



RAY EDWARDS

LIVE WITH JOY. LEAD WITH PASSION. PROSPER WITH PURPOSE.

Why You Find It Hard to Maintain the Change Episode #198

Sean: Welcome, my name is Sean Edwards, son of Ray Edwards.

Ray: It's been a while since you've used that one.

Sean: It has.

Ray: It's less than two weeks away. Many will be making New Year's resolutions and most of them will fail. Why? Why does that happen and what can you do to avoid that failure? You could be like my friend we talked about last week, who said I never make any resolutions therefore I never fail. That's one way of defining success, I suppose.

Sean: Yes, one way.

Ray: Here's a question. How do you get back in God's good graces if you've backslid so that he'll hear your prayers again? It could be that I set you up with that question.

Sean: Maybe a little.

Ray: Also, the secret way to hire a chef for about \$13 a meal.

Sean: It's a pretty good chef too.

Ray: You know what I'm talking about?

Sean: I do.

Ray: You're quick. I can't slide anything by you.

Sean: No, especially when you have it written out.

Ray: And you knew it was coming.

Sean: Yes.

Ray: You've ruined it, I don't think people knew that. Now they know. That's all coming up.

Spiritual Foundations

Ray: Some people think if they were more right with God then he would hear their prayers. The more ugly way of stating that is they feel like, if they didn't sin so much they'd get some

answers to their prayers. But they know they're just a dirty little sinning little sinner, so God isn't going to answer their prayers, why would He? Look what I just did yesterday or five minutes ago.

You can't go five minutes without sinning. You certainly can't go a whole day.

Sean: No, it's impossible because you're a worm.

Ray: Yes.

Sean: You can't help but sin.

Ray: Except for the part in the Old Testament where God says these laws that I give you are not too hard for you to keep.

Sean: Wait, I thought the old covenant... was designed to show us that we can't be righteous.

Ray: That's what many think, but that's another show. I'm not going down that path. However, I will tell you this, the book of Romans 4:7-8 says, 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.'

So, if your lawless deeds are covered, they're forgiven and God is not imputing sin to you, in other words, He's not adding that to your ledger, to your balance sheet even as you're doing it. It doesn't make sense to us, then you are blessed and if you translate that word and different scholars translate it differently, blessed sounds very holy and churchy but this is like super happy, ultimately joyous is the person. You bet!

Super happy and ultimately joyous are the people whose lawless deeds are forgiven. It's like the guy in Oh Brother Where Art Thou, 'ain't neither God nor man got nothing on me no more, my sins have been washed away.' I say it and we laugh, and I say it in jesting but God doesn't operate on the balance sheet system anymore if we accept the gift that He's given us under the new covenant.

He wants you to know beyond any doubt that you can always come to him as it says in the scripture, His thrown of grace, of unmerited favor, like you didn't earn the favor that He's about to give you. He's giving it to you as a gift and you can come with boldness and have confidence. What would it look like if you approached somebody with boldness? It would look presumptuous. It would look like this, hey, give me \$100 dollars I need a \$100 bucks and I'm kind of in a hurry. That's bold.

Sean: And kind of rude.

Ray: That's true. The point I'm trying to make is that when you approach God with boldness because of his grace and you have all the confidence that you're going to get his mercy and his grace, it's because of the finished work Jesus did on the cross. You're already right with God so you don't need to do anything to make yourself more right with God.

In fact, in II Corinthians 5:21 it says, that you have received the righteousness of God himself and no matter how many mistakes or how many intentional sins you commit, you will never lose that righteousness because in the first place God gave it to you apart from anything you did. See Romans 4:5-6. In other words, God does not impute righteousness

to you because you were good, so He doesn't impute sin to you because you were bad and it's all because of Jesus.

That makes me want to start singing, but I won't.

