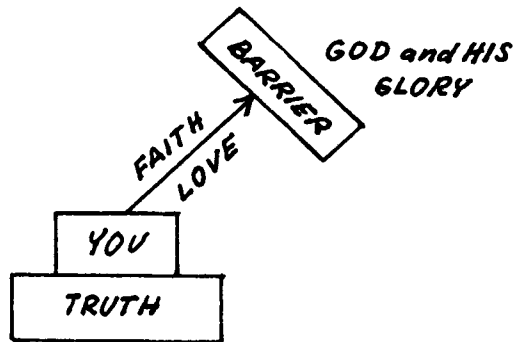


Lesson #7—The Hindrances to Living for the Glory of God.

Introduction

- A. In the last lesson we were **encouraged** through considering all the provision God has made for us so that we may honor and glorify Him.
- B. To summarize many of these passages:
1. In regard to our **persons**—we are God's temple.
 2. In regard to our **office**—we are God's priest.
 3. In regard to our **calling**—we are God's co-worker.
- C. Now we must face an **important question**. How can a group of people like ourselves, Christians, with such an adequate provision, enrolled in such a glorious plan, so miserably fail?
1. We are reminded of how Israel, during the days of Samuel, failed to glorify God.

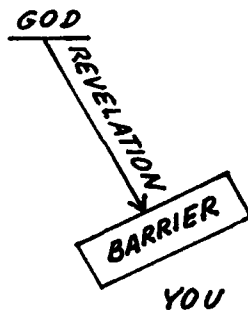
And she (Phinehas' wife) named the child Ichabod, saying, **The glory is departed from Israel**, because the ark of God was taken and because of her father in law and her husband. I Samuel 4:21
 2. It is easier to see the reason for this tragedy in history than to have the spiritual discernment we need for our own lives and time.
 - a. The weakness of Eli the high priest. He failed to provide adequate leadership to the nation and he did not disciple his own children. (I Samuel 3:11-14)
 - b. The ungodliness of Eli's sons. People refused to obey God in offering the sacrifices because of them. (I Samuel 2:12-17)
 - c. The way a form of "religious magic" had replaced a Biblical trust in God. (I Samuel 4:1-18)
- D. There are **four areas** where we must look, with humility, to see if we have allowed hindrances to come into our lives and rob us of living for the glory of God.



I. Common Hindrances Regarding the Foundational Truths of the Christian Life.

- A. The failure to understand the greatness of God, Isaiah 40: 25, 28.

To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.
Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding.



Observation: This is the most serious failure that could ever be made—to **misunderstand the very nature of God!** He is the Almighty God, the God of the whole earth, the Lord of Hosts. He is infinite, absolute, unchangeable, perfect in all His ways.

He is **faithful**—I may not misunderstand Him and doubt.

He is **holy**—I may not misunderstand Him and be unholy.

He is **love**—I may not misunderstand Him and be selfish.

He is **sovereign**—I may not misunderstand Him and be anxious.

He is **truth**—I may not misunderstand Him and pretend.

He is **all-knowing**—I may not misunderstand Him and question.

He is **all-powerful**—I may not misunderstand Him and fear.

He is **every-where present**—I may not misunderstand Him and panic.

He is the **Lord**—I may not misunderstand Him and disobey.

He is **good**—I may not misunderstand Him and covet.

B. The Failure to understand the goodness of God, Exodus 34:6.

And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and **abundant in goodness and truth.**

Observation: Due to our sinful condition we all have a tendency to evaluate the person and work of God from the **perspective** of our emotions and circumstances. There is nothing perfect with any of us. Because of this we often **doubt the goodness of God** and fall into the terrible sin of **covetousness**. If left uncorrected this will lead us into **the belief that God is against us**. These steps downward are inexorable. To live this way is to live in error. It is grieving and quenching to the Holy Spirit. This attitude will blight our lives and those about us.

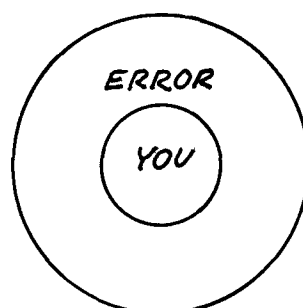
C. The Failure to understand the revelation of God, Hebrews 2:1; 4:12, 13.

Therefore, we ought to give **the more earnest heed** to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For the Word of God is **quick** (living), and **powerful**, and **sharper than any twoedged sword**, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a **discerner** of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but **all things are naked and opened** unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.

Observation: The Word of God has been given totally to every believer. It is our responsibility to accept God's revelation, learn its contents, and practice it in faith and love. We **misunderstand** the very nature of revelation when we accept as authoritative **only that which is presently convicting to us**. All of the Word of God is authoritative for us and we must submit ourselves to God through His Word. The Scripture has been given to us for doctrine, reproof, correction and for instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:16).



II. Common Hindrances Regarding Ourselves.

A. Failure to understand our **creation**, Isaiah 43:1, 7, 21.

But now thus saith **the Lord that created thee**, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, **Fear not, for I have redeemed thee**, I have called thee by thy name, **thou art mine**.

Even every one that is called by My name, for I have created him for My glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

This people have I formed for Myself, they shall shew forth My praise.

Observation: At least four great concepts are presented in these verses.

1. We have been created by God—that determines our **worth**.
2. We have been redeemed by God—that determines our **peace**.
3. We have been created by God for Himself—that determines our **fulfillment**.
4. We have been created by God for His glory—that determines our **vocation**.

