

SOM WEEK 8 OVERVIEW

Homework

- Bible Readings: 2 Corinthians 8-13
- Book Readings: The Jesus Style by Gayle Erwin pg 1-67

Sermon Highlights: Importance of a living and personal relationship with Jesus - Joel Salve

Song of Solomon 5:9

- J Vernon McGee addressing a graduating class at a presbyterian seminary, he taught out of this passage and he said "What is your beloved more than another beloved?.. You might as well forget everything you learned now cause you're going out into the real world, where there's broken marriages, and broken lives, and broken hearts, and orphans, and divorce and sexual abuse and drug abuse and when you get out there they don't care about what you know, they only care who you know. They're only gonna ask you one question, what is your beloved more than another beloved"

Introduction

- As I thought about this topic and what to study and how to teach it, I kept coming back how important/vital it is to have a living relationship with the Lord.
- Yes this is rudimentary, this is a basic tenet of Christianity, that it is a relationship not religion. It is foundational. And yet in the context of the ministry, it is so important and vital to keep your accounts current and be in constant communication and fellowship with the Lord.
- I believe that every person who is saved, who has asked Jesus to forgive them of their sins, to come into their life and to be their Lord and Savior, has a relationship with Him. That God is faithful and will finish the work that He started.
 - And yet Jude writes in his epistle to "building ourselves up on our most holy faith", that there is growth, that we are not to remain babes but to devour the word and spend time with Him so that we might come to maturity. The importance of developing, maintaining, deepening that relationship is so vital to our spiritual growth.
- So often I think we can get caught up in the christianese, in the christian culture, we have christian music, christian coffee, christian book stores, christian bumperstickers, and somewhere we can lose track of what it's all about, or who it's all about
 - One pastor I listen to said this "it's not that I get caught up doing bad things, I'm a pastor! I'm at church, I'm singing songs, teaching bible studies, counseling, I'm doing good things, I'm not out robbing banks.. And yet in all the business I can forget or put off the most important thing, which is being alone with Him.. sitting at His feet"

- I wonder sometimes as I look at the church as a whole, those who fall into gross sin, those who teach wacky doctrine, those who started out well and have now fallen by the wayside, are they saved and have just been led astray?- are they going to get to heaven and say "O God forgive me, I messed up, I had it so wrong" and get in as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:15 "But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames."
 - Or they were never saved, they were just sown in by the enemy to deceive many as Jesus says in Matthew 13:25
- Something I'll never forget when we first came to Calvary, was on a Sunday Bobby was preaching, and he said "If I start getting weird, and start telling people that the mothership is arriving or something hokey, throw me out into the parking lot"
 - And it always made an impression on me to esteem the word of God over man's opinion or doctrine(mike always said we don't bend the scripture, we bend to the scripture), being a Berean searching the scripture to see if these things were true.
- And the answer to avoiding going down paths like that(because at the end of the day we are all human, we are all made of the same stuff, we all have a traitor that lives within us-take heed you stand lest you fall), being led away in deceiving theology, is to have a living relationship with the risen Lord, to be grounded in His word.
 - As Bobby always quotes his favorite verse Jude 1:21 "keeping yourself in the love of God"
- So as we look at this topic, I want to look at some examples of lives that were not in relationship/fellowship with the Lord(or consequences of not having a relationship with Jesus), what does it mean to have a relationship with Jesus(or how to have a relationship with Him), and what He promises us if we will walk with Him(the blessings that come with)

A) Examples of lives that were not in relationship with the Lord(consequences)

Acts 5:1-11

- This is the account of Annas and his wife Saphira, how they were members/part of the early church, and I think seeing Barnabas's example(chapter 4) and the recognition he got, they determined to the same, so they sold their land, but instead of giving the whole thing over they kept back some of the money for themselves which was fine.
- The problem was when they came to give it to the apostles, they lied about how much the land was saying they were giving all the proceeds to God. and because of their sin, they were struck dead.
 - Now before we judge them too harshly, let's be grateful that God doesn't do that every time we lie. Think about how often our hearts are not right when we are approaching God. In church singing "I surrender all", and not meaning it. One commentator pointed out how churches would need a mortician on staff.
- Now definitely a sobering account, and makes us remember the holiness of God- I am of the opinion that both Annas and Saphira were saved and that they ignored the promptings and convictions of the Holy Spirit instead of seeking God's will in their life.

