

Living in the Saturday between Salvation and Resurrection...how do we become skilled in the Saturday of Life? it is wrapped up in Matthew 4...the message to his first disciples and that message is the same for all disciples...

Matthew 4:18-20 (NLT) ¹⁸ One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. ¹⁹ Jesus called out to them, “**Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!**” ²⁰ And they left their nets at once and followed him.

-The simple invitation is to come

You would think Jesus would call the best and the brightest and the most resourced to come to him, follow him and then join in expanding the kingdom of God...after all that is what most of us would do...But not Jesus... His strategy for choosing, building and commissioning people to carry on his mission is extremely risky by human standards...listen to His strategy of whom he calls to come... which is summed up in these few verses...

1CO 1:26 Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. ²⁷ **Instead,** God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are **powerless** to shame those who are powerful. ²⁸ God chose things **despised by the world**, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. ²⁹ As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

Jesus as a general practice does not choose these kinds of people...:

- **wise by the world's standards... ...play well in the world's system of attaining success...**
- **or the powerful in the world... powerful in other words they are worldly important with status, prestige and influence**
- **or the wealthy... which includes noble birth ...people of great worldly means.. others words ordinary...**
- **He chooses these kinds of people...**
- **people who the world considers foolish... foolish people usually have a history of making poor decisions...or lacking skills, education, basically do not excel in the system...**
- **culturally powerless... Weak by nature...fragile in a sense...outsiders...not powerful**

- Lowly ...in other words... common to lowly to misfits.... **Most of them were in the beginning** Anonymous people from anonymous parents...ordinary people with mundane occupations...but more commonly troubled people from troubled starts, troubled families...and sketchy past...often times a sketchy present..
- **And the despised**...people the world does not look up to...and usually look down upon
- **Generally speaking these are the people Jesus calls...**
- **What kind of a world changing strategy is that?** Terrible if you're depending on human skills, worldly wisdom, wealth that grants influence and power.
- **Apparently Jesus Thinks it is an outstanding strategy... and history bears Him out....Why? your dependence will then be on him not your skill and wisdom....why?**

1 Cor 1:²⁹ As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

- **boasting about ourselves... is a great temptation for all people...or at least making sure we get credit for what we do..**
- **but it will be obvious ...that the glory goes to God when one sees the changes in the character and lifestyle of the people he changes and how he them uses them to touch others...That is a God thing!!**

******Why does he call these kinds of people? ...simple...because they know they are messed up... their lives often messy...**

Now once you are called...You are challenged to change.. How? - by following

It is a mistake to romanticize the following of God...it is not the same as falling into your dream career....i want to bring reality to you...we need to understand that difficulty and pressure are par for the course for those who choose to follow Jesus. there is no amount of Bible study, weekend retreats, super living seminars, deeper life conferences, “miracle today” Christian television shows, or gospel youtube programs...that will exempt you from struggle and trials....

No where in the scripture does it say Jesus calls us to a safe place with easy timesThere are no promises from God in the Bible that He will place a bubble of protection around you in this life... ask people like Hannah, Job,

Abraham and Sarah, Joseph, Esther, Samson, David, Daniel, Peter or Paul... But it will be the Best life you ever had!

*****Listen to the Follow me of Matthew the Apostle...he obviously heard of Jesus as a local tax collector...so Jesus skips right to the Follow me...**

Matthew 9:⁹ As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

- Two kinds of tax collectors **Chief tax collector**...Zacchaeus in the gospel of Luke...oversaw in a sense federal taxes...
- **General tax collector** who would set up on key road intersections or in the market places. Local taxes such as Matthew
- What did the Lord see in Matthew? obviously a man of courage... to be willing and actually step out and choose a profession and lifestyle that reject his people, religion, his family, his honor...his place in society...took a lot of courage
- Of all the apostles Matthew who was a Jew named Levi would arguably considered the greatest sinner of his day...the lowest of the low... hated by the populace, rejected by the religious and literally banned from the synagogue ...considered a traitor by his own nation... a sell out to the occupying Roman government... the shame of his family and considered completely and irrevocably rejected by God.
- They are always grouped in the Gospels by the religious with sinners...those outside of relationship with God...pagans, and gentiles
- they were spoken of in the same breath and matched up to prostitutes
- A tax collector would often be considered lower than a prostitute...And this is why... **a prostitute only sells her body...**
- **A Jewish tax collector sold himself to the Romans and than would financially fleece the people his own people for his enrichment...**
- Not only would he charge the going roman land use tax...but could charge whatever he would want on top of that pocketing it for himself.
- **He could tax...for toll (use of the road) load(how many axles your cart had) any mail. Not to mention sales tax on good, produce and meat products...**
- Used roman thugs to enforce the tax or confiscation of good if deemed necessary. All under the approval of the roman government.

1. apparently money and pleasure were his high ambition...at least when he started out...**as he threw off every constraint he had been raised with.**
 2. I say that because **Since he could not go...and probably would not want to go to the synagogue**
 - **Ostracized from religion...hurting on the inside...sinners on the outside...**
 - **why would he reject the faith of his family and culture?**
 - **most likely at a early age he was disillusioned by the discrepancies and hypocrisy between what was written and what was practiced.**
 - he probably was one of those people ...who if it isn't real it no deal...
 - But the Lord saw in him...that he was not content...he was in too deep to get out...but what he initially thought would fill him left him empty...
 - He wanted the real thing or no thing...
 - being in the mist of the marketplace ...the hot bed of town gossip he most definitely heard of this ...different rabbi...who could heal, who preached with authority, and could dispatch demons...his heart must have been stirred
 - and when the word of the Lord Hit that fertile ground...he moved in characteristic courage...quit his job on the spot and followed Jesus
 - the first rabbi who would ever speak to him ...let alone invite him to go with him...
 - he would not let this opportunity pass him by....he messed up once he wont do it again. **so there was much healing needed in his life...**
 - **Just the type of people Jesus calls to follow him.....the sick...**
- This is the depth of challenge that character formation requires in following Jesus. and Jesus leads us right into these challenges..the hardpart is following and learning..**
- **Growth Demands:** The surrender of what appears to be security for the taking of calculated risk...for if you want the fruit you have to go out on the limb.
 - a turtle has to stick his head out of the security of the shell to go anywhere.
 - **Growth Demands:** the giving up of familiar but limiting patterns of living...turn off social media...getting up a little earlier, getting off the couch...
 - **Growth Demands:** the moving on from safe but unrewarding whether it be work, location or habit.
 - **Growth Demands:** the giving up of values no longer believed in

- **Growth Demands:** relinquishing relationships that have lost their meaning, Relationships which are harmful to us...for me it was those relationships which revolved around sin and drugs.
- **Growth demands taking many new steps...but anyone following Jesus can make a difference now!**

So third I will show you how to fish for people!” and those people are already around you..and God will expand your influence as you grow

- **He was immediately willing to reach out to people like him in an environment they would be attracted too.**
- **So The first thing he does is hold a huge banquet at his house for Jesus and invites all those like him... so they could hear and meet Jesus....**
- **One person can impact many for the Kingdom of God...**

Matt 9:10 Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. ¹¹ But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such scum?”

You see when you reach someone....you reach their sphere of influence

- **Often people in messy situations themselves**
- **Years later this man wrote the gospel of Matthew ...which is written with a Jewish mind set...meaning he was learned in the Jewish faith.**
- **this is evident in that his gospel contains over 95 scriptures references to the Old Testament more than the other three gospels combined.**
- **which tells us he was well versed in the Word and Jewish religious tradition.**

Matt 9: 12 When Jesus heard this, he said, **“Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.”**

Matthew also was humble Why? he must have saw himself as Sick...to give up one's ways..is a humbling thing...it is the admittance that what I have is not satisfactory...and I cannot fix it...it has to change...

- **years and years of social and religious criticisms and inward self condemnation had shamed and his own actions and lifestyle...revealed his many and deep sins ...he was ready for change...**
- **His humility also shows In the fact in his gospel he mentions himself only two times....once at his call and once in the list of the twelve apostles.**

- His focus was on Jesus, his love of the lost, and his call to the religious hypocrites to repent of their religion and know God and love others...a continual theme in Matthews Gospel

Jesus saw that in Matthew...that which Matthew did not see in himself. To do something he had never done before...all that was required was to surrender what he is familiar with now...

He lost the life he knew for the life he had never experienced... he got off the path of self...to travel the path of selflessness...and in it found himself...

