Rediscovering God’s Fullness

Powerpointslide **#1)** For this message the Lord has directing me to re-focus on the basic foundations of our spiritual life. I think that most of us have had wonderful glimpses of God & His purposes for our life! But many things try to distract us away from our high calling, and from the life of God abundantly dwelling within us.

**2-5)** It is so easy for us to let God’s fullness in our life slowly slip or melt away. So many times we fall into repeated daily patterns or rituals where the life of God seems to slowly diminish in our lives. For the Ephesian church in the book of Revelation, it was that they had left their first love for the Lord. For the Laodicean church, they had lost their first love: they mistakenly began to believe that God’s abundant natural blessings on them were all that they needed, while they neglected focusing on their spiritual needs. For Martha in the Gospels, she was so busy serving the Lord, that she forgot how to sit at Jesus’ feet, like her sister. For the 10 virgins in Jesus’ story, five of them had not noticed that their oil, speaking of the anointing in their lives, had started to run out.

In countless ways, we can be serving the Lord, seeking to be good Christians, while we are letting the most important focus of our Christianity slip. Our focus and goal should be defined by the Scriptures,

**6-8)** So let me quote a few of the most important verses that should guide and motivate us: we are to be “strengthened with might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts” Eph. 3:16-17. We are to grow “until we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” -Eph.4:13. Romans 8:29 tell us that we are “predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son”

**9-12)** We were told God’s eternal plan from the beginning, when God first made mankind. In Genesis 1:28 the Lord Himself God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness” –Gen.1:26. Colossians 1:27 tells us “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” Colossians 1:27.

“…that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace… toward us in Christ Jesus,” Eph.2:7. And for all eternity God gives us an invitation: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he will be My son” - Rev.21:7

**13)** The Apostle Paul saw the greatness of our Christian calling when he saw the Lord on the Road to Damascus, and Paul then dedicated his life towards seeing it fulfilled in his life. He testified to King Agrippa in Acts 26:19, “I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.” In the middle of his years of ministry, Paul wrote in Phil.3:13-14, “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” And in his last letter which he wrote shortly before his martyrdom, Paul triumphantly declared “I have fought the good fight, I have finished my race, I have kept the faith.”

So we can read how Paul’s life was gripped by this heavenly calling and vision- but what about ourselves? Are we staying focused on God’s highest & best? As life goes on day after day, we are often distracted from what should remain our life’s focus. And especially during these pandemic years, we have often found our lives rearranged and bound with new limitations, with our lives looking boring and our plans put on hold.

Does life seem to have been slipping by around you these last few years? Have your Christian goals and vision seemed to be put on hold, and you feel that you have been going nowhere?

**14)** Heb 2:1 tells us, “For this reason we must pay closer attention to the things we have heard, or we may drift away.” A boat that is still in the water will often start to slowly drift away in some direction, usually going more and more off course. This unnoticed drifting can seem unimportant to our life at first, but it can slowly be leading you into defeat, or deception.

It can be like when a frog is left in a pot of warm water- the frog can be content in the warm water,

**15)** -but if the water is slowly made hotter and hotter the frog will not notice it until the clueless frog becomes cooked and dies!

**16)** In 2 Sam.11:1 we read that “at the time when kings go out to battle” David stayed at home in his comfortable palace.

David should have gone out to the battlefield with his army- instead, he stayed at home and sent his army commander to lead the army without him. As David relaxed in the comfort of his palace, he did not recognize that he was becoming spiritually weak- he didn’t see the warning of Scripture ‘Woe to those who are at ease in Zion.’ As a result, David was blindsided and unable to resist temptation when he saw his beautiful neighbor, Bathsheba, bathing on her rooftop.

The Lord wants to speak to those who are “at ease in Zion” -You have been letting other people fight the battles, while you stay in your “comfort zone.” However, in your comfort you have been growing spiritually weak. You need to respond to the exhortation of Isaiah 52:1-2, “Awake! Awake! Put on your strength, Zion; put on your beautiful robes, O Jerusalem, the holy city…. Shake yourself from the dust; rise up, sit enthroned, O Jerusalem! Free yourself from the chains on your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!”

David was not careful to keep a pure, victorious life, and sin brought destruction to his kingdom, his family, and to his own soul. DON’T CARELESSLY FOLLOW DAVID’S EXAMPLE- FIGHT YOUR BATTLES- STAY STRONG IN YOUR PRAYER LIFE- OR ELSE ENJOYING A ‘*COMFORTABLE*’ LIFE CAN SLOWLY LEAD YOU TO TRY ENJOYING A *SINFUL* LIFE!

David was ‘a man after God’s own heart’- and yet comfort and success let him drift into a short season of terrible backsliding. Adultery and murder! It brought great damage to his kingdom, his family, and to his own soul.

**17)** David experienced several seasons of discouragement and failure in his life- three times in the Psalms he wrote, “Why are you cast down, O my soul?” (In Ps.42:5 & 42:11 & 43:11) David said, “Why are you cast down, O my soul?” What does that mean? BEING CAST DOWN IS A SHEPHERD’S TERM- AND DAVID WAS A SHEPHERD!

**18)** A sheep that is cast down has rolled over on its back and cannot get back up. Many times a sheep that looks for a comfortable spot to lie down, then unintentionally rolls over so that his legs are kicking the air, and he cannot get up again. Blood circulation slows down, and on a hot sunny day a sheep can die in a few hours if it is not rescued. THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST COMMON REASONS THAT A SHEPHERD IS NEEDED TO RESCUE SHEEP. THE SHEEP GOT TOO COMFORTABLE- ROLLED OVER TOO FAR- CANNOT GET BACK UP!