For many of you this is basic and you're like yeah I get this, I know this already. Do you really or do you ever decide that you don't feel like going to church because you've been thinking about something you did this week, some attitude that you have or you just don't feel very pretty to God right now and maybe you go to church and during the song service you don't feel connected to God, but you act like it. You put a big smile on your face and put your hands in the air like you don't care, but inside you're torn to pieces because you have this idea that God is looking to punish you or that you deserve to be punished.

How do you get free from that? When you know the truth, that your sins have been paid for, including all those you haven't committed yet, the one you're committing now while you're listening to this podcast.

Sean: Because we all know that you are.

Ray: Sinner... your sins will not stop him from hearing and responding to your prayers. They will not stop him from blessing you. When you commit sin the thing to do, and we do, we do commit sin. We don't have to but we do, because it's easy and sometimes it's fun. Admit it. There are consequences for sin, I'm not saying that that's not so. If I go out and shoot a bunch of people there's a consequence to that. God forgives even a sin like that and I can't understand that in my human mind, but I do know if you do that there's a consequence that you will have to pay, which usually involves the FBI and ATF.

You don't have to make things right with God because He's made things right with you. And you practice living this out by practicing His presence. You just make yourself aware of His presence and trust that He always hears what you're asking for. He knows what you need. He loves to hear from you. He loves to dialogue with you. He loves to interact with you in your life and you don't have to call for your pastor or church leaders, somebody to walk you through a prayer, to make you write and get you clean again so that you can be back in fellowship with God. It doesn't work that way.

You are righteous in Christ and God hears your prayers all the time because of Jesus, so pray with confidence that God hears your prayers and when you pray just know that something always happens. You may not see it immediately. You may not know exactly what it is, but I promise you, something always happens when we pray.

Tip of the Week

Ray: What if you could hire a chef?

Sean: I'd love to hire a chef.

Ray: A gourmet chef. What if you were trying to adhere to something like the Paleo diet or a ketogenic diet and you thought it would be easier if you had someone to cook for you, so you wouldn't have to figure out new recipes. What if you could hire a chef for \$13 a meal? You can hardly eat at McDonald's for that kind of money and that's not chef made food. There is no Chef McDonald.

We have been using a new service lately that we just love called PetesPaleo.com. A tip of the hat to my friend, Joe Polish, who I was privileged to have dinner with at the Titans of Direct Response Marketing event earlier this year. I was talking to him about some of the changes I've made dietarily and he said you should check out Pete's Paleo, because I was decrying the difficulty of getting grass fed beef in Spokane.

So we tried it and they prepare these meals that are healthy, real food meals freshly made by a gourmet chef. They're cooked, you simply saute' them or heat them up in the microwave. What if it costs less to eat this way than it does to eat at a cheap crappy restaurant? It can. Try it out. My recommendation is to go to the website and tell them you heard about it here. We get a commission and they don't have an affiliate program. We really like their service and the food is delicious.

Sean: It's muy delicioso.

Feature Presentation

Sean: Dad, sometimes I find it hard to maintain the change, do you have any advice on that?

Ray: Well, what a coincidence that you should bring that up, because this is exactly what I wanted to talk about on today's show.

Sean: Wow, that's crazy.

Ray: According to the statistic brain research institute, only 8% of the people who make New Year's resolutions actually achieve them. There are a bunch of other interesting statistics about New Year's resolutions, so why is it so hard to maintain the changes that we want to make in our lives? They're important to us. Nobody would argue that when you make the resolution to lose weight, to save more money, to get out of debt, to build wealth, to start a business, to write a book. Nobody would argue that you don't mean it.

I think you really do mean it. I don't think you're lying to yourself or kidding yourself. I don't think you're lazy. But why can we not maintain the change, even when we have a good system? Now, this past year I used a new system for setting goals and I've tried every kind of goal setting system you can imagine over the years, different ones I've paid lots of money for, ones I've used for free, some that I've made up myself. The most success I've had has been with Michael Hyatt's 5 Days to Your Best Year Ever System.

