

My Blog 2016

It is true that we can attempt to fill our needs for peace, meaning, happiness, and life with offensive idols in our hearts, but that the real estate of our hearts ultimately belongs to God. When we renounce our idols through confession, forgiveness, healing, repentance, submission, and invite God into those places...we are not doing Him a favor. We are not the landlords...God is the Land Lord. We can treat the Land Lord shamefully, or with respect.

Sunday, January 3, 2016

Realized I need to be gentle if I want kindness returned no matter how difficult.

Love is not self-focused...it is other focused.

Being free from addictions does not mean we are focused on performance, milestones, achievements, or comparisons...we are focused on the goodness belonging to God, and redirecting our thirst and hunger away from idols and resting them in God in strategic prayer and actions.

We can still have really negative emotions in reaction and responses to dynamics in our relationships. But we ought not try to wrestle with these emotions (realizing that thoughts determine our emotions not the other way around) ...but in prayer ask God to help change our thinking and heal our emotions...by replacing them with goodness, warmth, peace, and compassion. The negative emotions we have control over within ourselves are the negative energies of our unhealthy anger that push for force, control, rigid demands, manipulation, and harmful judgments

There is healthy and unhealthy anger. When injustices occur or boundaries are violated the anger is healthy. When anger comes from the vices: conceit, pride, envy, greed, lust, sloth, and gluttony then it is unhealthy. I'm sure you can imagine why! For instance, when one is envious one can be very judgmental and angry when one doesn't get what one wants. That is immature, and needs to be jettisoned! So the anger expresses something that is ugly!

Yes, all the vices spring from fear...so unhealthy anger springs from fear!

Insights:

I learned today that I need to own my thoughts, beliefs, and deeds. I also learned that I need to respect this for everyone else. I have one life to live. I take no captives. I make no weak poor me demands of others. My value, self-esteem, happiness is not dependent on others. I was made to live my life only... Nobody else's. Those are the lines or boundaries I need to and want to live within.

Not wise to pray: Jesus I wish you were my life, meaning, happiness, and peace.

Wise to pray: Jesus I choose you as my life, meaning, happiness, and peace. This will lead to wanting to spend quiet time with God not because it looks good or holy but because it is healthy.

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

If we believe that our actions are noble towards a person, and then expect them to give us our way because we have supposedly earned their love then this is a dark self-righteous attitude....

because we don't earn God's grace and love by our deeds. If we expect people to be our friends because of something we did, then they will always feel like they are paying off a debt and this will sour the relationship. If we don't give up this expectation, then we are in danger of losing many good relationships. Therefore:

I refuse to hold any noble deed over anyone, and therefore demand, or expect they do the same for me. I choose to set them free to soar on eagle's wings! I only wish them happiness!

Saturday, January 9, 2016

John 6 is a much disputed chapter between Roman Catholics and Protestants since the Reformation! I have a different take on it. In John 6:48 Jesus says, "I am the bread of life". I think Jesus is saying that there is a God shaped vacuum within each of us that is meant for God to dwell. Jesus sees Himself as the bread that can satisfy our hunger...and the Holy Spirit as life giving water that can quench our thirst. We can go for communion our whole lives and never cast out the cheap idols (that can't satisfy our thirst for God) in our respective God-shaped vacuums. We don't thirst for lesser things...we thirst for God...the problem is that we are either foolish enough or deceived enough into thinking idols such as food, drink, sex, money...etc. will satisfy that emptiness. When we get in touch with our thirst and hunger and locate it we will realize that what we really want is peace, meaning, life, and happiness; and only God can satisfy this appetite. Confessing our guilt to God, and renouncing our idols in prayer with faith and inviting God into our lives to meet our thirst and hunger is the path to take...this will help heal our addictions to these idols and set us free to live and love more deeply.

Sunday, January 10, 2016

I realize that there is a constant push towards idols in my life. This weak call for instant gratification is the flesh trying to do what God willingly and freely and lavishly supplies. The devils try to redirect my hunger and thirst for God towards the idols instead. The funny thing is that these idols which the devil promises will satiate my hunger and thirst can't do the job. They just land up intensifying the attraction with diminishing returns. The flesh is that weakness in us that willingly gives into the pull of the devil's lies. God did not give us idols. Sin is when we fulfill a need in an unhealthy way. It is interesting that we aren't attracted to any of the devils...they are ugly and repulsive...so they do their best to pull us away from God to stuff that is more attractive than the devils but not God.

