WHEN GOD MAKES A FINAL SETTLEMENT WITH MAN

Rev. 6:12-17 ••• Romans 6:23

1. Illustration of a share cropper. God started this plan in Joseph’s day in Genesis.
2. Someday God will have a final settlement with man. Before God sends judgment He always sends a warning. For two, thousand years God has been faithfully warning man.
3. Judgment is not something new or a new message • Man knows there is a time of accounting • this why men fear to die unprepared. God’s word has always presented judgment.

I. The Fact of Judgment

1. The nature of God demands it. Sin cannot go unpunished.
2. Noah preached judgment.
   A. The condition that prevailed. Genesis 6:5-6
   B. God saw Noah and was pleased with him. Gen.6:8-9
   C. God told Noah of the coming judgment and gave him the blue prints of the Ark. Gen.6:13-14
   D. God gave instructions
      Noah began to build and to preach. Every board was a sermon • every peg • pitch
   E. People laughed • Noah kept building • on dry land • no water and had never rained • 450’ long • 45’ high • 75’ wide.
   F. The end came • animals went in • God shut the door • and too late the people realized they, had listened to the devil to their own doom • pay day came for them. It will to YOU if you continue to rebel against God!
3. Christ preached judgment.
   A. Christ spoke of judgment several times.

II. The Judgment Of The Saved.

1. The saved are judged for natural sin-at the point of faith in Jesus Christ. We are not to be judged as to whether we are saved at this time.
2. The saved are to be judged when Jesus comes.
   A. We are going to give an account to God. II Cor.5:10; Rom.14:1
   B. Yes, saved people are going to be judged, we are going to tell God about our actions.
      (1) For our speech.Matt.12:3b; Luke 12:2-3
      (2) For our actions. Luke 16:2
      (3) For our way of life. I Cor.6:20
      (4) For the way we have done the work God left for us to do. Luke 19:13 ••• Matt.28:18b-20
      (5) Judged for rewards. I Cor.3:12-15

III. God’s Final Accounting

1. The judgment of the unsaved
2. This is the Great White Throne Judgment.
Rev.20:11-15
3. You will not be there to see if you are
   going to be saved or lost. Your eternal destiny is
   sealed when you leave this world a lost hell-bound
   sinner.
4. Who will be there?
5. What is the issue? (Not if you are saved or not).
6. What is the result? The degree of punishment you
   are to receive for eternity.
7. Many shall cry for mercy ** mercy
   will be absent. Many shall plead their innocence **
   the truth will be known... All the love and mercy of
   God will turn to wrath as God loses His wrath and
   fury on unbelieving unsaved ** Christ rejecting
   humanity.
8. Listen to the pleas of the doomed. Hear God
   as He sternly declares "You made your choice **
   depart from me."
9. Every person who stands at the Great
   White Throne Judgment will have had an
   opportunity to be saved.

Conclusion
1. Man shall stand before God *** saved are going to be
   judged at the coming of Jesus. Do not think you can
   escape it!
2. Unsaved are to stand at the Great White Throne **
   then it will be too late.
3. What are you going to do?

Let her, she will do it best.
Anyway I have a pain in my back,
And I will probably have to rest.

Mrs. Smith said, I have small children,
I just never do get through.
I would really like to help, but
Mrs. Green would be better help for you.

Mrs. Green said, yes pastor I'll help,
Although my load is heavy to bear.
I have visitation and a shower'
And a Sunday school lesson to prepare.

Although sometimes I get downhearted,
Because others the load won't share.
Then I see Jesus hanging on the cross
And I know He carried for me.
I pray I will never let Him down,
For He saved my soul and set me free.

Written by Dovie Brown
recalling a sermon by Bro. Jack Spencer.

THE WAY TO BECOME USELESS
II Kings 5:20-27

Introduction-
20 - But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of
   God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman
   this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that
   which he brought: but, [as] the LORD liveth, I will
   run after him, and take somewhat of him.
   This is the beginning of the end of his service
   (becoming useless)
1. Gehazi using God's service for personal gain
   a. Lied about his master sending him
   b. Used a lie about spiritual needs
   c. Relied on Naaman's gratefulness
2. Gehazi has to hide/secure his personal gain
   a. Received material items based on lies
   about spiritual needs

EXCUSES

The people prayed for a leader,
They prayed sincerely hard.
They thought with a good leader,
They could really please the Lord.

