

East Africa Renewal Pastors and Leaders Conference, Eldoret, Kenya October 22-26, 2019

Ralph F. Wilson, speaker

Some of the messages Dr. Wilson shared in the conference can be studied in greater depth in online studies and articles that are linked below.

Tuesday afternoon

1. Repentance – Abandoning in the love we had at first (Revelation 2:1-7)
2. Humility – pride can keep you from renewal

Wednesday

3. Intimacy – Patterns for Spiritual Fitness
[Gym Training for Spiritual Fitness \(1 Timothy 4:7-8\)](#)
4. Repentance – Let us Lift up our hearts with our hands
[Let Us Lift Up our Hearts with our Hands \(Lamentations 3:40-41\)](#)
5. Integrity – Honest Business Dealings

Thursday

6. Integrity – Rejecting Greed
[Reject Greed, Pursue Godliness \(1 Timothy 6:3-21\)](#)
7. Integrity – Errors of the Prosperity Gospel
[A Brief Critique of the Prosperity Message](#)
8. Integrity – Sexual Purity
[The Command and Blessing of Holy Sex \(1 Thessalonians 4:1-12\)](#)

Friday

based on 5-week e-mail Bible study, [Listening for God's Voice](#)

9. Intimacy – Developing a Pattern of Listening

10. Intimacy – Recognizing God’s Voice

11. Intimacy – Humble Discernment

Saturday

12. Influence – Your Ministry of the Word

13. Influence – Paul’s Deliberate Tent-Making Strategy

[Paul's Tentmaking Strategy](#)

Sunday (at Word of Life Harvest Church, Sunday service)

14. Pushy vs. Propped Up Faith

[Touching the Hem of Jesus' Garment \(Luke 8:40-48\)](#)

[Raising of Jairus' Daughter \(Luke 8:40-42, 49-56\)](#)

1. Abandoned the Love You Had at First 22 Oct 19 Rev 2:1-7 East Africa Renewal, Eldoret

I. Introduction

A. Welcome

B. Especially to small-church pastors

1. I know how it feels, went to conference at FBC Modesto, felt overwhelmed, wept.

C. Focus is on our relationship with Jesus, nurturing it, since it is our greatest asset in the ministry.

D. How to renew that relationship, and how to get free from sins which plague us.

E. Listening for God's voice

F. Sharing the Word

II. Abandoned your first love (Revelation 2:1-7)

Revelation 2:1-7 ¹ “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. ² ‘I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. ³ I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary.

⁴ **But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.** ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶

Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

A. Church was doing good works

B. Church was enduring patiently, not weary

C. Orthodox, detected false apostles

D. But “abandoned the love you had at first”¹

1. “Abandoned” (ESV, NRSV), “forsaken” (NIV), “left” (KJV) is *aphiēmi*, generally, “to cause someone or something to undergo separation.” 3. “to move away, with implication of causing a separation, leave, depart from,” b. “give up, abandon” (BDAG 15, 3b)
2. “Love” is *agapē*.
 - a) Towards each other. Talks about doing the works you used to do.
 - b) Towards God

E. Not talking about emotion – though emotion is involved.

III. Substitute Ministry for Love

A. Story of Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38-42 ³⁸ Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.”

⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, ⁴² but **one thing is necessary**. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

¹ “At first” (ESV) is *protos*.

IV. Run Dry, your heart isn't really in it.

Psalm 42:1-2 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 63:1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

- A. If you don't have a way to fill the well, it will go dry**
- B. Thirst for God**

V. God's Desires to lead you back to your first love

Hosea 2:13-15 ¹³ I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; she decked herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but me she forgot," declares the LORD. ¹⁴

"Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵ There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

VI. Conclusion – Take time for restore love

- A. Next: The importance of humbling ourselves afresh.**
- B. This afternoon: Patterns for spiritual fitness**
- C. Wednesday and Thursday.**
 - 1. The importance of taking stock of our lives, and becoming again men and women of integrity.
 - 2. Getting free from the things that have bound us.
- D. Friday: Listening for the Voice of God**
- E. Saturday – how ministry can flow from this core, refreshed love relationship with Jesus.**

VII. Break into groups of 2 or 3

- A. Some come from afar, don't know anybody.**
- B. Share with each other: "What do I think God is trying to say to me from this message?"**
- C. 5 or 10 min.**

2. Absolute Necessity of Humility Mk10:35-45

22 Oct 2019 East Africa Renewal, Eldoret

I. Introduction

- A. We're looking for Holy Spirit renewal and revival in our lives
- B. One of the biggest obstacles in our way, my way, is pride
- C. Jesus had to deal with it among his own disciples

II. Pride and Power -- Let it not be so among you! (Mark 10:35-45)

³⁵ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶ And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory."

.... ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them."

⁴³ **But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,** ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:35-45

- A. African "Big Chief" idea carries into the church as the pastor or bishop as the "Big Chief"
- B. We pastors and bishops and leaders love glory and praise
- C. We love to be in charge, to tell others what to do.

- D. "But it shall not be so among you!" vs 43
- E. Pride is a sin that keeps us from God
- F. Politicians surround themselves with people who tell them how great they are, who will never tell them the truth
Pride will blind you from what God is saying to you.

III. Practicing our righteousness before others (Matthew 6:1-4)

Matthew 6:1-4 ¹ "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. ² "Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. **Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.** ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

- A. **We put on a face, a show, don't show the real us, perhaps don't even remember what it is since we have been putting on a show for so long.**
- B. **Hypocrite – masks used in Greek theater**
 1. The real person is concealed behind the mask.
- C. **Hypocrisy**
 1. Pharisees were earnest to obey the law, but fell into hypocrisy
 2. Loved people to think they were holy men
 3. Fell into a trap
 4. They couldn't humble themselves publicly
 5. Lost their reward
- D. **Lost their reward (Matt 6:2)**

"Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward."

IV. Cultivating a Teachable Spirit (1 Thess 2:13)

¹³ And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it **not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God,** which is at work in you believers. 1 Thessalonians 2:13

A. Didaktos, “teachable”

B. John the Baptist, down by the Jordan, thousands came to him

Luke 7:30 “but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

C. If you think you know it all you can’t learn

1. If you think you know better than anyone else, you can’t learn.

a) Trump

D. Unless you humble yourself you will reject the purpose of God for you.

E. This teacher from America isn’t saying anything I didn’t already know.

A. You’re probably a better preacher or teacher too.

B. Difference between “knowing” and “putting into practice”

C. Is this too simple, or can you learn afresh from the Word of God?

V. Humble yourselves before God (1 Peter 5:1-7)

¹ So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ² shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ **not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.** ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵ Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. **Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”** ⁶ **Humble yourselves,** therefore, under the mighty hand of God **so that at the proper time he may exalt you,** ⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:1-7

A. God call on us elders to humble ourselves

B. We don’t want God to oppose us.

C. We know God will exalt as the proper time.

VI. Conclusion

A. Story of Doyle Brannam – song leader, missionary in Mexico.

B. Pride has been a sin in your life, humble yourself before God today

C. Unless you humble yourself before God and your brothers and sisters, you can’t find the renewal in spirit you are seeking.

