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KINGDOM LIFE

WORD/**WALK**/WITNESS 2

WHAT DIRECTION ARE YOU WALKING IN?

- **SANCTIFICATION**
- ***The Benefits of a Christian Walk***
- ***Battling Sin***
- ***Are You Making These 3 Mistakes In Your Christian Walk?***
- ***Steps to improve your Christian walk***
- **Q & A**



Psalm 15 (KJV)

15 Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

² He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

³ He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

⁴ In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

⁵ He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

1 Timothy 4:12(KJV)

¹² Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Romans 7:15-22(KJV)

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

¹⁶ If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

I.

Sanctification - a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives.

The Benefits of a Christian's Walk

You don't have to be a believer for long before you discover by personal experience that being a Christian and living like one are often different things. Like the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:15, we find that we want to do the right thing but too often end up doing the very thing we hate.

*****Scripture on the one hand addresses the Christian positionally as perfect, forgiven, righteous possessor of "every spiritual blessing" (Ephesians 1:3) and on the other, as one who experientially in his daily life and experiences falls short of perfection, righteousness, etc.** The believer's position and benefits may be compared to the foundation on which the Christian life is built as a superstructure.

This "walk", "growth", or "building of the superstructure" commonly called "sanctification." Some of the qualities that characterize our growth or sanctification are: (material presented in these four points is take from Victor Matthews, Growth in Grace? Baker, 1980, pp. 47-50)

I'M SAVED AND GROWING! 2 Peter 3:18

A. The Benefits Are Claimed

We receive and experience such virtues and abilities only as we learn how to put them into practice by faith

and love (Romans 6:16; I Peter 1:22), An illustration of such a benefit would be the ability to resist temptation. We grow in this ability by truly desiring it, by claiming the provision and promise of God (I Corinthians 10:13), and then by making use of it in acts of faith (Matthew 4:3-11; Hebrews 2:14-18; James 1:2, 12-14; I Peter 1:6, 7; II Peter 2:9).

B. The Benefits Are With Degrees

That which the believer possesses by way of sanctification is never complete. Whatever the benefit may be, it is only partially known and utilized. One Christian may possess the ability to resist temptation only in a very small degree while another may possess it in a much larger degree. All Christians have some ability to resist temptation, but all in a different degree.

C. The Benefits Are Transitory

By comparison, the virtues and abilities of sanctification are not necessarily permanent. It is very possible to attain a high degree of progress in some area of Christian practice and then to lose it through neglect. It is debatable whether one may lose any benefit of sanctification absolutely. Undoubtedly this would not be true. Every Christian, however, has experienced remarkable growth in some area only to find a stunting of that growth and a decline in ability due to carelessness. (I Corinthians 3:1-4; 5:1-13; 6:1-8; 11:18-22; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; II Tim. 4:10).
Luke 2:52-5

D. The Benefits Are Based On The Person & Work Of Jesus

The benefits of sanctification depend not only on Jesus Christ and His work, but also upon the spiritual cooperation of the believer. It has been pointed out earlier that one must desire and learn how to utilize these benefits. The provision has been made by Jesus Christ so that His people may live successfully. The Holy Spirit has been sent to teach and anoint the believer. But it is clear from Scripture and from the experience of every Christian that our cooperation is necessary.

II. Battling Sin

Several topics already covered are keys to grow as a Christian, i.e. Bible study, prayer, confession, etc. Frequently, while knowing that we should grow, we have difficulty like Paul in Romans 7:15. To help us understand better the battle we face throughout our life as a Christian, here are a few important points.

A. The Battle Ground Is Our Heart

Look up and note this truth in Mark 7:21-23; Genesis 6:5; Luke 6:45.

1. What is the heart?.....motives.

Heart in Scripture is used in various ways. The mind as it reasons, discerns, and judges; the emotions as they like or dislike; the conscience as it determines and warns; and the will as it chooses or refuses - are all together called the heart.

2. According to Jeremiah 17:9-10, what are 2 characteristics of the heart of man?

- a. deceitful
- b. desperately sick

"Knowing that indwelling sin occupies a heart that is deceitful and unsearchable should make us extremely wary. We need to ask God daily to search our hearts for sin that we cannot or will not see. This was David's prayer: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there by any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way" (Psalm 139:23-24).

God's primary means of searching our hearts this way is through His Word, as we read it under the power of the Holy Spirit. "The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

As we pray for God to search our hearts, we must continually expose ourselves to the searching of His Word." (Jerry Bridges, The Pursuit of Holiness, NAV Press, pp. 64,65).

Are You Making These 3 Mistakes In Your Christian Walk?