God answered their humble prayers,
He sent a pastor that wanted to lead.
But when he ask members to help,
They wanted others to plant the seed.

Pastor, you know I have my job,
I heard one member say.
Ask Mrs. Jones to do it,
She has more time, anyway.
Mrs. Jones said Mrs. Smith has more talent,
b. Had to put them away so no one would know

c. Returned to Elisha to continue his service

3. Elisha knew

a. The Spirit of God was with Elisha and he knew Gehazi was up to no good
b. Elisha asked Gehazi "where have you been"
c. Judgement came - Gehazi took Naaman’s gifts in the name of God’s service - in return he received Naaman’s.

Galatians 6:7 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

There are many "Gehazi's" in our churches today who go about as servants to THE GREAT PROPHET seeking to extract gifts and/or money dishonestly "for the work of the Lord" - be careful you are not one of them - judgement day is coming.

Missionary Pastor Joe Willtrout
Woodglen Missionary Baptist Mission
Spring, Tx.

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Dealing with Adversity
Text: Psalm 13 S.R. James 1:2-4

Introduction:
A. Everyone has his or her own set of problems to deal with.
B. How we react to these problems defines our character.
C. Under extreme persecution from Saul, David fell into a state of depression.
D. Yet his hope remained in God
E. David sought help from God and so we should follow his example.
F. Note carefully David’s mind set, examine the conditions that brought him low, and learn of the value of depending upon God

I. The Problem of a Weary Heart. ---- Doubt

A. How long must I wait for assistance?
B. David could only see his circumstance and not see God’s presence.
C. When God did not send immediate relief David’s despair deepened
D. Little did he realize that this delay helped him learn to wait upon God
   1. Example of Jesus and Lazarus - John 11
E. Feeling alone David went to the Lord in prayer.

II. The Prayer of a Concerned Heart. ---- Desperation

A. How long must I try to solve my own problem?
B. He believed there was no one who cared
   Sorrow
C. He believed that God had hidden his face from him.
D. He asked 'Where shall we find good’? Psalm 4:6
E. In Psalm 71:20, he said that God would life him up again.
F. In Psalm 116:3 David said that God had brought him low and helped him.

III. The Plea of the Lonely Heart. ---- Desertion

A. Feeling deserted David devised his own plans.
B. David found that evil was all around him.
C. When his plans failed, David felt that death was near.
D. David’s trust in God brought him through.
E. His trust in God gave him hope.

IV. The Praise of a Joyful Heart. ---- Deliverance

A. David trusted in the mercy of God
B. David made his refuse in the presence of God
C. David proclaimed that God’s Word was a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path.
D. Paul said we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. II Cor 4:7
E. David prayed that his enemies would not prevail over him.

Conclusion:

A. David’s prayer for mercy was answered
B. Who is a God like unto thee?

Pastor Carl E. Fitzgerald
Grace Missionary Baptist Church
Spring, Texas
Prayer and Praise -

Prayers of the People

We pray to you, Lord Jesus Christ, asking for strength to persevere to the end of this unfolding season, seeking to match our lives and our worship to the quickening pace of your saving work. May we walk in your company, overhearing the words you speak, enjoying the intimacy of the times spent with your friends, rejoicing with those whose lives are changed when they meet you on the way, exultant with those who are healed and the future opens before them, shrinking before the onslaught of furious opponents, hoping that you would hear us speak up for you when the going gets difficult. Open our hearts at this season to the challenge of your words and the challenge of your life, that we may be caught up in the promise of your resurrection.

Scriptures:
Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
John 2:13-22
1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Processing Problems
Gen. 29: 25-35

I. Jacob Background
A. Not a man you would want in your church - Supplanter
B. Rachel - ewe; Leah - wild cow - always unloved, competing, must have craved love
C. Sanctified imagination - what was it like when Leah was told by Laban that the only way she would ever be married was deception?
D. Leah was always craving acceptance

II. Position
A. She thought marriage would solve it, but Jacob responded in anger
B. In our lives, we think a move, a promotion or some other change will do it
   1. Being married will change him
   2. I left my 195k mile Toyota in a new car lot - position did not make it a new car!
C. In churches, we think position if effective
   1. If our church had a better location
   2. If we could get that person in the church [invitations to church are NOT evangelism]
   3. If we could get this person a new job/house/etc.
   4. Faithfulness does not change by position