For me, I feel as though he's taken the best parts of all the good goal setting systems and he's also taken a new spin on some psychological realities that we all deal with and found ways to overcome lots of the things that hold us back in achieving our goals. So his system is very simple and only takes five days. It's about an hour a day each day, or you can do what I did and go nuts and do it all at once.

What were the results that I got? Well, I did pretty well. I hit some of my goals and missed a few by a mile. I would love to tell you that I hit all of them 100%. I would love to tell Mike that I hit all of them at 100%. I sent him an email and told him this part. I said here are all the amazing things I did because of your program and he said that's exciting, thanks. What I didn't say is, here's the stuff that I messed up.

Sean: Here's what didn't go so well.

Ray: One of the goals I set was to read 52 books in a year. I'm up to about 61 now and I do love to read, but I wasn't reading that much. It took a real effort. Another goal I set was to read the Bible through four times this year and I did that. I've read it through four times in four different translations and that was a life changing experience. Another goal I set that I believe I will, even though I haven't yet achieved it, and that is to write 365 handwritten notes and send them in the mail this year. I'm not quite there yet, but I'm going to make that one.

I had a weight loss goal that I set and I didn't not hit that goal. There's literally no way for me to grind that goal out before the end of the year. See the TV show the Grinder.

Sean: There are so many jokes I want to make.

Ray: I could have a limb removed to reach that goal, but there's really no way that I find acceptance to achieve this goal, but I did lose 51 pounds and I am going to lose the rest. I know where I strayed and went off track. I know what I need to do to get it right. I think I know why I didn't hit the goals that I missed.

Another goal I didn't hit was our income goal for our company. We came close. Now, here's the interesting part about goal setting. When you aim high and really go for it... and sometimes I think people set their goals too low and that's not good for you because you blow past them and it's like eh, no big deal. Or, they set their goals luke warm and it doesn't excite them very much so they don't work hard at them. Sometimes they set their goals too high, so high they think it's impossible so they never even try.

So this was a stretch goal for us. It was a bigger goal than we'd ever achieved before and was somewhat unrealistic and we didn't hit it, but, we did have the biggest year we've ever had.

Sean: That's for sure.

Ray: By a long stretch and if I hadn't set that goal and used a system that Michael teaches then it wouldn't have happened that way, I'm convinced of it. Beyond that, what is happening that causes us, and I was motivated to hit all of my goals. I was fired up about them. I had them written down. I went through Michael's system and followed it every step of the way. So as I was coming towards of 2015 and I'm getting ready to do his process again, and by the way, if you want to join me on that journey you can go to RayEdwards.com/bye.

That's an affiliate link. I will become extraordinarily rich when you buy his product through my link. I'm going to buy my own private island with the money from BYE this year. Just kidding! But you should know I will make a little if you use my link and I deserve to because I told you about it.

I highly recommend his program, whether you buy it through my affiliate link or not. Now again, why did I not hit some of my goals, even as good as your best ever is? I believe the change we're trying to make and the ability to maintain it is mostly about the ecosystem in which we exist. I've heard this concept before and so have you, but I heard it presented in a unique way by Pastor Chris Valetin in Redding, California. He was talking about ecosystems and how you get into an environment where people are doing extraordinary

things and you find yourself doing extraordinary things and you can think that, I'm extraordinary, and then you leave that environment and things don't go so well.

Then you begin to realize that all the water for my crops was coming from the place where I was living not from me. I wasn't providing all that fuel. So the point is not that you need to go live in a special place or be part of a special group, and maybe you do, but you need to be aware of what the ecosystem is that is causing you or will cause you to be able to generate the outcomes that you want. In other words, our environment either nurtures us or destroys us. It either helps us to grow or it causes us to die a little bit each day.

I believe that each of us can increase our ability to maintain the changes we want to make over time, by optimizing the following nine environments. I believe by doing this we can automate much of what is required for us to be successful. So think of it like trying to grow certain crops. You have to have all these different things in the environment. You have to have the ideal temperature, ideal amount of sunlight, ideal amount of water, fertilizer, or nutrients in the soil, cultivation or watering schedule.

