

TODAY'S TOPIC:

PURSUING JESUS [#2]

TODAY'S KEY VERSE:

1 Cor 2.1-2 - And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 FOR I DETERMINED NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING AMONG YOU EXCEPT JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.

2 POINTS

1 PROMISE

1. A MIRACULOUS PROOF OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS THE

GENUINE... CONSISTENT

PURSUIT OF JESUS

EVEN WHEN

YOU'RE FREE OF PAIN...

AND COMFORTABLY SUCCESSFUL!

THE LAODICEAN CHURCH

Rev 3.17 - 17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— [CARNALITY CONFUSED THEM]

THE EPHESIAN CHURCH

Rev 2.2-4 - 2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. [SPIRITUALITY CONFUSED THEM]

Ezek 16.14-15 - 14 Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, FOR IT WAS PERFECT THROUGH MY SPLENDOR WHICH I HAD BESTOWED ON YOU," says the Lord God. 15 "But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.

Jgs 16.19 - 19 Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head.

1 Sam 15.17 - 17 So Samuel said, "When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord anoint you king over Israel?"

2 Sam 11.1-3 - It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house.

2 Chron 26.16 - [UZZIAH]: "16 But when he was strong

his heart was lifted up, to his destruction

I WANT TO SHOW YOU

CONVINCINGLY...

A UNIVERSAL

HUMAN VULNERABILITY

WHEN IT COMES TO

SEEKING GOD!

2 Cor 4.6-10 - 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—

2 Cor 12.5-10 - 5 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. 6 For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. 7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

THIS ONE GREAT DIVIDE SEPARATES

THE CARNAL FROM THE SPIRITUAL:

THE VERY BEST 'CARNAL':

WHO PURSUES CHRIST...

FOR ALL THE GOOD THINGS

THAT COME FROM HIM!

THE ONLY SPIRITUAL [THAT WORKS]:

WHO PURSUES CHRIST...

FOR CHRIST...

HIMSELF!!

IS HE... YOUR SUGAR DADDY?

OR IS HE...

YOUR SWEETHEART!

IMAGINE THE EARTH'S

MOST POWERFUL... WEALTHIEST

CORPORATION!

JESUS IS THE OWNER!

HERE'S WHAT SEPARATES THE MEN

FROM THE BOYS:

Picture a long hallway...

with Jesus' door at the end.

As you move toward his door...

Many doors are on your left and right.

'HEALING'... 'MIRACLES'... PEACE.... JOY....

BLESSED FAMILY LIFE... MARRIAGE HOPES FULFILLED...

MINISTRY GROWTH... BLESSING THE WORLD... ETC.

THERE ARE NO OBSTRUCTIONS.

ONLY... DISTRACTIONS!!

The main obstacle to maintaining

a growing relationship with Jesus

isn't Satan standing in the hallway...

with all sorts of weapons in his hands...

OR...

Doors on the left and right

with labels on the doors like:

Sex... drugs... pride... dishonesty...greed.

OUR MAIN OBSTACLE...

TO RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

OVER THE LONG HAUL... IS...

PREOCCUPATION WITH OURSELVES!

And nothing gets us as fixated on OURSELVES...

Quicker or more powerfully than...

A few notable healings... through these hands...

Or...

Words out of this mouth... that draw huge crowds...

Or...

[as in Paul's case]

Revelations and spiritual encounters of all kinds!

ETC.

SO...

What do we really want as a church?

A job?

A good job?

The highest paying job?

Or... a deep, loving, genuine friendship

With the owner??

FORGET THE JOB AND THE MONEY!

LOVE THE OWNER!

WHY ARE YOU TEACHING THIS, BOB?

Because, if individually... becoming  
Operational and functional members

Of Christ's body...

By the Holy Spirit's power...

MANIFESTING GOD'S BEAUTIFULLY ATTRACTIVE GRACE

Can ELEVATE US as individuals...

What could happen to us as a whole church...

If signs, wonders and miracles become normal...

And word spreads... and... what would happen to us?

"Crossover? Yes! You know...I'm part of that!"

WHAT IF

many of us are being routinely transported

And often visiting heaven

where we see and hear

Things we aren't permitted to tell anybody?

WITHOUT FIRST

BEING FIRMLY BUILT

ON THE FOUNDATION...

OF CHRIST, HIMSELF!

AND WITHOUT GOD'S ON-GOING

SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE...

HELPING US REMEMBER HOW WEAK

WE REALLY ARE

AND WHERE THE POWER

IS REALLY COMING FROM??!