III. Possession
A. Leah thought three sons would solve her problem.
B. We think having things will solve our problem
C. Churches think possessions will solve our problem!
   1. Band, Gym
   2. Teachers
   3. Programs

IV. Praise
A. The purpose of our lives is to glorify God
B. Leah had to put her eyes on God
   1. Not a perfect change
   2. A progressing one
C. Churches exist to glorify God
   1. Eph. 3:21
   2. Eph. 3:10
D. Focus on the glory of God, the rest works
   1. 1 John 3:2-3
   2. 2 Cor. 3:18

V. Choose not to solve problems by position or possession, which whitens sepulchers. Change from the inside out by praise!

Pastor Justin Gatlin
Unity Missionary Baptist Church
Richwood, Tx.
The Sustaining Life
Deuteronomy 8: 1-4—Psalm 37:28

Introduction:
A. Although "trials make the promise sweet," yet to the people of God suffering has its mystery.
B. Abraham was tested by God to strengthen his faith. Genesis 22. It was the offering of Isaac. Vs. 12 Lay not thy hand upon him, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God. ..
C. Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh. My God will supply.
D. It is hard to sometimes see the affliction of his hand; we can only trust the love of His heart.

I. Let Us Learn of God's Purpose in Divine Trials.
   A. To humble us. To make thee know that man does not live by bread alone. vs.2
   B. To prove us (to know what is in thy heart). Vs. 2
   C. To teach us to depend on Him (every word). Vs.3
   D. To guide us. Vs.2 The Holy Spirit shall guide us into all truth. John 16:13

II. Let Us Learn of God's Provision in Divine Trials.
   A. He fed them with manna. Vs. 3
   B. He brought them water out of flint rock. Vs. 15
   C. He provided clothes that never grew thin. Vs.4
   D. He provided shoes that never wore out. Vs. 4
   E. He provided physical health; they never had foot ailments.

III. The Pleas of the Lonely Heart. - Desertion
   A. God led them. Vs.2
   B. God was present with them. In the furnace the three Hebrew children proved the presence of God.
   C. They were taught them that the chastening rod was in the hand of God. Vs.5
   D. The Lord is with us. Deuteronomy 20:21

IV. Let Us Learn of God's Promise in Divine Trials.
   A. God will bless thee. Vs. 10
   B. God will give thee power. Vs. 18
   C. God will give life thru his word. Vs. 3
   D. God will reward us. Vs 7

Conclusion:
A. Pain becomes blessed when we know that love sent it.
B. God deals with us according to his infinite love and wisdom.
C. Your life is in His hands. His grace is sufficient for you.
D. Will you surrender to him?

Pastor Carl Fitzgerald
Grace Missionary Baptist Church
Spring, Texas

To Whom It May Concern,

This is an article I would like to submit to your paper. I work part-time as Out-Reach & Senior Adult Director at Victory Missionary Baptist Church in Russellville, Arkansas. My previous job was the Director of the Arkansas Tech Missionary Baptist Student Fellowship for 23 years. I would like to put other articles in your paper, if it is okay. Let me know what you think. My email address is: kenworthen@hotmail.com and my home phone number is (479) 967-2287 and my cell is (479) 857-1443. Please check out my website at: www.Isaiah5511Project.net

May God richly bless your work!!!

Sincerely,

Ken Worthen - Project Director

The Isaiah 55:11 Project....
Mission Work at Home
By Ken Worthen

Pastors and church members, I want to ask
you a question. What kind of mission work are you doing? Many churches support missionaries and some even go on mission trips. These things are great but what are you doing within a one to three mile radius from your church building. Jesus told His local church to go into all the world but many churches are neglecting their respective towns. When you stand before Jesus at the judgment seat of Christ, is He going to be pleased with you? There are many evangelism tools that can be used but I want to share with you the Isaiah 55:11 Project. This project is endorsed by Victory Missionary Baptist Church of Russellville, Arkansas. This program challenges the membership of your local church to commit to pass out one gospel tract a day for 30 days. Many churches used to pass out gospel tracts but I am afraid we have let this ministry fall by the wayside. This is one of the easiest ways to evangelize our communities. I want to encourage you to check out my website at www.isaiah5511Project.net.