¹³ Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices. **'For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.'**"

- There are four types of sick... Jesus is speaking of spiritually sick
 1. those who are sick know it and want help
 2. those who are sick know it and don't want help ...yet
 3. those who are sick, don't believe it, refuse to listen to the symptoms or diagnosis... and want to kill the doctor
 4. Those who are sick and don't know it, so they don't want help.. but when presented the symptoms and diagnosis in a way they can hear...will want help
 1. The business of a child of God is the business of people!
 2. You must first value yourself enough to be teachable and willing to do what will heal you. that is what Jesus does for us...he takes no-bodies and says they are somebody's... he takes the sick and incrementally makes them well
 3. Then uses us to help others know they are loved and valued.. can be taught and healed also...nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care...
 4. You can only take someone as far as you have gone...the farther you go in your own healing, perseverance, maturity the farther you can help someone else go... every step of growth you take helps some else to be willing to take a step also..
 5. Those who are willing to help others enter into the kingdom and grow and succeed in life during arew living the life we are made for during the Saturday between the friday of salvation and Sunday age oof Resurrection Resurrection...
 - and that my friends is our job who is on board?

end

everyone you run into is sick...some just did not know it...and actually thought they were well.

- **the Pharisees were the sickest they just did not recognize it...much like a person who has cancer but does not recognize it until it is in its fourth stage...none the less they have been sick for quite a while.**
- **the others know they are sick..and our waiting for help...a doctor...**

Jesus said it plainly to his disciples whom had already been called and have been following Jesus ...He told of his pending death, the soon to be resurrection...trials they would experience because of following Jesus...

John 16:2 For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God

- **thrown out of the synagogue... where they had their identity as jews would ...they would be rejected sometimes unto death.**
- **their old way of life and careers would change ...tax collecting, fishing, business...and all would eventually die following the long line of God followers**
- **Were told this about the whole group of believers in the Old Testament**

Hebrews 11:13 All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth.

¹⁴ Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own.

What did they hold on to...1)they were anticipating a country (the new earth) that would be a perfect home. 2)So they were not going back where

they came from...2)they knew that they were being led to a better place...a heavenly homeland 3)they knew God was pleased with them preparing a city for them...

Hebrews 11:14 Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own.¹⁵ If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back.¹⁶ But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Jesus told his NT followers this...

JN 16 33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.

- **I have a thought...Jesus why don't we just skip the peace in you and and focus in the taking away the many trials and sorrows part?**

So Why Did he not skip peace and take away trouble? Because it is in the trouble or tough times that character is forged...

John 16:1 "I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith.

- **Since anything worthwhile is almost by definition something not obtained instantly or easily, many of us do not embrace the struggle it takes to follow Jesus ...because growth is incremental...we want fast and easy...**
- **In fact, most tools of instant gratification are destructive (drugs, alcohol, t.v., porn, food etc.)**
- **If you have a habit of giving up when the going gets tough, don't expect to go too far.**
- **If your energy runs out during challenging times or during difficult assignments, or if you have a habit of being impatient and giving up, the proof will be in the pudding: maturity, victory and goals simply won't be accomplished.**
- **When promoting disciples, Jesus looks for individuals who have persevered during tough times, encouraged others to be their best, and have helped to our fellows.**
- **So third your ability to increase is tied to your growth in population..people skills**

- Challenges that we spend most of our life trying to avoid eventually and inescapably will seek us out.

Moses had to learn the challenge of growth...and the challenge is it is incremental.....

*EX 23:27 “I will send my terror ahead of you and create panic among all the people whose lands you invade. I will make all your enemies turn and run. ²⁸ I will send terror ahead of you **to drive out** the Hivites, Canaanites, and Hittites. ²⁹ But I will not drive them out in a single year, because the land would become desolate and the wild animals would multiply and threaten you.*

- What God had for the Israelites to inhabit... was already occupied by forces that were entrenched and powerful...
- to powerful for Moses and the people to dislodge by themselves
- **So God was going to do three things...**
- **First he will soften up** that which needs be overcome...his terror...which means the fear of him...his power will create panic...which will drive out the people...who possess what is yours by right...
- **our basic problem is people...** ourselves and others...
- we are created through relationships. we are damaged through relationships, we are healed through relationships...

- observe the thoughts which go around in your mind...how many encourage you? condemn you? confuse you? entrap you? trick you? lie to you?
- **Secondly**...he will not dislodge them all in a single year.. He will use the people he does not dislodge to take care of the land and keep even worse things from happening...the wild animals overtaking what he has for his kids...
- **So third** your ability to increase is tied to your growth in population..people skills

Ex 23:30 *I will drive them out a little at a time until your population has increased enough to take possession of the land.*

1. what is the key to increase? Your population has to increase...two aspects that increase population...
2. the first is the population of me... the internal population in our Mind has to grow to the place whaer our thinking is an ally...not an enemy!
3. to possess all that God has for them and us...our thinking skills must be increased incrementally...
4. what thoughts have been driven out or your mind? which as a result has given you a better life? are you possessing that territory well is it desolate ? is it flourishing?
5. How are you handling the current trials and troubles emotionally?
6. What steps are you taking to become more compentent? what is your next challenge? Each one of us is on the next step of our development of character, maturity, and competence.
7. You answer the call..you follow Jesus ...you heal, mature and grow on a personal level...
8. **Second** is your influence upon others...the attraction principle...people skills
9. when I have grown in personal skills...and people skills I am now ready to fish for people...

(tim please put the folloing on slides)

This equips us to be shown how to fish for people...attract people to the Kingdom..

Matt 4:19 *Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”*

6. The purpose of come and follow me is to be taught enough people skills starting with yourself... so that **Jesus can show us then how to catch other people...** **The business of a child of God is the business of people!**
7. You must first be taught and healed enough to value people...that is what Jesus does for us...he takes no-bodies and says they are somebody's... nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care...
8. Then add value to them...we become assets to people...you can only take someone as far as you have gone...the farther you go in your own healing, perseverance, maturity the farther you can help someone else go...
9. Your compensation or increase of territory is determined by how many people you serve, and how well you serve them. As you labor in the Harvest field...your possession of territory of fields increase.
10. Those who are willing to help others enter into the kingdom and grow and succeed in life during this Saturday age are the ones who affect the Kingdom's bottom line in the age to come.
 - and that my friends is our job between the friday of Salvation and the Sunday of Resurrection....who is on board?

end

- There are four types of sick... Jesus is speaking of spiritually sick
- 5. those who are sick know it and want help
- 6. those who are sick know it and don't want help ...yet
- 7. those who are sick, don't believe it, refuse to listen to the symptoms or diagnosis... and want to kill the doctor
- 8. Those who are sick and don't know it and so they don't want help.. but when presented the symptoms and diagnosis in a way they can hear...will want help

One must first recognize he needs help before he is willing to ask for it or accept it

If you are not teachable you are not reachable

- Matthew knew the way to get the fourth group was to create an environment for them which was common to them...a banquet party...so they could hear Jesus....
- We rarely get to choose the time and the place of our loss, our trials, our frustrations, lack of control, the setbacks of life... But it is in these we find that God is with us And he has given us the spiritual resources to deal with them.

John 21: ¹⁸“I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others^[1] will dress you and take you where you don't want to go.” ¹⁹Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, “Follow me.”

²⁰Peter turned around and saw behind them the disciple Jesus loved—the one who had leaned over to Jesus during supper and asked, “Lord, who will betray you?” ²¹Peter asked Jesus, “What about him, Lord?”

²²Jesus replied, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? As for you, follow me.”

V

10. **and we grow from not caring to valuing people...** nobody care how much you know until they know how much you care...
11. Your compensation increase of territory is determined by how many people you serve, and how well you serve them.
12. **all that I shared previous is the prerequisite to the Go...to fish for people...**
13. **they had answered the call...they have followed Jesus...they are growing , maturing now they must go and make their way to reach people...**
14. **if you are a child of God...your business is the business of people!**
15. **all other activities are a means to do that...your land of possession must include a greater population to possess it with you...**

@ @ @

There's a Sabotaging Sam, Complaining Cathy, and Passive-Aggressive Pete in just about every office. Whether you get sucked into their drama or remain above the fray is up to you. An ability to both get along with and get the most out of difficult personalities, as well as the wisdom in effectively dealing with inevitable conflicts , will stand you in good stead.

Those who are willing to help others succeed are seen people who ultimately affect an organization's bottom line. Spend some time recognizing the expertise and excellence in others, and help them hone and develop those skills as well as acquire new skills to increase competency.

Helping others through constructive criticism, feedback, and guidance will not only help others further their careers, it will also help you further yours.

@ @ @ @

we have had a burden to build lives...but it is really God's burden he is given us...and there is brokenness all around...

There is a saying: if you have the burden you have the job....God will provide what is needed..but we must do!!

This reminds me of Neheimah...listen...

Nehemiah the cup bearer to King Arterxes...Although the people who were in boandage to the Babylonians had been free for ninety years and had a Temple built in Jerusalem...the city was in ruins...

Neh 1:1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah: In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. ³ They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." ⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Question: Why did the people tolerate living and worshipping in a ruined city for over 90+ years??

Think about it...every Sabbath they would have to step and climb over piles of burnt out building , walls to go wherever they went...how depressing and shameful.

