CHURCH NOT IMMUNE

Paul is pitting two lifestyles against each other - THE STRIVING LIFE VS. THE ABIDING LIFE. But it's not a matter of just switching. We must unlearn.

THE STRIVING LIFE DEALS IN SELF-DECEPTION. THE ABIDING LIFE DEALS IN SELF-AWARENESS.

> *1 Corinthians 3:18a - [18a]**Let no one deceive** himself.*

Explain

The striving life begins with an inflated view of self, for better or worse, big or small. "We know what's best."

- *Isaiah 5:20–21 - [21]Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!*
- *Galatians 6:3 - [3]For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

Illustrate

It is easier to live with the perception we have of ourselves than with the real us.

• Basketball in Newport

This isn't a call to just see all our deficiencies. It's a call to look to God, who allows us to see ourselves rightly.

- *Isaiah 6:5 - [5]And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"*
- *Job 42:5–6 - [5]I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; [6]therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."*
- *Revelation 1:17–18 - [17]When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, [18]and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*

Apply

Don't put effort into maintaining appearance. Put effort into being refined in his presence.

- *Psalm 139:23–24 - [23]Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! [24]And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

Unlearn old identities - winner or worm. Only define us if we are living the striving life.

Take that effort and learn to see ourselves rightly - Angry, hurt, sad, lonely, guilty, shameful, afraid… Adam, where are you? He lays his hand on us - fear not. Abide.

THE STRIVING LIFE DEALS IN THE WORLD'S METRICS OF SUCCESS. THE ABIDING LIFE DEALS IN GOD'S METRICS OF SUCCESS.

> *1 Corinthians 3:18b-20 - [18b]If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, **let him become a fool that he may become wise**. [19]For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," [20]and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."*

Explain

If we see ourselves rightly, we will look and feel stupid now… good! God can work now! Let us become fools!
God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. This is a church problem - "among you"!
We have seen how the world sees God's wisdom - here we now see how God sees the world's wisdom. (v 19)

- *Job 5:13 - [13]He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end.*
- *Psalm 94:11 - [11]the Lord—knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.*
- *Jeremiah 8:8–9 - [8]"How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us'? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie. [9]The wise men shall be put to shame; they shall be dismayed and taken; behold, they have rejected the word of the Lord, so what wisdom is in them?*

Illustrate

We all want to seem wise by the world's standards.
Shying away from hard people and conversations because I want to appear competent and smart. I am defining success as an appearance vs an act of faithful presence.

Apply

We will not outwork or outsmart God. We must become fools that we may become wise
What is your definition of success and who is paying for that?
God has ideas of success

- *Psalm 51:16–17 - [16]For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. [17]The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*
- *Matthew 22:37–39 - [37]And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. [38]This is the great and first commandment. [39]And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*
- *1 Thessalonians 4:9–12 - [9]Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, [10]for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, [11]and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, [12]so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.*

We must unlearn old metrics - success as ultimate.

- *David Garland - Human judgments are inherently twisted until God's Spirit sets them aright. Consequently, humans must empty themselves of their own wisdom to be filled with God's wisdom.*

We must learn to value what God values. Do you know? Don't guess; he will tell you. Word, fruit, church affirmation.
Abide.

THE STRIVING LIFE DEALS IN COMPARISON. THE ABIDING LIFE DEALS IN CONTENTEDNESS.

> *1 Corinthians 3:21-22 - [1]So **let no one boast** in men. For all things are yours, [22]whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,*

Explain

So much striving is fueled by comparison
Corinthians: who are we following and what does that say about us.
Same with us: it's never just about who we are following or looking towards. It's what this says about us.

Illustrate

Pickup/drop-off - time arrive/car, clothes, friends, relationships to kids, etc.
Underneath all of this is an insecure 6th grader that the gospel is still working on.
Do we admit our own weaknesses?
What are you trying to escape underneath all the striving? What does God say about the feeling you're trying to escape?

Apply

Learned contentment

- *Philippians 4:11–13 - [11]Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned, in whatever situation I am, to be content. [12]I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. [13]I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Unlearn the scarcity of comparison
Learn the abundance of contentedness in Christ.

Contentedness in this world will always leave us wanting more.

"All things yours" - Stoics took this phrase as a proclamation of human self-sufficiency and mastery over all circumstances.

Paul takes it and uses it to show us how much we have in Jesus. We have everything, the best of every team and the best of everything life has to offer.

YOU MUST BECOME SOMEONE VS. YOU BELONG TO SOMEONE

> *1 Corinthians 3:23 - [23]and **you are Christ's, and Christ is God's**.*

Explain

The world's gospel is that you can make something of your life that is worthwhile and beautiful. And perhaps you can, but who decides this, and how long will it last?

Satan

- John - Jesus calls him the father of lies
- Genesis - "Did God actually say…?"
- Revelation - "Accuser of the brethren"
- The message: It's not enough. You must do and be more for yourself and for God. Some of you are living here.

Illustrate

Apply

John 17:20–21 - [20]"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, [21]that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

The church is Christ's, and Christ is God's son and Messiah

You are not for yourself, we are for him! Abide.