

Striving for Security (Lust of the Flesh)

September 3, 2017

1 John 2:15-17 ESV

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life--is not from the Father but is from the world.

17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

LUST OF THE FLESH

*The compulsion to strive after **SUCCESS, SECURITY and SATISFACTION** in the flesh (self-effort) apart from God.*

SUCCESS

- **GOD'S DEFINITION and MEANS OF SUCCESS is FOOLISHNESS TO MAN.**
- **SUCCESS WITH GOD is measured by OBEDIENCE, NOT (apparent) RESULTS nor CIRCUMSTANCES.**
- **SUCCESS is found ONLY IN THE WILL and PURPOSES OF GOD, NEVER IN THE WISDOM and STRENGTH OF MAN.**

SECURITY - we strive for security in **PROVISION and PROTECTION**

The drive to provide for and protect your family and friends is God-given and good. Like any God-given desire, it becomes perverted when you trust in yourself, in man, or in worldly wisdom, instead of trusting in God.

Trusting in God instead of the arm of the flesh does not mean we work less in time or exertion. Trusting in God removes all of the stress, anxiety and frustration of the work because we're working as unto the Lord in gratitude instead of striving to be our own provider.

We gratefully embrace the work God sovereignly brings to us, knowing the work is God's provision for us and our families. Our employment is a gift from God, performed to God as worship.

Psalm 33:16-19 ESV

16 The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

17 The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue.

18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love,

19 that he may deliver their soul from death [PROTECTION] and keep them alive in famine [PROVISION].

Matthew 10:29-31 ESV

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Jeremiah 17:5-8 ESV

5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 ESV

17 Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.'

18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Jeremiah 17:5-8 ESV

6 He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

Isaiah 30:1-3 ESV

1 "Ah, stubborn children," declares the LORD, "who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin;

2 who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

3 Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation.

Rules of Engagement When Going to Egypt ("...they that use this world, as not abusing it..." 1 Cor 7:31)

- Always seek God's plan and will first - "...who carry out a plan, but not mine..."
- Never be yoked (unholy alliance) to Egypt - "who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit..."
- Never trust in Egypt - "...to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh..."

2 Chronicles 16:1-10 ESV

1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

2 Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying,

3 "There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me."

4 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

5 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease.

6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you.

8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand.

9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless (*shalem - complete, full, whole*) toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars."

10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time.

We can be deceived into trusting in the flesh by apparent good results. King Asa was able to repurpose all the stones and timber that their enemy had gathered!

But if we will only trust in the Lord instead of the arm of the flesh, God wants to do so much more than flesh could ever hope to accomplish. By faith we can participate with God in the miraculous, if we will only wait on Him.

Isaiah 31:1 ESV

1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD!

How hard it can be to trust an invisible God and to let go of all the fleshly and worldly securities we have known!

"When we look to God as provider, we are surrendering our independence and trusting someone else to meet our needs, over which we have no control. Letting go of our 'dependence on independence' and letting someone else take control goes against natural human instinct. We need to fight the urge to take over and just let God be God, because He can provide for us better than we can." — Corallie Buchanan, Watch Out! Godly Women on the Loose

Matthew 19:16-26 ESV

16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

17 And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."

18 He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,

19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

20 The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?"

21 Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

26 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

"It often seems more difficult to trust God than to obey Him. The moral will of God given to us in the Bible is rational and reasonable. The circumstances in which we trust God often appear irrational and inexplicable."

--Jerry Bridges, "Trusting God"

"God still shuts us up to faith. Our natures, our circumstances, trials, disappointments, all serve to shut us up and keep us in ward till we see that the only way out is God's way of faith." --C.H.P., Streams in the Desert

**Choose to trust God as your Provision and your Protection. Ask Him to help your unbelief.
Pursue faith to trust in the Word of God.**

1 Timothy 6:17 ESV

17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

Psalms 62:5-12 ESV

5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

7 On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Selah

9 Those of low estate are but a breath; those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.

10 Put no trust in extortion; set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart on them.

11 Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God,

12 and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.

"Society offers us a path to success, but God invites us to leave that enticement behind and embrace His safety and security.

Although society is performance driven and applauds those who are constantly striving for more, God invites us to rest.

Even though society was encouraging Him (Jesus) to rely on Himself and strive for more, He knew the power of waiting on and following God. This same power is available to us. Return to God's rest and put your confidence in Him today!" --David Jeremiah, "Flourish", Today's Turning Point

REGARDING PROVISION

Matthew 6:24-34 ESV

24 No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

25 Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?

28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,

29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

"What a serene and quiet life might you lead if you would leave providing to the God of providence! With a little oil in the cruse, and a handful of meal in the barrel, Elijah outlived the famine, and you will do the same. If God cares for you, why need you care too? Can you trust Him for your soul, and not for your body? He has never refused to bear your burdens, He has never fainted under their weight. Come, then, soul! have done with fretful care, and leave all thy concerns in the hand of a gracious God." --Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"The matters we or the world might consider trivial, He cares about and wants to remedy. He longs to relieve our worries and has promised to supply our most fundamental needs." — Charles R. Swindoll

REGARDING PROTECTION

Psalm 91:1-10 ESV

1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

5 You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

6 nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

8 You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place-- the Most High, who is my refuge--

10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.

Luke 4:28-30 ESV

28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.

29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

30 But passing through their midst, he went away.

John 7:30 ESV

30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

John 8:59 ESV

59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

John 19:10-11 ESV

10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?"

11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

Acts 14:19-20 ESV

19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.