

INTRO.

We have had two challenging messages from the Word given by Chase and David the past two weeks showing us the importance and the seriousness of being holy. I have been seeking the Lord regarding holiness and the Lord began burning in me a practical means but also an absolute NECESSARY means of living in holiness. I am grateful to the staff for letting me share this on a Sunday morning, and I do not take this lightly. So let's get to it.

The Fight For Your Life

Properly wielding the Sword of the Spirit to fight temptation.

The reason I called this the fight for your life, is that walking in holiness IS the difference between life and death. We cannot ABIDE IN HIM without holiness.

But how do we do it? The cliché, "It's easier said than done" could never be more true than when applied to being holy.

DAVID'S DEFINITION

I want to remind us of the theological definition of holiness that David shared with us last week: Holiness means to be separated from sin AND devoted to the honor of God. So

make sure you hear that it's more than just NOT doing bad things. (example of good people I know that do not show evidence in their life of being saved) So holiness is much more than doing good things.

THE BIGGEST ENEMY

One of the biggest enemies of Holiness is TEMPTATION which leads us to SIN which separates us from fellowship with GOD. And James 1:13 says,

"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one."

3 SOURCES OF TEMPTATION

Temptation comes from one of three sources : 1. The Enemy (whose desire is to steal, kill, and destroy 2. The World (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life 3. The Flesh (a host of trouble too long to list ;))

So this is a very serious battle to be fought if we are to resist temptation in pursuit of holiness.

THE BEST WAY TO FIGHT TEMPTATION

One of the best ways to fight temptation is using the only OFFENSIVE WEAPON listed in the Armor of God found in Ephesians.... THE BIBLE aka the Sword of the Spirit.

Eph. 6:17 refers to the Word of God as THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT so I'm going to be using that throughout the message.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO JUST USE IT

However, it is not enough to just use the Bible in a given situation, but we must PROPERLY WIELD the Sword of the Spirit.

Let's watch this clip involving swords.

(Watch Video) 1:47 – 2:12

Now that was a perfect example of not using a sword for its intended purpose, an amazing way to use it, but not the intended way.

SOMETHING WE ALL DO

But let me ask you... How many of you have ever used something in a way it's not intended to be used... WE ALL DO.... A screwdriver as a crowbar, a wrench for a hammer, a towel as an oven mitt, or even ketchup on French Fries. Sometimes it might work, but other times it's bad

But now think about this one... How many have been negatively affected / embarrassed by using something in a way other than its intended purpose? I have been very negatively affected in this way

THEN YOU ALSO HAVE not being able to use what you have as well as you could?

How many times have we had DIVINE APPOINTMENTS with someone, but walk away from it feeling like ... "man if only I knew the Bible better...", "or I should have said this", or "I REALLY WISH I had not said that..."

There are CULTS and TERRORISTS that use God's Word on a daily basis to harm and even kill others.

Or what about using the Word of God to get what WE WANT?

The WORD FAITH movement is guilty of this today, but let's be honest and ask God to show you and I where we try to selfishly BEND THE SCRIPTURES to justify an action or desire. it is so dangerous and we must be aware of it. lest we fall.

IF WE DON'T HANDLE THE WORD OF GOD PROPERLY bad things can happen.

A TALE OF TWO TEMPTATIONS

Now let's look at two biblical examples that we are all familiar with, but that clearly

demonstrates THE WRONG WAY and THE RIGHT WAY to handle the Word of God in the fight with temptation.

THE WRONG WAY: THE FALL

Genesis 3 We won't read it, but I'll just break it down in the context of this message. Now in this passage the serpent (THE ENEMY)is tempting Eve to take fruit from the tree God had told them not to eat. The Enemy comes to Eve and initially poses a slight variation to what God had told Adam. Which then to Eve's credit she repeats what God actually said. Now the interesting part of this is then the serpent uses God's 'Word' to get her to give in to the temptation.... "3:5 when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." That was THE TRUTH according to verse 22and Satan uses it to tempt her.

I do want to read the part where the temptation leads to sin. "Gen 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate." Look at the 3 things that happened Now let's look at 1 John 2:16 real quick to see how it perfectly labels these three issues that caused Eve to fall.

1Jo 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh (GOOD FOR FOOD) and the lust of the eyes (DELIGHT TO THE EYES) and the boastful pride of life (ABLE TO MAKE ONE WISE), is not from the Father, but is from the world.

For time sake we can't dive into that well, but I pray you jump into it on your own.

But enough about the wrong way... Let's take a look at

THE RIGHT WAY: THE WILDERNESS

... Another aside that could be developed here is looking at the contrast of setting between these situations. You have the wrong way taking place in a lush garden bursting with life, and the right way taking place in a dry arid desert after having not eaten in 40 days!

Man there's a few messages in all of that. But back to the regulary scheduled program..... Matt. 4:1 says, "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."

Again we won't read the entire passage but what happens here is yet another direct correlation to 1 Jhn 2:16 b/c The Enemy uses the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes

, and the boastful pride of life to attack Jesus in hopes of making him fall. I don't know about you, but I wonder if that's the Enemy's M.O. of attack....

Now the first two times, Satan uses the old tactic... "Well, If you ARE the Son of God, then....."

The first attempt was using the LUST OF THE FLESH. Jesus hasn't eaten for 40 days so he says.... turn the stones into bread and Jesus responds with, "... It is written... "

so the Enemy then comes back with Scripture, SPEAKING TRUTH AGAIN, and uses the LUST OF THE EYES by saying - throw yourself from the Pinnacle of the temple b/c the Angels will keep you from falling if you are the Son of God.

Now think about this one for a minute... The temple in the HOLY CITY is a very busy place, if Jesus had jumped from there and all the people SAW Jesus rescued by angels, it would be instant 'messiah'. No cross, no suffering, all the people would worship him....

but still again Jesus wields His Sword beautifully and cuts through the Enemy's deceit... until finally Satan just says look, just worship me and I'll give you all the kingdoms you see.... playing the final boastful PRIDE OF LIFE card...

but perfectly he uses the Scripture to combat the temptation dealt by the Devil himself and remain victorious!

So, that brings us to the final question: How do we use the Sword of the Spirit properly?

GO TO THE SWORD FOR THE ANSWER

We find the answer in Ps. 119:9-12 "9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. 10 With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! 11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

We have to get the Word of God into our minds, let it seep into our hearts, that we may live it out in holiness unto the Lord. **THAT IS HOW WE KNOW WE WILL PROPERLY WIELD THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT** and I close with the short little prayer of verse 12...

12 Blessed are you, O Lord ; teach me your statutes!"