

Hebrews 6.11-12

Becoming Sluggish

We have been talking about hope for over 7 weeks now. And hope is the power of the God's promise infused, pressed into our current circumstance. When we lose hope, we allow the chaos of the world, our circumstance or our own sin to take our eyes off of the truth that is ours in Christ and thus robbing us of both our joy, and our effectiveness for the King. It is a problem that the church needs to recognize and fight within ourselves. It is the deep play of the enemy, and he has been very effective in its use. The net result of this attack is that it robs us of our vigor. It is always about LOSING something that God has given us... We cling to false things and lose our grip on true ones... We become sluggish and ineffective, and then we are unable to fight the war that rages around us. The real flavor of the fight is the reality of our hope in Christ.

I. LOSING FOCUS

- a. Allowing the allure of the world to draw us after it

- b. Setting our eyes and hearts upon that which will not last and thus becoming captive to the ideas and foolishness that surrounds us
- c. Finally becoming convinced that these things are true
- d. Taking part in them, participating in them, supporting them
- e. Warring against those who still fight the lies...
- f. This ultimately creates a whole host of false teachers and their followers who misdirect the church

2Timothy 3.1-5

1Timothy 4.1-5

1John 2.18-19

II. LOSING OUR SENSE OF PURPOSE

- a. Forgetting that the church marches against the gates of hell, we do not fight a defensive war

b. Forgetting that our King has already won the war and defeated the enemy

c. Forgetting that He has given us all the weapons we need to fight

1Corinthians 15.1-8

d. Forgetting the glory that we carry within us

e. Forgetting the beauty of the king and the reason price He has already paid for our salvation

f. Forgetting the real battle we fight is NOT with the world per se, but with the enemy of our souls, his lies and his deceptions

2Corinthians 10.3-6

III. LOSING OUR WAY

a. Allowing the weapons of the world to become our hope

- i. Politics
 - ii. Preparations
 - iii. Plans, schemes and the strength of horses
- b. We can become addicted to the false hope, anger, manipulations and impotent strivings that the world advocates; and while these things may allow a sort of plastic victory, the false triumphs only grant the enemy reprieve to solidify his position.
- c. Allowing our anger over the evil to cause us to hate the people instead of the true enemy
- d. Allowing the massiveness of the war, to obstruct the clarity of the battle.
- i. There is a sense in which we can win the battle and lose the war
 - ii. But there is also a sense in which we can become to obsessed with the grand war and our inability to change its path that we do not fight the battle that is in front of us.

iii. We are called

1. to fight the fight that God gives us,
2. with the weapons He provides us,
3. In the manner that He commands us
4. at the moment that He commands us and has placed us
5. For the glory of the King

e. Allowing the evil of the day to stand unopposed because of our own desire for

- i. Peace
- ii. Comfort
- iii. Success
- iv. Safety

f. God has given us all of the specific weapons we need to fight the war in which we are engaged

Ephesians 6.10-20

IV. LOSING HEART

- a. Becoming filled with despair over the seeming insurmountable forces that the enemy brings to bear
- b. Becoming paralyzed with fear and/or inability to move against them due to uncertainty
- c. Becoming numb to the evil because of its prevalence and our own inability to effectively change it
- d. Forgetting that the victory is sure, the glory is promised and the joy set before us is near
- e. Finding only ruin, finding only loss, finding only pain and defeat in the prospect of obedience, thus turning to a host of things, that, while they may not be bad, are not good and effective for the calling on our lives
 - i. Entertainments
 - ii. Distractions
 - iii. Selfish ambitions

iv. Empty desires

v. Petty ambitions

f. Your best defense against this creeping miasma is to do the practical good for the body of Christ that God gives you to do each day. Take your eyes OFF YOURSELF, OFF YOUR OWN THINGS, OFF YOUR SORROWS

Galatians 6.6-10

V. LOSING OUR VIGOR, POWER AND JOY

a. When we disconnect from the glory of God as our motive, our purpose and our strength we are forced to rely on all these other things.

They are empty and will not help us in the day of battle

b. Fight against this by purposefully doing everything you do for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

³¹ Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- c. Setting your focus or hopes anywhere else will, in fact, harm us in the day of battle. Every other motive is false, and many of them are actually the snares of the enemy, set for your soul
- d. Failing to have the right motive leaves us running on our own resources, battling with our own ability and relying on our own wisdom
- e. Ultimately it leaves us unplugged from the true source of our power and joy, which is our God, our King. The One who gave Himself so that we might have hope and life in Him. He is the one who IS our joy. And when we take our eyes off of Him we lose the things that allow us to stand in the day of trial.