Our theme today is: Becoming a Godly Christian Pt 3 - Investing in Eternity

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We recently considered the danger of Christians making unwise decisions and lifestyle choices. Choices which can have a significant effect upon our life.

Now, we can all make unwise decisions. This is because we are imperfect. We often lack knowledge and experience as we negotiate life's difficulties, and there are times when Christians can unfairly judge themselves in light of past mistakes.

- We need to be careful when we are faced with our own faults and limitations. Learning from our mistakes is one thing, self-destructive thought is quite another.

This means we must avoid a harsh and destructive inner dialogue, which in itself, does not produce any beneficial change but only discouragement.

The fact is that we would never judge anyone else in such a harsh light, so why do we judge ourselves in that same light.

- Correctly assessing ourselves in the light of God's Word and the witness of the Holy Spirit is essential, but constantly beating ourselves over the head with negative self-criticism is to be avoided.

It is better to learn from our errors in a positive way and avoid constant negative criticism which can lead to Christians giving up and opting out of being a useful disciple of our Lord.

- Now who would have thought that God would use a man called Saul of Tarsus, a great opponent of the Christian faith. A man who caused havoc among early Christians.

God saved him and Saul became Paul the Apostle, a great disciple who preached the Gospel and was a loyal follower of Christ and who kept faithful to the end.

Paul says in **Philippians 3:13-14**. *"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

As an athlete approaching the winning line, Paul is absolute in not letting anything get in the way of finishing the race, overcoming obstacles, winning the prize and being faithful to his Saviour.

Now, **if** you have made poor lifestyle choices and decisions that have taken you off track, the good news is that you can change it and get back on track. In fact, the Lord wants you to do that with His help.

Full repentance, turning your back on an unprofitable lifestyle and getting back into the race brings joy, blessing and a rewarding lifestyle that's deeply enriched with God's presence.

Why choose the cheap trinkets that the world has to offer when you can choose the riches that are in Christ and the eternal rewards that are yours by following the Lord. **Why not make that decision now**.

• Remember previously that we reflected on an important principle in Christian thinking, that of '**putting on Biblical glasses to align our vision and our understanding with the word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit**.'

Just like any new skill, the newly born Christian has to practice the ability of regularly aligning their will to Gods, so it becomes, more or less, the normal thing to do. In many ways it becomes automatic, rather like driving a car. New skills and behaviours become ingrained and deep routed into your new lifestyle, so that being able to make the right choices becomes more obvious because your mind, your attitude and behaviour become more aligned to the will of God.

Daily fellowship with God, regularly praying, reading God's Word and walking in the Spirit become part of your life. This development is very important because we live in an ungodly world and the flesh always wants to do its own thing, not the things of God.

Paul writes about this in **Galatian 5:16** *"This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh"*.

As we consider a range of important Biblical truths essential for Christian growth, by putting these truths into practice, to become more like the Lord Jesus, is an investment in eternity and nothing could be more important than that.

Let us continue this theme and other important steps.

The next step is...

• The importance of developing a Biblical worldview.

In **Exodus 20:11** Moses writes: *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it*.

By **removing** those the secular glasses that we once wore, glasses that promoted an evolutionised worldview, and by **putting on** Biblical glasses, the Christian can now see that it is not millions of years of sin, death, decay and extinction that we once imagined through those secular glasses.

Remember, it is the evolutionised mindset that ruled out God and which helps sinful man create an imaginary world where he can set the standard and make up all the rules and be responsible to no one but himself. **A tragic mistake with eternal consequences**.

• Faith is a core essential in the Christian's walk with God. Without 'faith' we cannot please God and that faith extends to believing God's word in the creation account exactly as God inspired it

Christians support '**real science**'. Science that is observable, testable and capable of verification, called 'Operational Science'.

It is the science of Christians like **Robert Boyle** (father of Chemistry), **Isaac Newton** (discoverer of the Law of Motion and Universal Gravitation etc); **Michael Faraday** (who made discoveries in electromagnetism and electrochemistry), and many other Christians who were key scientists in laying down the foundation of true operational science that is **testable**, **observable** and **verifiable**.