Somebody had to say..."I think it would be a good idea to clean this up and rebuild the city walls"... probably many did... they did not think they could...it was to much to ask...after all they were disgraced! and broken down..

- **Seeing a ruin and doing something about it are two different things...**
- **so many churches ignore the brokenness and the disgrace that exist in so many people ruined by destructive relationships ...with people and substances...and alienated from God...**
- **We are surrounded...**

I believe the answer lies in the word found in verse 3...**disgrace**

- Webster's dictionary defines disgrace as: the loss of respect, honor, esteem ...
- To live in shame, or embarrassment

It was embarrassing...but they got used to living that way... the thought of trying to change did not enter their minds as a possibility...

- Even if they did want to change...they talked themselves out of it...it's too hard...it will take too long...cost too much...I am too stressed...I have never done this before...
- where would they go for help and be accepted...
- **What is really sad about that mindset...is that they had God on their side...**
- They would step over the rubble everyday for some and on the Sabbath for all to go and worship God...but yet could or would not trust him to help them change their circumstances...
- Burned doors...even if they built or when they built their enemies demoralized them...or destroyed their work.
- They would go into a broken down city to worship God...then leave with no more power to change as when they came in...
- What is familiar about that Picture...
- **Our character defects, our circumstances which embarrass us, our relationships, which we so earnestly desire to change at one time...**
- **Sometimes... become over time ...things we just try to step over, go around or ignore ...saying it is just the way I am... I cannot change...**

Nehemiah believed God would build the city of Jerusalem ...because God said so to him...and Jesus said to us..

Mark 2:17 *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

Let me tell you the Nehemiah principle of building lives...after God opened all the right doors for him to carry out this plan to build lives...He told the people the plan..

Neh 2:17 *Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace."* ¹⁸ *I also told them about the*

gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work.

- *This is The Nehemiah principle...of building lives*

A) Define the Problem.....

Nehemiah: "We are in trouble Jerusalem lies in ruins" ...

His Place: We are in trouble People's lives are in ruins

B) He Gave the Solution ...

Nehemiah: "The Hand of God is upon me! Let us rebuild the walls" ...

His Place: "The Hand of God is upon us!! Let us rebuild lives"

C) He Gave the reason Why should we do this? ...

Nehemiah: "So We will no longer be a disgrace" ...

His Place: "So People will no longer live in disgrace!!"

D) He gave The action to take...

The people replied Yes lets rebuild the walls!!

We replied Yes let us rebuild lives!!

There are to many lives in ruins...we need to build the walls of their lives...and God willing we will...!!

We will serve God's purpose in our Generation!!!

Lets Pray for our first Church plant leaders...come...

1 Peter 4:12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

5. What you focus on is what you get

6. the purpose is to bring a reward and increase.

PHP 3:15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.

7.

8.

9.

10. but not just for you...

Matt 4:19 Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!"

11. **the purpose of come and follow me to be taught enough people skills so that Jesus can show us them how to catch people.....**

12. before you can catch them you have to value them... Add value to people...story of salesman and big account he needed to land

13.

14. The law of Compensation

15. Your compensation is determined by how many people you serve, and how well you serve them.

What you focus on is what you get

16. **you value them by adding value to them...that is what Jesus does for us...he takes nobodys and says they are somebodys...**

all that I shared previous is the prerequisite to the Go...to fish for people...

17. they had answered the call...they have followed Jesus...now they must go and make their way to reach people...

18. if you are a child of God...your business is the business of people!

19. all other activities are a means to do that...your land of possession include a greater population to possess it with you...

How many want to do the will of God this year? How many of us think God's will for us is like finding a needle in a hay stack? Or that only some of God's kids find it but most of us miss it? And That if God does not speak directly to me about a situation, I should not do anything until he

does? But what if he does not give clear direction? Is that even possible? Is that even biblical? The answer is yes... Listen the Scripture is full of incomplete direction... But once one follows Jesus...the journey begins... now the journey is different for all of us...**but the principles are the same...then and now**

Matthew 28:16-19 (NIV)

*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told **them to go**.¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ **Therefore go** and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...*

-The urgency of the moment to go

- **Relying** on God
- **Resisting** unfruitful methods
- **Remaining** on guard
- **Resolving** to not give up
- **There is a saying that is true...methods vary principles don't...The principle is Old ways have to die for new ways to be begin...**
- Or said another way...the old life must die/ be left behind for the new life to come forth... a baby must leave the womb for the new life to begin...

Listen... God told Abram to go to a land he had never seen or been to before...in the old testament..

GE 12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

- He was told what to leave, but not what to take.....
- He was told to go...but He was not told how to go...which way to go...when to go or what to say when you go... ..
- Only that God would direct him to the destination as he went...
- and His present way of doing life would have to end, for His new life to emerge..

In the New Testament...Luke the Gospel writer ...gives this account of his actions and reasons for doing what he did to write his Gospel...

*LK 1:1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.³ Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, **it seemed** good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,⁴ so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.*

- **No mention of any divine revelation...or divine directive simply that he thought it good...**
- **to research which would include years of traipsing around the middle east with Paul the Apostle and then to write about the life and ministry of Jesus to help his friend ... in which he did not know that his writing will now help us today...2000 years later...**

And in his writing in Chapter 9 of his Gosphe he recounts the event of...Seventy two people who had made the decision to follow Jesus ...and that Jesus had determined they were ready for their first assignment...or first chance to live out the decision and in a very real way..

Just like your decision to follow Jesus will lead to living life a very different way....

- They wanted something different for their lives.... And God was going to give it to them...but they would need to fully participate...
- May I suggest the highest dream you could ever aspire too...follow Jesus...
- You will find your life and your dream...but change must occur...and that really means something must die for something new to begin...

When People have follow Jesus that means they cannot follow themselves any longer... that is the adventure...then and now... this passage will give us some valuable understanding of what it means to step out in what you believe God would have you do and actually accomplish more than you could ever imagine..

LK 10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

- **Following Jesus gets real...really quick... the first thing they are confronted with is a mission... when you are with Jesus ...there is going to be change...**
- **we might think that following Jesus means he always goes first...but sometimes he send us out before him....His mission becomes your mission...and his mission is to reconcile the world to himself...you will have a role in that...**
- **Once commitment is made the journey begins... they start to live their dream...but like all dreams at the beginning we do not know where it is going or how it will end...**
- **But with Jesus we know one thing it will not end in a nightmare ...but it will definitely be scary ... but it will have a very successful ending...in ... the end we win...the harvest is plentiful...**

² He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field..."

- **Lesson one... Jesus already has the plan... before Jesus gives us His plan before we even know there is a plan...**
- **and you are to ask him to send workers into the Harvest...you know what that means?**
- **when you ask him to do that ...you will be the answer...**

JN 15: 16 *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.* 17 *This is my command: Love each other.*

- **When we pray what God wants ...we always get it... when you pray lord help me to love others...that is always his will...so you will get the job...**
- **What you don't get is how he plans to use us to carry out that plan...that is the great adventure...**

So he gives the command and tells them to go...

³ **Go!** *I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.*

➤ **Jesus told them to Go...other versions say**

KJV version.....Luke 10:3 **Go your ways:** behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

NKJV version... Luk 10:3 **Go your way;** behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

1. **First.... He wants their destinations to be set by their own dreams, goals, passions, and inner stirrings...** They would need to make decisions on how they would carry out the command to go before him to these towns.. where to go and how to go and what to do when they arrived...
 - a. **How they would approach each town...where they would begin**
 - b. **Would Peter and John start by going to the fish markets...they were fisherman...it would be logical**
 - c. **Would Matthew the tax collector want to go to the financial district... ?**
 - d. **Would those cured of diseases want to go where the sick hang out?**
 - e. **Would the transformed criminals go to the seedy parts of town?**
 - f. **The former prostitutes go to the brothels?**
 - g. **Those reared in the bondage of Religion go to the synagogues..**
 - h. **these were there decisions...but know this...the Lord would be with them in their choices....**

And Secondly...they would feel like Lambs among wolves...

- a. **They would feel vulnerable and uncomfortable like lambs among wolves...**
- b. **They would need to improvise and strategize.... and this whole journey would be brand new to them...**
- c. **They would need to be gentle like lambs among wolves, carefully and gently handling aggression (wolves) toward them with love...**
- d. **they would encounter spiritual conflict...and when one does you will most definitely feel like a lamb among wolves...**
- e. **bottom line Jesus gave some some directives as we will see...but left much room for their own decision making...and that is always scary for us...**
- f. **In any case they were going where God was showing their dreams and aspirations for the Kingdom of God here on earth.**

- g. **More importantly Jesus was telling them to go!** 20 years from now I would hate for any of us to say with regret.....‘Why didn’t I go?’”
- h. What if Simon turned to Jesus and said, “If they want to go that’s o.k. but, I think I will just stay here with you Jesus where I know that it is safe.” Jesus would be like, “I am offering you the riches of life in its fullness and wonderment. Why would you just want to stay here and settle for the scraps? Nevertheless, the Kingdom of God has come near.”

