

FREEDOM FROM COMPULSIVE HABITS

GOD'S WAY, NOT OUR WAY

AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE
OUR HEARTS WITHOUT
CONDEMNATION

God's Word for Heartbeat for 2007

- It's a year to invest in people for eternity; a year for joy and salvation which is the result of us being Good News and proclaiming Good News. It is a year to lift up our eyes, to raise our sights and to expand God's Kingdom as never before. We will see Jesus more clearly than ever before and we will show Him to the world as He really is. His light will shine in the darkness and many will come to His light.

FROM LAST WEEK: GOD WANTS US TO BE LEADERS WITH INFLUENCE

- If we want to see God as He really is, we need an intimate, high quality relationship with Him (I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing). John 15:5 (KJV)
- Pastor John mentioned last week...to be effective as leaders we need to be humble, accountable and teachable, as we can do nothing apart from Jesus.
- So, we want to be obedient to God and not let anything hinder our relationship with Him.
- “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, 1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV)

GRACE

- **The message of God's grace is that He loves us unconditionally because of the finished work of Jesus. ALLOWING GOD TO HELP US OVERCOME A COMPULSIVE HABIT IS NOT A CONDITION OF HIS LOVE TOWARDS US**
- **But God has never said there aren't consequences of our actions here on earth. When it comes to temptations to be disobedient to God we have to take care according to Hebrews 3:12, "lest anyone one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin".....**
- **If compulsive habits/attitudes lead to sin, they don't harden God's heart towards us, but our hearts towards Him and affect how we see God.... and remember our word for 2007 is that God wants us to see Him as He really is.**
- **James 1:13-17: "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. (Not death in our spirit, so must be in the soul (our emotions and understanding)...more on that later)**
- **We all know what it feels like when we sin, we feel ashamed etc. and unless we understand God's Grace, we can easily turn away from God when we sin, thinking He's condemning us, instead of turning towards Him in repentance and looking for His Grace and solutions to the problem.**

GOD'S SOLUTION FOR COMPULSIVE HABITS

- FIRST WE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE A PROBLEM/HABIT/ATTITUDE (EXAMINE OUR HEARTS)
- NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM
- WHY DO I DO WHAT I DON'T WANT TO DO?
- KEYS TO BREAKING HABITS.

WHAT'S A COMPULSIVE HABIT?

- DOING WHAT WE DON'T WANT TO DO (DESCRIBED BY PAUL IN ROMANS 7:14-16)
- THEY'RE NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS
- GOD'S GIVEN US A CONSCIENCE: OUR SPIRITS KNOW WHAT PLEASES HIM AND WHAT DOESN'T, WHICH ALL LINES UP WITH HIS WORD
- ANYTHING THAT CAUSES A BATTLE BETWEEN OUR FLESH AND OUR SPIRITS (WITH OUR SOULS CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE) AND SO HINDERS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

GOOD NEWS IS THAT OUR INHERITANCE AS CHRISTIANS IS PEACE

- HEB 4:9-10 THERE REMAINS THEREFORE A REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD. FOR HE WHO HAS ENTERED HIS REST HAS HIMSELF ALSO CEASED FROM HIS WORKS AS GOD *DID* FROM HIS.
- WE'LL SEE THAT COMPULSIONS COME FROM A LACK OF REST OR PEACE
- OUR FLESH IS A HARD TASKMASTER, "ONE MORE TIME OF INDULGENCE AND I'LL HAVE PEACE." DECEPTION MAY MEAN THIS ISN'T A CONSCIOUS PROCESS

WHY AM I NOT AT PEACE?

- UNBELIEF IN OUR HEARTS: WE WILL OFTEN PAY MORE ATTENTION TO WHAT OUR SENSES (FLESH) AND EMOTIONS (SOULS) TELL US MORE THAN GOD'S WORD AND HIS REVELATION KNOWLEDGE
- WE DON'T CHOOSE TO BE IN UNBELIEF BUT REMEMBER HEBREWS 3:12: SIN IS DECEITFUL (WE OFTEN DON'T EVEN KNOW WE'RE DECEIVED)

FOUR LIES THROUGH WHICH SIN IN OUR FLESH DECEIVES US

- YOU BELIEVE GOD IS NOT FAITHFUL TO YOU (TO BELIEVE WHAT YOUR FLESH TELLS YOU OVER GOD'S WORD, YOU MUST FIRST BELIEVE GOD ISN'T FAITHFUL).
- YOU BELIEVE THE LIE THAT THE HABIT YOUR FLESH WANTS TO DRAW YOU INTO WILL SATISFY YOU.
- YOU BELIEVE THAT THIS HABIT IS STRONGER THAN THE POWER OF JESUS CHRIST WITHIN YOU TO BREAK IT.
- YOU BELIEVE THAT THE HABIT OR WRONG ATTITUDE IS PART OF YOU AND THAT'S JUST THE WAY YOU ARE.

- WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T ASK GOD TO HELP US WITH OUR HABIT AND TRY TO DEAL WITH IT OURSELVES:
- OUR GOD-GIVEN CONSCIENCE ACCUSES US AND GUILT PLAGUES US. THE GUILT CREATES A LACK OF PEACE IN OUR SOULS AND THE FLESH GOES TO WORK AGAIN TO COME UP WITH ANOTHER SOLUTION TO BRING US THE PEACE WE CRAVE.

WHAT DRIVES THIS DECEPTION

- THOUGH JESUS MADE SATAN POWERLESS AND TOOK AWAY THE POWER OF SIN AND DEATH, SATAN STILL TRIES TO CONTROL PEOPLE THROUGH DECEPTION AND THE FEAR OF DEATH
- BECAUSE WE ARE TRI-PART: SPIRIT, SOUL, BODY, WE CAN FEAR 3 TYPES OF DEATH. AS CHRISTIANS WE DON'T OFTEN FEAR PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL DEATH
- IT'S THE FEAR OF DEATH IN OUR SOULS WHICH DRIVES OUR COMPULSIVE HABITS, E.G "I WON'T BE HAPPY UNLESS I HAVE ANOTHER.....OR FOLLOW THIS COMPULSION"

“WHOEVER WISHES TO SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT”

- THEN JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "IF ANYONE DESIRES TO COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME. FOR WHOEVER DESIRES TO SAVE HIS LIFE WILL LOSE IT, BUT WHOEVER LOSES HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE WILL FIND IT. FOR WHAT PROFIT IS IT TO A MAN IF HE GAINS THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSES HIS OWN SOUL? MATT 16:24-26 (NKJV)
- MATT 16:25: IN THE GREEK, THE WORD LIFE (“PSUCHE”) IS THE SAME WORD USED IN VS. 26 FOR SOUL
- SO JESUS IS NOT TALKING ABOUT LOSING ETERNAL LIFE, IT’S SOUL LIFE
- SO IF YOU, IN YOUR OWN STRENGTH, TRY TO SAVE YOUR OWN SOUL LIFE THROUGH A HABIT, YOU LOSE IT, BUT IF YOU LOSE YOUR SOUL LIFE FOR HIS SAKE, YOU’LL THEN FIND THE LIFE OF JESUS WHICH BRINGS TRUE PEACE.
- SO YOU WON’T FIND LIFE IN YOUR SOUL UNLESS YOU YIELD IT TO JESUS. THEN THE TRUE LIFE OF JESUS IN YOUR SPIRIT (NOT DECEPTIONS FROM YOUR FLESH ABOUT WHAT GIVES YOU LIFE) CAN COME FORTH AND FLOOD YOUR SOUL, BRINGING TRUE PEACE AND HAPPINESS.

WHAT ARE OUR DEEPEST SOUL FEARS?

- **THAT I AM NOT OF VALUE AND IMPORTANCE IN THIS WORLD?**
- **THAT MY NEEDS WILL NOT BE MET AND MY GOALS FULFILLED?**
- **IN ORDER TO FEEL VALUABLE AND IMPORTANT WE MUST FEEL BOTH SECURE AND SIGNIFICANT**
- **SECURITY: “CONVINCED AWARENESS OF BEING UNCONDITIONALLY AND TOTALLY LOVED WITHOUT NEEDING TO CHANGE IN ORDER TO WIN LOVE; LOVED BY A LOVE THAT IS FREELY GIVEN, THAT CANNOT BE EARNED AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE LOST.”**
- **SIGNIFICANCE: “A REALISATION THAT I’M ENGAGED IN SOMETHING THAT IT TRULY IMPORTANT, THE RESULTS OF WHICH WILL LAST FOR ETERNITY; A JOB FOR WHICH I’M COMPLETELY ADEQUATE.”**
- **JESUS WANTS TO BE THE SOURCE OF OUR SECURITY AND SIGNIFICANCE BY HIS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE: ENSURING THAT ALL FEAR IS CAST OUT. (1 JOHN 4:18). IT’S NOT DEPENDANT ON OUR PERFORMANCE OR WHETHER WE HAVE A BAD HABIT OR NOT.**

BUT WHY HAVE I BEEN UNABLE TO OVERCOME MY BAD HABITS?

