

Upon This Rock: Foundations for Life Together

Sunday School, Week 2

Going the Next Step: Applying the Gospel to the Heart

Brief Review – The Doctrine of Justification and Sanctification & Three Ways to Live

Objective For Today – To understand the power of the gospel to sanctify us through heart transformation, motivating and empowering us to put to death sin and live unto righteousness.

I. Identifying the Heart

The Mind, Will, and Emotions

- The Heart Thinking
- The Heart Choosing
- The Heart Feeling

The heart is essentially the internal core commitment that drives or motivates your thinking, choosing, and feeling (i.e. it is the “treasure” of your life, Matt 6:21)

Most of us deal with competing motivations or treasures, and thus vacillate between motivations and treasures throughout our life, even from moment to moment.

- Two Common Motivations – Approval & Power (Tim Keller)
- “Expulsive Power of the New Affection” (Thomas Chalmers)

II. Aiming at the Heart

- Knowing the Gospel, and *Knowing* the Gospel
- “A Divine & Supernatural Light”—Jonathan Edwards

Three Common Evaluations

- “I know the truth, I’m just not practicing it.”
- “I know the truth, and I’m doing what I need to do, I’m just not happy.”
- “If I only knew the truth, then I’d practice it.”

III. Confronting the True Source of our Sinfulness

“A sense of the love of Christ in the cross lies at the bottom of all true spiritual mortification”—John Owen

The Distinction Between Root Sins & Fruit Sins

- Fruit Sin – The manifesting or presenting sin
- Root Sin – The concealed sin that fuels the fruit sin.

Getting to the Root: Diagnostic Questions:

1. What is the manifesting or presenting sin?
2. What is the motivation behind the presenting sin? (root sin)
3. What is the relationship between the root sin and the gospel?
4. What must happen in the heart for change to happen?
5. What gospel approach will be needed to help facilitate that change?

Examples:

Galatians 2:11-14 (Negative), *But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"*

II Corinthians 8:8-9 (Positive), *I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.*

IV. Contrast Between True and Common Virtue (Jonathan Edwards)

Titus 2:11-14, *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."*

Common Virtue – Doing the Right Things for the Wrong Reasons/Motives

- Self-Interest & Natural Liberty (Smith, Theory of Moral Sentiments)
"It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect to get our dinner, but from their regard of their own interest. We address ourselves not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities, but of their advantage."—Adam Smith
- Self Interest stirs up **fear and pride** in the center of the heart.
- Example – Parenting practices

True Virtue – Doing the Right Things for the Right Reasons/Motives

- Glory of God and Interest of Others & Gospel Liberty (Service)
- The goal of Christianity is that we would know and love Christ with all our heart and your neighbor as yourself (Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 10:27).

Next Week's Topic – "Christ's Church, Christ's Way: How the Gospel Builds Community" Want to prepare? Read and meditate on Matt.16:8; I Peter 2:4-12, 21-25; Acts 2:42-47