Don’t miss the boat! Don’t recognize the call to move in upon your calling, your dreams, your hopes for a better future, a better you and not act upon it! Listen closely to that inner voice and when Jesus says go, then go!

@@@@@#

*PR 13:11 Dishonest money dwindles away,
but he who gathers money **little by little** makes it grow.*

It is in the trials...those things that come upon us...uninvited and unexpected... that God uses to mold and shape our character ...as James puts it...

JAS 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

James wants us to know some things trials,

Trials require Perseverance....Perserverance is just Patience stretched out to accomplish their tasks of bringing reward into our lives...!!!... last week examined 2 of the 5 principles the importance of patience...this week the last three...

why do we need to be Patient???

- 1. You are not getting out of anything...God is taking you through...it will require faith in God and the development of perseverance or patience**
- 2. The purpose of Faith and Patience is to bring a reward...maturity and wholeness**

This is most important for our mental understanding and heart faith...to realize that the Lord has purpose in all He does and that those who wait patiently for his promise to happen will never be disappointed. They will grow!!!

Storms come for a season and come for a reason...outlast the season and you will grow wiser and stronger...

3. The method of growth is through trials... the process is time...which requires faith and patience to complete

You have a race marked out for you...

*HEB 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy** set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

- Things hinder
- Sin entangles...both slow us down...

As I have gotten older and hopefully wiser I have noticed that there are two ways we can live our lives...

Patience is the unshakeable belief that God will do everything He has promised to do even before there is visible evidence to that effect.

5. Each one of us is on the next step of our development of maturity

James tells us it is a high compliment to go through a trial or test...it means you are being prepared for your next step of Maturity

Any faith you and I hold onto is based on the belief that God is Good, In any area of our lives where we doubt, fear or drag in obedience to God it is because we in our heart of hearts doubt his goodness.

Therefore... we will not wait for him....

David the Psalmist expressed this truth...That God is Good, when he wrote in a time of uncertainty, persecution, and trials:

PS 13:1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

PS 13:2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts

and every day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

You know trouble has a strange way of making people forgetful and become irresponsible in their commitments...

Separation and isolation is and enemy...

When going through trials...remember you friends, your family, God's family...but mostly remember to stay hooked to God...

PS 13:3 Look on me and answer, O LORD my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death;

PS 13:4 my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"

and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

PS 13:5 But I trust in your unfailing love;

my heart rejoices in your salvation.

PS 13:6 I will sing to the LORD,

for he has been good to me.

- Pray like David...not just a prayer to get through....or to help you get out...
- But Relinquishing prayer...Relinquishing the control of the situation to God...
- Relinquishing our will to the will of god
- The Prayer of Relinquishment is a bona fide Letting Go...it is a release with hope...buoyed by a confident trust in the character purpose and outcome of God in any situation I find myself in...

David realized even though he was experiencing tremendous trials ...that his life was not in the hands of enemies or events but his life was in the hands of God.

God's goodness and love toward David overruled every circumstance, so the exercise of Patience was a worthwhile venture.

Just as it was true for David it is true for us....

Patience is the road to your maturity...

God's Love and goodness overrules when sickness, unemployment, broken relationships, failure, and disappointment ---are gnawing at our lives, even then God is good. God will use everything for Good, including what the enemy intends for evil.

- It is not coincidental...that Paul's famous description of Loves starts with Patience and ends with Patience... Perseveres... simply patience stretched out....

As Paul so eloquently wrote:

PHP 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

- @@@@ @

so Jesus sends them out with nothing so that they learn the first lesson in serving Jesus ... extremely important to internalized... You and Jesus is really overkill...or more than enough for any situation.. ...tough lesson!!

Luke 10: 2 He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field..."

➤ interestingly Jesus said pray for workers not harvest...it is far easier to pray for the harvest than get in the mix of harvesting....

- When we pray what God wants ...we always get it... when you pray lord help to love others...that is always his will...so you will get it...
- The first thing you will get in that is change because we are by nature selfish...expect change...

³ **Go!** *I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.*

- When you go ..you will feel and rightly so totally inadequate..get used to it
- In fact if you feel capable...piece of cake ...probably not God leading...

I believe Jesus was not only describing the toughness of the situation when he described it as lambs going among wolves, he was giving them the spiritual posture he wanted them to assume. They were not to go with a plan of attack like a pack of wolves, but in a spirit of love, humility and peace. Gentle as a lamb..

It is pretty easy to follow God when his will and our will line up...it is a whole other story when his leading takes us into the lions den...the furnace fire...

But this is where character and Faith is displayed... and maturity exhibited or not...

Let's get something clear here...if God is in it...it is a win/win...since he never fails...it is like the old aphorism:

“No one ever bet too much on a winning horse”

When it comes to God...you will never give up more than you will receive...

The regrets we will have at the end of our lives will be that we didn't seek God more or seek God sooner or take advantage of the opportunities he sent our way....

Let me share something with you Jesus said:

MT 11: 12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

- **The Kingdom of Heaven moves forward it is proactive...**
- **Those willing to move forward will experience it...**
- **The goal of faith is not the elimination of Risk...but the opportunity to do great things...**
- **God directs we must be forceful...it is the opposite of passive...**
- **In other words stop cursing the darkness and start lighting some candles...**

It would not be easy to tell people Paul had just seen an angel...it is all going to work out...but that is what he did...

@ @ @ @ @

- **When God placed the Holy Spirit in you ...YOU WERE RESOURCED!!**
- **HE GAVE YOU ALL THE SPIRITUAL RESOURCES YOU WILL NEED...**

You were chosen and specifically shaped...

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- Given great power...Listen

John 14:12 I tell you the truth, *anyone* who has faith in me *will* do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

- **Do you hear that...You and I will do greater things than Jesus...in this world...and these things have been prepared before hand...How is that possible???**
- **What greater things have I ever done than Jesus???** Well what can I think of??
 1. I have lived longer on this earth...that is an accomplishment...
 2. Drove in so cal...traffic over forty years...
 3. I have been married almost 32 years ...am a father...raised teenagers ...am a grand father..
 4. *Went to catholic school for twelve years..*
 5. Drove a beer truck for a decade...
 6. Overcome the bondage of addiction
 7. Overcome a sin soaked life...overcome much failure...and hopelessness...
 8. Suffered the death of my son...
 9. Getting older... Been in full time ministry over 23 years...have witnessed many lives enter into the Kingdom of God and be transformed.
 10. **But that and much more does not seem greater then what Jesus *did*...**

Here is where the rubber meets the road...I don't think I have asked Jesus to do as great a things as I should have...or at least what is available...

Listen...

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

- *What have you asked God? He will do it... the basics...change you? Use you? Help you?*
- **Our problem is we don't ask big enough ...requests...to advertise God!!**
- **I don't ask to Conquer more...**

Do you know how God does that? He gets all in your busiess...up close and personal...you are an original...

like Oswald Chambers said,...”Let God be as original with other people as he is with you”

- Listen to this interaction in this story of Jesus and Peter...specifically designed for Peter...he knew what water was needed..
- He knows what is needed for you too...

Matthew 17:24 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?” 25 “Yes, he does,” he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?” 26 “From others,” Peter answered. “Then the sons are exempt,” Jesus said to him.

- **Question...Does he pay the required tax for the upkeep of the Temple...yes**
- **So he gives Peter a lesson...Jesus father owns the Temple ...so Jesus is exempt it is his home.....Helping Peter again to understand who Jesus is ...his identity ...though Peter has acknowledged it a number of times before...**
- **He like us is growing in understanding what that means...all well and good...**
- **Then it gets really weird...and funny**

27 “But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

- **So we don't offend these guys who cannot handle it right now...the water being poured out...wisdom...**
- **Go upstairs and get out of my wallet the money and pay them... nope not that**

simple...

- **He tells Peter to go fish... That is just plain crazy and seems totally unnecessary.... Why would he request this??**
 - 1. Peter is a professional fisherman...maybe Jesus knew Peter still thought he knew best...at least in his own profession...and Jesus wanted to show him that Jesus knows Peters business better than Peter...**
 - 2. Maybe it was simply an exercise specifically designed for Peter to test his obedience and faith...when it makes no sense in the natural...**
 - 3. Peter had probably in all his years of fishing caught a fish with money in his mouth...but oh well...**
 - 4. I wonder if Peter talked to anyone while he was fishing...it would be crazy for him to share ...what Jesus asked Him to do...I wonder how long it took him to catch that first fish...**
 - 5. I do know this...that test was personally designed for Peter to hear an obviously absurd request...to build some kind of faith and draw Peter closer to Jesus....**
 - 6. Bottom line is ...I don't know what it is completely about ...Maybe Peter never even really knew...**
 - 7. You know our biggest tests of faith comes when we don't know why God does something or request something at the time....**

My conclusion...if Jesus asks you to do it...do it no matter how crazy it seems now...it will seem less crazy later...! It is designed to draw you closer to the Lord now...and t is preparation for the future...years later...