D. Pride blocks genuine intimacy with God.

E. Come forward to repent before God, and break your proud spirit, that you might be renewed in the Lord.

3. Patterns for Spiritual Fitness Oct 23, 2019 Mark 1:33-39 E. Africa Renewal

I. Introduction

A. I'm trying to become fit

B. Multiple things to consider

1. Working out twice a week
2. Eating right
3. Sleeping enough

"Train yourself for godliness; for while **bodily training** is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:7b-8, ESV)

C. Get spiritually fit and stay that way.

1. Involves patterns of intimacy
2. Involves breaking patterns of sin in our lives.
3. We'll talk more about that this afternoon.
4. Both –
 - a) Intimacy without repentance and holiness is a delusion
 - b) Holiness without intimacy is mere legalism

II. Jesus Led the Way for Us

Capernaum -- ³³ The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴ and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you!' ³⁸ Jesus replied, 'Let us go somewhere else -- to the nearby villages - - so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.' ³⁹ So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons." (Mark 1:33-39)

A. Luke's Gospel shows this pattern of prayer.

Luke 3:21 "Now when all the people were baptized, and **when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying**, the heavens were opened..."

Luke 5:15-16 ¹⁵ But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. ¹⁶ But **he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.**

Luke 6:12 In these days he went out to the **mountain to pray**, and all night he continued in prayer to God.

Luke 9:18 Now it happened that **as he was praying alone**, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

Luke 9:28-29 "He took with him Peter and John and James and **went up on the mountain to pray**. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

Luke 18:1-2 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought **always to pray and not lose heart.**

Luke 22:41 And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and **knelt down and prayed.**

III. Absolute Necessity: A Healthy and Regular Devotional Life – our regular time before the Throne

A. We're all made differently

B. Not the only prescription for healthy

C. But these three elements are necessary, I believe.

1. Worship
2. Scripture
3. Prayer

IV. #1 Morning Praise

- A. Purpose: To turn our heart, mind, and emotions to the Lord and open ourselves to him.
- B. Praise choruses that focus on God and our love for Him.
- C. Guitar, acapella, take a walk so you can be vocal
- D. Music touches the emotions in many ways.
 - 1. Joy of the melody
 - 2. Joy of the beat
 - 3. Joy of the dance
 - 4. Joy of memories of happy times, nostalgia
 - 5. Joy of faith, joy in the Lord – that’s what we aim for.

V. #2. Morning Scripture

- A. Not studying for sermon – though some sermons may come out of it.
- B. Rather to feed our own souls on God’s Word.
- C. OT, Psalms, NT, Ribbons in Bible

VI. #3. Morning Prayer

- A. I review my day ahead before the Lord and ask for his help
- B. Confess my sins and weaknesses, and ask for his help in temptation
- C. Supplication – intercession – Prayer rope
 - 1. Family
 - 2. People I have responsibility for
 - 3. Governmental Leaders
 - 4. Church – leaders
 - 5. Church members
 - 6. Others God brings to mind
- D. Listening
- E. Take Notes

VII. Obstacles to a Regular Time with God

- A. Family needs
- B. Embarrassment, they won’t understand
- C. Time to go to work
- D. Other things to do
- E. Satan fights us hard on this, because he knows that if we can’t develop a regular, predictable time with Jesus, then we aren’t much of an adversary.

VIII. Conclusion

A. Go to the gym

- 1. Intense workout shifts metabolism for many hours afterword
- 2. Increases energy, promotes weight loss
- 3. (2 hours each week) 1.7% of waking hours each week, big effect on energy, weight
- 4. (10-20 min a day) 1-2% of waking hours in time before the Throne will make a huge difference in you.
- 5. Shifts your spiritual metabolism.

B. Result

- 1. Know the Lord better, enjoy Him fully
- 2. More power in ministry
- 3. Greater sensitivity to the Spirit’s voice (which we’ll talk about on Friday).

Greg Kreiger: Spiritual disciplines are like putting up all the sails to catch the slightest breeze of the Spirit.

4. Lift Up Our Hearts with our Hands Oct 23, 2019 Lamentations 3:40 East Africa Renewal

I. Revival

A. History of Revivals

1. East African Revival began in 1929 and spread throughout East Africa in the 1930s and 1940s, and continued into the 1970s.
2. The First Great Awakening in the American colonies (1730-1750), Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield
3. The Second Great Awakening 1790 through the 1840s touched millions, civil war
4. The Welch Revival (1904-1905)
5. The Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles (1906) -- Pentecostal movement
6. Charismatic movement (1962-1970s)
7. The Jesus Movement – 1970s

B. Definition.

1. The restoration an individual or the church itself to a vital and fervent relationship with God after a period of decline – moral, spiritual, behavior.

C. True revival begins with repentance

1. So often we're content to go through the motions of our faith, without really connecting at a basic level with God.
2. We excuse ourselves for practices we know aren't realer pleasing to God
3. We rationalize our behavior and attitudes.

D. Go through the motions of religion, but heart is far from me

II. Search and Try Our Ways (Lam 3:40a)

A. Song by Jack Hayford

⁴⁰ Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. ⁴¹

Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

Lamentations 3:40-41, KJV

⁴⁰ Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD! ⁴¹ Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven: Lamentations 3:40-41, ESV

B. Search out¹ -- *hāpaś*.

C. To search, investigate, examine -- *hāqar*²

D. Ways, paths, journeys -- *derek*³

O LORD, you have searched me and known me! Psalm 139:1

1. We rationalize, hide from ourselves,
2. justify our ways
 - a) It isn't so bad
 - b) Everyone's doing it
 - c) Must do it to compete in business, society

III. And Turn again to Yahweh (*shub*)

1. *shub*, “to turn about, to return.” Figuratively used (1) “to turn oneself” to any person or thing, e.g. to Jehovah. (Gesenius)
2. It is the twelfth most frequently used verb in the OT, appearing just over 1050 times.
3. Repent and turn to Yahweh

IV. Let us lift up our hearts

1. *nasa'*, (1) to take up, to lift up” (g) to lift up the soul to” anything, that is, to wish for, to desire something. (Gesenius)

¹ *hāpaś*, “to search for”, always in Kal metaphorically, “to seek out,” e.g. wisdom (Gesenius). Qal, “search, search out” 3. search=test (Lam 3:40) (BDB 344).

