

Leadership Tip!

When was the last time you spent purposeful time in your day to pray for your members by name and the things going on in their lives? Prayer is a powerful tool for you as a leader in how you connect to God but also to those in your group. Find time this week to be purposeful and pray.

WALKING DEAD
“Spiritual”

STARTER QUESTION:

Culturally speaking, how many people in your life know God, believe in God, but don't actively live their lives for Him? Why do you think this is common in our world today?

MAIN IDEA:

Pastor Hank continued our series on The Walking Dead as we examine Romans 8, the greatest chapter in the Bible. As we saw this past week there are a several great reminders that impact how we view our current standing with God.

Being honest, which of these statements best describe you right now:

- I can't keep my excitement for God.
- I can remember a time when I was much closer to God than I am today.
- I am just going through the motions right now.
- Reading the Bible and praying just seem like a task to me.
- I am feeling more burnt out than sold out.
- I am on a spiritual roller-coaster lately.

Let's read as a group the passage that Pastor Hank used in his message on Sunday (might be helpful to have a one or two people read the passage) -

Romans 8:1-14 (NLT)

“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully

satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."

What phrase or verse stood out to you the most?

As we think back to the questions we answered about how we are feeling right now, we can see a correlation between this passage from Paul and our self evaluations. Pastor Hank showed us how the words spirit and nature are used 24 times in these 14 verses. Let's talk about these words a bit so we can better understand how to get out of the state we are in right now.

Pneuma - This Greek word can be translated as wind, breath, or spirit depending on the context. John 3, Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Holy Spirit (Spirit of God) is like the wind. It cannot be seen but you can see and feel the effects.

Sarx - This Greek word is translated as sinful nature and is not connected directly to the Devil, but rather is connected back to the Garden of Eden where Adam or Eve first sinned by choosing to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. In doing so, we inherited a sinful nature as a human race and plagued with the idea of living for ourselves and elevating ourselves over others. This leads to doing what we feel in the moment, how we make self based decisions, and most of us it opens us to temptations from the Devil.

The Spirit is God's pledge to us that we will befall transformed and conformed to the image of Christ. This Spirit that God places inside of us gives us freedom from sin and death but the choice is up to us whether we decide between our sinful nature or God's Spirit living in us.

How can you lean into what the Spirit wants for you versus what your sinful nature wants?

Paul also reminds us that there is freedom that comes when we follow the Spirit's guidance in our lives -

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

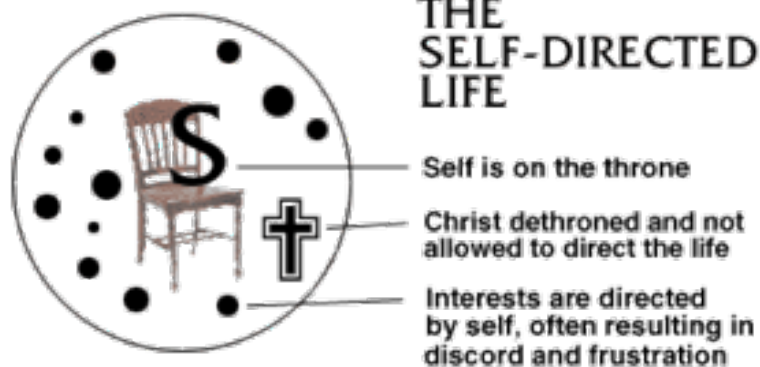
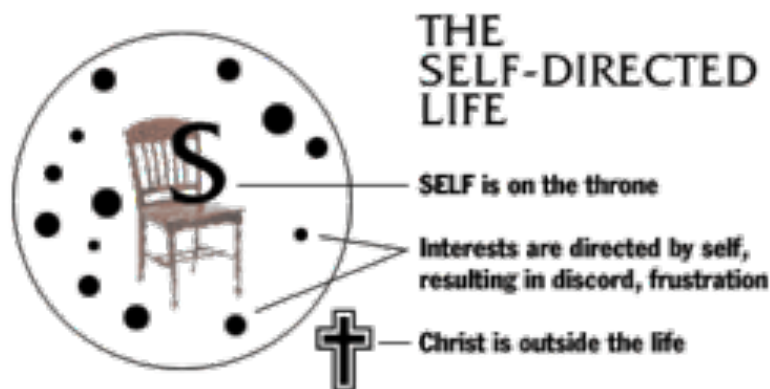
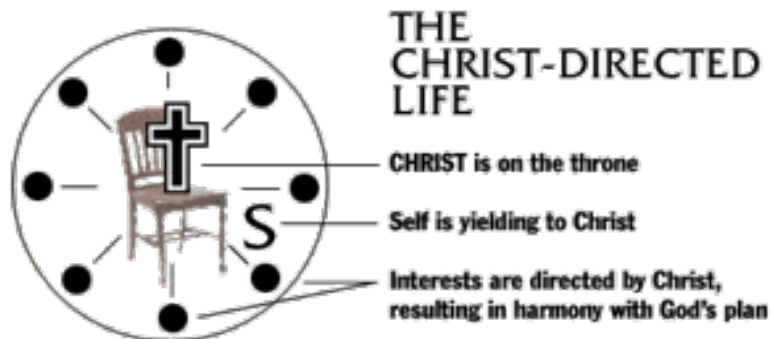
But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

Do you feel like your actions resemble someone that is free and operating in the Spirit of God or someone who is listening to their sinful nature?

Hank talked about how busyness can contribute to our distraction from the Holy Spirit.

How true is this in your life today?

Below are the three images that Hank used from Sunday to describe people:



WALKING DEAD

“Spiritual”

June 12, 2016

“PNEUMA” – The Holy Spirit

“SARX” – The Sinful Nature

3 Types of People:

1. The Natural Person

“A natural (PSYCHIKOS) man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

1 Corinthians 2:14

(NAS)

2. The Spiritual Person

“The spiritual (PNEUMATIKOS) man has insight into everything, and that bothers and baffles the man of the world... Christians actually do have within us

a

portion of the very thoughts and mind of Christ.”

1 Corinthians 2:15-16

(Living)

3. The Worldly Person

“I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly (SARKIKOS) —mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly (SARKIKOS). For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly (SARKIKOS)?”

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NIV)

Why do people go from “Spiritual” to “Worldly”?

1. Sin

“Your wrongs have separated you from your God, and your sins have made him hide his face so that he doesn’t hear you.”

Isaiah 59:2 (GW)

2. Busy-ness

“...the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.”

Matthew 13:22 (NLT)

If the devil can't make you bad, he'll make you busy!

3. Life's Hard Knocks

"...they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word." Matthew 13:21 (NLT)

Early Predictors:

1. Thought life
2. Getting iffy on the "Sin-thing"

You have to settle what is and isn't sin in your heart
before you can make a courageous stand against sin in your life.

3. Disconnected from God's people