Acts 3:3 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. 6 Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to

walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

- You don't do the crazy now ..you wont do the impossible later...
- How many times have we stopped ...when we thought that is crazy
- I am telling you I am done with that....it is crazy for a goof ball like me...to want to on this community for the Lord...but today I am crazy enough to go for it...
- Listen...when Jesus met with Nicodemus...a religious leader...who presumed to know the answers...i.e. the messiah would overthrow the Romans...Jesus tells him he must be deconstructed...

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named **Nicodemus**, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." ...

- His position was one of a ruler of Gods people...Jesus will call him Israel's teacher...Highly educated...a PHD in Theology...
- But what got him...was the unexplainable miracles he witnessed Jesus performing...
- Jesus tells him All his learning must start over...not by men but by God....He must be reformed...reeducated...the Spirit must teach him..
- his dependence was on race and position and religious observances
- He must be reborn to dependence on the Spirit of God...for he is a spiritual being...not just human.

3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.**4** "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" **5** Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. **6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

- We will walk in the limitations of our flesh or the unlimited power of the Spirit...

5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. **6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. **7** You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' **8** The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." **9** "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. **10** "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?"

- I take solace in that as I too...I am growing in my knowledge...and understanding...

When Jesus meets the woman at the well...she needed no one to tell her she was a mess...she was married five times and now living with a new guy...ostracized by society...and religion...hopeless on the inside surviving on the outside...

- **Jesus breaks all social and religious bounds sees a woman dying of thirst on the inside...parched...empty, going through the motions.. and speaks to her and offers her the water of life...incredible...**

John 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” **8** (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

- **Jesus first poured out the water of acceptance..**

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) **10** Jesus answered her, “*If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.*”

- **Then offers the water of life....the woman hears for the first time ..that inspite of all her failures...she had access to the gift of god through Jesus ..eternal life...**

John 4:11 “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?” **13** Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

- **She asks are you greater than the Jacob...the father of the 12 tribes of Israel..who was given this land ...and had all the herds...in other words ..he was rich...**
- **Jesus answers...I am...I give eternal life...because I know all about life...**
- **She did not get it...So Jesus gives a practical...and personal example of his mastery over life...**

John 4:15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” **16** He told her, “*Go, call your husband and come back.*” **17** “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. **18** The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

- **She desperately wanted meaningful long term relationship...apparently liked getting married...but was completely unskilled in how to do relationship...**
- *And she had no God personally but knew something about religion..*
- *Jesus knew her current boyfriend was in the same condition...and wanted to help him too...go get him....she brought the whole... the outcast...becomes the spokemen...*

Just as Jesus knew what he was doing in shaping these cups to be healed formed...reformed...God right now is working in you all ...reforming...equipping...doing what we would consider crazy things...and telling us to ask for more...who wants more

@@@@

*JN 13:34 "A new command I give you: **Love one another**. As I have loved you, so you must **love one another**.³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you **love one another**."*

JN 13:36 Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

- Until we follow him home...we are to love each other from the heart while we are here...it is not an option
- That means authentically...
- **Authenticity, means a Convergence of Confession and Life, a Harmonizing of Word and Deed.** . . that's what the world is looking for when it comes to our faith. As we grow older the challenge we all have is to live out what we know to be true.
- Jesus shares this last command on the final night of his life...
- Within a few short hours their life, and dreams hopes and aspirations... would be turned upside down...their beloved Lord would be crucified....
- And what they would need to make it through were faith...and loving one another....
- **Sometimes we fall asleep to the realities of life around you. Everyone with whom you come in contact is busy working through their own struggles, weaknesses, setbacks, relapses, crises, and obstacles to their personal growth and recovery. All of us are on the path to personal growth.**
- **There is no one exempt from this journey. It takes a lifetime to complete. We need each other..**

*PR 17:17 A friend loves at all times,
and **a brother is born for adversity.***

Loving one another is labor intensive ...if you want to help people you have to increase your contact with them.

The church ought to be the place where the hurting are told to go because that where they will find people like themselves...not who are different than them

People need to know the truth that Christians have the same struggles and need the same kind of acceptance she is looking for. that God accepts them as they are and perhaps more importantly that Christians accept them too.

Why???? Because People "infer" Gods acceptance and care through us.

This is what Jesus meant when he said they will know you belong to me because of your love for one another. He wasn't speaking philosophically but quite practically.

Paul states

2CO 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

- one of Gods acts of compassion is the giving of us to eachother...He gave the disciples to each other and he gives us to one another....we are blessing from God to one another
- One cannot be compassionate or give comfort to others if they are not Participating in relationships.

For much in life works to tear us down and apart...

But God wants us united...

Which takes us to point number four ...(as we continue from last week)

4. Unity in the Family of God requires Participation...or else we are just observing...like looking through a window...

And Participation is pro-active, it takes initiative.... the church not only functions as a body belonging to a head and members to each other.....with no emotions or personal relationships....No we are a family....

RO 12: 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

- Paul gives us an analogy on what the functioning church should look like...a family
- Devoted to one another in brotherly love...
- Devoted to one another...mutual love...father to mother to children...to show love tenderly
- In brotherly love...family love...brotherly means “of the same womb” we are a unique family unit...not from the blood of a mother...but united from the Blood of Christ...
- We are literally blood brothers and sisters
- Paul’s point is clear: Christ followers are to be just as devoted to each other as the individual family members of a close knit family unit.
- In the NT....Brothers (adelphos) is used to refer to the “Christian family” over 230 times

But showing affections and love to other children of God treating them as brothers and sisters does not happen automatically. If it did we would not have so many exhortations to do so.

But growing up does not happen automatically...[one must choose to participate](#).

***How do we show affection and love to our family of believers treating them as brothers and sisters???

First we must evaluate our attitudes and actions toward other members of your Christian family...

1. to what extent do you experience emotion and affection toward each fellow Christian? Paul said this...

RO 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. And we have already mentioned compassion and comfort....

- To rejoice and mourn give comfort and act compassionately toward others requires **emotional involvement...**
- And emotional involvement requires interpersonal relationship.
- if we don’t make the time to know each other...how can I feel emotionally toward you??
- And Involves emotion: deep feelings of Joy as well as deep feelings of sadness...
- Now...Some of God’s kids find it very difficult to identify with other believers at the feeling level...the have a wall up...
- There are reasons for this...

1. [Fear of Rejection...](#)

- Some individuals have been so hurt in the past they are afraid to express their feelings ...they are not willing to take the chance to be hurt again...they do not let others in...nor allow themselves out

- This is of course no excuse for not reaching out to others
- We must work towards a mature perspective on Human relationships...we must be vulnerable...
- Furthermore most Christians to whom we reach out will support...and not let us down...
- Act on what you know is right and brings health...feelings and emotions will follow.

2. [family background...](#)

- Some people grow up in relationships where physical affection and love toward other family members are seldom or perhaps never expressed...
- We might know we were loved...but it is never expressed...emotions were not allowed or viewed as important...for even might be viewed as weak or unneeded.
- So we keep our feelings bottled up and feel most uncomfortable around those who express theirs...

3. [Anger and resentment](#)

- Some Christians are controlled by deep anger and resentment toward other people. They are usually people who have repressed hurt... internalizing it...they are so full of hurt they have no room to feel for others in a deep way...
- **Anger and resentment have to do with expecting more from people than what we have received...**
- **When one holds anger and resentment we become intolerant of others and it buries our capacity to feel for them**
- **Then moving us toward judgment...I am going to wait and see who will ask how I am doing...who will reach out to me...look at these people no one cares for me....**
- An attitude of...Why should I feel for them no one feels for me
- you hurt... well so do I
- Instead of emotional involvement angry and resentful people...emotionally distance themselves or actively in their anger destroy others...

*PR 29:22 An **angry** man stirs up dissension,
and a hot-tempered one commits many sins...*

but you know...what do we do when our anger and resentment is to a great degree justifiable...

Jeremiah asked valid questions...

*JER 12:1 You are always righteous, O LORD,
when I bring a case before you.*

Yet I would speak with you about your justice:

Why does the way of the wicked prosper?

Why do all the faithless live at ease?

He makes broad sweeping statements but there is truth...

- Wicked people do seem to prosper...
- Many people who reject God ...do seem to live comfortable lives...
- And what about the religious hypocrite Jeremiah next mentions...

*JER 12:2 You have planted them, and they have taken root;
they grow and bear fruit.*

*You are always on their lips
but far from their hearts.*

- They talk it but don't live it...the truth is they gain nothing...