² *hāqar*, “to search, to investigate” The primary idea is perhaps that of searching the earth by digging. Followed by an accusative of person or thing, “to explore, search out” as a country, food or drink, wisdom, the mind of anyone. (Gesenius). “Search, investigate, examine”

³ *derek*, “Way, road, journey, manner, work,” metaphorical, “often refers to the actions and behavior of men” (Herbert Wolf, TWOT #453a)

2. **lebab**, “the heart” (a) the soul, life), (b) the seat of the senses, affections and emotions of the mind” of various kinds, as love. (c) applied to the “mode of thinking and acting”, (d) the seat of “will and purpose” (e) “intellect” and “wisdom” “the faculty of thinking”. (Gesenius)

V. With our hands to God in the heavens

A. Worship without change

⁸ ““This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁹ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”” (Matthew 15:8-9, quoting Isaiah 29:13)

B. Repentance instead of outward worship

Psalm 51:16-17 ¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Isaiah 1:11-18 ¹¹ “What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. ¹² “When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? ¹³ Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. ¹⁴ Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. ¹⁶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, ¹⁷ learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause. ¹⁸ “Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Matthew 5:23-24 ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴

leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

C. Honesty about sin -- Alcoholics Anonymous 12 steps

1. **"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**
2. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
3. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
4. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
5. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
6. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

VI. Conclusion

⁴⁰ Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. ⁴¹ Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens. Lamentations 3:40-41, KJV

5. Honest Business Dealings Deut 25:13-16

Oct 23, 2019
E. African Renewal

I. Introduction

A. Money going to corrupt politicians

1. Deteriorating roads, fat bank account
2. Minister of Anti-Corruption was found corrupt himself

B. First time in Kenya, a in-country briefing

1. Black man counting receipts, actually a missionary from a church in Detroit who had worked in Kenya for many years.
2. Deserted, half-built church buildings dotted countryside
3. Some donor gave to build, but when found that money was going to the pastor's personal account, stopped giving. Building stopped.

C. Chairman of pastors' group had an orphanage

1. Wanted me to visit
2. Few children actually, though he claimed 150
3. Had children come from the neighborhood to look like he had more children than he did.

D. Deep corruption has reached from the highest office on down to pastors of churches

1. Passed over as "everybody does it."
2. Brings discredit on the name of Jesus.
3. Prevents pastor from being a believable man or woman of integrity in his or her community.
4. Prevents you from leading your congregation in financial integrity.
5. If you are guilty of financial corruption, God can't use you fully until you repent

E. Pastor Chriss – tell us what your pastor-father told you about financial integrity.

II. The Bible Talks A Lot about Honest Business Dealings

A. Two different sets of weights for the scales on which money and goods were weighed.

¹³ “You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, a large and a small. ¹⁴ You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵ A full and fair weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you shall have, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶ **For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are an abomination to the LORD your God.**” (Deuteronomy 25:13-16, ESV)

B. God considers you an “abomination”¹ if you cheat. – same word is used for practice of homosexuality (Proverbs 11:1; 20:10)

(Proverbs 11:1) A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just² weight is his delight.

(Proverbs 20:10, ESV) Unequal weights and unequal measures are both alike **an abomination to the LORD.** (Proverbs 20:10, ESV)

C. Also

“³⁷ Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. ³⁶ Use **honest scales and honest weights**, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt.” (Leviticus 19:35-36)

“Honest scales and balances are from the LORD; all the weights in the bag are of his making.” (Proverbs 16:11)

¹ “Abhors” (NIV), “is an abomination” (ESV) is *tô ‘ēbā*, “abominable (custom, thing), from *tā ‘ab*, “abhor” (Piel). Its basic meanings in the Piel are “abhor, loathe” in a physical sense and “detest, exclude” for ritual or ethical reasons (RFY, TWOT #2530a).

² *Shālēm*, “perfect, whole, full,” from *shālēm*, “be complete, sound.” The general meaning behind the root sh-l-m is of completion and fulfillment - of entering into a state of wholeness and unity, a restored relationship (GLC, TWOT #2401d).

“Am I still to forget, O wicked house, your ill-gotten treasures and the short ephah, which is accursed? **Shall I acquit a man with dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights?**” (Micah 6:10-11)
“You are to use accurate scales, an accurate ephah and an accurate bath.” (Ezekiel 45:10)

1. Ephah (dry measure) = Bath (liquid measure). Ephah was the standard for measuring grain and similar articles,

D. Corrupt business dealings is stealing, unjust, unrighteous, “You shall not steal”

E. New Testament is also uncompromising

“⁹ Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor **thieves** nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor **swindlers**³ will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Luke 6:31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Ephesians 4:28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing [honest] work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

III. Closely Related is Honesty in Speech

A. We lie to get out of trouble

B. We lie to take advantage of a person

Proverbs 6:16-19 ¹⁶ There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, a **lying tongue**, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ a heart that devises

³ *harpax*, “1. rapacious, ravenous’ of wolves, 2. subst. ‘robber, perhaps better ‘swindler’ or ‘rogue’ (BDAG 134, 2). KJV “extortioner” vb. “extort -- to obtain from a person by force, intimidation, or undue or illegal power : wring; also : to gain especially by ingenuity or compelling argument” (Merriam-Webster). Extortion -- The act or practice of extorting especially money or other property; especially : the offense committed by an official engaging in such practice. 2 : something extorted; especially : a **gross overcharge** (Merriam-Webster)

wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, ¹⁹ a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.”

C. Honesty is part of following Jesus

Colossians 3:9-10 ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

D. God’s word is truth, how can our words be dishonest?

IV. God Hates Bribery, because it is unjust, perverts justice

A. Bribery prohibited by the Mosaic law

Deuteronomy 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.

Exodus 23:8 And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right (also Deut 16:19)

B. Government employees, judges taking bribes is condemned

1. Samuel’s sons, son of the judge took bribes (1 Samuel 8:3)

1 Samuel 8:3 Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

2. Perverting justice (Isaiah 1:23)

Isaiah 1:23 Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves.

Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not bring justice to the fatherless, and the widow’s cause does not come to them.

3. Receiving Bribes to get you to do something (Job 36:18; 26:9-10)

Job 36:18 Be careful that no one entices you by riches; do not let a large bribe turn you aside.

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Psalm 26:9-10 Do not sweep my soul away with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men,¹⁰ in whose hands are evil devices, and whose right hands are full of bribes.