God’s Word tells us three things in Isaiah 55:11:
(1) His Word will not return to Him void or empty,
(2) It will accomplish what He wants, and
(3) It will prosper.

Think about it!!! EVERY TIME we put out a gospel tract, it will prosper. God has used gospel tracts to convict and lead many people to trust Him as Savior. If your church would like to hear about the Isaiah 55:11 Project, please contact me at: home (479) 967-2287 or my cell at (479) 857-1443.

WAKEUP
Romans 13:11 -14

Did you ever forget to set the alarm and over sleep? You wake up in a panic and rush off to do whatever is on your schedule.

This text challenges us to wake up.

I. BECAUSE OF THE DAY IN WHICH WE LIVE
   A. The dangers abound.
   B. Our enemy is tireless.
   C. Evil is waxing worse.
   D. The love of many is growing cold.
   E. Many are falling away.

II. BECAUSE OF THOSE AROUND US
   A. There are many that are lost.
   B. The time to witness is growing shorter and shorter.
   C. We have been commissioned to carry the message to the world.
   D. Doors that are open today may be closed tomorrow.
   E. Many are teaching lies. False teachers abound.

III. BECAUSE OF WHO IS COMING AGAIN
   A. Jesus is coming back.
   B. We do not know when.
   C. The time to work is drawing to a close.
   D. Our redemption is getting nearer.

There is still much to do.
It is time for God’s people to wake up and be busy about our task.

Pastor Ernest Moyers
Calvary MBC.
Livingston, Tx.
HOW TO BE STRONG
1 Corinthians 16:13; Ephesians 6:10; Nehemiah 8:10

INTRO. - We all encounter circumstances which try our faith, and which will destroy our usefulness, damage our spiritual life, and devastate our emotional makeup if we react negatively. We see people who face and overcome adversity, and we admire them and say, "I don't see how they have the strength to stand up to what they have to face." And we say, "I'm just not that strong."

Or we see a Church in conflict, with members who are discouraged, despotic and causing discord, while some are contending for false doctrine. One church in this condition may decline in membership and spirituality, while another may overcome their problems and restore peace and harmony, and prosper spiritually. We say of one that the church is weak, of the other that the church is strong.

What makes one strong? The same principle applies both to individuals and to churches. The secret lies in Nehemiah's message to the Jews, Neh. 8:9-12.

The key is that our strength lies in the "Joy of the Lord."

   * Circumstances. We want things to go our way, and we’re happy when they do, unhappy when they don’t. Many circumstances are not under our control. Paul was in the worst of circumstances (prison) when he wrote his Epistle of Joy, Philippians
   * People. Many of us lose our joy because of people, and what they have done or have not done to or for us.
   * Things. We often let our desire for things rob us of joy; what we want that we do not have, and what we have that does not satisfy, cf. Luke 12:15.
   * Worry. This is perhaps the worst thief of all. Paul could have had cause to worry (in prison). Consequences of worry: high blood pressure, ulcers, tension, and a number of related problems.
   * Because these things rob us of the Joy of the Lord, we become weak, and we are unable to overcome life's trials.

2. Truths That Renew Our Joy.
   * Salvation, Isa. 61:10.
   * Scripture, Neh. 8:12; Jer. 15:16.
   * Support, Psalm 28:7.
   * Suffering, James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-9; Rom. 5:3-5. The renewal of joy in suffering comes not from a masochistic pleasure in the pain, but because of what it produces in the long run.
   * Service, Psalm 100:2.

   * When we are saved, there is never a moment when we are out of God's care, Heb. 13:5.
   * God designs every circumstance of life for our benefit, Rom. 8:28.
   * Our strength lies in the Lord, not in our own efforts, Neh. 8:9-12.
   * Our admonition, Eph. 6:10...
   + Be strong, ενευμαθεία, clothe one's self with strength as one puts on a garment. This comes only in union with the Lord.
   + Power, κρατος, relative and manifested power; dominion.
   + Might, ευστος, power as an endowment.
   + "Clothe yourself with strength in the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in the Lord."
   * The solution lies in our focus...
   + On our problems - or on the Lord, Heb. 12:2.
   + On our need - or on the Supply, Phil. 4:19.
   + On our efforts - or on the Lord's power, Gal. 2:20.