The Christian walk is often a hard one. Our old, sinful nature continually battles against the Spirit, causing us to sin. (Gal 5:17)

Even the Apostle Paul struggled at times, admitting that, "I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." (Rom 7:15) So in this study we're going to look at three mistakes all Christian's make and what to do when we make them.

Now it's very important to understand that we aren't trying to correct these mistakes to earn our salvation. Our salvation doesn't depend on our ability to live a perfect life, it depends on Christ's ability to live a perfect life, and be a sacrifice for our sins.

In other words we fight against sin not to be saved, but because we are saved, and we want to be as close to our Lord and Savior as we can.

Mistake #1 – God's Word Isn't Guiding Your Actions

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (Jam 1:22)

The Christian faith isn't something only to be professed, it's also something to be lived. "True faith", J.C. Ryle once said, "is more than holding theological positions – it's living, burning and active. It produces works of love, it purifies the heart, and overcomes the world."

What you believe should affect how you live. God's Word is "living and powerful", a "light to our path", and is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness." (Heb 4:12, Ps 119:105, 2 Tim 3:16)

If God's Word Isn't Guiding Your Actions: "The just shall live by faith," and "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Hab 2:4, Rom 10:17). Commit yourself to reading and applying the teachings of the

Bible every day.

Prayer: Father, let me not only love Your truth, but live it.

Mistake #2 – You Aren't Living In God's Strength

He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. (Isa 40:29)

Christians should live day by day in God's strength, but often they turn their focus from living in His strength, to living in the world's strength.

People live in worldly strength by intimidating, oppressing or seducing those with lesser strength. The world's strength is seen by breaking those under them.

People live in God's strength when they recognize that He alone is the source their joy, value, purpose and power. God's strength is seen when He gives, renews and increases the strength of those who take refuge in Him. The world forces down and breaks, God lifts up and rebuilds.

If You Aren't Living In God's Strength: Focus on living – not for the world – but for Christ, who is your life, and through whom you can do all things. (Col 3:4, Phil 4:13)

Learn from Abraham, who Romans 4:20-21 tells us "was strengthened in faith" because he was "fully convinced that what God had promised He was also able to perform."

Trust the Lord to see you through whatever has been put in your path. Turn to Him to increase your strength when you are weak, give you comfort when you are hurting and give you rest when you are weary. (Isa 40:29, 2 Cor 1:3-6, Matt 11:28)

Prayer: O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me.

Mistake #3 – You’re Living For Sin Instead Of Living For Christ

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. (Rom 13:14)

We sin when we go against God’s law. We do this by either not doing what God requires of us or by doing what He has forbidden us to do. Sin can occur in thought, word, or deed.

All too often Christians underestimate the power of sin and overestimate their own power to avoid it. We fall into sin by becoming increasingly comfortable going in the wrong direction. We flirt with sin, then engage in it, then before we know it, we’re overwhelmed by it.

If You Are Living For Sin: Turn from sin to Christ. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 Jhn 1:9)

Prayer: Lord, teach me through your Word & Spirit to Honor you in all I do

III.

Steps to improve your Christian walk

1

Follow Jesus' example at all times . Follow Jesus' (the Son of God) greatest commandments: "Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, mind, body and soul" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Even if someone treats you wrongly or whether you know them or not, we are called to love them. Jesus said "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Jesus says in John 13:15, "I have given you an example, that as I have done, so should you do." In I Corinthians 11:1, Paul says, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God as dear children." Also many Believers are "empty, swept and garnished" (Matthew 12:44) by lukewarm Christian Doctrines. If you just go to church, you will be a weak Christian and trials will make havoc of your life. But if you go to church AND read the Word every night, you

will become a strong Christian. Most Christians do not read the Bible every day, so if all you do is go to Church, you will be a weak Christian. A few Christian growing passages are Proverbs 8:17-21. Psalms 1:1-3. John 14:21-27. James 1:2-8. I Thessalonians 5:16-18. II Timothy 1:6-7, Hebrews 8:6,10. Ephesians 6:10-18. Proverbs 4:20-23.

2

Acknowledge that you have faults (sins) and then repent -- change your attitude and pray.

Realize that conversion is not simply one act but the beginning of a life-long commitment. Persistence and perseverance are continuing attitudes for engaging life with. Don't be hard on yourself if and when you fail, but admit it; pick yourself up; trust in God and move forward.

3

READ and DO what the Bible says. James 1:22 - Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." Matthew 4:4 - Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" The bible also says that "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable [for something] for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;" - 2 Timothy 3:16.