4. New Testament, showing partiality because of a person's wealth (**James 2:9**)

James 2:9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

C. A Bribe Corrupts Your Heart (Ecclesiastes 7:7)

Ecclesiastes 7:7 Surely oppression drives the wise into madness, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

D. Greed is the root of bribery (Proverbs 15:27)

Proverbs 15:27 Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.

V. Integrity is doing what is right when no one is looking.

1. Integrity means having a clear conscience in all financial dealings.
2. Integrity means not taking advantage of anyone in financial dealings.
3. Integrity means total honesty in financial dealings.
4. Total honesty means telling the truth, even when it hurts.
 - a) Total honesty means no cheating or stealing, even in small things.
 - b) Total honesty means resisting all bribery.

VI. What should you do?

A. Story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:8)

Luke 19:8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."

B. Principle of Restitution (Leviticus 6:1-5)

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Leviticus 6:1-5¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,² "If anyone sins and commits a breach of faith against the LORD by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor³ or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby—⁴ if he has sinned and has realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he found⁵ or anything about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs on the day he realizes his guilt.

C. Too poor to restore?

1. Work this out with God
2. Ask him to guide you in how to make it right

D. Begin by stopping dishonest practices.

VII. Conclusion – friendship with the world enemy of God (James 4:4)

James 4:4 "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

A. If you want renewal in your relationship with God and return to your first love, then you must be honest, especially in your financial dealings.

6. Rejecting Greed 24 Oct 2019 1 Timothy 6:2b-12, 17-19 East African Renewal

I. Introduction

“⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (**covetousness**), **which is idolatry**. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming.” (Colossians 3:5-6)

A. Greed - “a selfish and excessive desire for more of something (as money) than is needed.” (Merriam-Webster)

B. *pleonexia*—‘desire to have more’

1. John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937), perhaps the richest person in history, was asked, “**How much money is enough?**” He answered, “**Just a little bit more.**”
2. Greed was a problem in the church at Ephesus. The false teachers taught that “godliness is a means to financial gain” (1 Timothy 6:5), which distorted the whole Gospel.

II. Characteristics of False Teachers (1 Timothy 6:2b-5)

1 Timothy 6:2-5 “^{2b}... Teach and urge these things. ³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

A. A Corrupt and Defrauded Mind (1 Timothy 6:5)

“... Men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.” (1 Timothy 6:5)

“**Corrupt mind**” -- *diaphtheirō*, “to cause to become morally corrupt, deprave, ruin,

B. “Robbed of the truth.”

C. Imagining that Godliness Brings Financial Gain (1 Timothy 6:5)

1. “**godliness**” (*eusebeia*) -- “awesome respect accorded to God, devoutness, piety, godliness.”
2. “**A means to financial gain**” (NIV) *porismos*, “means of gain.” It is derived from *poros*, “acquisition, gain.”
3. Doctrinally linked godliness with wealth.
4. We sometimes have teachers in our day proclaim:
 - a) “Poverty is a sin and a bondage.”
 - b) “Wealth is God’s blessing on the godly.”
 - c) “If we believe the promises of God, we will prosper financially.”
 - d) “If we tithe, we will get more money, because we can’t out-give God.”

Of course, there is some truth in these teachings—and some things that are warped and distorted.

D. Vs. Godliness with Contentment (1 Timothy 6:6)

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.” (1 Timothy 6:6)

1. The keyword here is “**contentment**” (*autarkeia*), “ ‘self-sufficiency’ in the sense of ‘independence’, then general ‘sufficiency,’” here internal sufficiency, “state of being content with one’s circumstances, contentment, self-sufficiency,”

(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.’”

(Philippians 4:11-13) “I have learned to **be content** (*autarkē*) whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret [of being content] in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

E. Jesus warned against the seduction of wealth

(Luke 18:24-25) “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

(Matthew 6:32-33) “For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

III. The Temptation to Get Rich (1 Timothy 6:7-9)

(1 Timothy 6:7-9) “⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹People who want to get rich fall into **temptation** and a **trap** and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.”

1. Much Christian stewardship teaching appeals not to sacrifice, but to a desire to get rich and an implied promise that if we give, God will bless us financially.
2. He does—and will (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)—but if that is the motive for our giving, then we are falling into the temptation to get rich, rather than giving out of a spirit of love and worship.

B. Temptation

1. “**Temptation**” here is *peirasmos*, “an attempt to make one do something wrong, temptation, enticement to sin.”

(Matthew 4:8-9) “The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’”

C. Trap or snare

1. “**Trap**” (NIV), “**snare**” (KJV), “are trapped” (NRSV) is *pagis*, “a device used to catch animals, trap, snare,” then figuratively, “that which causes one to be suddenly endangered or unexpectedly brought under control of a hostile force, trap, snare.”
2. The Hebrews, along with most of the ancient world—and rural peoples today—trapped birds for the meat they provided, however meager. They used a whole variety of traps and nets to do this—“the snare of the fowler” (Psalms

91:3). The idea is to catch the bird or small animal unawares—deceptively.

3. Snares are often used symbolically of the hidden dangers of sin (Psalms 91:3; Proverbs 7:23; 29:5-6). The desire for wealth is like a snare, ready to be sprung and trap you in its constraints.

D. Foolish and Harmful Desires

1. “Foolish” (NIV, KJV), “senseless” (NRSV) is *anoētos*, “unintelligent, foolish, dull-witted.”

IV. The Fruit of a Desire for Wealth (1 Timothy 6:9-10)

(1 Timothy 6:9-10) “... [They] plunge men into ruin and destruction. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

A. Utter destruction – 2 words

1. “Ruin” (NIV, NRSV), “destruction” (KJV)
2. “Destruction” (NIV, NRSV), “perdition” (KJV) is *apōleia*, “the destruction that one experiences, annihilation both complete and in process, ruin.”
3. **The two words combined mean “utter destruction.”**

B. “Wandered from the faith.”

C. “Pierced themselves with many griefs.”

1. Remember the fate of the rich young ruler whom Jesus loved, but who sadly walked away from Jesus when asked to sell what he had and give to the poor (Mark 10:21-22).

V. The Love of Money (1 Timothy 6:10)

(1 Timothy 6:10) “For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, **eager for money**, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

“Keep your lives free from the **love of money** and be content with what you have...” (Hebrews 13:5)

- A. “**Love of money**” in verse 10 is *philargyria*, “love of money, avarice, miserliness,” from *philos*, “love” + *argurion*, “silver, money.”
- B. “**Eager for money**” comes from a word which means literally, “to stretch oneself, reach out one’s hand.”
- C. **The Danger of Riches (cf. 1 Timothy 6:17)**

The rich are commanded to hope in God instead of wealth.

