

Week 5 Faith Formation in a Secular World: Study Series, Brentwood Hills Church of Christ, fall 2018  
"Kingdom Living Requires Daily Workouts! 1 Corinthians 9:19-27"

### **REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

- Homework: Christian master narrative: take your given blessings, choose to use them for other than your own advantage, serve others for their well-being.
- Purpose of the church – to show the world the holiness of God as we live in God's narrative of generous gift...
- God leads us to die so that we might live.
- We are not who we think we are to the world – for them we are who they think we are – we need to "re-brand."
- We (all humanity) were made in the image of God. Jesus is the image of God in the flesh. Kenosis is the frequency of authentic living.
- Not so much to "imitate" Jesus as to participate with him in new creation. We are called to be the proleptic, eschatological people of God – a contrast community – the visible reign of God.

### **WHAT MIGHT THIS LOOK LIKE?**

A community:

- of justice in a world of economic and ecological injustice
- of generosity and simplicity (of "enough") in a consumer world
- of selfless giving in a world of selfishness and entitlement
- of humble and bold witness to the truth in a world of uncertainty
- of hope in a world of disillusionment and brokenness
- of joy and thanksgiving in a hedonistic world that frantically pursues pleasure

### **If we don't change the narrative, we can't change the church...transformation is the Spirit's work**

- Most present solutions are not helpful. Tweak worship, change preachers, remodel the building, take a survey...
- Must confront the elephant in the room – too many of us are not living in God's redemptive narrative.
- Helpful change comes from within (renewing, transformative work) via the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus said our actions come from within, caused by how we "see" the world. If our eyes are full of darkness (sinful distortions), there is no light.
- Romans 8:1-15 – live according to the flesh? Death. Mind governed by the Spirit? Life and peace! "Through the Spirit put to death the misdeeds of the body and live!" (8:13)

### **Paul's challenge to the Colossians:**

- New (ancient) narrative: Colossians 1:15-22
- Colossians 2:2, 3 – all treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden here
- Colossians 2:8 – WARNING – all other narratives are false...
- How do we become a part of this story? Colossians 2:9-15 By God's grace!
- Colossians 3 is the challenge – live into the story! You have been raised, set your hearts and minds on God's purposes, not this secular world!

- Take off, put to death what does not belong...
- Replace it with godly attire – intentionally dress yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...
- Live a life of singing this song! All that you do!

### **OK, I understand, but how?**

- We all need a “Rule of Life.”
- We have been called to be athletes of God’s kingdom and training is required!
- I Corinthians 9:19-27 – diligent training is indispensable in Christian walk.
- Training vs. Trying
- We cannot try to be like Jesus without accepting his training regimen.
- IT IS NOT ABOUT DOING MORE OF WHAT YOU ARE PRESENTLY DOING POORLY. “A bucket of balls does not cure a bad swing.”
- We need to relearn the Christian practices so that they become the workplace of the Holy Spirit.

### **Essential Practice Elements**

- Love God with all your heart, mind, strength, soul – all disciplines should deepen our love for God!
- Feed your soul! A high spiritual metabolism requires nourishment Psalms 19:7-8; 119:20, 27  
Developing a longing for study...
- Quiet your mind and learn from God – the desperate need for reflective disciplines...
- Note the results. Not all practices produce fruit.
- All spiritual disciplines lead not only to love of God but love of fellow human beings.
- Spiritual formation or disciplines that does not lead to missional living is not authentically Christian...

### **Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Yearly**

- Homework? Develop a “rule of life” and keep it. INTENTIONALITY is the first discipline.
- Begin the day with the Lord, intentionally
- Give the best part of your day to knowing God better
- Open your eyes and your ears to the language and events of the kingdom
- Examen – awake to the work of God around you. Join God in his work – he is already there.
- Find helpful “replacement” disciplines. Consider buying a copy of Adele Calhoun’s Spiritual Disciplines Handbook (2 edition is better).
- Develop a routine. Assess the value – experiment, discover, flourish!