

General Topics :: Needed: Godly Counsel

Needed: Godly Counsel - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/22 22:27

Yeah, me again. Sorry.

I want more of God; His face and presence. I want to walk in the FULLNESS of what He's intended for my life to be. And I want that because I know it will bring Him glory and make Him proud of me. To hear "Well done good and faithful servant," is one of my goals. I want to grow in love for Him and others and to decrease myself into nothingness for His name's sake.

I "don't care" about money, material things, or even if I'm in good health or not. Naturally, I don't WANT to be in bad health and I don't WANT to be penniless. But those things are irrelevant to me in serving the Lord because I KNOW Him as my Provider. If I don't have those things, I don't worry about them. I'm confident to pray for my needs and trusting Him on a daily basis. I've lived this way for many years, never once disappointed.

Materially, I couldn't care less about gaining/owning anything that I don't already have. (And I wouldn't care if I lost what little I do have - a bed, desk, chair, computer, clothes, a few books, toiletries and kitchen things. It's just temporary stuff.) I live so simply people ask if I'm Amish. If it weren't for SermonIndex and YouTube for sermons, I wouldn't even have a computer! I never cared about owning a home, buying gadgets, or anything else. Although, admittedly, I wouldn't mind having a car and taking real vacation. I haven't had either one for 16 years. I actually feel guilty for even WANTING those things because they're not absolute necessities.

Then I read all the promises in the scriptures. I CLING to the promises of spiritual blessings and growth! THOSE I pant after and will never stop seeking! I have trouble with the physical blessings, though. I always want my motives to be right and not seek after God for material things, but the Bible shows that God delights in blessing His children materially so sometimes, too.

If I stopped here, I could answer my own question and say that this stems from a lifetime of being told I'm worthless, unwanted and having to prove that I was worth anything whether it was attention, kindness, blessings, a job, friends, etc., (This is something I seek God for healing in, but, again, if He doesn't, it's not a necessity. I'll still serve Him with all that I am and have!)

Here's my problem and where I need advice:

I know God knows my motives better than I do. I always want my motives to be pure. But, every time I'm about to do something "good" or "right," I STRUGGLE DEEPLY with thoughts popping into my head that are contrary to what I described above. It's like the enemy is taking advantage of my past pain of worthlessness and says things like, "You're just doing that to get a reward from God."

To be completely honest, it breaks my heart and torments me! Thinking about it now brings me to tears. I don't EVER EVER want to be reward-minded. I even struggle with eternal rewards. I know the scriptures says we should go after them, but I struggle with the whole concept of being rewarded in ANY way. Not just by God, but by ANYONE. If I take an elderly resident's garbage down to the trash bin for them, they try to give me a couple of dollars. It breaks my heart because it's NOT why I'm doing it. I explain that I know they appreciate my help but I really don't want money for doing it. 99% of the time I do win, but I hate that it even gets brought up so often!

You shouldn't have to be rewarded for doing the right thing. The fact that it glorifies God is the only reward I'm interested in. But these thoughts TORMENT me on a daily basis! So far I'm not getting any answers from God about it so I wanted to ask folks here.

Am I crazy? Am I being ridiculous? What on earth is my problem?

Re: Needed: Godly Counsel, on: 2016/5/23 0:21

Brother, the Lord wants you to be whole and to be set free from the strongholds of rejection otherwise you will not be effective for the Lord in ministering to others. Let me explain. We are created in the image of God and our basic needs are met through love and communication. When rejection enters a person they are denied love, security, acceptance, identity and recognition. They are no longer capable of loving or receiving love. The result is crippling and destructive to one's total person. Please note there are degrees of rejection whose effect is proportionate.

Rejection is a deep bruise that destroys one's total person.

Parents who cannot communicate love also suffer from rejection. Alcoholic parents (no communication of love), they substitute giving of things for love. Some are preoccupied (busy schedules create problems) and lapse into passivity in their parental role. Others are critical (requiring perfection). Some parents set goals for children requiring compensation (meeting those goals to be accepted). Many parents do not realize they are disciplining through rejection.

An unloved child by a father will have difficulty building a stable relationship to God as Father. (You build the spiritual on the natural). A child who grows up under rejection will accept rejection rather than love from God. The parent image is the model upon which the child builds his relationship to God.

Peer relationships can bring rejection. Cruel remarks, Cliques and exclusion, lack of achievement, etc. One who is not whole in God will allow these things to move them from their sure foundation. They will be tossed to and fro in their emotions, like the waves of the sea. They will be incapable of having stable, loving relationships.