- Reminds me of the verse in Ephesians 4:30 “and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”
 - 1 Timothy 1:19 “Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.”

The second example is in Leviticus 10:1-2

- We see Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron bringing out their censers and taking strange fire and offering it before the Lord, and the verse reads “which He had not commanded them”. God had commanded Aaron to burn incense on the altar every morning and evening as a regular offering to the Lord. The fire used to burn the incense was always taken from the altar of burnt offerings.
 - And all of a sudden here comes these two, Nadab and Abihu coming out with their strange fire offering, and fire comes out from the Lord and smokes them both. There is a thought that they were drunk as they did this, because God talks about being regarded as Holy in v3 and then mentions not drinking wine in v9 lest you die.
 - Whether the penalty was because they were not supposed to be the ones burning the incense only aaron(like Hezekiah would learn), the details given to us tell us that they offered profane or strange fire. They offered something to God that was not prescribed by Him.
 - And this what God said Leviticus 10:3 “By those who come near Me I must be regarded as Holy; and before all the people I must be glorified”
- Especially being involved with the ministry(by those who come near, it is imperative that we not lose our wonder and awe of who God is, and regard Him as Holy).
 - Many authors had much to say about this G Cambell Morgan said ““The danger of familiarity with holy things is that it leads to contempt.”
 - Spurgeon said ““It is an awful thing to be professionally occupied with holy things, and yet to have no fellowship with them.”
- These two who had seen the miracles and the majesty and the power of God, ignored the law, and went out and did something that He had not commanded, they did not take heed to His word, they did not regard Him as Holy, and there were consequences.

The third example is in Matthew 7:21-23

- A familiar text to most of us, here we see those calling out to the Lord declaring to Him the many works that they had done, prophesying, casting out demons, doing many wonders, all in the name of Christ- but look at what Jesus says- I never knew you.
- There are those who do many things in the name of Christ but do not have a relationship with Him.
- Spurgeon said ““It is not talking about religion that will save a man, but walking with God.”
- Tozer said “It is altogether possible to satisfy the demands of religion and yet miss the person of Christ.” and “The most important thing about a man is not what he does for God, but what God is to him.”

Conclusion of section A

- This is all applicable to you and me as we step forward to take hold of the ministry, because while it might look great on the outside, even if you are getting the praise of men, and seeing things happen, none of that matters if you do not have a relationship with God.
- All of these examples, people who did religious things without the fellowship, communion, and some without a relationship with God. Paul said "These things were written for our instruction" - Romans 15:4- what do they teach us? Not to ignore the conviction of the Holy Spirit, Not to ignore the word of God, salvation isn't based on works, but on knowing and having a relationship with Jesus.

B) So what does it mean to have a relationship with Jesus

- We already established that a relationship with God starts at salvation, we repent of our sin and ask Jesus to be our Lord, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit and He comes and dwells within us. But is that it? You pray the sinners pray and yeehaw that's it?
- Think about Paul the apostle, some people look at him like the energizer bunny. Jesus met him on the road to Damascus, radically transformed his life, set him on fire for the Lord and he never looked back. That was all he needed. Lord, that's what I need- a damascus road experience, i need to fall off a horse and be blind for three days.
 - When in reality, Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:16 "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day."
 - Paul needed renewal. Think about the amount of suffering he went through, shipwrecks, beatings, lashes, stoning, etc. He said in Corinthians we were pressed beyond measure
 - But he was renewed day by day, spending time with the Lord, in communion, in fellowship, in the word, in prayer. He didn't just get one dose and he was set, rather every day he pressed toward the upward calling.
- Jesus when teaching the disciples how to pray He said Matthew 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread."
 - Teaching and telling us to daily go to the Father for our needs and provisions, not weekly, monthly, or yearly, but every single day to have an open line of communication with God.
- We see it in the life of Jesus, as we read through Mark. Again and again, Jesus went to pray. He woke up early and prayed. He stayed up all night and prayed. He sought the will of the Father again and again as an example to you and I. and the Father showed Jesus what to say and what to do.
 - John 12:49 "I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it."