4

Allow God to change you: As a follower of Jesus, you cannot change yourself, only God can through his Son. Ezekiel 36:26-27 - "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." Ephesians 4:24 says "and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness". A true Christian, when converted, will immediately notice an unavoidable change in sensitivity to his daily routine. They will begin to question their taste in movies, music, clothing, even choice in friends! The Bible says "Therefore, rid yourselves of everything impure and every expression of wickedness, and with a gentle spirit welcome the word planted in you that can save your souls."(James 1:21)

5

Understand that you will be persecuted

for your beliefs. Do not allow others' attacks to weaken your faith. Have courage in your convictions and do well but don't judge others. 2 Timothy 3:12 - "In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"

6

Set aside time for effective and

meaningful prayer. Make intercession for people who do not pray enough for their own development, i.e.: children, cousins, friends, enemies and family, etc. In Ephesians 1:16 Paul prays for a "Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation" I recommend that you say the prayer in Ephesians 1:16-23 for yourself everyday for one year and God will open up your spirit and develop your understanding.

7

Try to see the perspectives (point of view) of others, even if you personally disagree with them.

Of course, an answered prayer for peace for your enemies and that they would become blessed as children of God would help both you and them.

8

Be patient with people who do not make you happy or even upset you.

Work on trying to forgive those who may have hurt you. You must learn to love your enemies. God loves everyone, and we need to, also. Say farewell to selective loving. If you have a hard time loving your enemies, pray to God to provide understanding through his Holy Spirit.

9

Work and pray for others to the best of your abilities.

Care for people who are in need when they ask for help. James 2:16 "If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?" This is one of the things Jesus talked about in His teachings. Giving does not always having to be financial, it can be in the form of perishables or clothing.

10

Treat others kindly as you would like to

be treated. Even simple acts of kindness like holding a door open for someone are good deeds that can help you feel less paranoid--because then you feel that others should think well of you and of your testimony in Christ.

11

Strive to live a quiet life.

1Thesolonians 4:11 - "and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you," Pride can imply that you are judging others falsely and is said to be the mother of all sins, because pride resides in each one of us. The source of all sin is ones' own selfishness (greed, lust, hate for others, murder, theft, etc.).

12

Openly share the good news!

Remember, living the Christian life through your actions will show others that God must be working in your life. Always stick up for your beliefs such as being conservative in good morals and liberal in giving your own goods--not being a Robin Hood or "welfare-monger" (profiting off poverty) or welfare-cheat, but planting seeds in others towards Christ by grace through faith, which always results in good deeds (which are a RESULT of salvation and NEVER a means to salvation).

13

Make special efforts to fellowship with other believers.

It is a wonderful thing that God wants Christians to unite in church and Bible study evenings--so do not think of others as hypocrites or hold yourself out as an example. Give the credit for any good that you may do to God and to God's blessing. You will find it a blessing to talk with Bible study members about the Christian life: but not sensationalism like argumentative opinions... This may be called being accountable--being open to share your views or any misgivings and weaknesses.

14

Practice what you preach...

Jesus gives us a very good example in Matthew 7:3-5 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you

say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

15

Help people. Volunteering is a great place to start for a Christian who is sure or unsure of what God wants them to do. For example, you could take a shift at a soup kitchen near you, or visit people staying in a nursing home.

Questions:

1. How do you feel when a Christian is dishonest or gossips to you? Why is this bad?
2. How well can you relate to these principles from Psalm 15? Are they realistic and practical for you, for today? Why, or why not? What do you think? Do your thoughts mesh with Psalm 15 and the rest of Scripture?
3. Read Eph. 2:8-9 and James 2:14. Compare and contrast these passages. How do they differ? How are they the same?
4. How can your growth in Faith and Character impact your church?
5. Some Christians put their emphases on what they believe, while others emphasize on how they are to behave. What are the values of belief and knowledge, and how does this relate to how we react in life?
6. Look at each of these "Principals" and answer the question, how have you applied these to yourself, your family, your friends, your church, and people in general?
7. Why would you or a church not want to follow these principles?
8. What about ways to demonstrate these principles to others around you so that it affects "who you are" in your personality and deeds? In doing so, you not only hear what God says, but truly listen and apply His "principles" in all that you do.
9. What happens when we are not following these or other godly principles?
10. What would be the characteristics of a pretender or false teacher? Would he or she model the above precepts? How would you know?
11. Our focus must be on edifying and encouraging. So, what can you and/or your church do to make this a priority?
12. Which of the stanzas of Psalm 15 strike at you so that you need to deal with it in your own life? When, and how will you?
13. How will these principles be used to build your faith and church?
14. How can you improve your spiritual walk so you can be the person who models Psalm 15?
15. Can you think of other practical ways to demonstrate these principles in your life?