Let's look at Jesus, the most rejected man that ever lived.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isa 53:1-3)

I would not concern myself right now with ministry or doing great things for God. The Lord wants you to work with Him to drive out the enemies "in the land". His word to you right now is to "Possess the land, within".

What are the results of rejection?

1) Emotional immaturity. Love, acceptance and approval are essential for emotional maturity.

2) Love vacuum. No person can fill this vacuum and the person who is not healed of rejection who enters into a close relationship with another, runs the risk of smothering that person (drawing life from them). No person can satisfy all of our longings. The rejected person will worship the other and make them the center of their life. Manipulation is a major activity in a person who is suffering from rejection. Eventually, because the other person cannot satisfy all of the rejected person's needs they are either hated or enslaved (manipulated).

So a person who has a history of broken relationships has fallen into the tragedy of a love vacuum. I don't know if this applies to you, as I am just laying out for you some key problems created by rejection.

Also, goals and things cannot fill the vacuum. Men have a tendency to try to fill the vacuum with ministry (proving themselves to God). Possessions indicate success, career gives acceptance, intellectualism gives recognition. Extreme dedication to any of these could indicate vast emptiness, inside.

Another aspect of rejection is that the person is totally self-centered which can manifest in self-gratification, sex, lust, perversion. Or they can manifest a "savior image" and become very religious. This type of person can be dangerous in leadership because he has too great of a need to be needed. They will dominate all relationships in their midst. Don't try to fill this vacuum by assuming leadership. Be a servant of God and not man. You don't need to measure up to man. You don't get your acceptance from man but God above. Don't be a man-pleaser.

Loneliness and fear. The person not delivered from the stronghold of rejection will build walls to protect themselves from hurts. Inwardly - full of insecurity, loneliness, fears, self-pity and vanity. Outwardly - either withdrawn or competitive. Those who are rejected and don't withdraw are highly competitive. They are dominated by fear of rejection.

You won't be able to mature spiritually until you come into the justification God has for you.

Shyness and humility are not the same. Don't be afraid to fail.

Self-rejection - manifestation of the loss of self-value. One accepts the rejection of others as indicative of his worthlessness. This builds a negative self-image, always comparing oneself with others...a mistake. II Cor 10:12.

Criticism has two attitudes - critical of one's self and critical of others. This person is suffering from self-hatred and loss of identity. Rejection destroys a person's identity. Teenagers seek identity with their peer groups. Adults seek identity in a profession, church, club, etc.

Man was made in the image of God and only in Him can he find his identity. God is the only ONE that can give us a new self image.

One cannot enter into fellowship with God as long as there is rejection. Tends to relate to God upon the basis of works. A substitute for the love of God or others cannot be busyness (activity).

And most importantly, REJECTION undercuts FAITH.

A sure sign of rejection is being unable to love or receive love.

If any of this speaks to you, and if you like, I can give you steps out of rejection. Through Jesus, we can possess the land, within and come into His rest (the promised land).

"Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it...fear not, neither be discouraged. " Deut 1:21

Re: Needed: Godly Counsel - posted by SolaVeritas, on: 2016/5/23 1:20

Hello, Keith,

Others will have a more helpful insights but I'd like to say two things:

First, I'm positive that the Lord is already proud of you, for he looks at the heart and I can tell that your heart is in the right place. Only those who truly love Him desire His glory over their own comfort.

Secondly, from my own experience with a similarly perplexing problem in my walk with Christ, I'm confident that if you keep bringing before him what troubles you, He will answer you in His timing. After a few years of asking Him about it, He took me right down to the root of my problem one morning while I was driving down the street. It was one of my most memorable encounters with the Lord and changed me profoundly. He is faithful and He cares deeply. I just want you to be confident that He sees your struggles and that an answer to your prayers is coming. Bless you. brother.

But those who wait on the Lord
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Re: , on: 2016/5/23 1:29

Amen, SolaVeritas.

The Lord loves our brother and with all of us, no matter what the "enemy" in the land is, the Lord wants us to have under standing so that we can get to the root. We have a part to play just like the children of Israel. They had to act in faith to drive out their enemy, looking to God for victory. It is the same thing for us today in our spiritual battles. We act in faith towards God to drive out the enemies in the land.

We have to "lay the axe to the root" of those things in our life that do not bring forth good fruit. God will give us understanding and then we must "lay the axe".

Luke 3:9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

His love and acceptance (accepted in the Beloved) will strengthen us for battle.

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 1:37

Thanks for responding, Julius. I appreciate you taking the time out to lovingly be so thorough and thoughtful.

Given that there are varying degrees and types of rejection, some of what you said hits home and some doesn't.