TO BE STRONG, WE MUST FIND OUR JOY IN THE LORD.

G. F. Crumley
Gone Home
The Cause and The Cure For A Cold Listless Life
Mark 14: 26-38; 54, 66, 72

I. Introduction:

1. Previously in this chapter, we are told of the closing in on Jesus in these last few moments of His earthly ministry. The chief priests, the Jews, and the scribes, met and set their plot to rid the world of Jesus.

2. Judas betrayed the Lord into the hands of the enemy (and it is quite likely that many betray Jesus as did Judas even in our day), Jesus set the Lord's Supper in the Church and now this passage tells of the conversation of the Lord with the Apostle Peter and the others (v-31)

3. Perhaps a better name for this message would be simply Backsliding, It's Cause and the Cure, for this passage of Scripture tells of the steps which one takes in backsliding. A person can attend church regularly and be guilty of backsliding.

   A. Backsliding is a falling away from truth. A return to sin and error. Sliding back, taking up former sins and ways. It is not the losing of salvation but the losing of the joy of salvation.

   B. Cure simply means the remedy that relieves the disorder.

4. In this Bible lesson we have a picture of one who goes back in sin, backslides, becomes listless, cold, indifferent, unconcerned, saved but inactive and ineffective in the Lord's work.

5. There are four steps which the Apostle Peter took which present the picture to us:

   I. The First Step in Backsliding: Self Confidence.

      1. The Apostle Peter was self-confident; "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." And a little later in the same conversation he said, "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise."

      2. We need confidence, but it needs to be anchored in Christ. When we get to thinking of what I will and I can do, then we are bordering on dangerous ground.

         A. He boasted in himself, "I will not deny Thee"

      3. This incident happened the same night they had eaten the supper.

         A. Isn't it a shame that so many times those saved will backslide so soon into error and sins.

         B. We need to be ever so careful when we say, "well I'm different." The devil lurks and listens for your boast.

         C. I have seen church members, well-meaning church members, say, "Well I would never desert the cause of Jesus and stop working for the Master", yet their lives today speak of a cold and indifferent selfishness.

      4. The quickest way to uselessness in the Lord's work is to think highly of yourself and boast in yourself.

   II. The Second Step In Backsliding: Asleep on the Job.

      1. Now we see the Apostle as he had quit watching and praying, he is asleep on the job.

      "And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? Couldest not thou watch one hour?"

      2. Simon Peter, the one who had so quickly said, "They all may deny you, yet will not I" is asleep on the job, he had taken another step away from the Lord.

      3. This is the same man who said, "I will never leave thee."

      4. Our lives cease to honor God when we stop watching and praying. "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is... and what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:33, 37.

      5. You know, when a church loses her power, seal, desire to win lost souls, do you know where the matter lies? It's in the memberships who are asleep on the
A. We have many today in the Lord's churches who are asleep on the job.
B. Asleep to sin and ungodliness.
C. Asleep while sin rages on and souls go into hell, unwarned.

6. Oh how we need to awaken, sweep out the drunkards, ungodly, those who are determined to work for the devil and his cause to the hurt and shame of the Lord's church.

7. Paul said "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13:11

III. The Third Step In Backsliding: He Followed Afar Off.

1. The Apostle had taken three steps now and he is further away from the Lord. There is more distance between the Lord and the Apostle Peter.
   A. The more distance between you and the Lord, the colder will be your heart.
   B. Boasted in himself, asleep on the job, now he is following afar off. "And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire." Mark 14:54

2. There are many of God's soldiers who have gone over the hill, absent without leave, and they are warming their fleshly hearts and lives by the enemies fire.
3. Associating with the world, worldly people will make others wonder if you are saved.
4. Many professing Christians follow as did the Apostle Peter: "afar off, warming by the enemy fire".
   A. Maybe you do not indulge in fleshly sins, maybe you do not drink...gamble...curse...etc... but if you run with the pack, you will be branded with them.
5. The world needs to see our lives as separated unto God.

IV. The Fourth Step In Backsliding: He Denied the Lord.

1. He had taken another step away from the Lord. He had boasted in Himself, he had gone to sleep on the job, he had followed afar off, now he denies the Lord Jesus!