● This is the science that, in our modern day, designs and builds jet engines, space stations, computers, mobile phones, communication satellites and many other things.

This is so unlike the claims of evolutionary philosophy, which still remains an '**unsubstantiated hypothesis**' and is based primarily upon defective reasoning that rules out the Creator. In evolution, no Creator is needed.

● Evolution itself cannot be **tested**, **observed** or **verified** by the normal scientific method. Evolution is fundamentally an interpretation of the past which insists on removing God from the equation, and its conclusions lack genuine support by verifiable evidence.

● Interestingly, the scientific evidence it does claim is **made to fit** the evolutionary hypothesis, and the data that fails to conform to this premise, is conveniently hidden or ignored and certainly not taught in classroom and school textbooks, because that would be far too embarrassing.

Previously, we considered the cause of this faulty reasoning. Sadly, unregenerate man is ***compelled*** to accept and follow evolutionary philosophy wherever its leads, no matter the consequences.

● This is because he is a sinner, he is lost, his heart is darkened and his life is at odds with the Creator, this is why he wants to hide away from his Maker and imagine he does not exist.

Does that remind you of the first man and woman's behaviour in Genesis after they sinned?

● What many today do not realise is that after decades of indoctrination, western society gradually allowed evolution to become the **secular substitute** for the Creator God of the Bible. This has undermined the Christian principles and laws that once shaped our society, with tragic results in society today. Rising crimewaves, increasing wars, political turmoil, youths seeking fulfilment in materialism, alcohol and drugs, find out that their life is futile and meaningless.

Also, it should not go unnoticed that Evolution cannot answer man's most fundamental questions, such as:

• Who am I?

• Where did I really come from?

• What is my purpose in life?

• What is truth?

• Why do bad things happen in our world?

• What happens after I die?

Evolution and its bedfellow, theistic evolution, have absolutely no answers to these questions or, at best, can only make a vague guess at an answer.

● But the real answer to each question is that every person owes his origin to the Creator. It is the Saviour who gives true purpose and meaning to our lives.

Without Him, we are lost. Bad things happen in our world because man is a sinner, and he lives to please himself rather than God.

It is far better to know the Eternal God who created all things and who told us how He did it.

In **Isaiah 40:28** we read *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary?"*

We can safely trust in God's eternal Word.

The next step is..

- ## The importance of strengthening Your Christian Life by developing good habits.

Developing good habits includes the daily reading of God's word, regular prayer, fellowship with God's people and seeking God's will for your life.

- It is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, that the seed of God's word will grow in us and shape our lives. But this growth is in **direct proportion** to the **time** and **effort** you spend in God's presence in prayer and in His Word. There are no short cuts, it is a long-term investment.

In Ephesians 5v8 we read: *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: **walk** as children of light*. Notice that word **'walk'** means consistently walking, consistently growing, consistently living and enjoying your new faith. This is because our faith is truly alive! It is a life that comes directly from God to us.

- Before salvation, we were not just living in darkness, we **were** darkness! Now **we are** children of light and because of this our lives shine in goodness, joy, peace, kindness etc, which is the outward manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit, in its fruit that develops in us and which bare testimony of the **LIGHT** that we now walk in.

- Therefore, we are to live as children of light, and this includes resisting this world's philosophy and power to mould us **back** to its way of thinking.

Satan's master attack upon Christians is to develop in us a secular, evolutionary mindset with the intention that Christians will eventually lose their confidence in God's Word.

If you allow this to happen, it increases Satan's chances of transforming you back to the way of thinking that you had before you were saved.

- Satan cannot take your salvation in Christ, but he can, if you allow him, spoil your life if he can get you to gradually walk away from the Lord.

To the Galatian Christians, Paul said: *"You ran well. **Who** hindered you from obeying the truth?"*

In **Colossians 2:8** we read *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*.