With the hope of not going into another long post, I can say with 100% assurance that I know God is working on this issue in me in His own time and I'm very patient. I absolutely trust Him, His ways, and His timing!

Thankfully, giving and receiving love isn't an issue for me. I've never been told, "I love you," but I wouldn't shrink back at the hearing of it! As for giving love to others, if there's a spiritual gift of loving others, I have it. It's genuine, without the clinical symptoms/diagnosis of being needy, clingy, looking for approval, etc., I never did the needy and clingy thing and I gave up looking for approval from others about three years ago.

Even as a kid, growing up with abusive parents, God shielded me from the kinds of scars that people generally need years of counseling for. I knew God was real without anyone ever telling me. (I just didn't know about salvation until I was 17!) Whenever my parents were mean, I knew it wasn't my fault because I was a "good boy." Many times I remember thinking, "I hope they get better soon." (They didn't grow up in loving homes themselves, so they didn't know how to love.)

In all honesty, for all I went through in the area of rejection, I really am very, very blessed and fortunate for coming through it like I did. In this regard, I am TRULY the MOST blessed person I know. God has spared me from more than I even know! I could give testimonies that would blow your socks off!

The scars that I DO still carry, mostly come from churches and ministries that abused their authority. These places affected how I viewed God, to the point that I believed He couldn't possibly love me anymore. I was a constant volunteer where ever I was needed. I was known for it. Cooking, cleaning, parking lots, nursery, set up and tear down for conferences, etc., Unfortunately, they were Word of Faith churches. (Brutal egos and power trips!) All of my volunteering ended up getting me involved with the likes of Joyce Meyer and Benny Hinn. Behind the scenes of those ministries is... scary. It took me a VERY long time to trust God again. And it's taking even longer to heal. Even so, I consider myself a walking miracle when I consider all of the other garbage I could have been saddled with in this area!

So, the rejection damage that remains has been, and is being, dealt with by God. My post is more to do with my struggle with the rewards and blessings God promises. I examine my motives in everything I do. I tremble at the thought of having wrong motives! That's what the enemy has latched onto and whispers in my ear several times a day. I'm not interested in "payment" or rewards, but I know I don't have right thinking in this area, thus the torment of the thoughts that run through my mind.

(Quote Feature doesn't work for me.)

JULIUS SAID: "I would not concern myself right now with ministry or doing great things for God. The Lord wants you to work with Him to drive out the enemies "in the land". His word to you right now is to "Possess the land, within".

"Ministry" and "doing great things for God" are the absolute last things on my mind, actually! I don't look to be great in the eyes of this world (even Christendom). I only want to finish my race and complete the work that God has chosen for me to do. If that means moving to ::insert any town/state/country here:: and scraping road kill off the streets, then those are going to be the cleanest streets you've ever seen! Position, acceptance and being esteemed mean nothing to me. I can honestly say that. In fact, I want nothing to do with them. I would MUCH prefer remaining unknown and unseen while obeying what He tells me to do.

So, right now, my goal is just spending as much time in prayer, worship, the Word, and just plain old abiding and waiting on Him. When He says go, I'll go. Until then, I'm seeking His face.

Where the thoughts about "only doing this for the reward" come in, it's for doing things like setting aside time to worship, reading the Word, examining my life, being conscious to display works worthy of repentance and displaying the fruit of the Spirit. Like I said, the enemy knows how careful I am of my motives and wanting them to be right!

But, again, I do tend to overthink and over-analyze things since I'm prone to perfectionistic tendencies. And because the area of motives, and wanting to genuinely bring God glory, are things I'm continually attentive to, I don't trust that I'm NOT possibly over-analyzing these things. I think I just need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give me a battle plan to handle these thoughts as they come. They're exhausting!

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 1:46

Thank you, SolaVeritas, very much!

Your reply makes me think that I AM overthinking all of this. I've been told my entire adult life that I "think too much."

A scripture that came to mind as I read your post was Philippians 4:6, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;"

I am anxious. We're told to be anxious for NOTHING, even if it seems like it's a good thing to be anxious about, like guarding my motives.

It's "funny." I have all the patience in the world for other people. I can wait three hours for you to tie your shoes only to figure out your not wearing any. But, when it comes to myself, I become impatient and think I should be able to fix things once I know what the problem is.

I guess God is showing me that there are still things I need to learn to let go of. After all, I HAVE been praying for His help with COMPLETE surrender.

Thank you again, SolaVeritas. I got a lot of comfort from your post.

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 1:51

Julius -

I have to admit, as dumb as it sounds, the concept of being loved is so foreign to me that I can't conceive of it. Whenever I see family members laughing, having a good time, being friends with each other, etc., I've been told I have a lost puppy dog look on my face like I'm trying to figure out what I'm looking at!