*DT 32:35 It is mine to avenge; I will repay.
In due time their foot will slip;
their day of disaster is near
and their doom rushes upon them."*

RO 12:17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary:

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

RO 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

HEB 10: 30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

And for those who have been victims...

*JOEL 2:25 "I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten--
the great locust and the young locust,
the other locusts and the locust swarm--
my great army that I sent among you.*

That is why...

RO 12:17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary:

*"If your **enemy** is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

RO 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

*JAS 1:19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become **angry**, ²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.*

*EPH 4:25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still **angry**, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.*

You see when we harbor anger and resentment toward others we have little patience toward people...and we will not bear long with them...

*COL 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ **Bear** with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

- You see when we are in a family we have to learn to bear with one another...bearing with one another has to do with...
- Beign patient with one another's weaknesses...
- Not one of us is perfect and all of us fail particularly in human relationships...
- How easy is it to expect more from other Christians then we expect from ourselves.

This has particular relevance to living as a family of God.

- In the family setting we get to know others like in no other social unit..
- We live together day after day, week after week, year after year
- As members of a family we get to see eachother at our best and at our worst both as parents and as children.
- And sometimes parents expect more from their children than they do from themselves
- And children usually expect more from their parents and other adults than they do from themselves...

- And together this often erupts into anything but forbearance and forgiveness with one another...

The same is often true in the family of God...

- In a church when we get to know one another as we should...we also get to know one another's idiosyncrasies...
- We place higher expectancies on others than we do ourselves...getting angry and resentful when they don't measure up to our expectations...but hey don't judge me!!!
- The older I am in Christ...the higher my expectations ought to be for myself and lower for others...or as Jesus would say...

•
*MT 7:3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the **plank** in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a **plank** in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the **plank** out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

Some Christians carry grudges anger and resentment against others for years ...how miserable...and you how people like to hang around bitter and resentful people...

- how out do character should this be for a believer in Jesus
- and how ungrateful for a Christian to hold a grudge against another Christian...when Christ has canceled our own debt of sin..

we need to bear with eachother and practice forgiveness with others so that we may have the capacity to emotionally connect and love those God has place in our lives.

By this we demonstrate that we are his disciples.

@ @ @ @

we all struggle with things we fear... and We FIGHT fear with FAITH..in Fact faith is the only thing that can overcome fear...so we must learn to strengthen our faith ... Fear and Doubt are two of the most ongoing opponents we face in life...it is truly like a life long Prize fight...round by round we face the one and two punches of fear and doubt.....with little rest and water breaks in-between rounds...

Why is this? Because things to fear encompass us on all sides...if you don't believe me just listen to the Presidential Candidates tells us in every possible way we should fear not only everyone and everything...but each eachother....not to mention our own personal fears...

So before we talk about getting in the ring and winning the battle against doubt and fear...we need to know some things about our opponent...

first of all... **Fear Sells itself , and We're All Buying...** Like any good con, Fear relies on sleight of hand. Fear works by demanding that we imagine the worst possible outcome and project that outcome into the future which we cannot see... **Fear is amazing it is like a good rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere...except emotionally wrecked...**

Listen when I grew up people driving with their kids not wearing a seat belt was common and nobody had fears about it... No one thought of the danger the parent was putting their child in and we definitely did not think of those parents as negligent? We've come a long way from throwing eight kids into the back station wagon!

I wonder how many children and adults needlessly loss their lives in accidents because of that lack of a simple safety precaution...

This is the truth about every generation throughout time Each generation messes up the next... We must not underestimate the significant role of the spirit of a culture and the distinguishing character of a community in shaping and developing the character of an individual.

@ @ @ @ @

Fear is a powerful enemy, so we need a powerful ally to overcome them. The good news is that there is someone who can help you overcome your fear. **His name is Jesus Christ, God's Son. He came into the world to free us from the things that hurt us. He came to deliver those who are held captive, even when the prison is made of fears.**

Your fears are very real to you but they do not need to control your life. You can take back that control by allowing Jesus Christ to help you.

Thankfully God is in the business of rescuing each generation... Because He is the same generation to generation..

*[Lamentations 5:19](#) You, Lord, reign forever; your throne endures **from generation to generation.***

*[Daniel 4:3](#) How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures **from generation to generation.***

*[Hebrews 13:8](#) Jesus Christ is the same **yesterday and today and forever***

today we will look at the antidote to fear..Faith.... We will battle fear our whole life...it is one long boxing match..Faith versus fear and doubt.

We need a New Trainer!! Jesus

Fear is a powerful enemy, so **we need a powerful ally** to overcome them. The good news is that there is someone who can help you **overcome your fear**. His name is Jesus Christ, God's Son. He came into the world to free us from the things that hurt us. He came to deliver those who are held captive, even when the prison is made of fears.

Your fears are very real to you but they do not need to control your life. You can take back that control by allowing Jesus Christ to help you.

Do you know What the most frequently given command is in Scripture "Do Not Fear"
Isa 41:10 **So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

Have you found that you feel alone when you are fearful? Jesus promises never to leave you or forsake you.

Hebrews 13:5 **Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.**

Second thing we Need is a New Imagination...a new vision.. Whenever fear enters our minds, another emotion tends to tag along with it: impatience.

- Often we grow impatient by fearing that life won't turn out the way we think it should. So we better do something about it quick...
- **Get control of your imagination.... for an uncontrolled imagination is a nesting ground for worry and fear that can spoil otherwise productive lives.**

Proverbs 29:18 **Where there is no revelation (vision), people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.**

- Fear and worry thrive when we imagine the worst. Nothing better is revealed... Chronic worriers tend to misuse their imaginations to the extent that upcoming events feel like catastrophes waiting to happen. don't restrain or control or contain themselves...
- No wonder whole lives can be blighted by fear and worry...fear takes us to bad places...faith teaches us to restrain ourselves...
- **listen to what comes out of a fearful persons mouth...**
- Listen we all have imaginations and are able to project into the future that is why we can plan ahead.
- **Develop a Holy imagination...** able to imagine possible positive futures instead of regularly imagining things going wrong. A bit of this is useful; after all, there

really might be muggers or disease. But uncontrolled imagination is a nesting ground for worry and fear that can spoil otherwise productive lives.

*Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters, **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.***

@ @ @ @

In Jesus there is a restoration of the true human nature, not an external addition of ...some help... to an otherwise self-governing human existence. Salvation consist in a renewed communion with God, making human us fully human again.

Getting the “vertical” right is followed by getting the “horizontal” right.... Know God...the one who redeems you...then he teaches and directs you in the way to go...

Isaiah 48:17 This is what the Lord says— your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.

The Results of the having

1) The Lordour God...we have a God He is knowable

2) He is Our redeemer the one who finds us where we are and brings us to a better place...

3) He teaches us what is best for us, and

4) He directs us or guides us in the way we should go or live...

These relational roles of Jesus our Lord fulfill the four critical relational needs of all people....

- **When I am settled in this vertical relationship I am now positioned to have healthy horizontal relationships...**

Listen...Your spouse, nor anyone or anything else is able to fulfill your four most critical needs. Those needs can only be filled by God when you are found In Christ.

The first of our critical relational needs...

1. Our relational need for True Identity...to belong

What is identity...it is That which you are identified by: you are body soul and Spirit

- a. Your body is identified by dental records, pictures, finger prints, DNA etc. visible attributes
- 2. But What Identifies your invisible man...your soul and spirit...anytime the invisible tries to find its identity in the visible ...we become disordered..**

- a. If you are not spiritually identified with God...your spirit which is eternal has no proper connecting point... you are spiritually disordered ... there is great void
3. **So that leaves your soul...which is also invisible...**if it's identity is not connected spiritually it has to connect itself to that which is visible to find identity... (job, possessions, appearance, prestige, ,power) or human beings...a spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend,...or isolation trying to be ok by your self.....the soul becomes disordered...for all of those things will one day be separated from us...and the people will also, and they can reject...hurt us ...in other words if my souls identity is people places and things...I will be disordered...

1 Corinthians 6:17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

1 John 3:1 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

4. **You were designed to be eternally identified with God...when that takes place...in my Spirit...my soul gets changed and my relationships and the way I do life on earth changes...only god can meet the critical need of knowing who we truly are!**

2) Our relational need to be accepted...

2. Your acceptance...who or what makes you ok, acceptable
- We are loved by him...individually
 - His love is not based on pedigree, appearance, or talents
 - God is not ashamed of you, nor wishes you were someone else
 - You are accepted and rejoiced over.
 - We are not in competition with others for His love.
 - He is with you now and will never forsake you.
 - His love toward you is everlasting.

Psalms 13:5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

3)Third Our relational need for being secure...