1. **Riches are temporal.** We are rich only “in this present world.” You can’t take it with you. Therefore, we should “lay up treasure ... for the coming age” (1 Timothy 6:19).
2. **Riches are uncertain.** Only in heaven, “moth and rust do not destroy, and ... thieves do not break in and steal” (Matthew 6:20)
3. **Riches are deceitful.** In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus compared the thorny ground to “the deceitfulness of riches” that chokes the word of God and keeps it from growing to maturity (Mark 4:19).
 - a) Wealth is deceitful in that it promises one thing, but delivers another.
4. **Riches cause arrogance.**
 - a) A feeling of superiority to the poor.
 - b) Pride and a desire for wealth feed on each other.
5. **Riches replace God as the source of trust.**

D. Positive Commands for the Rich (1 Timothy 6:17-18)

Paul gives several positive commands for the rich:

1. **Hope in God.**
2. **Do good.**
3. **Be rich in good deeds.**
 - a) lay up treasures there (Matthew 6:19-20),
 - b) “rich in good deeds” (1 Timothy 6:18).
 - c) Dorcas was “abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did” (Acts 9:36, NASB).
4. **Be generous,** literally, “be good at imparting.”
5. **Be willing to share.** This is a synonym of being generous, “pertaining to giving or sharing what is one’s own, liberal, generous.”

E. Laying Up Treasures in Heaven (1 Timothy 6:19)

“In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.” (1 Timothy 6:19)

1. **Rewards in heaven.**
2. **Authentic life.** “... So that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.” (1 Timothy 6:19b).
 - a) “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10b).

VI. Pursuing the Character of Christ (1 Timothy 6:11)

“But you, man of God, **flee** from all this, and **pursue** righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.” (1 Timothy 6:11)

A. Flee.

B. Pursue.

C. What follows is a six-fold list of virtues to pursue:

1. **Righteousness** is moral uprightness and justice. The end does *not* justify the means. The means must be just as well as the end.
2. **Godliness** is devoutness, piety, and respect for God. This is a lifestyle of seeking to please God with one’s life.
3. **Faith** is trust in the faithful character of God, in his goodness, and in his power through Jesus Christ our Lord.
4. **Love** is the selfless love modeled by Christ, when he gave his all for us. Now we give our all for God and for our fellow human beings.
5. **Endurance** or patience is the “capacity to hold out or bear up in the face of difficulty, patience, endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, perseverance.”
6. **Gentleness or meekness** is “the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness.”

7. Three Errors of the Prosperity Gospel 24 Oct 2019

E. Africa Renewal

I. Introduction

A. Important truths

1. God wants you to prosper.
2. As we live godly lives, we will prosper much more than living like the world.
3. As we give, God blesses us. You can't outgive God. In 2011, I taught a whole series on "The Blessings of the Tithe." On DVD in Swahili and English, and on YouTube.

B. But the Prosperity Gospel Twists Scripture - 3 John 1:2

KJV "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

ESV "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul."

NIV "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."

1. "I pray" (KJV), "wish" (ESV) is *euchomai*, "to speak to or to make requests of God, pray," then "wish" (BDAG 417, 1-2).
2. "prosper/prospereth" (KJV), "go well" (ESV, NIV) *eudoō*, "in our **lit.** only the **pass.** is used, and not literally 'be led along a good road', but in the sense: "have things turn out well, prosper, succeed" (BDAG 410).

C. There are three underlying problems:

1. The assertion that poverty is the curse Christ frees us from.
2. The danger of greed being a primary motivation for giving.
3. The related danger of pride when one flaunts one's wealth.

II. Claims that Poverty Is the Curse

"You are **under a curse** – the whole nation of you – because you are robbing me." (Malachi 3:9)

Cursed are those who fail to obey the law (Deuteronomy 27:26).

The curses or penalties for disobedience (such as not tithing) include poverty, famine, war, and natural disaster (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

False argument:

1. Since Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13-14),
2. We don't need to be poor or suffer financial setbacks – or be sick, for that matter.
3. Being rich, say prosperity teachers, is evidence of God's blessing; being poor is evidence of a lack of faith, of not entering into all that God has for you.
4. It is God's will for his people to be financially wealthy so they can bless others.
5. Jesus became a wealthy man, they claim, from the gifts of the Magi, rich enough to have an accountant, Judas.
 - a) Jesus was not wealthy, but a working carpenter prior to his three-year ministry, during which he was supported by friends (Luke 8:1-3).
 - b) Judas managed the money given to support Jesus and the Twelve in their mission (John 12:6; 13:29).
 - c) Jesus' gospel was not centered on prosperity or financial gain. He warned against it.
 - d) Rather, his focus was on the poor who were receptive to his message. You don't get prosperity doctrine out of Jesus' teaching without serious twisting of the facts and of his words.

B. Jim Bakker,

1. sent to prison for accounting fraud in 1989.
2. **“The more I studied the Bible ... I had to admit that the prosperity message did not line up with the tenor of Scripture. My heart was crushed to think that I led so many people astray. I was appalled that I could have been so wrong, and I was deeply grateful that God had not struck me dead as a false prophet.”**

C. The Curse of the Law vs. the curse on Adam

1. Jesus freeing us from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13-14), nowhere in the context does it remotely suggest that material wealth and prosperity are the result of Jesus' death on the cross. Rather, we are **freed from sin**, since Christ fulfilled the penalty of the law for our sins.
2. **Is poverty a curse?** Yes, in a sense. It is the result of a condition we experience in this world since God cursed the earth following Adam and Eve sinning.

“Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food
until you return to the ground....” (Genesis 3:17b-19a)

- a) The poverty and the struggle of life will not be fully conquered until Christ's coming brings about the new heavens and the new earth in his Kingdom.
- b) Until then, poverty on this earth will continue to result from a variety of causes, including natural disasters, famines, drought, lack of jobs, economic depressions, exploitation by others, imperialism, war, ignorance, lack of a good education, laziness, illness, divorce, death of a spouse or parent, and a host of social problems. It's a long list.

D. Being a Christian brings with it financial blessings.

1. When you stop wasting money on drinking, drugs, gambling, purchasing more than you can afford,

2. role of caring for your family to the best of your ability
3. The Book of Proverbs has much to say about how common sense living helps you prosper.

E. Will every Christian get rich? No. But most will be able to improve their financial situation to some degree. Moreover, there are clear financial promises attached to giving. Malachi 3; 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.