I try to look at it this way: The first time I'm likely to HEAR the words "I love you" spoken to me will be from Jesus Himself! When I think like that, it makes everything so much more bearable!

And, when it comes to laying the axe to the root -- THAT'S what I'm all about! Forget the symptoms, let me attack the disease itself and I will ruthlessly fight against it!

Re: Needed: Godly Counsel - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 1:58

I love this forum. Not knowing any Christians in the 3D world, it's GLORIOUS to have SermonIndex to come to to bounce things off of other believers. I tend to be the kind of person that, once I talk something out, I'm good... It really helps clarify my right thinking from my stinking thinking. A bit like separating the sheep from the goats!

I need to surrender this area of my life to God and trust that He understands. Sounds silly to others, I'm sure: "Of course God understands!" But, when you haven't had much understanding in your life... Then I need to pray and dive into the Word for a battle plan for when these thoughts arise. I've given them too much time and place already.

Hey! Look at me! I'm growing! Woot!

Re: , on: 2016/5/23 3:31

Hi Keith

I don't think that your sensitivity to sin is over thinking. You might over think in other areas, but in this one, the opposite is the danger.

For what it's worth, my view is that the Lord is preparing you for a deeper work. For a lot of Christians, avoiding deliberate sin is as far as they think is possible and that we are covered for unintentional sin.

I have found this not to be the case, and the Lord desires us to be free of that too.

How is that possible some would say?

Well we are told to be holy as He is holy, that our thoughts come from our hearts and a pure heart will not produce evil thoughts. If the Lord gives instructions, then it is possible.

To be where you desire, is a place where you will definitely hear the Lord say, well done thou good and faithful servant and it is the most wonderful thing in the world to hear!

So I would encourage you to go on to perfection and learn to surrender all.

Re: , on: 2016/5/23 3:36

By the way, I also experienced not understanding how people were so at ease socially and knew the right thing to say but found out much later it was not just though abuse but also because of being on the autistic spectrum.

Huge anxiety issues there which the Lord takes away when we are in full union.

Re: Needed: Godly Counsel - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/5/23 6:54

I'll post three posts which Dustin Horstmann shared some years back, which I believe are relevant to the various points you raised (particularly with respect to the motives and desires of the heart):

When I was a younger Christian I used to have a serious addiction to pornography.

To fight it, I would carry around Bible verses to help me keep my mind off of lust and on the Lord.

Years later God freed me by unveiling to me the purpose of His Son's death. Before that revelation, I could not see that I was trusting **my ability** to desire holy things over evil things: I was trying to use those Bible verses to reform my **self**.

I didn't know that Christianity is not the reformation of self, but the manifestation of Christ in you--and me crucified.

Later, when God brought me to Romans 7 and showed me that apart from Him, I am in helpless bondage to evil desires, and that's **why** I need Christ, I learned that all those years I was not turning to Christ with those verses, but to myself, even though I was handling God's word--because I didn't have a good foundation of Christ.

How?

I believed I couldn't turn to Christ because my part was to try to desire holiness before Christ would be for me. Thus I could never turn to receive with confidence.

I haven't looked at pornography since March of 2009. I've learned that we turn to Christ because we can't stop desiring evil and this shows the depth of God's love for us, and the depth of our need for Him.

When we turn to Him like this, He gives us what we do not have on our own, by the Spirit, to the praise of God, because there is no credit to self.

Romans 3 & 7 - God gave the Law to give to us the knowledge of our sin (He already had it). Without the brilliant, exposing light that the Law shines, we think we are pretty good people, and so don't think we need Christ so much.

But God would humble us so that we cry out with Paul, "Who will save me from this body of death?"

The answer is not you or me. It is Jesus Christ.

Have you heard of Him--the depth of His love for you and the depth of your need for Him?

Believe the good news today and receive the transforming power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3). Amen.

When repentance is about your ability to stop desiring each and every known sin, it's about your trustworthiness.

When repentance is about turning to Christ to save you from sin's power (because it is too great for you), it's about Christ's trustworthiness.

This morning I was tempted to look at a picture of a scandalous woman on my Facebook feed.

As I was going down the feed, I saw the picture and quickly scrolled past it, but I felt this strong urge to think about it after I passed it by. And I could not easily shake it. So I looked to the Lord for insight and the response was immediate and simple.

I will write what God spoke to my heart in this form, though it wasn't words:

"In that moment, more was happening than you being tempted with lust. The enemy tempted you with the idea that you are accepted by the quality of your desires and decisions. You began to agree with this and *that* is what strengthened the power of the temptation. The strength of sin is the law. When you use the Law as a ground for acceptance (the quality of your desires and decisions), the Law will show you how untrustworthy you are."