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

I heard it said in a recent Batman movie, "that some people are not afraid to die" along with the question: "But are they afraid to live?" I'm not afraid to die...but deep down inside I just wanted an easy cushy, and wimpy passage to Heaven. I did not want to live, I saw it as exhausting, draining, and I feared and hated the burden. Basically I was afraid to live. This is cowardice...and it does make us demanding, judgmental, and un loving because we don't want to pay the price of living life. This attitude attracts negativity to us and gives room for demons to work in our lives. When we are not wanting to pay the price we take shortcuts. Hence we have sloth, instant gratification and gluttony too, just to feel good. Not wanting to pay the price for stuff in our lives leads to not wanting to pay the price to love others. Praying through this issue will bring life and freedom...not shortcuts, depression, self centered ness boredom, and despair.

If we don't want to live (having a whole hearted commitment to cowardice motivating it) then we can't expect the Holy Spirit to fully indwell us (note: Even when we find ourselves here, God will fight for us and not abandon us). When we refuse to love in difficult circumstances God can't force his empowering-presence on us. All God can do is mourn our foolishness as we push Him away, for He is slow to anger. God understands our weaknesses and is not judgmentally anal towards us. God is not looking to pick a fight with us; but to reconcile us to Himself.

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

What does the following verse mean: "Submit to God, and resist the devil"?

Submitting to God means embracing Jesus' teaching, and accepting His Leadership. The resisting the devil part has to do with fending off the lies, temptation and seduction that the devil throws our way.

Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Got this quote from the wife: focus on the opportunity in the difficulty; not on the difficulty of the opportunity. It is a fitting way to kill self-pity, negativity, complaining, blaming, ugly anger, and calls of unfairness. It kills sloth, and creates work ethic, and aids the creative process.

Sunday, January 24, 2016

No one owes me anything. I take no prisoners. Obviously no one likes parasites and wise people push them away. Some people like to love and be loved. When a relationship has two people like this then neither is earning the other's friendship and they stay together because love attracts. If they were trying to earn the loyalty of the other person, then the relationship is one that is based on works, and guilt; like: what you owe the other person. Where there is no love then what they signed up for is much like a contract, and demanding ness will result when violations are committed. People like reciprocation... they like to be loved...love has no hooks, small print clauses on contracts. When two people love each other they stay together not because they earned stuff in the relationship...but because their love has no strings attached. This is freeing and is a paradox (not trying to own the other person; they enjoy and connect to each other).

In the parable of the prodigal son (found in Luke 15:11-32) ...the father did not try to get healthy behavior from his sons out of guilt, manipulation, or with a "you owe me" mentality because of all he did for them...or now it is their turn to "put out" considering all he gave them. The father loved the two sons...and gave them much. Neither one realized his love. The father in the parable is symbolic of God the Father. God's love has no strings attached to it. There are consequences attached to our sins. Sin always pushes God away (rejects God). Sin is its own punishment. The sting of death is sin not God. Sin is not so much "rule breaking", but sin is unhealthy actions motivated by and unhealthy desires that are motivated by unhealthy thinking and believing. This meditation is one of the strongest medicines to cure pride, envy, greed, and judging together with confessing and receiving forgiveness and healing from God.

"Do not focus on the difficulty of the opportunity; focus on the opportunity in spite of the difficulty." This is a principle that when practiced allows one to live in the moment, and it also helps to kill envy. Problems and difficulties require processes to diagnose and solve, and when there are no immediate solutions then powerlessness, depression, and self-pity can result and

this can fuel anger and direct our attention away from what we can do. When engaged in a project, we can focus on what is still not done or we can focus on what we are doing and has been done. The latter gets us into the moment and makes us feel good, the former will weigh on us so long as the task is not done and can steal our motivation and make us feel self-pity along with the temptation to give into sloth.

Always connect with your feelings, your hunger and thirst when praying about them to God! In doing so we are connecting our minds to our hearts, and those who seek God with their whole heart will find God and freedom. Being disconnected from the source of our problems, means we can't repent fully with God's help.

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Jesus said that He is the true Vine and we are the branches. His life wants to flow into us. It wishes to flow into that God shaped vacuum that has an appetite and thirst for God. We have to remain in Him if we are to drink from Him and therefore bear much good fruit. To remain in Jesus means to jettison our idols that we can trace back to our thirst and hunger for God, this way we can welcome the life of the Holy Spirit to live in us more fully. Saint John told us to keep away from idols. To remain in Jesus means our allegiance belongs to Him and not to the world, the devil, and the flesh. To remain in Jesus, the true Vine, we need to re-direct our thirst for meaning, peace, life, and happiness back to God who satisfies. When God teaches us something, we need to hold onto it. When people tell us something contrary to the Good News of Jesus Christ, then such is the "world's message" we need to reject. We are told in the Bible that "unhealthy" friendship with the world is hatred for God.