2. This is the same man who vehemently declared, "Though all the others forsake you Lord, you can count on me."

3. Many Christians have condemned those who run the race well for a while, then fall by the way side. Some of you have told me of former active members who worked well for God and now you find yourself in the very same company,

4. Some say confidently "I would never, never, deny Jesus!"
   A. But, do you deny Jesus?

5. There are many ways Christians deny Christ Jesus:
   A. You can deny Jesus by the life you live.
   B. By your choice of associates.
   C. By your speech
   D. By your action. Example: Deacon who hunted birds on Sunday
   E. By your lack of action. "I don't do anything."

6. The Apostle Peter came to the place he denied the Lord, and even cursed a little to make it seem stronger to the enemy.

V. The Remedy or Cure for Backsliding: Repentance

1. He was sorrowful for his sin and his denial of the Lord, "And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, 'Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.' And when he thought thereon, he wept." Mark 14:72

2. He saw Jesus as Jesus looked at him.
   A. The Lord Jesus looks down at the very thoughts and actions of every professing child of God.

3. He "remember the words of the
Lord."

A. Oh how his heart was racked with pain as he realized how far he had gone from the Lord.

B. How miserable as he looked back at the steps, remembered his vow unto God, and how he had broken every word of his promise to the Saviour!

4. He repented in tears; tears of sorrow but they brought tears of joy.

5. Tears are not always a sign of repentance, but true repentance brings a tearful heart as one in repentance turns away from sin and error unto the will of Almighty God.

6. It is not enough to be sorry for your sin... but...you need to take a stand and by the grace of God do better for HIM. This is what the Apostle Peter did.

7. The Apostle Peter lived his life for Jesus, even died for Jesus.

A. Legend says that when he was killed for the cause of Christ, they hung his head down to the ground, crucify him upside down, "for" said he, "I am not worthy to even die like my Lord."

Conclusion:

1. God wants your life, but he is not going to overpower you, He wants you to freely give yourself unto Him.

2. Are you refusing to let Him have your life?

3. Are you refusing God something that He wants you to do?

4. Are you denying the Lord, following afar off? You must answer for you.

5. God calls all who are out of service and out of harmony with Him, to repentance...now...this minute...will you?

6. Jesus calls lost souls to Him.

Bro. J. B. Powers
Home in Glory

A PROFITABLE LIFE:
Mark 8:36-37

Introduction: I John 2:15-17 says, "The things of the world shall pass away."

A. So we must decide between the spiritual and the worldly.

B. Your Choice today could save you much trouble.

I. Choose between Wealth and Loyalty:

A. Jesus said, hardly can a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven.

1. This was shortly after a rich man inquired about eternal life.

2. This man walked away sorrowful because he could not give up the things of the world.

B. We must not lose sight of where our blessings come from. James 1:17

1. "If you would be my disciple you must take up your cross daily and follow me."

2. This means self-sacrifice.

C. If a man could be rich and loyal to God, O.K., but,

1. Remember the riches shall pass away.

2. Then we must stand before God and give account.

II. Choose between Popularity and Discipline.
John 15:18-20

A. There are many things popular with the world.

1. Drinking and dancing,

2. Dope and hanging out,


4. Dressing slinky, and wearing your hair as the styles permit.

B. You can do these things, it is your choice.

1. But it is not God's choice.

2. God has told us His standards.

C. Remember that most of the hurt that comes to people is because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time, doing the wrong thing.

D. Self-discipline is the strongest form of love.
1. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and soul and mind.
2. And to love your neighbor as you love yourself.

III. Choose between Christ and the World.

A. Your Choice is simple!
1. You can either choose Christ
2. Or you can choose mammon
3. You cannot serve both
B. It has been tried since time began:
1. Adam tried to serve wife and God, in his choice to eat of the fruit.
2. Saul tried to be God's king, and make his own choices as to how to run his life,
3. Ananias and Sapphira, tried to serve both,
C. Even if you are saved, you can be happy or miserable according to whom or what you are loyal.

Conclusion:

A. What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?
B. Christ is the profitable life!

Bro. Sammy Eldredge
Home in Glory

FOLLOWING JESUS NEEDS TOTAL COMMITMENT
LUKE 9:23-24

Introduction:
People are willing to pay a high price for something they value. IS it any surprise that Jesus should demand this much commitment from those who would follow Him? There are at least three conditions that must be met by people who want to follow Jesus.
1. They must be willing to deny themselves.
2. They must carry their crosses.
3. They must give up their lives.