- John 5:19 "So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does."
- I love the verse in Genesis 5:22 "After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him"
 - Ever hear the christianese phrase "how's your walk? Hows your walk with God?" This is where it comes from. And there's truth to it. Ill bring that spurgeon quote again "It is not talking about religion that will save a man, but walking with God."
- Amos 3:3 "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" the NLT says it this way "Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?"
 - Not just the direction, where they meet, where they are going, the pace that they are walking
- Do we agree with Jesus and the direction He's walking? Do we agree with Him? Do we know Him? Because to know and agree with Him we need to know what His word says, we need to spend time alone with Him.
- I heard this great analogy, it'll mean more for those of you who are married. If you told your wife or husband, hey you get one hour every Sunday, maybe five minutes before work, and a minute before we go to bed, but besides that I'm too busy for you. How many of you think you would have a healthy relationship?
 - Yet how many of us treat our relationship with the Lord like that, something we can ignore, something we can put off till tomorrow, all the while He is there waiting for us.
- Something Matt brought up when I was talking to him about this(if none of this makes sense this is all his fault) was how precious it is that the God of the universe would want a relationship with us.
- When Jesus died it says Matthew 27:51 "At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart," essentially God saying come on in, where before no one but the high priest was allowed once a year into the holy of holies, now God tearing the veil inviting us in.
 - Where the Hebrew author says Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."
- So to answer my earlier question after that scripture shower, what does it mean to have a living relationship with Jesus?
 - It means talking to Him daily, it means spending time with Him, and seeking His will, It means walking with Him.
 - And that is so imperative for ministry, because Christ is the head of the church, we are all ministers(servants) we are serving Him, we get our marching orders from Him. So we need hear Him and what He is saying, where He is telling us to go, what He is telling us to do
 - And lets be real for a second, ministry isn't always fun or pretty, there are times where its discouraging, Paul wrote "We are hardpressed on every

side, yet not crushed, we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed.” 2 Cor 4:8-9

- There are times where you want to throw in the towel, when people are spreading rumors or gossip that isn’t true, or worse yet it is true and you don’t know how to continue on.
 - One pastor friend of mine was done, he had practically been ousted out of his church that he had taken over and built up, and he was done, he was going to start his own business, when the Lord spoke to him and gave him his marching orders. God wasn’t done with him.
- And that is where we need to constantly be looking to God. When we sin and fall short, run to the throne of grace and repent. When people are against you, let God be your defender, When you need direction, let Him guide you, when you are beaten down, Let God comfort you. Jesus is everything you need.

C) What He promises us if we walk with Him

- With the time I have left there no way I can cover all of the promises that God has for us but here are just a few
- I love the verse from our readings in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 “come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you, I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty”
 - He promises to be our Father, what does a father do? I just googled this “A father’s role is to be a loving, supportive guide, acting as a protector, provider, teacher, and role model who fosters a child’s emotional, social, and physical development through guidance, discipline, play, and instilling values, helping them grow into confident, capable adults” God says that He will be our Father.
- I just read this morning Isaiah 51:12-13 “I even I am He who comforts you, who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of the son of man who will be made like grass? And you forget the Lord your maker.”
 - Paul wrote in Corinthians that He is the God of all comfort
- Proverbs 3:5-6 “trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths”
- Some of my favorite verse in the whole bible are in John 15, v5 “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”
- Matthew 19:27,29 “Then Peter answered and said to Him “see we have left all and followed you. Therefore what shall we have?” so jesus said to them, “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”
- I can keep bringing up verses with these great and precious promises but I think we get the idea, God wants a relationship with you, He isn’t satisfied with leftovers, He wants everything. And He gave His very best so that we could enter into fellowship with Him. And we get all the benefits, we trade in our sin and shame and guilt, for eternal life,

peace, joy, comfort, protection, provision, direction, and fellowship with the King who loves us from everlasting. That's a good deal.

- And this a daily thing where we won't completely arrive until we step through the veil, Paul wrote near the end of his life in Philipians 3:10 "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,"
- What's the takeaway? Jesus loves you and wants to spend time with you, He wants to guide you, He wants nothing but the best for you, our responsibility is to walk with Him and to be in fellowship and communion with Him.
- So as we wrap up, I'll come back to my original question- what is your beloved more than another beloved?" Is Jesus your everything? Is He precious to you? Not Calvary, Not christianity, but the risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who loves you.