III. 2. Greed

A. The danger of giving in order to get more.

1. If giving to God will result in greater blessing to me (as I believe it does), then I'm tempted to give more in order to increase that blessing. It's subtle, but greed can begin to replace godly motivations for giving: love for God, obedience, compassion for the poor, etc.
2. Financial gain is used as a primary motivation in their appeal.
3. Appeal to greed corrupts the giving so that what should have been worship is now about us rather than about God.

B. The New Testament is clear about the dangers of desiring wealth.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth ... but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.... No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Matthew 6:19-21, 24)

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (1 Timothy 6:6-10)

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world.” (1 John 2:15-16)

IV. 3. Pride

A. The temptation to flaunt one’s wealth, an expression of pride.

1. If wealth is a sign of God’s blessing, then wearing gold chains and expensive clothes, and driving luxury cars is a way of acknowledging that blessing – or so we tell ourselves.
2. You shouldn’t be ashamed of God’s blessing, prosperity teachers say, but should glorify God in it. True, but our corrupt hearts begin to exalt us in others’ eyes by our conspicuous spending and high lifestyle.
3. Pride is an ugly thing that God detests. Humility is our only defense against pride.

V. Conclusion

A perversion of poverty,
A gravitation towards greed, and
A penchant for pride.

8. Sexual Integrity

1 Thess 4:3-8

24 Oct 2019
E. Africa Renewal

I. Introduction

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸

Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

II. Accept the way God made you – a sexual person

- A. Sex is a very strong drive, difficult to control or completely suppress
- B. We sometimes feel guilty for sexual feelings
- C. The way God made us
- D. Origin castrated himself
- E. Sexual feelings should not be a source of guilt
 1. Jesus was a man
 2. Had sexual feelings like any other man
- F. Paul is frank about sexual needs (1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

1 Corinthians 7:1-5 ¹ Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” ² But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. ³

The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴ For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife

does. ⁵ Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

III. Jesus loves you no matter how you are sexually

- A. Loves homosexuals
 1. About 3% of males
 2. Also females
- B. Loves heterosexuals too.
 1. Sexual sin is just that. Homosexual sin is not worse than heterosexual sin
- C. Loves you women (and men) who have been abused, raped
 1. Sometimes that trauma and abuse is a weakness that Satan exploits.
 2. Begin to give in to that trauma.
 3. Not your fault.
- D. The Bible standard is sex within marriage

IV. Beware the Temptations

- A. Beware of infatuations with someone in your church, and do not act on them.
- B. Beware of your own rationalizations of your behavior.
- C. Beware of pornography (more on that in a minute)
- D. Beware of a man or woman who desires you
 1. Pastors are people of power, and that attracts some women
 2. Be on your guard, about being alone with a person of the opposite sex, not in your family

V. Pornography

Matthew 5:27-28 ²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

A. Pornography is deceitful – it promises sexual pleasure without consequence

1. Plays on male weakness to mate with any naked female – but we're not animals and expected to control ourselves
2. Stirs up lust
3. Takes advantage of young women who are exploited for money
4. Cripples your spiritual life.

B. Pornography creates sexual tensions in marriage

1. Anger in wives
2. A sense that they can't ever measure up to the physical perfection and sexual performance their husbands see on the screen.
3. Can become a substitute for normal sexual relations

Proverbs 5:18-19 ¹⁸ May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. ¹⁹ A loving doe, a graceful deer-- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.

C. Creates tremendous shame and guilt that can disable you, and cause you to lose confidence.

Matthew 5:27-28 ²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

D. Can lead to compulsive watching of pornography

1. Demonic element in filming

2. Open to demonic element in viewers

VI. Masturbation

- A. **Nowhere in the Bible is it prohibited**
- B. **Can be a release when you're separated from your spouse, or your spouse can't have sex with you for some reason**
- C. **But can become compulsive and a substitute for normal relations**
- D. **Can cause guilt because of imagining the woman you are sexually stimulated by in your mind (Matt 5:27-28)**

VII. Protect Yourself

- A. **Avoid solo counseling situations with persons of the opposite sex**
 1. Meet in a public place
 2. Have your wife or another woman in the church with you.
- B. **Share your temptations with a person you can trust.**
 1. Same sex
 2. Spouse
 3. Ask that person to hold you accountable.
 4. Example of a group of three men at Community Covenant

VIII. Conclusion

A. Calls us to integrity

1 Thess 4:3-5 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.

- B. **Your own freedom from guilt**
- C. **Your reputation in your community**
- D. **Your freedom to love the sinner and fallen**

9. Developing a Pattern of Listening 25 Oct 2019**E. Africa Renewal****I. Introduction****A. Boy, Presbyterian Church****B. Noah Houk, "The Lord showed me there would be six people come forward this morning. We'll just wait for you."****C. Confronting unbelief and fear:**

1. God isn't interested in our affairs in detail.
2. I am unworthy for God to speak to me.
3. The Scripture is sufficient, 'Give me a verse not a voice.'
4. God might expect me to obey what he tells me.
5. I might get off the well-trod path of Christianity, into craziness.

II. Jesus Listens to the Father (Mark 1:35)**A. Pattern of getting away on a mountain to pray.**

Capernaum -- ³³ The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴ and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

³⁵ **Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.** ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you!' ³⁸ Jesus replied, 'Let us go somewhere else -- to the nearby villages - - so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.' ³⁹ So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons." (Mark 1:33-39)

B. Getting new directions from his Father.

"O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water." (Psalm 63:1, NKJV)

III. Jesus Operates by Listening to and Obeying the Father (John 5:19)

"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do **only what he sees** his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." (John 5:19)

"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." (John 5:30)

"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." (Philippians 2:6-7)

A. Two choices about Jesus' miracles

1. Jesus does miracles by virtue of being divine.
2. Jesus does miracles by the power of the Spirit.

B. If Jesus ministers by being divine we can't learn from him since he is unique. But he is our Guide and Example of ministry.**C. Healing the demon-oppressed boy (Mark 9:29)**

"This kind can come out only through prayer." (Mark 9:29)

IV. Jesus ministers in the power of the Spirit.

"The **Holy Spirit descended on him** in bodily form like a dove." (Luke 3:22)

"Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit**, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert." (Luke 4:1)

"Jesus returned to Galilee **in the power of the Spirit**, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him." (Luke 4:14-15)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
(Luke 4: 18-19, quoting Isaiah 61: 1-2)

V. The Spirit Reveals the Mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:9-11, 16)

^{9b} "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him' —
¹⁰ 'but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. **The Spirit searches all things**, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the **thoughts of God** except the Spirit of God....
¹⁶ 'For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?'
But we have **the mind of Christ.**" (1 Corinthians 2:9-11, 16)

VI. The basis of hearing God is getting acquainted by a regular quiet time with him.

10. Intimacy: Recognizing God's Voice 25 Oct 2019

East Africa Renewal

I. Introduction

A. Elijah and the Still Small Voice (1 Kings 19:9-13)

⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." ¹¹ The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:9-13

1. God's voice is often quiet.
2. God's voice can guide us what to do. Assignment to Elijah.
3. God's voice can provide comfort when we are anxious.
4. God's voice can bring a rebuke.
 - a) Lindley Ave. Baptist – "Shut up and let me bless you."