Saturday, February 12, 2016

I just wanted to thank Liz for a comment she made at a Bible Study I attended this week. She contrasted the difference between the words: charity (love) and compassion...and yes I was stuck there...feeling twice the guilt because I first didn't have a lot of emotion well up in me in many situations, and second because I did not act compassionately in those situations (because of my lack of passion or emotion that I was wrongly depending on to act kindly). We are called to love no matter what we feel. Compassion has that meaning of having to feel the right emotions in order to be kind. Love and charity do not.

For a long time, I disliked the old word "charity" but now I realize that it has power (thanks to Liz): where one is merciful, caring, and kind as a way of life when our motivation is to love or be charitable. Not waiting for the right feelings to come by in order to somehow get me to do the right thing like the word compassion led me into thinking.

Our words can have meanings poured into them that can make things complex and fraught with difficulty when simpler words would make it really that much more simple and empowering! Double thanks Liz! For me the word compassion is too complex a word, and I now choose the words: merciful, gracious and loving in its place.

I had jettisoned the word charity a long time ago when somebody made the remark: "I don't want your charity" which had the energy: "I don't like you feeling noble, because I am noble too even though I don't have what you got, and I don't want you feeling noble at my expense." I also

did not want to use the word "love" too much because I saw my lack of it in the face of how much I wanted to preach it. Perhaps with these insights I can get to being enthusiastic about love again.

Monday, February 15, 2016

For a long time, I felt estranged from God the Father. I asked myself: what good does He do? I saw Jesus getting His hands dirty, loving us, and forgiving us. I saw the Holy Spirit as indwelling us, nurturing us, and giving us life. But I did not see what God the Father did. Until I realized that He gave the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus Christ to be with us, love us, give us life, and guide us.

I always saw Salvation in the terms of accepting Jesus as Lord (Leader) and Savior through faith. But this however important is not the whole story. We are all God's estranged children even before we come to know God in a personal way, when we come to know Him He re-adopts us and starts the work of sanctification, and restores the image that Satan tried to erase in us through his filthy intrigues.

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

I just realized why I compulsively judged people to be shallow hypocrites for most of my life. I was rejected by some children as a child...and so out of this wound of rejection from a few small children when anyone seemingly did something noble I believed the lie that what they did was for attention (just like the few children) and they did not really care about anyone else (because I believed that they did not care for me like the few children who did not care). This pride-judgment-mentality in me grew and grew and eventually pervaded most of my thinking ever since then until recently even though the leaps or jumps in logic were illogical and absurd. By rejecting any noble act done by others, I told myself that all people were just attention seekers and really did not care for anyone besides themselves. There was one exception: I blindly and proudly thought I was different.

This lie became a wall that destroyed intimacy, caring, love, warmth, and deep relationships...I became shallow and proud.

The compulsive judging stopped when this lie was revealed to me by the Holy Spirit. Seeing the lie for what it is I was able to humble myself and find freedom.

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

I was told growing up that I had an anger problem. I was led to believe that I had problems controlling my anger which led to me trying to control my anger with no results. Now I know anger is a warning alarm that notifies me that something needs to be dealt with interiorly or exteriorly in my life. When I deal with the stuff that causes the anger such as injustices/ unfulfilled expectations/ and judgments then the anger will go away. Anger is an emotion. Feelings/ emotions don't determine our thoughts, our thoughts determine our emotions and feelings. Changing thoughts/beliefs will change the feelings. The only time feelings have the power they ought not is when we feel them and believe the lie that because we have the feelings our thoughts must be true too.

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

I have wanted to get in touch with my hunger and thirst for God for some time now. Yes, seeing what we are wrongly drawn to is important in redirected hunger and thirst to God. But what happens when one starts to struggle in this area? Is there any other place one can look to connect with one's hunger and thirst for God? There is more...seeing, hoping, desiring to see Jesus in His fullness at the end of time where we will be with Him in Eternity also illumines or reveals our hidden hunger and thirst for God. Keeping these two fronts in mind helps us draw closer to God. The second one is important because it is a more positive affirmation not a partially negative one. One can cultivate desire, hone it, and direct it towards God in fitting manners and ridding oneself of idols is an important part of it.