- YOUR SPIRIT (FREE FROM SIN) DESIRES TO GOVERN YOUR SOUL.
- YOUR FLESH (CONTAINING A REMNANT OF SIN) WANTS TO GOVERN YOUR SOUL
- THERE IS A BATTLE IN OUR SOULS UNLESS WE WALK BY THE SPIRIT, ACCORDING TO GAL 5:16, SO THAT WE'LL THEN NOT WANT TO CARRY OUT THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH

THE LAW OF THE MIND

- IN ROMANS 7 PAUL SAYS HE DELIGHTS IN THE LAW OF GOD IN THE INNER MAN, BUT HE SEES A DIFFERENT LAW IN THE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY, WAGING WAR AGAINST THE LAW OF HIS MIND, MAKING HIM A PRISONER OF THE LAW OF SIN.
- THERE ARE TWO SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE MIND (PART OF THE SOUL):
 - A) INFORMATION FROM OUR FIVE SENSES AND OUR NATURAL MIND/THINKING
 - B) REVELATION KNOWLEDGE, (FROM GOD'S WORD AND OUR SPIRITS)
- WE OFTEN MAKE THE MISTAKE OF TAKING THE WORD OF GOD, MAKING IT A STANDARD OR LAW IN OUR OWN MINDS AND THEN ATTEMPT TO ACCOMPLISH IT THROUGH OUR OWN STRENGTH, WITH THE RESULT OF FAILURE.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US KEYS TO BREAK COMPULSIVE HABITS/ATTITUDES AND HAS SHOWN US HOW TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT (Gal 5:16)

- FIRSTLY, DON'T IDENTIFY YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE FLESH: WE ARE NOW NEW CREATURES AND LIVE BY THE SPIRIT
- THEREFORE, FROM NOW ON, WE REGARD NO ONE ACCORDING TO THE FLESH. EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE KNOWN CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, YET NOW WE KNOW *HIM THUS* NO LONGER. THEREFORE, IF ANYONE *IS* IN CHRIST, *HE IS* A NEW CREATION; OLD THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW.
2 Cor 5:14-17 (NKJV)

MOVING FROM A ROMANS 7 EXPERIENCE TO THE VICTORY OF ROMANS 8

- PAUL LEARNT TO DISSOCIATE HIS TRUE IDENTITY FROM SIN: HE FIRST DESCRIBED THE PROBLEM IN ROMANS 7:
- For that which I (*the soul*) am doing, I (*the spirit*) do not understand; for I, (*the soul*), am not practising what I, (*the spirit*), would like to do, but I, (*the soul*), am doing the very thing I (*the spirit*) hate. He recognised that he's spirit, soul and body
- SO PAUL RECOGNISED HIS TRUE IDENTITY IN ROMANS 8:1 "There *is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT: RECEIVE THE FEAR OF THE LORD AND THE HATRED OF SIN

- THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS NOT BEING AFRAID OF GOD, IT'S A REVERENCE OF HIM AND RESPECT FOR HIS OPINION AND HIS WORD
- "THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY ONE IS UNDERSTANDING.
PROV 9:10 (NKJV)

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT: TRUE REPENTANCE

- FOR GODLY SORROW PRODUCES REPENTANCE *LEADING TO SALVATION, NOT TO BE REGRETTED*; BUT THE SORROW OF THE WORLD PRODUCES DEATH. 2 COR 7:10 (NKJV)
- WITH A COMPULSIVE HABIT, YOU CAN REPENT OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - A) THE EXTERNAL MANIFESTATION OF SIN (THE HABIT). ASK THE LORD TO FORGIVE YOU FOR TRUSTING IN IT TO BRING YOU PEACE
 - B) PRIDE: REPENT OF TRYING TO DEAL WITH IT IN YOUR OWN STRENGTH
 - C) UNBELIEF AND FEAR: LET JESUS BRING YOU PEACE.
 - D) RESISTING GOD'S LOVE: REPENT IF YOU HAVE BEEN ANGRY TOWARDS THE LORD IF YOU THOUGHT HE WASN'T HELPING YOU, PARTICULARLY IF IT'S AN ISSUE WHICH GOES WAY BACK, EVEN TO YOUR CHILDHOOD

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT: RECEIVE GOD'S LOVE

➤ THEREFORE IF THE SON
MAKES YOU FREE, YOU
SHALL BE FREE INDEED
(JOHN 8:36)