Everything has to be idealized to provide the biggest possible yield from those plants that you're trying to grow. So think of it that way. This is what you're trying to do, create an environment that produces the fruit that you're looking to produce and makes it as easy as possible. The importance of the environment you operate in cannot be over-emphasized, so here's what we're going to do. We're going to go through the nine environments.

1. Physical environment

In your physical environment if you're trying to be organized and you're trying to get your life streamlined, get more productive and get things done and your physical environment is a mess, that does not serve you and is an environment that will cost you. If your environment is dirty, disorganized, disorderly and makes you have mental chaos going on inside then that's not going to leave you as the most productive individual you can be, being the most organized and on task person you can be. First you have to look at your physical environment.

Go ahead, look around you right now where you work and live and ask yourself, what needs to change in my physical environment so that I can be more prepared and more enabled and empowered to achieve my goals. I'm not going to pretend to tell you how your physical environment must be. For me, I know there are certain things that need to change for me to get further along in the path to my goals this year than I did last year. One of those things is, I need to be more physically organized and have less clutter around me. It's distracting. Some people say they thrive in that environment. I don't believe that, but who am I to say it's true for them. For me, it's distracting and doesn't lead me to being productive.

2. Mental environment

What's going on inside your head? What thoughts are you habitually thinking? Try this exercise sometime.

Get in a quiet place, sit down, close your eyes and start concentrating on your breathing. Notice as you're breathing in and out, let that go on for a bit and notice what you begin thinking about. A thought pops up into your head of how you need to make an email for so and so or you need to make a call to John, you need to go to Target and pick up gift items and you begin making a list. When you notice that, just think interesting I'm making a list.

Now I'm going to thinking about breathing again. What was that noise? Why can't I have just five minutes peace? Wait, now I'm thinking a thought of irritation.

You will find that it's very hard to not be thinking all sorts of thoughts and here's what I really want you to notice. Begin noticing throughout the day how many of the thoughts do you have; twice. In fact, how many thoughts that you had today are the same thoughts that you had yesterday? If you're thinking the same thoughts over and over and they aren't effecting some kind of change in your life and they aren't feeding you in some way, then why are you doing that? Clean up your mental environment and make it so that it serves the purposes that you're trying to accomplish.

3. Spiritual environment

This gets touchy for some. I'm not going to tell you what to watch and not to watch, what to read and not to read or who to hang out with or not. I'm simply going to tell you what I've learned for myself. If I watch entertainments that are dark, depressing, frightening, that present a view of the world that has been called gritty and realistic, a drama ripped from the headlines. I am tarnished by that. My spiritual environment becomes polluted. My thoughts of the evil deeds that people do, my thoughts of anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, hatred, of whatever is being portrayed in those entertainments that I'm allowing to pass into my mind, that becomes part of my spiritual environment.

So I'm not saying that you can't watch TV shows, movies or read books unless they are holy and spiritual, but I am saying, notice what effect the music you're listening to and everything you're allowing to come into your heart and mind what affect it has on you spiritually and ask yourself, is this giving me the spiritual environment that I need in order to accomplish the goals that I've set out to accomplish? What's more important to me, accomplishing my goals or watching this movie about this serial killer who eats people's brains?

I know a very sweet man, who I think is wise and kind and generous and he loves to watch crime dramas. He is absorbed by these shows that are full of the most heinous stuff.

Sean: Very difficult to watch.

Ray: I just think, how can you do that? I've asked him how he watches that stuff and he says, it doesn't affect me. Yes, it probably does. So be honest with yourself, what are you putting into your spiritual environment and it can get even more subtle than this. I don't know if you'll find this easy to accept or not, but there are ministries, churches that teach things that are destructive to people.

Sean: What!?

Ray: They misrepresent the heart of God. They misrepresent what it means to serve God. They misrepresent who God is and who you are in God and they leave you feeling lessened, diminished and dirty. Don't let those things into your spiritual environment. That's my advice, you have to make your own choice.

