

MEN's MEETING DECEMBER 14th 2013

SELF PART 2

Review of concentric circles

- SELF--SPOUSE--FAMILY--CHURCH—MISSIONS (All Christians: self, church, miss)
- The concentric circles for your life are determined by the will of God (married/children)

In discussing the concentric circles, we are dealing with “How to prioritize your life according to God’s will for God’s glory”

- The greatest desire for the believer is to glorify God
- We noted that worship is not merely singing songs on Sunday (part) but the whole of life being brought into conformity to Scripture and the image of Christ
 - **Romans 12:1** *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies (life) as a living sacrifice (given to God), **holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.***

We are talking about the **practical implications** of Biblical truth (We all say we believe the Bible, and it is our supreme authority in all matters of life & faith)

- If we believe the Bible than the truths in it must shape our everyday lives
- It is inconsistent to merely confirm Biblical truths and not have reformation accordingly
- As we grow in understanding and wisdom according to the Word we will then be Always reforming (life of Christian is one of continue and constant conformity)

Another important truth to reiterate: **God’s will for our lives is perfect**

- **Meaning:** we do NOT have to forsake one aspect of our responsibility to fulfill another
- We must be good stewards

The first focus of our priority must be SELF (Breakdown in self cannot fulfill other priorities)

Last Month:

Word and Prayer (Personal Communion)

-Consistent daily time communing with God through His Word and prayer

-Knowing Christ and being conformed to His image are the chief goals/desires of the believer (You WILL NOT fulfill this apart from Word (John 17 Sanctify by truth))

We must prioritize our lives around the Word and prayer (What have we given other priority to that is causing us to forsake this necessary aspect of our relationship with God)

Prayer (without ceasing 1 Thess 5:17/Matt 6:6 Closet)

-Demonstrates our humility and recognition of our need for the God grace and the Holy Spirit

So we must be consistently, daily communing with God through His Word and prayer, renewing our minds, preaching the gospel to ourselves

-In addition we must be guarding ourselves

-All throughout scriptures we are called to watch ourselves, guard ourselves

Guarding

- **1 Timothy 4:16** *Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.*
- **Proverbs 4:23** *Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*
 - The keeping and right managing of the heart in every condition, is the great business of a Christian's life!" **John Flavel (Puritan Pastor/Writer)**
 - Flavel goes on to say The 'heart' is our whole inner being. It is that which controls and gives character to all that we do. To 'keep' or guard--the heart is the great work which **God has assigned us. The enablement is His--but the duty is ours.** We are to keep .
the **imagination** from vanity,
the **understanding** from error,
the **will** from perverseness,
the **conscience** clear of guilt,
the **affections** from being set on inordinate or evil objects,
the **mind** from being employed on worthless or vile subjects.

This, this is the work to which God has called us!" (and it is HARD WORK)

Everything in your life is either profitable or non-profitable. Building you up or not building you up.

As Paul said "Whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, any excellence, anything worthy of praise, think on these things." **Phil 4:8**

Practically what does this look like? How does one guard his heart? Filling up (truth) & guard

Let's start with our eyes: we must have a biblical filter before our eyes

- **1 John 2:15** *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and pride of possessions is not from the Father but is from the world.*
 - **Remember Eve in Gen 3v** *So when the woman saw the that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes... she took and ate*
- **Psalm 101:3** *I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless.(good for nothing, profitable, wicked)*
 - **What has our eye? Money, Fame, Objects (Cars, homes, toys), Lust towards women OR Christlikeness**
- **So what should we do? Well, regarding women, Job 31:1** *"I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?"*
 - **1 Thess 4:3** *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality;*
 - **Ephesians 5 (1-21)** *must not even be named among you, do not associate*
- Don't tempt yourself to be tempted (you can't manage or control it)
- MENTION Men who have recently fallen into sexual sin
 - **Prov 7:26** *"many strong men were slain by her"*
- In the guarding of our heart, we must guard our eyes (TV, Internet, Everything)
 - Inadvertent temptation is not sin (what we do with that temptation is sin)
- **2 Timothy 2:21-22 (read v21)** *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

In guarding our hearts, we must not only be concerned with our eyes, but what about our relationships in regards to guarding our heart/life (negative perspective first)

Everyone in your life is either stirring you towards Christ or pulling you away

1 Corinthians 15:33 *Do not be deceived:* *"Bad company ruins good morals.(We believe we can handle it, and not be impacted)*

Proverbs 13:20 *Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.*

2 Corinthians 6:14 (Context is marriage but principle applies) *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

Eph 5 (v7 do not associate)

From a positive perspective on relationships

Final aspect for today: Positive part of relationships

Accountability

- We were never called to walk this walk alone
 - **Hebrews 3:12-13** *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*
 - God has chosen one of the means that we overcome the deceitfulness of our own sin and fight against hardening of heart is other brothers in our life (who can see our sin)
 - We need to be humble enough to acknowledge this and receive this
 - **Hebrews 10:24-25** *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*
 - **Practical implications here:** How could you fulfill these two verses without intimate personal relationships in the body?
 - Personal intimate accountability would be a practical take away here.
 - Encouraged all of you last time to get with one or two brothers weekly in prayer, and accountability (Sent out email on questions to ask one another to help structure those times)
 - **Proverbs 27:17** *Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.*
 - The goal of our relationships is mutual edification, encouragement, admonishment, accountability

Daily consistent time in Word (purposeful)

Dependence on Holy Spirit (clothed in humility)

Demonstrated through Prayer (Continual communion/Alone in closet)

Guarding your heart (eyes/mind, relationships, biblical filter)

Biblical Relationships (accountability, encouragement)