I realized that I decided to believe as a child the only way certain people would truly love me is if I would somehow die (thinking: if I cease to exist then those people will actually love me, and feel guilty for not having loved me while I was alive). Going through life believing that the only way people will care for you is if you died doesn't say much about your opinion of them or you. Today I see through this lie and choose to connect with and love people instead...not believing this lie (which is from the pit of Hell) about anyone. What a sorry state of affairs! I guess I decided I could not trust anyone to fully love me back for me the way I wanted. So there was less chance of intimacy because I bought into the lie and so the lie became a self fulfilling prophecy for a long time.

Friday, February 26, 2016

Sometimes praying to uproot pride seemingly does not work because the spiritual malady has other roots that have to be dealt with too. For instance, I realized that often a wall came up in me pushing others away when the healthy thing to do is care, feel another's pain, frustration and struggle. Some pride was involved but it wasn't the mother load and confessing only pride didn't heal the wound of insensitivity. However, confessing the insensitivity, unwillingness to trust, to not care, and to not feel for people as wrong and asking God for forgiveness and healing and receiving them in faith. Then repenting in faith with Jesus' help speaking to the walls we have erected (to vainly protect against rejection) and courageously breaking them little by little (when we sense them rise up within us) will bring healing. When the wall has been up for decades then plenty of strategic prayer may be needed to remove it.

When the wall comes crumbling down we will feel raw pain emotions with a breath of fresh air. Feeling it we will recognize we are alive and readier for love.

Saturday, February 27, 2016

People who dwell on injustices can fall into self pity...and land up having victim mentalities. And land up having negative outlooks to life, and draw negative things to themselves. This steals our joy which is a fruit of the Spirit. If joy is a fruit of the Spirit, then self pity is a malady of the flesh which means it is sinful. The only ways to kill it are to not feed it (feed something better), and pray strategically so that God can cleanse us from it.

Monday, February 29, 2016

The Holy Scriptures say that some sins lead to death, whereas other sins are far less serious. Fact is that all sins try to push God away. Yes, some sins are mortal. But we are not to compare our sins to others because that leads to pride. Or judge others because they have serious sins in their lives because we seemingly don't. The Bible says we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. This is directed to Christians not unbelievers. We are all guilty, and just because we don't commit certain sins does not excuse us from guilt or make us holier than others. Because we have sinned we have broken the whole law not just part of it. We are all guilty.

We all have some high standards, and there is a chance that we may eventually violate some of them, and as a result we can land up hating ourselves because of our pride when we violate a high standard. When such is the case we are saying we deserve hatred when God still loves us and that is saying we know better than God. God is Love, and He never changes.

When I am hard on others because of their failures and my successes, then I can possibly do so out of a sense of personal superiority and pride. If so, then I have envy too because there are areas where I'm weak and others are strong. Either way I won't be charitable towards others with my pride and envy in place. God can't bless this. We will always remain weak in areas where we envy others because envy keeps us from improving, and developing in healthy ways the aptitudes God gave us. God blesses the humble...and the proud refuse or can't receive His blessings or graces. Grace is God's empowering presence...that humble people have access to, but God only knows the proud by afar because proud people distance themselves from everyone including God. Now God loves everyone including proud people. Fact is one can be proud in one area and humble in another area. So in one area we are open to God's blessings and another area we have famine.

Wednesday, March 2, 2016: Hunger & Pain

Lord God earlier today you brought back my memories of me eating buckets of ice cream to dull, assuage, and relieve my pain. My pain of hating myself, putting pressure on myself to be perfect, and dull the pain of rejection. I feel my pain and I redirect my hunger for peace and purpose to you the Living God! I choose to receive your Peace for, and your promises to me Lord God. Amen and Amen!

Lord God I don't know how to deal with my pain except to feel it, mourn it, cry it, and rest in your warm, soothing, and caring love.

I think I will bring my pain to you always from now on. You are the great physician; the comforter, the wonderful counselor, and the helper. Leaving you out of the situations or equations in my life back then was not wise. I remember turning my life over to math when I my first romance failed...I now redirect that idol worship to worshiping you the living God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I give you your rightful place in my life, heart, mind, and heart. I confess the idol worship as wrong and ask for your forgiveness and healing. You know the way, and I receive your healing and forgiveness Lord Jesus. Amen and Amen.

Monday, March 14, 2016

I have seen agreement with me and getting what I wanted as getting acceptance from others. No agreement meant feeling rejected, rejected meant feeling self pity. Not getting what I wanted

meant to feel rejected, not respected, meant I felt self-pity. Either way I have gone to dark places because of it. Lord I confess that the above dynamics have been at work within me for years, please forgive and heal me I ask in Jesus' name. I receive it in faith with thanksgiving.

Saying, "I'm a selfish person" is not declaring who I am in Christ. A healthier confession is to say "I was selfish when I did so and so... and I was in the wrong, and I was unloving, and I ask for your forgiveness and healing Lord God and I receive them in faith through Jesus Christ my Lord."

