
 - c. Permanent- Nothing is going to change
 3. Our brains drive our behavior- it is possible for our brains to become hardwired to keep us stuck.
- C. Five Internal Maps
- a. Having an abnormally high pain threshold- You are willing to put up with more than most.
 - b. Covering for others- Taking too much responsibility for others.
 - c. Believing that ending it means I failed- It is the toxic version of quitting and thinking you are a quitter.
 - d. Misunderstood loyalty- when ending feels disloyal.
 - e. Codependent Mapping- Feeling responsible for another person's pain with the enabling has ended.
- D. Sometimes we are our own worst enemy. Change often should come and can come, but is dependent on our perceptions.