When I saw this, I immediately turned from my self-righteousness back to the Lord, and the evil desire *instantly* vanished. I no longer had an unclean desire to see the picture. Instead I had life and peace. This is walking by the Spirit: as you received Christ, so walk in Him (Col. 2). We received Him by faith alone. And that is how we received the Spirit (Gal. 3), and we are to continue to receive Him in this way. God was calling me to walk by the Spirit, not just have a profession of faith from the past.

You see, when I began to trust myself, I began trying to figure out if I really wanted the lust, or if I had crossed the line from temptation into sin. Why was I trying to figure this out? If I want to stand on my own righteousness, I need to assess myself to see if I am righteous or not. And of course, when you begin to doubt your righteousness, you begin to make excuses for yourself, especially if you feel you *must* rely on yourself. A lie appears better than absolute hopelessness.

In the past, I would have thought my battle was this: will I love God more than lust? It would have been all about my quality response, my love.

But because I have the light of the gospel in me, my spiritual senses can be trained to take part in *the real fight*: faith in Christ. So I could see the other temptation the enemy came to me with.

The issue was obedience. You might say, "But isn't choosing purity over lust obedience?" It is. But when you trust in your choosing and your character to be able to choose rightly as a ground for acceptance, you are being *disobedient* to God who said "I only justify the ungodly through faith in My Son alone." Moreover, those who will not submit to Him in this (Rom. 10), He will give no grace to grow (Gal. 5).

Don't you see the oddness of this? God will give you grace only if you stop trusting in your effort for acceptance and rather

er trust in Christ. God is a God of trust. He is the God of our heart.

You see, it takes a wrestle to stand firm and not submit to the slavery of self-righteousness (Gal. 5). Faith is a fight. And I need the Spirit to *even walk*. I don't try to walk (have loving desires and make loving decisions) in order to get the Spirit. Justifying faith is the same faith through which the Spirit is ever supplied to us (Gal. 3). I need the Spirit *to be* a loving person, and that is one of *His fruits* (Gal. 5).

This is how I walk free of sin and grow out of any sin I become aware of. It is because of the Gospel. I perfect in the Spirit what began by the Spirit (Gal. 3).

The righteous are as bold as a lion.

May more men *obey* God's gospel.

Re: , on: 2016/5/23 7:32

Quote:

-----by AlmostHome on 2016/5/23 1:37:27

Thanks for responding, Julius. I appreciate you taking the time out to lovingly be so thorough and thoughtful.

You're welcome. :-)

Quote:

-----The scars that I DO still carry, mostly come from churches and ministries that abused their authority. These places affected how I viewed God, to the point that I believed He couldn't possibly love me anymore. I was a constant volunteer wherever I was needed. I was known for it. Cooking, cleaning, parking lots, nursery, set up and tear down for conferences, etc., Unfortunately, they were Word of Faith churches. (Brutal egos and power trips!) All of my volunteering ended up getting me involved with the likes of Joyce Meyer and Benny Hinn. Behind the scenes of those ministries is s... scary. It took me a VERY long time to trust God again. And it's taking even longer to heal.

The above paragraph is concerning to me. As a Christian you will be abused by men. It just goes with the territory of being a "God-pleaser" and there is a balance in the "motivation of doing". We serve God because we already have love and acceptance and this is our motivation. DOING is an EXPRESSION of LOVE rather than DOING to RECEIVE LOVE. WE ARE RECEIVED! There is rest in love and absolutely no rest in rejection.

"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever." (Psa 131:1-2)

A common problem with Christians is that they set high standards for themselves in wanting to please God. Then, they don't reach those standards, fall back and feel rejection, again. This breeds an unstable spiritual relationship with the Lord. You said that you received deep scars from churches and ministries to the point of it damaging your relationship with the Lord and that it took you a very long time to trust God again...even longer to heal. This should not happen. If you are not received, it is because they do not receive Jesus and you have to know that Jesus is being rejected, not you. The religious world, built on performance and works is a very dangerous place to be, anyway. It eats up people and spits them out. Jesus was able to walk amongst the religious and the sinners delivering truth to both. He was rejected severely but not to the point where He received deep scars and had His relationship with His Father damaged. This is where the Lord wants us to be in Him. Totally secure in Him, knowing our identity is in Him and not in man's approval. You received scars because you were looking for man's approval and there is still a root in you that needs to have the axe laid to it.

Quote:

-----So, the rejection damage that remains has been, and is being, dealt with by God.