- How important it is to realise that our faith is not based upon human philosophy or man-made traditions but upon the sure, unmoveable foundation of God's Word.

Ephesians 2:20 says that we are *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ **himself** being the chief corner stone*. (Christ himself).

In construction, the cornerstone is the main stone that aligns the structure of the building. All other stones in the structure are placed with reference to the cornerstone.

• But the main cornerstone in **God's building** is not actually a stone but a **person**. It is Christ Himself because it is a divinely constructed building. Our faith is built upon a person who rose from the grave, He triumphed over sin, He conquered death and He overcame the powers of darkness.

A person who builds their life upon **this** foundation will be firmly established in the faith as they walk with the Lord. This brings permanent and lasting consequences such as true peace, true joy, true purpose and true meaning.

• As the Lord builds His church, there is nothing about the Christian life that involves faulty workmanship or anything that is man-made. We should be really glad about this because our salvation rests entirely upon the Lord and His unchanging word.

In the Lord there are no failed promises, no false hopes, no vague wishful thinking, no dreadful disappointments, no human philosophies, no dead ends and no empty lives **because** He fills us with His goodness and mercy.

• For the Christian, life is never empty. It is filled with the blessings of God. These are immovable, unchangeable realities that cannot be found in the world.

Therefore, continue to develop good habits and **build** them into your life by getting into God's word, praying regularly, and seeking His will for your life.

Because we are part of God's building that is constructed in accordance with God's eternal purposes, it provides every motive to consistently walk in the light.

The next step is..

• The importance of transformation - walking with the Lord.

To be a godly, thinking Christian we must never leave our brains outside the door, including the church door, the factory door, the office door or the door of our school, college or university or even the door to our home.

No place should be outside the realm of Biblically sound reasoning and logic. For it is in these areas where evolutionary philosophy tries to get a foothold.

• Furthermore, we must never hand over our thinking for someone else to do for us. Test everything by the Word of God.

To be a godly Christian, our **MIND**, our **THINKING** as well as our **BODIES** must be under the control of the Holy Spirit.

• A crucial element for the godly Christian is seen in **Colossians 3:2**, where we read: *"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."*

We are to **set** our minds, we are to **fix** our gaze, we are to **focus** our attention on the realities of things above, for God has established heavenly matters within the courts of heaven as the priorities of eternity.

- It is solemn to consider that within the realms of secular thinking no scientist, philosopher, professor, priest, cardinal or educational expert has ever obtained a place in God's kingdom by their own reasoning. This is because these people deny the word of God, they deny the gospel and reject the only One who can save them.

No attempt to elevate man's evolutionary theories to the status of **'truth'** can cleanse one single sin or make the sinner right with God. The outcome of secular thinking only creates a flimsy hope in man's ability to save himself. That is a dangerous delusion. The god of this world loves delusion.

The Christian has already been warned, Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:8** *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*

- Evolutionary theory says that man does not need saving but is constantly evolving into higher forms of life. Man will save himself they believe.

Evidence around us reveals the opposite is the case. Sin, godlessness, perversions, crime, wickedness, evil doings, scamming, lying, deception, thieving, brutality, drug addiction, alcohol addiction, pornography addiction and gambling addiction permeates societies around the world.

- Does this evidence point to a world getting any better? Or does it point to a world getting more sinful?

The message of the Gospel is that Christ, the Saviour, came into this lost world to save sinners. He came to give eternal life to all who turn to him. He came to give true purpose and meaning in **your** life.

He is coming to establish God's eternal kingdom where there will be no sin, no evil, no wars, no crime but peace, holiness, joy and perfect fellowship with God for all eternity.

In becoming a godly Christian, God has called you to full maturity in your understanding and knowledge. He wants you to know the greatness of your redemption, the greatness of your position in Christ, the greatness of your inheritance, the greatness of the eternal riches that are already yours through His love and compassion, and that is just the start of this amazing journey!

May God continue to bless you in accordance with the riches of His grace.

Thank you.

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