3. Your security... who or what protects me... or what is your source of protection..
- Career....it will end
 - Money...it is volatile
 - People...they can change how they feel about you...or die
 - **If you are secure in God's forgiveness, acceptance, and love, and that he is in charge of everything...you are secure...which gives us the courage to move forward...**

*Romans 8:*³⁷ No, in all these things we **are more than conquerors** through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able **to separate us from the love of God** that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **His love for us is more powerful than anything that can come against us...that is security...he will not leave us nor forsake us**

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

4)Our relational need for significance... to matter

4. To have significance... Who or what determines your worth

- If what you do or how well you do it determines your worth...at some time you will become worth-less because you will lose the ability to perform.
- If your appearance determines your worth...sorry to say that leaves too.
- You are significant because God made you. You are His handiwork.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Because of this Relationship to God, our four critical needs are met in us as individuals. We now can relate to other human beings from a place of health...rather than looking to get from them our critical needs met...

We can now truly begin to love them for their sake and who they are... rather than love them for their ability to meet our needs...

@@@@@

MK 3:13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him.¹⁴ He appointed twelve--designating them apostles--that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach¹⁵ and to have authority to drive out demons.

- **Those against him have been identified...so now Jesus announces those who are with him...his religious leaders...**
- **Jesus uses the Greek word Apostolos or meaning "one sent out."**
- That they should be with Him, in His neighborhood at all times, this constant interaction of daily life, and attendance upon His words and deeds being necessary for their training; **"Proper planning prevents ineffective performance."**
- **Jesus seeks to teach, train, and prepare these disciples for ministry.**

- **Theirs will be a different ministry than any others but so will yours...**
- **Second, after a period of time “with Jesus,” these disciples will be sent “to preach”** After receiving the training and preparation, the disciples will be sent out to accomplish ministry.

There are two parts...the being with Him...and the going out...

Third.... to have authority to cast out demons.”

- **When that is necessary they will have the authority...to do it**
- **In my twenty six years of walking with the Lord ...I have had only a couple of incidents where the enemy was in tangible control of a person...**
- **But I have had countless numbers of people whose thinking has been skewed by the enemies schemes....just as Paul says...**

*EPH 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's **schemes**. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of **this dark world** and against the **spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms**.*

And do you know what his major method of attack is? LIES!!

*JN 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. ⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to **the truth**, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ Yet because I tell **the truth**, you do not believe me!*

- **The enemy is always and in many different ways and forms telling us lies...**
- **many of the lies we believe about God, and ourselves are told us by people...who believe the lies of the enemy...**
- **Most of our casting out of the enemy will be in our thought life...**
- **The battlefield is the mind ...what we think about a lot we will do!!**

*2 Cor. 11:3 But I am afraid that just as **Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning**, **your minds** may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

- **The battlefield is the mind... it is the dialogue in our heads...if it can be led astray...your actions will easily follow...**
- **Pure not polluted by anything...for real**

1 Cor 14:33 ³³ For God is not a God of disorder (*confusion*) but of peace.

- The enemy sows confusion and disorder , panic...those are clues to an attack

How do we fight this battle?

JN 8:31 To the Jews who had *believed him*, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

1. Believe in Jesus
2. hold to his teaching about himself...
3. then you will be able to distinguish truth
4. and that truth will set you free...free from what? The lies of the enemy, what you used to believe..

This is the truth....

1 John 5:19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. ²⁰ We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us *understanding*, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true--even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

How do we apply this truth...

CO 10: 3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- We have been given authority to cast out every thought which tries to rise itself against what God says...
- We pull it down...stop listening to it and replace it with the truth...

Here is some truth...for you

Truth about Jesus

JN 6:38 For *I have come* down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Truth about you

1JN 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been

made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

This is a very peculiar love...He wants us to be his children...

- and the world does not know him as the Father....so they will not know us as His children...
- and what we will become has not been made known yet, it is a work in progress...
- so don't be surprised that you do not know what you will be yet...
- your fullness is a future event..."when he appears"

we practice righteousness and love because we are in relationship with God...the relationship is one of family

- We are His children...it is what we really are...that is truth
- And we shall be like him ...that is truth

Truth about our future

PHP 3: 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. *PHP 4:1 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!*

And Again....

EPH 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Truth about what we should think about!!

COL 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Truth about what we should do

2CO 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- We must see the world in our peripheral vision ...not our focused vision.
- What would the enemy have us do...keep our eyes focused on the immediate...
- God knows we have needs...with God it is always a heart issue not a thing issue...

Matt 6:30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But **seek** first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these **things** will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

▪ **That is a command not a suggestion!**

COL 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature (**that is negative**): sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

- **And children will resemble their family if we belong to God we will act Godly...if one belongs to the devil he ought to act devilish. we have this hope**
- **We have this hope to be like him in the future, so we ought to live like he did**
- now..verse 3

1 John 3:3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

So...the Spirit works in us changing us...helping us do the do

2CO 3: 18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-**increasing** glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- **Now that is true evolution...God's plan is to transform us upwardly ...on a continual basis**

So in a nutshell...

JN 10: 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come** that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Satan's tactic,

1. Destroy relationship with God
2. Destroy relationship with ourselves
3. Destroy relationship with each other...starting with Marriage, then family then world
4. Destroy relationship with our physical home...the earth

Jesus answer.. Take it all back...

JN 6:38 For **I have come** down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

▪ **The end result... God wins and we win too...**

REV 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will **wipe every** tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

REV 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

REV 21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

So do we have power over the evil one...you bet we do!!

So who ought we to live now... with purpose...we live looking at the big picture..

2CO 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our **light and** momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2CO 5:1 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2CO 5:6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ We live by faith, not by sight.

So how should we live....We live with a big whatever!!!!

PHP 4:8 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. ⁹ *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.

▪ **That is how we defeat the enemy!!! And win the battle of the mind!!!**

1JN 2:18 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many **antichrists** have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

You know a counterfeit by studying the truth... if you know the real you won't fall for the false...Secret service and counterfeit bills...they study the real...

end

In Jesus there is a restoration of the true human nature, not an external addition of ...some help... to an otherwise self-governing human existence. Salvation consist in a renewed communion with God, making human us fully human again.

Getting the “vertical” right is followed by getting the “horizontal” right.... Know God...the one who redeems you...then he teaches and directs you in the way to go...

Isaiah 48:17 This is what the Lord says— your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.”

The Results of the having

1) The Lord our God...we have a God He is knowable

2) He is Our redeemer the one who finds us where we are and brings us to a better place...

3) He teaches us what is best for us, and

4) He directs us or guides us in the way we should go or live...

These relational roles of Jesus our Lord fulfill the four critical relational needs of all people....

- **When I am settled in this vertical relationship I am now positioned to have healthy horizontal relationships...**

Listen...Your spouse, nor anyone or anything else is able to fulfill your four most critical needs. Those needs can only be filled by God when you are found In Christ.

The first of our critical relational needs...

5. Our relational need for True Identity...to belong

What is identity...it is That which you are identified by: you are body soul and Spirit

- a. Your body is identified by dental records, pictures, finger prints, DNA etc. visible attributes
- 5. But What Identifies your invisible man...your soul and spirit...anytime the invisible tries to find its identity in the visible ...we become disordered..**
- a. If you are not spiritually identified with God...your spirit which is eternal has no proper connecting point... you are spiritually disordered ... there is great void
- 6. So that leaves your soul...which is also invisible...if it's identity is not connected spiritually it has to connect itself to that which is visible to find identity... (job, possessions, appearance, prestige, ,power) or human beings...a spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend,...or isolation trying to be ok by your self.....the soul becomes disordered...for all of those things will one day be separated from us...and the people will also, and they can reject...hurt us ...in other words if my souls identity is people places and things...I will be disordered...**

1 Corinthians 6:17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

***1 John 3:1** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*

- 7. You were designed to be eternally identified with God...when that takes place...in my Spirit...my soul gets changed and my relationships and the way I do life on earth changes...only god can meet the critical need of knowing who we truly are!**

2) Our relational need to be accepted...

- 6. Your acceptance...who or what makes you ok, acceptable**
- We are loved by him...individually
 - His love is not based on pedigree, appearance, or talents
 - God is not ashamed of you, nor wishes you were someone else
 - You are accepted and rejoiced over.
 - We are not in competition with others for His love.
 - He is with you now and will never forsake you.
 - His love toward you is everlasting.

Psalm 13:5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

3)Third Our relational need for being secure...

- 7. Your security... who or what protects me... or what is your source of protection..**
- Career....it will end
 - Money...it is volatile

- People...they can change how they feel about you...or die
- **If you are secure in God's forgiveness, acceptance, and love, and that he is in charge of everything...you are secure...which gives us the courage to move forward...**

*Romans 8:*³⁷ No, in all these things we **are more than conquerors** through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able **to separate us from the love of God** that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **His love for us is more powerful than anything that can come against us...that is security...he will not leave us nor forsake us**

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

4)Our relational need for significance... to matter

8. To have significance... Who or what determines your worth

- If what you do or how well you do it determines your worth...at some time you will become worth-less because you will lose the ability to perform.
- If your appearance determines your worth...sorry to say that leaves too.
- You are significant because God made you. You are His handiwork.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Because of this Relationship to God, our four critical needs are met in us as individuals. We now can relate to other human beings from a place of health...rather than looking to get from them our critical needs met...