When we fail to live according to these truths we invite confusion, failure, weakness and instability into our lives.

B. Failure to understand our **identification with Christ**, Romans 6:4.

Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that **like as** Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life**.

Observation: This verse reminds us that **we died** in Christ and that **we were raised** in His Resurrection. The very roots of our salvation find their basis here. This simply means that we may not allow any sin in our life (because we have been delivered through the Cross) and we must be characterized by all forms of virtue (all made possible by the Resurrection). To fail to live in harmony with this fundamental provision of God will result in seriously hindering our daily life and render us incapable of bringing glory to God.

C. Failure to understand and **resolve our past**, Ephesians 4:17-24.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth **walk** (live) **not as other Gentiles walk**, in the vanity of their mind,

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ,

If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus,

That ye **put off concerning the former conversation** (life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Observation: As these verses indicate, one of the important steps toward living for the glory of God, is to **resolve the past**. By this I mean to deal with the past on the basis of the truth. Past sins must be **confessed and restitution** must perhaps be made. Old habits of thought and action must be **broken**. The unresolved relationships that have scarred and hurt us must be **settled**. In all of these areas **spiritual healing** must be received. Old hurts and conflicts have a tendency to be pushed "underground" only to resurface with increased power and damage later. The past need not ruin the present.

III. Common Hindrances Regarding Faith and Love.

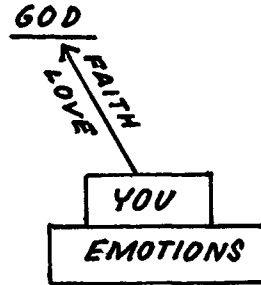
A. The confusion of faith—love with our **feelings**, Numbers 13:31, 32; 14:11.

But the men that went up with him (Caleb) said, **We be not able** to go up against the people, for **they are stronger** than we.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a **land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof**, and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature.

And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke Me? And **how long will it be ere they believe Me**, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?

Observation: God had promised the Israelites the Land of Canaan. He had amply demonstrated His power to them. The reason they could not believe Him was found in their fear (Deut. 7:17, 18). When they **accepted their fear and put it into practice**—that became their **authority and motivation**. They should have reminded themselves (as Caleb and Joshua said) that the Word of 'God was their authority and trusted God—rejecting their feelings of fear. When we follow our emotions we will be led into failure.



B. The confusion of faith—love with **passivity**, Hebrews 4:1-3.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to **come short** of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, but **the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it**.

Observation: These verses instruct us in a great truth. We are shown that a mere willingness to do the will of God is not enough. We must be aggressive in "mixing the Word of God with faith". This means accepting the Word as authoritative, putting it into practice for the glory of God, and doing all of this in faith—the practice of trusting God. This is not magic. The Israelites would need to search out the enemy, form themselves into an army, gather weapons and provision, develop a strategy, and then fight the battles and claim the land—all as an expression of their trust in God.

It is not enough for us to be willing to glorify God. If we are to fulfill our calling we must **learn how and then aggressively do so, day by day, trusting God**.

C. The confusion of faith—love with **knowledge**, James 1:22-24.

By be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass,

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Observation: A common tendency among us, which will lead to failure, is that of knowing the truth but not putting it into practice by faith and love. In fact, a strong case can be made to show that a person who does not practice a truth is revealing, by his actions, that he does not have a spiritual understanding of the truth. Perhaps this is why James speaks of this as a "deceiving" of ourselves. We may not allow ourselves to be led into a complacent study of the Scriptures. We must **learn the Word, put it into practice by faith, and do it all for the glory of God**.

IV. Common Hindrances Regarding the Goals of Daily Life.

A. The hindrance of having a **selfish goal of possessions**, Luke 12:15, 16, 20, 21.

And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully....

But God said unto him, **Thou fool**, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided?

So is he that **layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**

Observation: It is a mistake to believe that possessions can satisfy the desire of the heart. **God made us for Himself—not for things!** While hard work and frugality are Biblical this is never presented in Scripture as the goal of life nor as a measure of our success. To live for such a false goal causes one to miss the very meaning of life itself. That is why God called the rich farmer a "fool". Our possessions may never be a substitute goal for our daily life. They may be used, however, as a means whereby God is honored and glorified.

B. The hindrance of having a selfish goal of personal satisfaction, II Tim. 4:10.

For Demas hath forsaken me, **having loved this present world...**

Observation: One of the main characteristics of sinfulness is that of being self-centered. The attitude summarized in "**What do I get out of it?**" seems to permeate so much of our thinking. We seek to achieve this goal by many routes: entertainment, physical satisfaction, calling attention to our needs, being the life of the party, and the avoiding of any relationships which would hinder our own personal peace. All self-centered goals must be given up by the believer.

C. The hindrance of having false religious goals, Mark 7:5-9, 13.

Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why walk not Thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, **This people honoureth Me with their lips but their heart is far from Me.**

Howbeit **in vain do they worship Me**, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

For **laying aside the commandment of God**, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do.

And He said unto them, **Full well ye reject the commandment of God**, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered, and many such like things do ye.

Observation: There is no way we can honor and glorify God without a faithful obedience to the Word of God. Too often, however, we have placed the Church, or doctrine, or worse—our own private interpretation—much too high on our list of priorities. **The goal of our daily life is a Person, God Himself**, everything else is only a means whereby He is honored and glorified. As we live day by day and as we relate to others—this must be constantly kept before us.

Conclusion: **Do you know what is hindering you from glorifying God? If so, then confess and forsake it. If not—then ask God to show you.**