B. Samuel Anointing David (1 Sam 16:1-13)

"When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, 'Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD.' But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'" (1 Samuel 16:6-7)

"Rise and anoint him; he is the one." (1 Samuel 16:12b).

C. Words of Encouragement

"Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:9-10)

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9a)

"The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, 'Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.'" (Acts 23:11)

"Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you." (Acts 27:24)

II. Nudges and No

A. Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)

1. Go down to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza
2. Catch up with that chariot

B. Where to Preach, and where not to (Acts 16:6-10)

1. Don't preach in Asia (Acts 16:6)
2. Don't preach in Bithynia (Acts 16:7-8)
3. Macedonian Vision in Troas (Acts 16:9-10)

C. David inquiring before the Lord (1 and 2 Samuel)

D. Words of knowledge

1. Lystra. Paul saw he had faith to be healed (Acts 14:8-10)

E. Direction while I pray for people close to me

1. Sister in law, read the NT
2. Everyday nudges – floor installer for daughter's home in Auburn. Less than a week, called on Friday, installer came the following Monday.

F. God isn't talking non-stop

G. Training to see: Where have you seen God lately?

11. Intimacy: Humble Discernment 25 Oct 2019 East Africa Renewal

I. Heart Preparation for Listening to God

A. Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.” (1 Samuel 3:1-10)

1. You can worship God and not know him intimately (vs. 10)
2. You can hear God speaking but not recognize that it is God.
3. Sometimes a mentor can help you learn to recognize and respond to God’s voice.
4. We must come before God as humble and obedient servants if we want to hear what he is saying – not to get power to manipulate others.

B. It’s the Relationship, not the Voice, that we seek (Hosea 6:3; Phil 3:10-14)

C. Learn to follow orders without questioning – speak Lord, for your servant hears.

1. Only God sees the whole picture. Psalm 32:8-9, counsel with eye upon you, not a horse or mule, bit and bridle.

II. The subtlety of Pride

- A. Don't publicly claim God's guidance unless it is clear.
- B. Don't say, "God told me," unless he has really spoken.
- C. When you talk about God's guidance, do it with humility. It is God you are trying to promote, not the servant whose ears got cleaned out enough to hear Him.
- D. Simon the Sorcerer, wanted to purchase the power to confer the Holy Spirit so he could retain control over people (Acts 8:9-25).

III. Yahweh speaks to Gideon (Judges 6-8)

- A. The fleece
- B. Tempting or testing God. Don't demand.
- C. Humbly ask for confirmation.

IV. The voices in our head

- A. God's voice -- the real thing.
- B. The World -- voices of others, peer pressure, worldly standards of success, etc.
- C. The Flesh -- our own desires and thoughts, many of which are selfish.
- D. The Devil -- demonic temptation and misdirection from Satan and his forces.
- E. The Conscience -- our moral sense of right and wrong that we obtain from our upbringing. Sometimes we are hindered by a skewed sense of justice or righteousness -- perhaps an extreme legalism, or perhaps an insensitivity to certain sins. Our conscience is strongly influenced by the culture we grow up in. However, the conscience can be educated by the Word of God as we seek his way.

V. Cautions

- A. Learn the scriptures to sharpen discernment
- B. Confess and repent of any known sin
 1. Voice of the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 John 2:15-17)
 2. The renewal of our minds (Romans 12:2) so we can discern.
- C. Recognize and surrender your desires. Mark 14:36. "Not my will but yours be done."
- D. Inner peace (Col 3:15)
- E. Don't be rushed
- F. Counsel with a spiritual brother or sister

- VI. Conclusion. We can "know" or recognize his voice. His sheep hear his voice and they follow him (John 10:3-5)

12. Your Ministry of the Word of God 26 Oct 2019 2 Timothy 4:1-2 East Africa Renewal

I. Introduction

2 Timothy 4:1-2 ¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

Acts 6:2 “So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect [the ministry of] the word of God in order to wait on tables.””

A. Shortcuts

1. Television
2. Book of sermons
3. Copyists
4. I get e-mails. Please send me a sermon on _____

B. You run dry quickly

C. People starve spiritually, don't get fed

II. Your Spiritual Life comes first – daily time

A. Read Scriptures broadly, not for study

B. Your worship, prayer, scripture is food for you.

C. DON'T use your personal time for study. Use it to feed your soul.

D. Feed your own soul, not sermon prep

III. A Message Needs to Work in You before you preach it.

A. Messages must arise from what God is saying to you

B. Live it, pray it, let it change you

C. No short-cut

IV. Establish a study time each week

A. Make a notebook of which verses speak to you. Set of dividers for Bible book divisions. 3-ring binder.

B. Take an online Bible study – JesusWalk

C. Use online tools

D. BlueLetterBible.org

1. Available app on Android phones
2. Blue Letter Bible is a free, searchable online Bible program providing access to many different Bible translations including: KJV, NKJV, NLT, ESV, NASB and many others. In addition, in-depth study tools are provided on the site with access to commentaries, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other theological resources. Browse the site to see all of the Bible study tools available.
 - a) Many English Bible translations, NIV, ESV, KJV, NASB, etc.
 - b) Definitions of words. Word study tools are a century old. Gesenius, Thayer, Strong, but helpful, simple outline of Biblical usage.
 - c) Many cross references. Other verses
 - d) Dictionaries, ISBE

V. Preach the WORD, not your opinions or experiences

A. We illustrate with life experiences

B. Message is the meat of the Word.

VI. Your Spiritual Gifts affect your ministry style

A. Differing gifts

- B. Don't copy someone else, be who YOU are.
- C. Expository vs. topical
- D. Your unique voice in the Lord

13. Powerful Influence of a "Tentmaking" Pastor Acts 18:1-3 East Africa Renewal, 26 Oct 2019

I. Introduction

A. Paul, the tentmaker

¹ After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³ and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them." (Acts 18:1-3)

B. Tentmaking

1. Making and repairing tents.
2. Leather or animal hair
3. Skilled in crafting other leather products.
4. Tents were used widely and were in demand throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.
5. Roman armies in the field were sheltered in eight-man leather tents.
6. Leather tents would be made from sewing hides together, together with poles cut to length, transported by mules.
7. Nomads, on the other hand, such as modern-day Bedouins, used woven tents made from either goat or camel hair, supported by poles and ropes. In addition, travelers and traders would need tents. Closer to home, awnings would be needed to enable people to work out of the sun.
8. As a boy, Paul was probably apprenticed to his father. As he grew older, he would continue the trade, since Torah students and teachers were not salaried positions. Rabbis earned their living by other means. It's likely that Paul's father didn't just repair and sell tents to Jews, but to Gentiles as well,

giving Paul a clear glimpse into Gentile cultures, even though he was raised in an observant Jewish home.