Continue to let God work in that area of your life that seeks approval from men. Once you are healed of that, you want receive hurts which causes us to harbor unforgiveness and bitterness and not trust people.

Quote:

-----My post is more to do with my struggle with the rewards and blessings God promises.

I believe you are still seeking approval from God based on performance and have not come to a place of complete rest in His love for you. When you have, you will not even think about rewards and blessings. You will be satisfied in Him.

Isa_58:8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

Quote:

-----Where the thoughts about "only doing this for the reward" come in, it's for doing things like setting aside time to worship, reading the Word, examining my life, being conscious to display works worthy of repentance and displaying the fruit of the Spirit. Like I said, the enemy knows how careful I am of my motives and wanting them to be right!

Yes, the enemy knows each of us intimately and knows how to "pull our strings".

{quote

But, again, I do tend to overthink and over-analyze things since I'm prone to perfectionistic tendencies.

Perfectionism is a manifestation of a rejected spirit, which is the root.

The Holy Spirit is preparing the Bride (Church) for the Bridegroom. The ministry of inner healing is beautification of the Bride. The Spirit desires to take away the "spots and wrinkles" and bring the Church together, united in one body. But, the Church must receive the beautifying work of the Lord in their lives.

Instead of you always searching yourself, let the Lord do it, in His time at His pace. You will cripple yourself in analyzing everything about yourself and the enemy knows this.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psa 139:23-24)

Christ gave Himself for the Church to sanctify and cleanse her and to have for Himself a glorious Church. A Church without "spot or wrinkle". Christ wants a Church without BRUISES, free from the past (wrinkles). A church cleansed of all defilement.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2Co 7:1)

A Bride that is fully mature (Until we all attain to...a mature man, Eph 4:13-15). The fullness of Christ is received by a mature Christian but immaturity makes one vulnerable to deception and dominion of men. And that is where the scars come in. Root of bitterness, pride, etc. Growth comes through "speaking the truth in love".

Forgiveness releases the past (hurts), people are released and YOU are released. Jesus Christ transcends all time so let Him minister to you regarding the hurts of the past that you may still be holding. Ask the Holy Spirit to search you. Don't try to do it yourself as we tend to stay away from deep pain. The fact that you are always doing it yourself may mean t

hat you are fearful to let the Holy Spirit go deep within. Stop trying to be in control and allow the Lord to go into all areas of your heart.

Remember, the Lord is gentle and it is His gentleness that makes us great (whole, mature).

"Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great." (Psa 18:35)

He will not hurt -

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory." (Matt 12:20)

Jesus takes us places we often do not want to go. We think He is wanting to inflict pain on us but He actually wants to deliver and heal us.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Pro 27:6)

"The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether." (Psa 19:9)

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 13:24

Thank you for caring, Brenda. Your encouragement is a gift and I'm grateful!

My sensitivity to sin is something I'm definitely cultivating as a habit. The overthinking part is something I have to continually surrender and be careful with because it can easily turn into works or stagnation from thinking the situation to the point where I "freeze" and fear making ANY decision in case I make the wrong one.

YOU SAID: "How is that possible some would say?"

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That's a lot rougher situation than I had to go through. I was never socially awkward, didn't know what to say, or experience anxiety issues. I just stopped saying anything because it usually met with abuse. It just made me sad, not anxious.

The weird thing is, I can't tell you how many times I heard in my life - and still do - "It's hard for me to be around you because I always feel guilty and uncomfortable." I never tried to correct, scold, or tell people they were wrong about things.

But I knew right from wrong and was never afraid to stand up for what's right. When people asked me questions about my life, I would just answer them. To some I was a goody-two-shoes and it made them mad. Some, I've come to understand, felt convicted of their sin. I've even been seriously asked several times if I was an angel! ROFL

So, for me, growing up, I think God's hedge of protection around me was SO strong that people saw Jesus in me -- all to His glory because it had nothing to do with me whatsoever!

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 13:53

Thanks yeuhan. I appreciate you taking the time to dig up those posts from Dustin.

QUOTE: I could not see that I was trusting *my ability* to desire holy things over evil things

This is definitely a struggle of mine. I hate it so much. When I learned that I had been trusting in my own ability, strength and ways - and that the root of that is pride - I was horrified. I tear up whenever I see this happening and will stop in that moment and repent.

QUOTE: "I believed I couldn't turn to Christ because my part was to try to desire holiness before Christ would be for me. Thus I could never turn to receive with confidence."