THERE WERE TIMES WHEN DAVID’S SOUL BECAME CAST DOWN, AND HE COULD NOT PICK HIMSELF BACK UP! David needed restoration- HIS SOUL WAS DAMAGED, and he could not stand upright. He needed help! He needed the Lord to be his shepherd and lift him up from his fallen place -TO RESTORE HIS SOUL.

**19)** THERE ARE TIMES WHEN WE ALSO CANNOT PICK OURSELVES UP- PERHAPS WE HAVE BECOME COMFORTABLE & SPIRITUALLY WEAK -PERHAPS WE WERE NOT READY FOR THE TRIALS & TEMPTATIONS THAT CAME: WE NEED TO HAVE CHRIST COME HELP US, & RESTORE OUR SOUL

**20)** CHRIST OUR GOOD SHEPHERD WANTS TO RESTORE US FROM OUR PRESENT FAILURES, AND ALSO FROM HURTS & BONDAGES THAT WE MAY HAVE HAD SINCE WE WERE CHILDREN OR TEENAGERS

**21)** MANY THINGS CAN LEAVE US WITH HURTS & BONDAGES: **-CHILD ABUSE -POVERTY -FEARS -UNFORGIVENESS -REJECTION -SEXUAL ABUSE -BULLYING -PORNOGRAPHY -TEEN REBELLION -WRONG RELATIONSHIPS**

SOMETIMES THESE PROBLEMS MAKE DEEP WOUNDS IN OUR HEARTS & MINDS- AND WRONGLY INFLUENCE US EVEN MANY YEARS AFTER WE BECOME CHRISTIANS!

WE CAN SMILE & TRY TO ACTS LIKE GOOD CHRISTIANS- BUT WE ARE STILL PRISONERS OF THE PAST

**22)** A WOUNDED CAT WILL HIDE & BITE ANYONE WHO TRIES TO HELP IT- we can also be like that!

**23)** THESE HURTS & BONDAGES HINDER US FROM FULLY FOLLOWING GOD! “LAYING ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, AND THE SIN THAT SO EASILY ENTANGLES US, LET US RUN WITH PERSEVERANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US” –HEB.12:1

**24)** CHRIST CAME TO SET US FREE FROM THESE BONDAGES & SINS OF THE PAST. “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME…. TO HEAL THE BROKEN HEARTED, AND PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES”-LK.4:18

**25)** WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO BE SET FREE FROM THE PAST? **#1 CRY OUT TO GOD!** This was the answer for all the troubles that people had in Psalm 107-

Vs.4-9 WANDERERS who grow weak and discouraged

Vs.10-16 REBELS who become enslaved and afflicted

Vs.17-22 FOOLS who by their sins become sick & near death-

**ALL WERE RESCUED WHEN THEY CRIED OUT TO GOD!**

**26)** WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO BE SET FREE FROM THE PAST? # **2 FULLY FORGIVE THOSE WHO HURT US**: JESUS SAID THAT WE ARE ONLY FORGIVEN IF WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED AGAINST US, MT.6:14-15

**EXAMPLE: “I WILL NEVER FORGIVE THAT PERSON”** = YOU MAY BE KEEPING YOURSELF IN CHAINS OF BITTERNESS, OR ANGER, OR SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS, OR PRIDE….!

FORGIVING & FORGETTING IS NEEDED BEFORE WE CAN BECOME FRUITFUL CHRISTIANS, GEN.41:51-52. WE MUST FORGIVE & FORGET BEFORE WE ARE FREE TO PRESS ON IN GOD, Phil.3:13-14. **IF YOU KEEP REMEMBERING SOMETHING BAD, YOU HAVE NOT YET FORGIVEN!**

**27)** WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO BE SET FREE FROM THE PAST? # 3 **PERHAPS SEEK COUNSELING AND HELP.** Sometimes we need help & guidance to gain healing & release, James 5:16. Confess your faults and pray for healing!

If you cannot get the breakthrough by yourself, get help from a pastor, elder, or mentor, so that the well of salvation can freely flow in your spirit, Num.21:18 & Is.12:3. “The well that the princes dug, that the nobles of the people dug— the nobles with scepters and staffs." Christian leaders have been given authority- like scepters and staffs- to dig open the wells of salvation, Mt.18:18.

**28)** THE LORD WANTS TO RESTORE YOUR SOUL – TO SET YOU FREE TO FULLY FOLLOW HIM! CHRIST WANTS TO OPEN EVERY PRISON DOOR!

**29)** DON’T BE LIKE A WOUNDED CAT, THAT WILL HIDE & FIGHT THE HANDS THAT WANT TO HELP HEAL IT! DON’T BE AFRAID TO OPEN YOUR HEART, TO OPEN YOUR PAST! IF YOU WILL COME CLOSE TO THE LORD JESUS, LIKE A TRUSTING LAMB, YOU WILL NOT FIND HIM TO BE ANGRY, OR REJECTING, OR UNCONCERNED! YOU WILL FIND OUT WHAT DAVID AND SO MANY OF GOD’S PEOPLE HAVE EXPERIENCED!

**30)** THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT. HE MAKES ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES; HE LEADS ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS. **HE RESTORES MY SOUL!**

LET US REDISCOVER GOD’S FULLNESS TO BE AT WORK IN OUR LIVES!