In praying 1 John 1:9, we can't do it half heartedly, cynically, unbelievably, or focusing on doubts. We need to stand on the promises of God written in the Bible in order for God to take our prayers seriously.

Wednesday, March 15, 2015

Love is not demanding. It does not judge.

It does not go part way. It is not abrasive.

Love is accepting and kind interiorly and exteriorly.

Love is tolerant.

Love is warm not resentful.

Love goes the extra distance...not meanly demanding others put out "because look at what I done for you".

Love completes the job kindly, not expecting merit badges or compliance. Love is kind in nature, and not hostile. When we are unkind to somebody it infects the way we treat everyone else.

Love does not put hooks into people...saying: "like you owe me..." or "I own you"

The thoughts: "It always happens", "can't expect anything else", and "give people an inch and they take a mile" are illogical thinking patterns that re in force negativity, distort people's good will, and are accusatorial in thinking. I'm free from this now thanks be to God.

Friday, March 18, 2016

Politics and Private Spirituality:

Choosing the lessor of two evils is part of the political process. No one thinks twice about it.

As far as spirituality is concerned...conservatives dislike the relativism of supposedly choosing between two evils one more evil than the other in their personal lives, but embrace it in the political realm. They can't see Jesus choosing the lesser of two evils because He can't sin...so they wanting to be like Him refuse to choose the lesser of two evils because it is only a black and white world for them morally speaking.

As far as humanists are concerned...they make decisions based on the lesser of two evils all the time as their mantra is "love does no harm to one's neighbor" which is in also found in the Bible.

Therefore, conservatives and humanists don't always see eye to eye! One can't expect them to agree or to force each other to do it their way.

Condemnation occurs when either you don't forgive yourself, or you struggle to forgive yourself. Anger by itself is an alarm, but if it turns into a resentment, bitterness, meanness, hostility, abuse, manipulation, hatred, or murder then these are evil. If anger is treated as an alarm alone, and used to motivate healthy decisions, directions, or changes then that is acceptable.

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Living according to the flesh means we are putting short term happiness, feeling pleasure, and going by feelings first instead of going by the Spirit who directs us with its desires that involve truth, caring, and peace. The latter involves relationship... For me this is rough...I am so in the habit of going by my feelings. So I take this part of the journey as God's discipline in my life where more and more of my crooked thoughts are straightened out with God's help making me a healthier person relationally and interiorly.

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

I know that when I do something wrong, then if I don't know how to deal with it straight away then hopelessness, frustration, guilt, shame, or condemnation may come my way. The word of God is what I am busy learning to use to deal with such situations. Such as:

I am confident that He who began a good work within you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)

But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. (Romans 7:16-17)

If we confess our sins He is trustworthy and righteous and will forgive us and cleans us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Today and yesterday have been mind blowing. Recognizing that I need to become disciplined in my approach to life, and never living life by my feelings which is of the flesh, but living dependent on the Spirit's desires...and that there is no way out of this part of journey but to submit to God, and resist living for pleasure as primary, alone, or my goal.

I have seen major movement into positivity. But I still have fear in my throat when I look at the future. It is a negative expectation that something horrible will happen that will ruin my moment, hour, hours, or day, week, month or life. I confess that I am motivated by fear, and expect the negative thing or worst things to happen and I see that these are all wrong Lord God and I ask for your forgiveness and healing based on your promise of First John 1:9 that I receive in faith with Jesus' help. I choose to be motivated by love, not fear, not negativity, not darkness, but by the Light of the world. For light shines in darkness, but darkness can't overcome it. Amen and Amen.

There are positive, warm, caring ways to say things to people. It is one thing to dislike the negative or abrasive ways other people might say stuff. But we need to look at ourselves and find our own path to one that is positive, warm, hopeful, caring, and respectful of others. Lord God I confess that I have not had a positive, warm, hopeful, caring, and respectful attitude towards others in many situations in my life. Worry, anger and fear have driven me to drive others away with a dose of my bad humor. Please forgive me Lord God and heal me because of

your loving kindness, and mercy. I choose to receive your gifts in faith because you are faithful in all your ways.