4. Emotional environment

What emotions do you allow yourself to feel every day, habitually? I know you don't think you can control how you feel. The heart wants what it wants. Wrong answer. Your

emotions are, if everything is physiologically functioning normally in your brain and nervous system, your emotions are led by your thoughts. Even more importantly they're led by your physical movement. So I can tell you that even if everything isn't functioning normally in your brain and nervous system, it's still true because I have a few neurological problems.

I have a malfunctioning nervous system. It's a pain in the brain. The way you move controls the way you feel. If you act depressed then you will probably end up feeling depressed. I heard Tony Robbins describe it like this... we all have a recipe for depression. Like, if I asked you what's your recipe for depression, Sean? What would you have to do physically with your body? What would your recipe be to be depressed, physically with your body like posture, etc.?

Sean: The slouch.

Ray: And would your breathing be deep and full or shallow?

Sean: Probably shallow.

Ray: And would you be looking up or down?

Sean: Down.

Ray: Would you have a big smile?

Sean: No.

Ray: Would you talk in an exuberant and enthusiastic voice?

Sean: No.

Ray: No. There is now science that proves that the fake it until you make it approach actually works. A study was done on what's called 'bold posturing'. The people conducting the study had the subjects assume a bold posture, stand like Superman, pretend you have a cape flowing off your back. Walk the way Superman walks, strut as you walk across the room and they discovered they could see the parts of the brain that light up. The parts of the brain that light up when we feel boldness, confidence, exuberance, enthusiasm, all those parts of the brain lit up when the person assumed a bold posture as opposed to assuming a less than bold posture, a meek posture.

It changed the physical functioning of the brain and this is why exercise is so important. If you're depressed the best thing you can do is go sweat for an hour or so. Take a run, go to the gym, lift weights, swim, whatever it is you like to do that exerts your physical body, but your emotions are led by motion and are led by the things that you think. So you do have control over them.

Joy and happiness, positivity and optimism and enthusiasm and boldness are all things you choose to have, they don't happen to you by accident. If you're habitually having other thoughts, emotions or feelings, you can choose to change that. If you want to argue we can have a throw down and I will win. I realize there are some cases where there is a real physical injury or illness that makes it more difficult than I just made it sound, but I can tell you that's less often true than you think.

5. Social environment

Who do you hang out with? Who do you spend time with? You will probably tend to be like those people. Look around and see who you spend the most physical time with, talking with, having coffee with and joking with. Who are those people? Who are the people in your neighborhood, your life neighborhood? That's who you'll end up being like and if you don't like what you see, if you look around at the 5 to 10 people that you spend the most time with and you say to yourself, I do not want to be like those people, then the answer is easy. Stop hanging out with those people and find different people to hang out with.

Simple, not easy.

6. Financial environment

Again, this is simple but not easy. Here's the formula. Spend less than you earn, invest the difference and build wealth so that your money works for you instead of you working for your money. This is a lesson that took me 48 years to learn. I'm still in the process of working out the results of that learning, but it's simple it's just not easy to exercise the discipline and it goes back to the other environments.

All the environments I've mentioned so far all influence your financial environment, because they influence the decisions that you'll make. You'll be influenced by the people you're hanging out with, by the entertainments that you're watching, by the things you're feeding into your mind and spirit and how you're taking care of yourself physically.

7. Work environment

Do you have the tools required in order to do the job that you need to do? Is your office set up in a way to enhance your productivity?

8. Geographic environment

Sometimes it's where you live. If you are isolated and away from resources that you need access to, I'm not saying you can't live in a remote place and not be able to do the work that you need to do. We live in a not totally accessible place.

Sean: No.

Ray: In some ways that makes our business more difficult. It's difficult for some people. People are less inclined to travel here than they would be if we lived in Las Vegas or New York.

Sean: San Diego.