We can now truly begin to love them for their sake and who they are... rather than love them for their ability to meet our needs...

*******So Just as it is natural for the earthly child to imitate (Greek = mimic) his father, we as children of God must imitate Him as we follow Jesus.**

There are four pillars of action given in Ephesians 5 once our critical needs are met...in order to have healthy and ordered Relationships...

- 1. The first one is simply this...we imitate Jesus walk as he followed the God the Father...**

*First: EPH 5:1 **Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children** ² **and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.***

- **First of all.....** a child of God...is always a child before God... As His children we are known and loved individually and as one of all His children we are loved equally, there are no favorites. There is no distinction; we are all one in Christ Jesus.
- **...If we do not rest in our relationship to God the Father as beloved children, we will live auditioning for the position continually grading ourselves on our performance, rather than obeying and serving Him simply as faithful children.**
- we imitate God, and that we are to do that by walking in love.
- **Love is the goal of the Christian life. It is one thing against which there is no law. . which means it is always right to do ...I can have boundaries and still love someone...in fact without boundaries there is no love...just enabling**
- **Our lives become a sweet smelling aroma to the one who are close enough to smell us...i.e. experience us...**
- **One of the primary ways the Father draws people to Jesus is through those who know Jesus**

Now..if you are imitating someone you are careful to watch yourself ...so that you can see how close you are imitating the leader

Second Pillar : *EPH 5:15 **Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise,** ¹⁶ **making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.** ¹⁷ **Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.***

- **Christians are to be wise people, wisdom entails self analysis.. Wisdom is practical...it teaches us how to behave today: what to do and when to do it.. The proper action at the proper time...**

Search myself:

*Psalm 4:4 **Tremble and do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.** **Where do I fall short...teachable..listen***

Search me God:

*Psalm 139: 23 **Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.***

*²⁴ **See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.***

Why? absolute Wisdom is one of the character traits of God the Father...

*Job 12:13 **"To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.***

- **and His Son Jesus:**

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— **the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding**, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

- And we Receive this from God the Father Jesus and the Holy Spirit...

Proverbs 2:6 For the **Lord gives wisdom**; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 4:11 **I instruct you in the way of wisdom** and lead you along straight paths.

Proverbs 3:21 My son, do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion;²² they will be life for you....

- **So as you walk with God carefully gaining wisdom...imitate wisdom**
- We have to walk carefully...because it is so easy to stumble in the darkness of the days around us...
- The idea behind **opportunity** is that you buy up opportunities like a shrewd businessman. You make the most of every opportunity to use wisdom therefore gaining life.... in every way...including relationships..
- **the exact opposite of those who don't know God, therefore don't follow him, therefore do not imitate him...**
- **Paul gives us a contrast...the wise and the unwise..**
- **How do you identify an unwise person?**

an Unwise person...

Proverbs 11:2 When **pride** comes, then comes **disgrace**, (dishonor, shame)but with humility comes wisdom.

Proverbs 13:10 Where there is **strife**, there is **pride**, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

Proverbs 17:24 A discerning(astute, smart) person keeps wisdom in view, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth. (not focused, all over the place)

Proverbs 28:26 **Those who trust in themselves** (unteachable) are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.

Proverbs 14:8 The wisdom of the prudent (farsighted, perceptive) is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is **deception**. (scam, cheat, manipulate)

- The lack of wisdom destroys our life and our relationships...the opposite of what God desires

EPH 4:17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of **their thinking**.(they lack God's wisdom)¹⁸ They are darkened in **their understanding** and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the **hardening of their hearts**.

- They live by their own thinking...which is futile (Ineffective)
- Their own understanding...which is darkened...limited...dim
- Because they are separated from the life God has for them and are ignorant of that life... because they are completely unteachable..being hardened in their ways..
- **The Result...**

¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

- Lost all sensitivity to the Lord...they sense him not...so are unable to live life as God knows is best for his creation
- **and are now controlled by their Senses...taste, touch, sight, smell, hear.... but sensuality also includes... pleasure, power and possessions....so by extension people become a means to an end...they are used to fulfill their senses...**
- Continual lusting for more has the idea of being unquenchable ...drinking in as much as you can...but still dying of thirst...
- Trying to give ourselves life inside...but still dying...
- Thus destroying their relationships..
- **Wisdom is costly...but so beneficial...**

Proverbs 4:7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

Psalm 90:12 Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

- **Wisdom enables us to check ourselves daily...How should I handle my relationships today...first with God, myself and others...**

These are the first two steps in developing healthy relationships... know Jesus.. follow Jesus.... imitate Jesus in your relationships.... you will get so wise on how to handle every relationship...with God with yourself with others and things.... seek wisdom...

*Proverbs 9:9 Instruct the **wise** and they will be **wiser** still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.*

- moving on...he chose the twelve to distinguish them from the broader group of his disciples..

Mark 3:16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);¹⁷ James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder);¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Now the real preparation begins...Luke tells us what next happened...

Now Jesus has chosen the first representatives of this Kingdom...so now he shares with them the laws of His Kingdom...

LK 6:17 He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon,¹⁸ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured,¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

*LK 6:20 **Looking at his disciples, he said:***

*"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.*

*LK 6:21 Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.*

*LK 6:22 Blessed are you when men hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.*

LK 6:23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.

Imagine his newly appointed apostles...probably pretty confused about what that even means...and the other many disciples sitting around Jesus looking at him and listening to him...common men and women...

******And the first thing Jesus wants them to know is that in his Kingdom ...he blesses people... be blesses the broken...

God is a Blessing God

- The first truth they needed to internalize was that God is a Blessing God.
- We live in a fallen world we need God's blessing
- **Blessing means to cause to prosper...**
- Because God is :
 - a. Omniscient ...Knows everything...does not need to learn
 - b. Omnipresent...everywhere at once
 - c. Omnipotent...All powerful

He wants His people to know what ever is going on...God will make it advantageous to us. His attitude is one of blessing His children

- Faith believes it

- Hope waits patiently for it.
- **And today we examine the first truth :**

LK 6:20 Looking at his disciples, he said:

*"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.*

Matthew an eye witness says it this way:

MT 5:1 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them, saying:

*MT 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

- first off it is not speaking about poverty ...no where in scripture does God state starvation, homelessness and being penniless is a blessing...in fact the alleviation of such conditions is spoken of as a moral mandate...
 - Rather it is speaking of a personal condition.... **A conscious recognition of an inner condition...**Bless are those ...it is advantageous to those who acknowledge...they are in deep need...
 - They are in a real sense losers...or perhaps lost..
 - And will admit it...for they are in the proper mental and spiritual state to be found....
- LK 19: 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*
- I came from heaven to seek and find those lost
 - One must know he is lost to be ready to ask for directions
 - That is why men drivers never ask for direction ...we refuse to admit were in need of help ...and worst yet lost.
 - They recognize they aren't that great and neither is this place...
 - **They have no exaggerated sense of their own importance...**
 - **They get that it is not about competition...but cooperation...they recognize that getting ahead is only getting ahead if we all get ahead...**
 - The first law of his kingdom...is that you must recognize your poverty and this kingdoms poverty..
 - **You are not it and this is not it...his blessing is that you can be a part of a kingdom beyond here...**
 - And that there is a kingdom...that has much more in store...
- There is pie in the sky....there is a better place...the best is yet to come...

*REV 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will **wipe every** tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

REV 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

REV 21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son."

So who ought we to live now... with purpose...we live looking at the big picture..

*2CO 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ **So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.***

- Everything I see is temporary (brief, passing, transitory, impermanent, momentary)
- And what I don't see is eternal (perpetual, endless, ceaseless, everlasting, never ending)
- **So we live with purpose...we make decisions with purpose...**

I can just see Peter as he writes these words 25 years after the resurrection of Jesus ...thinking back how he sat there the first day after Jesus made him an apostle ...to Jesus talk of heaven...

He has lived the last 28 years of his life with purpose...he regrets not a day of it...

He was not perfect...he was faithful led, protected by God's power.....as he writes ...

*1PE 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, ⁵ **who through faith are shielded by God's power** until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and*

are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Blessed are you who are broken here...you won't be there

Blessed are the one who don't fit here... you will there

1. You see People who follow Jesus ... know the best is yet to come...

PHP 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

PHP 3:15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

- Their outlook on the world is eternal
- They expect God to do what he says
- They wait patiently on the Lord to do it
- **They live with purpose, act with purpose and make choices on purpose**

How far is heaven??? It is a breath away...live like it...