THE EXPERIENCE OF  
GOD'S BLESSINGS AND BENEFITS...

AND THE MANIFEST  
RICHES OF HIS GRACE...

BEING REVEALED TO US...

WILL... DESTROY... US!!

ABOUT PURSUING JESUS:

1. Truly pursuing Jesus when successful ...  
is miraculous... spiritual maturity!
2. FAITH... WORKS BY LOVE!

Gal 5.6 - 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Jd 1.20-21 - 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

FAITH – TONGUES – LOVE!

IT'S A PACKAGE DEAL!

WANT TO KNOW GOD'S LOVE BETTER?

GOD'S BEEN TRANSMITTING!

IT'S OUR RECEIVERS THAT NEED HELP!

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

TUNES... US... IN...

TO THE LOVE OF GOD!!

WHY IS IT SO HARD

TO BELIEVE IN JESUS????

IN OUR NATURAL EXPERIENCE:

PEOPLE MAY BE TRUSTWORTHY...

BUT HAVING TIME AND EXPERIENCE WITH THEM

MAKES IT EASIER FOR US TO TRUST THEM!

IN THE SAME WAY...

the Holy Spirit OFFERS US...

'REAL-TIME' experience with Jesus.

THE BETTER YOU KNOW HIM...

THE EASIER IT IS

TO TRUST HIM!

PRAY IN THE SPIRIT!

OUT OF AN

'I'M-PURSUING-JESUS'

KIND OF HEART!

SEEK HIM PATIENTLY. DILIGENTLY.

WHOLE-HEARTEDLY!

KNOW HIM.

KNOW HIS LOVE FOR YOU.

AND THEN...

TRUSTING HIM...

FLOWS NATURALLY...

AUTOMATICALLY...

EASILY

OUT OF THAT RELATIONSHIP!

We have been trying to generate faith

As if it can be found in a

COLD, LIFE-LESS, HARD,

STERILE MACHINE

OF WILL-POWER AND DETERMINATION.

BUT...

FAITH... WORKS... THROUGH... LOVE!!!

IT WORKS...

THROUGH RELATIONSHIP!

It works through that warm embrace!

Our faith rises organically

As we get to know him better

over a loving dinner!

I HATE TRYING TO BE A

'WILL-POWER-FAITH-GENERATING'

MACHINE!

If Jesus isn't in front of you!

If there's no view or sound of Him.

And yet more faith in him...

Has to be manufactured somehow

Inside of you???

HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN?

THAT'S NEVER WORKED WELL FOR ME!

In other words...

PURSUING JESUS...

IS ALL ABOUT

DEVELOPING A LOVING...

LIVING...WARM... FULFILLING

SATISFYING RELATIONSHIP

WITH JESUS!

AND OUT OF THAT



DOESN'T COME A MECHANICAL FAITH FORMULA!

BUT A LIVING FAITH...

FORMED BY EXPERIENCE

WITH JESUS OVER TIME!

AND THAT FAITH IS...

E-Z!!

WE HAVE

N'T TRADED IN

WORKING TO OBEY GOD...

FOR

WORKING TO GET FAITH!

THE FIGHT OF FAITH

IS WITH THE DEVIL...

NOT WITH GOD!

HIS... YOKE... IS...

E-Z!!

ABOUT PURSUING JESUS:

1. Continuing to pursue Jesus

EVEN AFTER... becoming successful ...

is spiritual maturity!

2. Faith works by love!

3. GOD'S PROMISE!

Jn 15.4-7 - 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they

gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Heb 11.6 - 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that HE IS A REWARDER OF THOSE WHO DILIGENTLY... SEEK... HIM!

Doesn't say how to seek.

Doesn't ask you to compare yourself

To others who are seeking!

Doesn't ask how long or hard

you've been seeking.

Doesn't ask how old you are

To see if it's TOO LATE

For this promise to work for you!

BIBLE PROMISES DON'T HAVE

A 70 YEAR 'PULL DATE'!!

THIS PROMISE IS VERY SIMPLE

AND IS REPEATED MANY TIMES

IN SCRIPTURE:

SEEK HIM...

AND YOU'LL FIND HIM!

"BUT...

I've wasted

My whole life!"

MAYBE THAT'S TRUE! BUT EVEN IF IT IS...

THERE'S NO BETTER

TIME TO START

SEEKING HIM...

THAN RIGHT NOW!!

WHY?

HE PROMISED:

IT...

WILL...

WORK!

YOU

WILL

FIND!