"What do you value in your life?"

What is it mean to follow Jesus? This means
to keep close to Him, to obey His commands, and to imitate His life, this is a true commitment to Jesus.

I. We must be willing to deny ourselves. V23a

A. To deny ourselves doesn't mean we are not important. It doesn't mean we are nothing. It means we must put aside our own desires and conveniences.
B. It means to reject our human desires and follow God's desire.
C. It means to throw our desires away, and depend on the Lord.

II. We must carry our crosses V.23b

A. When Jesus was telling about carrying cross and follow Him, his audience knew what carrying or taking a cross mean.
B. Death on a cross was a form of execution used by Rome for dangerous criminals. A prisoner carried his own cross to the place of execution, which signifying submission to Rome's power.
1. Jesus used carrying a cross to illustrate the ultimate submission required to follow Him.
2. He is talking about the heroic effort needed to follow Him moment by moment.
3. To do His will even when the work is difficult.

III. We must Give up our lives v.24

A. We must throw away our lives for the sake of Jesus Christ.
1. This means that nothing not even life itself can compare to what we can gain with Christ.
B. Jesus wants us to choose to follow Him rather than to lead a life of sin and self-satisfaction.
C. He wants us to stop trying to control our own lives and to let Him be in charge.
1. This makes good sense because, as the Creator, only He knows what real life is about.

Conclusion:

Whatever we have on earth is only temporary, it
cannot be exchanged for our souls. If we follow Jesus, we will know what it means to really live in this life and to have eternal life as well.

1. Jesus asks for submission, not self-hatred;
2. He asks us to throw away the self-centeredness that says we know better than God how to run our lives.
3. We need full commitment so that we can be submissive to Jesus Christ our Lord and our Savior of our lives.

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THE SECRET OF SUCCESS
John 21:1-6

Introduction:
A. All who have been born anew should long to be true servants of the Lord. He has said to us "Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men"
B. "How can I best serve my Master?" We are called to be witnesses for him. Our highest and most urgent service is that of winning souls.
C. Now note v.3. See sad but true illustration of what we may call self-conducted service. In this message we will note the contrast between "self-directed services" to which we are all prone. And "Christ directed service" to which we need to learn and practice.

I. "Self-directed service"
A. Peter said "I go a fishing" Not for just a night, but back to his old trade, self-originated.
1. If we (church) are to "spiritually successful". Besides human willingness we must have divine leadership.
2. Make sure not serving in self-will.
Outside will of Christ - much is called "Christian service" Real service is - obedient fulfillment of His will.
B. Peter did not go alone. Others said "we also go with thee" This service under human leadership - in self-will. Thank God for leaders. But we are not to follow leaders which lead us away from His Will.
C. Next - impulsiveness of self-directed services. "They went forth and entered into a ship immediately". No time for prayer, No question "is it wise" but went immediately.
1. Prayerless rush - Foolish risk
2. Worth doing - worth praying about
3. The danger in self-will service, do more harm than good.
D. Now - results of such service - "they caught nothing" Toiled - fished all night caught nothing. This is always the results of such service. As far as Real Spiritual Results are concerned - Nothing.

II. "Christ-directed service"
A. Now we see the transformation from failure to success. Why, because self-directed service gave way to Christ directed.
Vs. 4-6
B. At first they did not recognize Him (Jesus) v.4. Of course they were tired. Eyes dull from lack of sleep. Spiritual Lesson - Service in self-will dims our eyes and ears to the presence and voice of the Master. When they obeyed, failure gave way to abounding success.
C. Note some other things in this illustration of "Christ Directed Service"
1. Assurance v.6 "Ye shall find". How good for us to know that when we do His Will He will crown our efforts with success.
2. Success came - empty nets became full. V.6
D. "Christ - Directed Service" is "Christ sustained service." They came to shore - saw a fire kindled - fish and bread thereon - then a welcome voice "Come and Dine" vs. 9-12. No doubt great joy filled their souls.
E. So it is with us - when we do His will - His Way - According to His Word - the very joy of heaven will fill our souls.

Conclusion:
A. As individuals - family - church - the secret of success is in Jesus Christ.

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