II. Tentmaking was hard work

- A. Paul seemed to take pride in doing hard work, and not being lazy.
- B. Paul is a scholar and teacher, but isn't above what some might look down on as "menial work." In fact, he seems to glory in it.

"You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions." (Acts 20:34)

"We work hard with our own hands." (1 Corinthians 4:12)

"We worked night and day, laboring and toiling." (2 Thessalonians 3:8; cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:9)

III. Paul's Example

- A. Earn money to support himself and his mission.
- B. He sees it as an example to the believers.
- C. The Church in Thessalonica, for example, had some trouble with lazy people trying to free-load off the church's generosity.

⁶ In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to **follow our example**. We were **not idle** when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, **we worked night and day**, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves **a model for you to follow**. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'If a

man will not work, he shall not eat.'" (2 Thessalonians 3:6-10)

D. He is a strong example to those who would take advantage of Christian benevolence.

He had a right to support from the church (verse 9), but did not exercise it because setting an example was more important.

E. Stealing vs. work

"He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need." (Ephesians 4:28)

F. Widows

Some widows had nothing to do but gossip (1 Timothy 5:13).

Be involved in "doing good deeds" (1 Timothy 5:10), what we might call volunteering to help others.

G. Example of Giving (Acts 20:34-35)

³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.

³⁵ In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is **more blessed to give** than to receive.'" (Acts 20:33-35)

H. Criticized

When you read 1 and 2 Corinthians, you realize that Paul is roundly criticized by some for his tent-making enterprise, rather than asking the church for money to live on (1 Corinthians 9:4-15).

He establishes his right to receive help from the church, but then deliberately doesn't exercise that right. Rather, he is trying to:

1. Set an example of hard work to support oneself and one's own family, rather than depending upon others to do it for you (1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9; 1 Timothy 4:8), as mentioned above.

2. Set an example of giving to the poor and weak in the community, "that by this kind of hard work we must **help the**

weak (Acts 20:35a), and "to have something to share with anyone in need" (Ephesians 4:28). Paul teaches them that giving is more important than getting (Acts 20:35b). Almsgiving was a strong value in Judaism and Christianity, but not so much in the Greek world.

3. Set an example of not coveting money. "I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing (Acts 20:33), which is a big problem in all cultures! The Prosperity Gospel sounds good on the surface, and has elements of truth, but much of its appeal is based on greed. Raw greed. This is same motivation that drives gambling. I don't see Paul setting an example of riding in the finest chariot in the whole city to demonstrate how good God is to him!

4. To receive a reward for his ministry. We often find this concept of "rewards" difficult to understand. But Paul says that preaching the gospel won't bring him a reward – he does that out obedience. But preaching it "free of charge" will bring God's blessing to him (1 Corinthians 9:16-18).

(5. Free from financial control by congregation.) If the members of Paul's churches see Paul as their "employee," he can't teach them some of these things very effectively; rather, Paul believes he can disciple them better by being financially independent. Not all churches need to learn the same lessons. Some churches today need to learn to support their pastors generously and lovingly, rather than parsimoniously (that is, driven by twin motives of greed and power, especially a desire for control).

IV. Bi-Vocational Ministry

Second-class level of pastor.

"Full-time Christian ministry" is touted as the standard.

Being a tentmaker is an honorable calling!

It is difficult, hard on families, but definitely the way God is leading most pastors. Indeed, bi-vocational, tent-making pastors are changing the world for Christ!

Out in their communities as known and trusted entities, able to meet people in the course of their work and evangelize.

Pushy Faith vs. Faltering Faith 27 Oct 2019
Mark 5:21-43 Word of Life Harvest Church, Eldoret, Kenya

I. Introduction

- A. Two kinds of faith
- B. Two classes of people
- C. United by a desperate need
- D. Jesus has just arrive by boat in Capernaum, from the east side of the Sea of Galilee
- E. Jairus, Synagogue ruler, falls at Jesus' feet, heal my daughter, Jesus heads toward Jairus' home

II. The woman with the Flow of Blood

III. Jairus' daughter is healed

“the official who has charge of the arrangements for the synagogue services.” He isn't the attendant (Greek *hypēretēs*, Luke 4:20) who does the actual work, but the synagogue president, the leader. His duties include conducting the synagogue worship and the selecting of those who are to lead the prayer, read the Scriptures, and teach in the service.

- A. Tragedy strikes with no warning
- B. Knows Jesus – has invited him to speak in Capernaum
- C. Falls to his knees
- D. Only daughter, only child
- E. Believes that if Jesus lays his hand on her she will be healed.
 - 1. Centurion – just speak the word
 - 2. Hemmorrhaging woman – touch the edge of his garment
- F. Word comes she is dead.
 - 1. “Don't bother the teacher any more” – our problems DON'T “bother” God. He cares.

- 2. Don't be afraid, only believe, and she will be healed
- 3. Jesus carries Jairus with his own faith.

IV. Kinds of faith

A. Pushy faith – The woman with the flow of blood

- 1. Jesus tells two parables about this
 - a) The friend at midnight who wants a loaf of bread for his guests.
 - b) The widow and the unjust judge
- 2. This is the kind of faith Jesus wants to build in us.

B. Faltering Faith -- Jairus

- 1. Daughter on point of death
- 2. The word comes – “She has died.”
- 3. “Don't be afraid, just believe.”
- 4. Clears out all the unbelief from the room
- 5. Jesus heals the girl
- 6. Jesus is willing to carry us over stretches of the trail, until we can walk on our own
- 7. Put my granddaughter up on my shoulders so she can see from a different perspective

V. Conclusion

- A. Jesus is the Healer
- B. Faith is the way to approach him
- C. Jesus heals bodies, but especially, Slives.
- D. If you haven't invited Christ into your life your life is a mess.
- E. You need the Healer to heal your life
- F. Forgive your sin and give you power to leave sin behind.
- G. Jesus is your Healer, if you let him.
- H. Will you be bold enough to approach him today?