Thursday, March 24, 2016

Whenever negative stuff like unreasonable fear is used to motivate us or we are dependent on it, it can stay with us and grow in power and gravity if not dealt with properly. To kill the bondage to unreasonable fear we need to confess the wrongness of being motivated by it to God and receive His forgiveness and healing. Then to focus on healthier stuff like God's love. The fears can threaten to come back, but to fight them with truth is key. Truth that is positive and negates the lies. Thoughts determine our feelings (including our fears). Truth sets free. I know that I experienced paralyzing or adrenaline powered fear manifested and felt in my throat caused by lies and foolishness and immaturity developed over my life span until now. Fear is a horrible taskmaster. It is opposed to hope, and also motivates anger because of the supposed threats to a justice we feel should not come our way.

Saturday, March 26, 2016

Not coveting is about setting others free...and in setting them free...we become free...!

Sometimes it is as simple as confessing our sins exact natures to God for Him to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We don't have to always look for roots.

I know that I have used a certain kind of language in the Essays: Killing Pride, Humility, and The Twelve [Plus Four] Steps, from this Website, and it sounds kind of formulaic, but I am realizing that I can use other language. Thank you Jesus for making me real! Amen, and Amen!

Monday March 28, 2016

God wants us to spend time with Him. He wants us to abide in Him, His Son, and drink from His Spirit. In doing this we build healthier and healthier relationships with God, and we find the power to do His will in peace, and rest.

Tuesday, March 29, 2016

Spending quality time with God can be difficult to do and maintain because of certain pitfalls. For me, I realized that I often had thoughts in my head where I gave credence to stuff like: "this is difficult", "this is boring", "this is a waste of time", "I'm so dry", "this is more trouble than it is worth" and I also felt guilty that I was tempted to use my Quiet Times to get stuff, or use God to get stuff instead of spending the time to be with God because He is so great.

The negative thoughts are actually lies the devil places in our minds meant to destroy our relationships with God. The motives for why we seek God can be good and when they are then we aren't using God. Though it is true that we can want God's gifts more than Him only because the devil has deceived us into thinking we can't experience God as good, warm, friendly, present, and kind; and connect with Him in these ways regularly. Confessing to God that we believed these lies, asking for His forgiveness, and healing and changing how and what we believe about our relationships with God, expecting more, and receiving more of God is how we overcome these pitfalls.

When we see God in a healthy way we will love Him and those in our lives more deeply. The devil loves to divide us by lying maliciously, strategically, and cleverly because it works so often.

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

After God has given us gifts, maintaining the gifts and keeping the devil from stealing them often takes learning curves. I have found that the devil plants doubt about the gift of self-control in our minds when we foolishly stumble with the devil trying to confuse us and rob us of our confidence, certainty, faith, and the gift. Faith in Jesus (as Savior (not only for Heaven but here on earth for practical every day things (the things that are important to us too)), and that He will complete the work He began in us) will get us back on track and enable us to take the ground back that the devil wants to steal. For we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus through faith. Faith is so important because it gets us dependent on God where the grace comes from. When (or if) we trade our faith in an area for wondering, crippling doubts or fears, and unbelief then the gifts will get stolen too. It is correctly placed faith that first heals or saves us, and it also completes the process; but the initial healing and the maintenance involve different battles using faith, but in different modes.

Monday, April 11, 2011

Realized that just because I have fleshly thoughts in my mind does not mean I have believed or accepted them. My only crime is to agree with them if that is what I have done. For instance, if I have a lot of thoughts that are putting food taste and consumption before eating healthily, then only when I give into them have I sinned. It is not nice when I give into such fleshly motivations and lies. Sin rests in the will, not necessarily the thoughts...but embracing certain thoughts will cause sin and unhealthy lifestyles. Therefore, it is paramount to take all thoughts captive to Christ Jesus.

Friday, April 15, 2016

Abiding in Jesus is equivalent to practicing humility. God is close to the humble but knows the proud by afar. Through faith in Jesus, we have access to grace: God's empowering presence. God grants His grace to the humble but opposes the proud. A branch cannot bear fruit unless it abides in the True Vine.

Not living for feelings we become satisfied. The more we seek consolation the more it evades us.

Satan in a Robber. After God has given us gifts, the devil will be there to try and steal them away. The devil will try to rob us by stealing our understanding, stealing our memory of certain experiences, and stealing the meanings poured into words and events and fulfillments of promises God has given us. We can't reduce everything spiritual into words. The Bible says that there are some things that can't be put into words and Satan knows this and so lies to us that those mysteries aren't real because they can't be expressed in real and tangible ways with words. The devil will attempt to sow doubt, and unbelief and get us to confess that we really don't understand stuff that a short while ago was in real stereo and in full color. Only so much can be said. And we have to be weary of Satan's strategies and fight him wisely by wearing the full armor of God.