I can relate. The classic, "I have to fix myself first before coming to Him." But also never before, "I have to punish myself for awhile first." I see the enemy's hate for God and His people in those lies now. I think people find this so hard because Jesus's way of just running into His arms as we are sounds "too good to be true." And we live in a world today where, if something sounds too good to be true... it usually is.

QUOTE: "The answer is not you or me. It is Jesus Christ."

TRULY realizing this broke me. And then it freed me.

QUOTE: "Have you heard of Him--the depth of His love for you and the depth of your need for Him?"

The depth of my need? Most definitely. The depth of His love for me? Honestly? I believe it but I'm too scared to receive it. After 50 years of rejection and no love, I think if I received and felt His love for me, it might literally (yes, literally) kill me. This is my biggest struggle. In fact, I wouldn't even begin to know HOW to receive it.

QUOTE: "When repentance is about your ability to stop desiring each and every known sin, it's about your trustworthiness. When repentance is about turning to Christ to save you from sin's power (because it is too great for you), it's about Christ's trustworthiness."

That BLESSED me and hit the nail on the head. I will be taping that one on my wall. I needed to hear that.

QUOTE: "In that moment, more was happening than you being tempted. The enemy tempted you with the idea that..."

and

QUOTE: "But because I have the light of the gospel in me, my spiritual senses can be trained to take part in *the real fight*: faith in Christ. So I could see the other temptation the enemy came to me with. The issue was obedience."

This is exactly my thought process when temptation and sin arise! As I've said before, I'm a bottom line kind of guy. When

at's REALLY going on here right now? I picture the unseen war in the atmosphere around me and that helps me to be obedient.

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 14:28

Hi Julius!

QUOTE: "The above paragraph is concerning to me. As a Christian you will be abused by men. It just goes with the territory of being a "God-pleaser" and there is a balance in the "motivation of doing". We serve God because we already have love and acceptance and this is our motivation. DOING is an EXPRESSION of LOVE rather than DOING to RECEIVE LOVE. WE ARE RECEIVED! There is rest in love and absolutely no rest in rejection."

I completely understand why it would concern you. I HAVE matured and healed in this area a great deal. I'm not afraid of being abused by people anymore. This happened when I was in my late 20's and early 30's, when I was still very naive to the world. I'm a person who is very quick to forgive others... except when it came to this. The abuse I endured from these churches and ministries hurt FAR WORSE than the physical and emotional abuse I went through with my family growing up! That's saying a lot because I constantly heard (from my family) things like: "We hate you! We wish we never had you! You're so ugly no one will ever love you!"

I resented these "Christians" because they "took God away from me" and put themselves (authoritatively) in God's place in my life. God was the ONLY joy I had ever known and to have Him ripped from me was like tearing open my chest and ripping out my heart. Forgiveness and healing from this took 16 years. But, with that forgiveness and healing, came the understanding and maturity that you described in much of your post.

As you know, I've recently had a personal revival (which still thrives)! Part of this was being healed of people pleasing and acceptance. Of all the miracles that God has wrought in my life, this is the one I treasure most, right after salvation! I have never, EVER felt so FREE (bold, italics and underline FREE)!!!!

Even so, I'm SO grateful that you did the mature, loving thing and laid everything out the way you did because it was right to do so. That's what love does when it's put in action. As someone who has never received real love, I recognize it from a mile away, brother. (Which means I am well versed at spotting false encouragement, pretty sayings, and Christianese lingo spoken to exhort the speaker instead of the receiver.)

I get glimpses of God's love for me periodically. I've gotten glimpses of it through you because I can discern what's gone in (and is behind) your posts. (If that makes sense.) I think He allows me to see it in bits and pieces right now to prepare me for when He fully reveals it to me personally (and I know He will). I know that might sound ridiculous (even "wrong") to some people but when you haven't been given or felt love for 50 years, the idea of receiving God's pure love in all its fullness is PETRIFYING. I seriously question whether or not it would LITERALLY kill me. So, I'm grateful for the glimpses right now. They help build me up and strengthen me.

QUOTE: "I believe you are still seeking approval from God based on performance and have not come to a place of complete rest in His love for you. When you have, you will not even think about rewards and blessings. You will be satisfied in Him."

Without question, that's true! That comes from seeking approval and acceptance from my own father and mother. I see that. I may not seek approval and acceptance by people anymore (praise His name!) but recognize that I still do from God. The difference now is that I SEE that and have made preparations to battle it when the Holy Spirit brings it to my remembrance.

Through all of my hardships in life, the Holy Spirit has wisely walked me through learning patience and trust. I trust God's timing and His ways, as well as the Holy Spirit's guidance. And I know I WILL come out on the other side of this victoriously because of Him!

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/5/23 14:47

AlmostHome,

I can relate to a lot of your struggles.

