

# CHAPTER 16

## SO, JUST DO IT!

**Y**ou have seen the Nike’s registered trademark and product slogan *Just Do It!* This motivational slogan challenges each one of us to move forward and hopefully achieve success. In the sport’s arena, Nike provides all the resources in shoes and clothing for you to participate and play successfully. In fact, “each Nike ad is designed to inspire—to tell us that we can do anything.”<sup>1</sup> There are no excuses—so, *Just Do It!*

### Christian Slogan

Likewise Paul wrote to Christians to be victorious over their spiritual foe, the flesh. Remember his appeal in Colossians 3, Ephesians 4, and Romans 13. There the Apostle coined the slogan *Just Put It On!* Interesting his appeal is just like Nike—“to dress for success.” However, Paul was not interested with their physical attire but with their spiritual wardrobe. He previously wrote to believers saying they have everything to be successful in our Christian life (Rom 6:4-11). Yet, provision must be acted upon. For Paul, success is demonstrated in behavior spelled out in Colossians 3:12-14: “Put on a heart of

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compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other...Beyond all these things put on love.” Then he lists behavior that is just the opposite—what Christians are to avoid. Described in Colossians 3:8-9a, Paul commanded, “Put... aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech...Do not lie to one another.” *Just Put It Off!*

Do you want to dress for success in the Christian life? Then, *Just Do It!*: godly behavior and *Just Stop It!*: worldly behavior. Your choices will make all the difference.

### Living the Slogan

Notice that even though God supplies everything for success, having the potential does not guarantee achievement. It's in the choosing which translates into successful performance. But understanding two aspects of spiritual victory is critical.

#### **Lasting and Consistent Success Requires Time**

Christian growth is a process, a process that is not instantaneous. Remember how you learned to move from point A to point B. You learned to walk, then you learned to ride a bike. And it was only later that you learned to drive a car. Looking back you can't even recall how you began walking, but watching a baby will give you a clue. It is an arduous task. Holding on to people, chairs or whatever, the little one stumbles and falls. Only by getting back up and trying again and again does success come. You do remember trying to balance your weight on a bike and trying to peddle at the same time. But you got the hang of a bike. Learning to drive a car was a challenge all it's own. Learning the use of levers, switches, and pedals was overwhelming at times. But this too became more natural and second nature as time went on.

Likewise the Christian life isn't a magic trick—one moment you are a babe, the next moment you are grown-up. Maturity is a process. When Jesus appealed to Christians to “follow Him,” they were to spend time with Him and learn His ways. Just as physically one learns to

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walk, ride a bike and drive a car, over time following Christ should produce maturing behavior that is the natural and spontaneous overflow of exposure to Him. In both physical and spiritual development, rules or laws come into play and must be adhered in order to grow. Gravity is a hard taskmaster when learning to walk or ride a bike, just like speed limits and safety signs rule the road. Paul pointed out in Colossians 3 the signposts found in the “Law of Christ” for those who choose to follow Christ and move on to maturity.

### **Lasting and Consistent Success Is Influenced by the Spirit**

Throughout this book we addressed the two divergent positions of the Spirit’s ministry in the Christian’s walk. Either the believer sees the Spirit as producing obedient *behavior through him*, a “let-go-and-let-God” *empowerment model*, or the believer allows the Spirit to influence his behavior, a “do-it-and-stop-it” *influence model*.

The *God-does-it* view must see “self-effort” as sinful behavior, since only the Spirit can account for godly conduct. On the other hand, the *believer-does-it* position understands that walking or living requires human effort; everyday decisions are the real issue. The main thing in the Christian life is how you choose to live—either “with respect to the Spirit” or “with respect to the flesh.” It is the Christian’s responsibility to both *Do-It*, as influenced by the Spirit, and to *Stop-It*, if influenced by the flesh. Then and only then will the Christian experience successful living, leading to maturity.

We have biblically supported that the Spirit in a collaborative manner only assists the believer through filling, leading, and teaching rather than being the actual cause of the believer’s behavior. Remember, if the Spirit actually causes behavior, Paul’s use of commands to obey and conform to God’s Word would be nonsensical. In that case, the commands would be directed to the wrong person. The Spirit, not the believer, would be responsible for obedience to God’s commands. In fact, God would be commanding Himself to obey. Instead, the Scriptures emphatically direct believers themselves to do what is right, acting in accord with the Word as influenced by the Spirit.

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### Living is Choosing

Christians must decide to conform to Christ in order to mature. We are to make choices that lead to behavior reflecting our new life in Christ, as we walk with respect to the Spirit—

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