Often we good naturedly seek to ground our experiences of God and promises in truth. This can lead to some insights, philosophy and also abstraction. This can be helpful...but the devil after every argument will say: "Why?" trying to force us to go another level deeper and in doing so to insinuate that we have no proper foundations to rest our fickle beliefs and arguments on because few words come to mind. We then get lost in the details, trying to distill maxims, and principles from what we have learned; and the devil will try to use this to push God out of the picture along with all mystery and leave us only with useless rules that we soon discard. Mystery is good. God is good. The good news is that we don't have to be cerebral to feel and experience God's grace and obtain His promises. The devil says: unless you understand and can prove the validity of your experiences you don't know if they are real. But God says that it is our faith in Him that enables us to overcome the world and connect with God.

More Insight:

Jesus is the way, not man-made-philosophies no matter how practical. Jesus is the full package; not cerebral gymnastics. One does not have to dissect everything, get at all the roots, and argue systematically one's way into change. When this becomes the soul focus, and preoccupation then it becomes destructive. Jesus is more beautiful, kind, caring, and encouraging than text books, self-help books, maxims, and principles all by themselves. One can profit from these, but our ultimate hope lies in the person of Jesus whom God the Father gives to the world. Self-built-philosophies lead to pride and isolation. Jesus offers relationships, strength, insights, and fellowship. He can be met in the pages of the New Testament; and when received into the heart through faith becomes the source of life, joy, peace, and hope.

Faith in Jesus and His teachings is the path to change. Correctly placed faith. A faith that searches, knocks, and endures all the hardships in the way and along the way. Going backwards can be beneficial to the true seeker.

Tuesday, April 26, 2016

The word coercive means to get somebody to do stuff through force or threats. We can look at the Bible in a way that makes God look like He is coercive, but when we get to see who Jesus is and how He is the image of the invisible God, then the example and character we see in Jesus leads us to see the exact image of God as being non-coercive love. Instead we see Hell as a choice people make; not a result of God joyously carrying out His threats to punish. God puts both death and life before us: it is we who choose what we want. God warns us of the consequences of our choices, faith (correctly directed or poorly directed), virtues, vices, sins, obedience, and rebellion because they form our characters/attitudes/ ways of life/ faith/ and commitments. Also, God does promise to discipline His children, but it is not put forward as threats (as if He just zealously wants to carry out punishing us because He sees we have it somehow coming). God does not force himself on people. He respects us too much to take away our essence and make us fake like puppets or toys.

God does own his anger, but deals with it in healthy ways. He invites us to do the same.

Non-coercive love is the foundation of God's being. We embrace and see this non-coercive love in God through meditation of Holy Scripture through the lens of Jesus that we obtain for ourselves from Jesus through prayer and are enabled to live it out so we can become one with

Him in mind and spirit. Only when we have the attitude of non-coercive love (while owning our anger in a healthy manner) are we able to genuinely accept insults and persecutions because of the Name of Jesus...we are no longer ashamed of Him because we have truly come to know Him in His essence. May we all grow up into this love as that is what we are called to! As we mature through prayer/ relationship/ suffering/ fellowship/ meditation/ truth/ and action...we will recognize when we are not in the zone...but by Spirit-led-strategic-prayer (think First John 1:9) we can be launched by Jesus into non-coercive loving attitudes and acts. We can't do it alone by ourselves, but First John 1:9 is the way God takes the wrongs we do and replaces them with spiritual cleanness, healing, and health inwardly and outwardly that leads to humble service/ peace/ and joy.

Saturday, May 21, 2016

I don't want to be a god, or deity. Instead I want to be fully human; fully alive; fully God's. God is good, and has more in Himself that attracts me than what I see in myself. He is infinite. I'm finite. I was made for Him. He is not boring. He is not distant. He is not uncaring. Eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil is more painful, empty, and identity robbing than anything else. True fulfillment is only found in God...through His only begotten son: Jesus.

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Here is my interpretation regarding the dispute between Mary and Martha (Cf. Luke 10:38-42):

Martha indulged in self-pity, complaining, and in anger asked for judgment and a supposed justice from Jesus trying to make her sister Mary help her...that was the worst part...Mary choose the better part... Mary chose joy and that in the presence of Jesus! Mary chose joy; Martha chose self-pity/complaining/judging/anger. That is why Jesus said Mary choose the better part. Everyone knows that good works are important, and also that learning is important. It wasn't about work vs. visiting/learning...both are important. It was about self-pity/judging/anger vs. joy.

Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount for us to not judge or condemn people. One does this when one doesn't look in the mirror and make sober observations with the light given. Self-pity/complaining/judging/anger all go together. They are together often unhealthy, and in such cases they spring from pride. Mary chose the better part; Jesus said it would not be taken from her. Martha chose the worst part...and Jesus wanted to take it from her if she would allow it. I guess He did!