(For the record, I shared a partial testimony here, c.f. posting time 18:42 - https://img.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic_pdf.php?topic_id=53630&forum=34 ; there are also links to Dustin's testimony snuggled in there)

It is easy to focus on ourselves and what is wrong with our performance or desires. But these are but symptoms, rooted in wrong beliefs or unbelief.

I have found that having good doctrine helps a lot - that forms the foundation for a correct understanding of God and how we relate to Him. Apart from Dustin's writings, I believe these are excellent resources:

1. "The Power of Right Believing" (by Joseph Prince)
2. "The Rest of the Gospel" (by Dan Stone and David Gregory)
3. "Lifetime Guarantee" (by Bill Gillham)

Re: , on: 2016/5/23 15:16

Thank you for your response, AlmostHome. Communicating in text is not always easy and I appreciate you filling in the blanks for me. I rejoice with you in all that God is doing in your life and encourage you to continue to be open to the Lord to receive His grace in your life without which we would all be lost.

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/23 19:04

yuehan and Julius,

Thanks again. Attentiveness to sin and surrender is exhausting work. By 6pm, I'm usually so tired I'm ready for bed! But, come 4am, I'm ready to get up and do it all again! Perseverance leads to the crown of life. (James 1:12)

Re: , on: 2016/5/24 16:51

My own testimony is that I have found if you spend the day loving the Lord and singing and making melody in your heart to Him you will end the day refreshed and you don't have to give so much attention to sin or introspection. Try being attentive to HIM instead of sin.

"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not." (Isa 30:15)

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/24 18:28

Quote:

-----by Julius21 on 2016/5/24 15:51:51

Try being attentive to HIM instead of sin.

Oddly enough (i.e., confirming), that is what the Holy Spirit got through my thick head today. It was quite a moment!

Re: , on: 2016/5/24 18:54

:-)

Whenever the Holy Spirit gets through to us, it usually is "quite a moment".

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/24 19:12

Quote:

-----Whenever the Holy Spirit gets through to us, it usually is "quite a moment".

And I don't care where I'm at or who's around when it happens! I've given God complete carte blanche to do whatever He wants, whenever He wants. I trust Him that much. Tears, embarrassment, humiliation, laughter, shouts of praise... it makes no difference to me anymore. If it's for my good and His glory, that's all I want. I will praise Him at all times, in all things. And I don't censor my speech around anyone anymore. Don't get me wrong, I'm not "preachy" or "praise the Lord-ing" every five minutes but, when it's appropriate and natural, I'm not ashamed. The responses so far have been positive, but isn't that the usual way God "warms you up" before the negative nellys chime in?! I'm not worried about that either!

I woke up determined to surrender all worrying. I asked for the Holy Spirit to help me and I was surprised at the different forms worry shows up in! I had JOY! That's how I learned to concentrate on Him instead of sin. You know what's in the middle of sin? "I". (As in ME!)

Re: , on: 2016/5/25 8:04

Quote:

-----Keith wrote: Thank you for caring, Brenda. Your encouragement is a gift and I'm grateful!

My sensitivity to sin is something I'm definitely cultivating as a habit. The overthinking part is something I have to continually surrender and be careful with because it can easily turn into works or stagnation from thinking the situation to the point where I "freeze" and fear making ANY decision in case I make the wrong one.

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So, for me, growing up, I think God's hedge of protection around me was SO strong that people saw Jesus in me -- all to His glory because it had nothing to do with me whatsoever!

(Lower case brackets and/quote before the closing set).

I identify with trusting people too much. It has been a great problem for me. And also what you say about being hurt by believers. This has been my greatest trial too especially a pastor who was really nasty with me because I was just open and honest with him and said that I did not feel supported by his congregation. I guess that hurt his pride.

Spiritual abuse is the worst I think and takes some getting over but it is vital that we are not concerned whether we get approval or love from others or not and only look to God for it and especially for those who are hard set on being close to Christ and Satan attacks them this way with misunderstandings and lack of support.

That is interesting what you said about others being convicted of their sins in your presence as I have heard this from unsaved people on the spectrum too as they have an innocence that neurotypicals do not have. They do not pick up early on that in order to survive socially you must please people and not be entirely honest and definitely not be blunt lol People hate the truth and aspies speak the truth!

We have things deep in our hearts that only God can access and we can think that we have overcome things then they come back round and we see that the root was still there.

I just want to encourage you to trust in the Lords working in you and not strive. If we have a broken and contrite spirit God can achieve the work quickly and we will be in a position where there is rest and no striving. It comes as natural as breathing. Please God restore me.