

Successful Strategy Against Sinful Steps

Ephesians 4:20-24

Introduction:

- A. Biblical categories of Christians (those whom God has truly saved)
 - 1. 1Cor 3:1-3 – C_____
 - a. They continually fail in their struggle against s_____.
 - b. They are not g_____ spiritually.
 - 2. Rev 3:15,16 – L_____
 - a. They believe they are spiritually _____
 - b. They are i_____ to the things of God.
 - 3. Heb 5:14 – M_____ (1Jn 4:14 – conquerors; 1Cor 3:1 - spiritual)
 - a. They diligently follow God's s_____
 - b. Their sins are rarely planned but mostly i_____
- B. Today's lesson goal
 - 1. That you d_____ to become a spiritually mature Christian.
 - 2. That you a_____ God's successful strategy against sin in your life as outlined in Eph 4:20-24.

Scripture Saturation (20,21,23)

- A. The command of verse 23 – r_____ the spirit or the attitude of our minds.
 - 1. The apostle Paul assumes that his readers
 - a. Did not l_____ Christ in THIS WAY (refers to the previous verses of living sinful lifestyles; Christ way required repentance).
 - b. Had heard Jesus' teachings and were taught the t_____.
 - 2. Therefore, he is commanding them to saturate their minds with Jesus' teachings.
- B. Jesus' teachings
 - 1. Words spoken on earth have been preserved for us by His a_____ – Jn 14:26 (New Testament)
 - 2. Words spoken from heaven have been preserved for us by His p_____ - Jn 1:1 (Old Testament)
- C. Example of a strategy – we must saturate our minds with God's word to combat the l_____
 - 1. "Everyone else is doing it, so why shouldn't I?"
 - a. What is the lie in the above statement? – we are to be l_____ everyone else
 - b. What is God's strategy against this lie?

- 1) Rom 12:2 – don't con_____ to the world but trans_____ by renewing your mind)
- 2) 2Cor 5:17 – we are a n_____ creation
- 3) Eph 2:10 – we were spiritually re-created to do g_____ works.
- 4) Matt 5:17 – we are to let our l_____ shine.
2. "They don't deserve my forgiveness, so I will not forgive them."
 - a. What is the lie in the above statement? – we do not have to f_____
 - b. What is God's strategy against this lie?
 - 1) We all have r_____ Christ's undeserved forgiveness for our sins.
 - 2) We are to have the lifestyle of forgiving those who have s_____ against us (Lk 11:4)
3. "If they wouldn't have done that, I wouldn't have lost my temper."
 - a. What is the lie in the above statement? – losing my temper was not my f_____ but yours.
 - b. What is God's strategy against this lie? – take full responsibility by c_____ your sins (1Jn 1:9; Jms 5:16).
 - 1) Jn 8:31,32; Heb 4:12 – the truth will set you f_____ (take full responsibility for your sin)
 - 2) Ps 119:11, 105; Col 3:16 – react with God's word not your temper.
4. Every sin is due to some kind of lie. God's strategy requires us to saturate our minds with His word (Jn 8:31,32 – the truth will set you f_____; Heb 4:12 – God's word is to be the j_____ of our hearts and minds; Ps 119:11, 105 and Col 3:16 – God's word is to r_____ live in our hearts)
- D. Suggestion for getting into the habit of scripture saturation
 1. Review the scriptures in the sermon notes by looking them up individually or as a family
 2. Pick a book of the Bible as a focus for a month or so
 - a. Daily read a chapter or a paragraph
 - b. Soak in the meaning of what was read.

Active Application (22,24)

- A. There are two natures that Christians have
 1. The o_____ nature (v. 22)
 - a. Completely c_____
 - b. Patterns itself after s_____

- c. In sync with d_____ (lies)
2. The n_____ nature (v. 24)
 - a. Created in righteousness and h_____
 - b. Cannot be deceived but acts according to the t_____
- B. God's strategy requires us to
 1. T_____ off the old self and p_____ on the new self (metaphor of changing clothes)
 2. Gal 5:16 – walk by the S_____ and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.
 3. 1Jn 2:14 – the word of God enables us to overcome the e_____ one.
 4. Practical words – to apply God's word
- C. As you saturate your mind with a scripture (whether a single verse, a group of verses, or a chapter) ask: How can I apply this truth to my life?
 1. Example #1 – Rom 8:28 (dealing with adversity)
 - a. A truth – God will work all adversity in a believer's life for his or her good.
 - b. An application – when a bad thing happens to me, I will thank God that He will use it to grow me spiritually.
 2. Example #2 – Gen 3 (the temptation account)
 - a. A truth – Adam and Eve wrongly passed the blame for their sin.
 - b. An application
 - 1) I will take full responsibility for my failure.
 - 2) I will go back to the people I blamed for a failure and admit my wrong.
 - 3) I am not going to react wrongly when someone pushes my buttons.
 3. Jesus said in Matt 7:24-27
 - a. A f_____ person fails to apply His word
 - b. A w_____ person actively acts upon His word.

Conclusion:

- A. What kind of Christian are you? (circle one)
 1. Carnal - always seems to fail over and over again
 2. Luke-warm - takes God's word lightly and lets it go in one ear and out the other
 3. Victorious (spiritual; growing) – diligently hears God's word and lives it out.
- B. Decide which one you will be today.