Ray: Right, that too. Nashville is another place on the wheel of possibilities. Both of those places have, within their culture, all sorts of resources that are not available in other places in the country. They are travel hubs, technology and business hubs, and have a high concentration of high achievers, so it's easier to surround yourself socially, emotionally, physically with the kinds of elements in your environments that will help you to succeed on a higher level. Again, not saying it can't be done in a remote place, just saying it's more difficult. You need to assess what kind of person you are and if you're the type of person that can succeed if I'm a hermit?

Jeff Walker is a person who can. He lives in a little town in Colorado, which is next to nowhere.

Sean: Durango.

Ray: That's right. It's not a big hub. It's hard to get a flight there even, unless you own a plane. So you can do it, just ask yourself the question... should you? Are you a person who needs to be in San Diego? Listen to me carefully now, ask yourself this question.

9. Transportation environment

This is going to feel shallow. What you drive affects how you think about yourself. So am I saying that you should drive nice expensive cars? Yes, I am if you can afford it. This is going to be hard for some people to accept. I'm not saying borrow the money or lease a vehicle. So what if you don't have the money to buy a nice car, does that mean you're doomed to failure because you have a junky car? No, but you don't have to treat your junky car like it's a junky car.

It doesn't matter what kind of car you have you can keep it clean. You can get it detailed. You can make sure it doesn't smell like armpits and French fries. Your vehicle is your chariot, so what kind of chariot do you want to arrive in? Make the most of what you've got and I believe it's good to work to upgrade when you can, when it's financially responsible to do so. I have plans to buy new cars. I have other goals that need to be accomplished first but quickly, as I'm setting my goals through the Best Year Ever program, new cars is on the list. Until then I will treat my current chariots as chariots.

So the way you think about yourself is affected by what you drive and how you treat what you're driving, so treat it with respect and make it as bold a chariot as you possibly can.

Now, when you consciously engineer your nine environments to support patterns and states that lead to success you will enjoy more success than ever before, automatically, because the ecosystem supports it. Yes?

Sean: Yes.

Ray: Let's see if you were paying attention by recapping the nine environments.

Sean: The nine environments so you can maintain the change are:

1. Physical environment
2. Mental environment
3. Spiritual environment
4. Emotional environment
5. Social environment
6. Financial environment
7. Work environment
8. Geographic environment
9. Transportation environment

Ray: I'm like everyone else, I have certain goals I've achieved and others I haven't yet. I have to make choices, I'm not at liberty to have everything I want at exactly the moment I want it. I really want a Lexus, but it's not time for that yet, so I'm still driving the Honda and I'm

okay with that because I've made a conscious choice and it's based on my priorities and decisions I've made and goals I've set that are focused on other areas.

Your own set of priorities will be different, but these are the nine environments you have to take care of. If you want to maintain the changes you're making as you set out these new goals and resolutions for the year, I would encourage you to take your journal out and journal three to five changes that you need to make in each of these 9 environments. Make one of those changes, at least three, no more than five to seven, but make one something you can do immediately in each area. Make that change first.

If you can take all 9 of those first changes and get them done today, that would be powerful and would give you momentum. What can you do? Maybe you need to look up information about San Diego on a website. That would be an action you could take, as a for instance. That's how you do it. Journal those things, write out your action steps and then share them on the comments of this post in the show notes RayEdwards.com/198.

Sean: All right, you can find the show notes for this episode, including a transcript by going to RayEdwards.com/198.

If you received value from this show, please consider subscribing using the Apple podcast app and if you're feeling extra generous, give us a rating and writing a quick review in iTunes. That would be really awesome.

We will hear from Gina Paris, who says I always knew Ray was a master copywriter. He was one of my favorite teachers of the craft, but this show wow! I didn't realize he had that long of a broadcasting background. What a pro!

Ray: Thank you Gina. Think on this... the soil of your life will never produce the fruit of seed never planted. So plant some seeds.

Until next time, may God continue to bless you and do more for you than you can ask or possibly even imagine. See you next time.

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