Friday, May 27, 2016

Don't lean on your own understanding when it leads you to want to give up hope. Don't do it when it leads to focus on fear, insecurity, darkness, panic, and the direction of getting introverted, and isolated, focusing on speculations, untruths or lies, trying to solve it all by yourself by faulty, limited, thinking that is exaggerated or distorted, and bankrupt in interpreting of what may have expired...because it consumes our worlds with darkness, and robs us of good and healthy perspectives, freedom to breathe deeply, and our dependence on God through trust...leaning on one's own understanding is like quicksand, can cause depression, and doesn't give the benefit of the doubt to those involve. It can insinuate, accuse, and imagine motives and

supposed thoughts of those we are in turmoil with that when spoken insults; kills respect, kills hope, kills development, and kills our relationships. It breeds insanity and psychosis, and is altogether unhealthy. It invites the devils to speak into our minds and sets us on the road to complaining, bickering, anger, having hurt pride, and reinforces our inability and unwillingness to trust, care, be kind, and loving towards others.

The only way out is to trust God the creator. To do this one needs to remember His love and to have at least experienced His touch. Faith is the only way forward!

A milestone:

A sign of maturity is when someone ignores us or doesn't acknowledge us and we don't take offense and instead see and believe the best about the person with a wholesome energy. I finally get this...what freedom!

Monday, June 6, 2016:

I find it interesting how easy it is to expound on truths, ideals, humility, morality, love, and spiritual maxims when not exposed to raw reality where the stakes are high and life and choices and consequences draw us to compromise. The film series called, "Criminal Justice" made me more aware of this than ever...Under the right circumstance I bend, squirm, I get tempted, want to fold, want to give up (even if I don't give up), and I'm willing to compromise. Life is so tricky. I needed this film...it shows me that even though I have convictions, that when they get tested, doubts, fears, self-preservation, anger, weakness, temptation and the will to escape are not far from my will longings, and thrust...or energy. So I conclude that understanding humility is not the same as practicing it, or willing to pay the price to live it out, and to remain committed to it through thick and thin.

Another point that the movie raises, that I wrongly complained about in so many murder mysteries I watched on TV, in the cinemas, or read about in books over the years, is that we often don't know who did it until the very end...and often the culprit isn't even a character in the story until very near the end. I am struck by how this scenario not only plays out in the murder mysteries all the time, but also situations in my life that have nothing to do with murder. I have found that I have assumed or jumped to the conclusion that I had all the evidence in front of me so many times only to realize later that I did not have the full picture...and would have made some pretty bad decisions if God had not convinced me to do otherwise despite the pull on me to judge, passing sentence, and doing self-righteous things. Thank God for a conscience!

Saturday, June 11, 2016

The parable of the Talents has not been a stagnant pool for me. I have gradually garnished fresh insights from it over the years. I have wondered lately: what constitutes many talents or huge opportunities, and what constitutes fewer talents or smaller opportunities? I have come to the conclusion that huge opportunities involve big risks, lots of pain and suffering, and that over many years. While small opportunities involve less pain, less struggle, less suffering over smaller time periods. The whole thing is upside down compared to the way the world sees things.

Saturday, June 16, 2016

Masks are a reality (which is an oxymoron) in most of our lives. Some have BIG ones, others have more transparent ones, others have colorful ones, others have angry mean ones, others are like clown faces...others use them to protect or hide the fear and insecurity...others to save face...to be accepted and not be rejected...others to hide stuff they don't want others to see...others to suppress stuff...others to seem strong...others to seem normal. We all have masks that come on and off depending on the moments that serve our weaknesses. Admitting we have them is the first step to dealing with them. We deal with them by cleaning our interior lives. If we don't we will not make progress with dealing with compensating our weakness/ shame/ and fears with masks.

As for boundaries...yes they are terribly confusing most of the times. Many people don't respect them even in places where one would expect there to great respect. I think that how we handle our boundary violations shows how healthy our boundaries really are...yeah, some people are so in your face, disrespectful, hostile, angry, uncaring...and one needs to handle each person separately ...one isn't strong because one supposedly has clear boundaries that no one violates (think Darth Vader) ... Who wants to be around him anyways? One is strong when one handles assaults on one's boundaries healthily ... and that might look weak to some...but actually loving to others...we can feel weak...because of self-pity (I know that I did...until I learned how to deal with my self-pity in healthy ways. But I have to admit that I still wear masks...not as thick, not as suppressing, not as black, not as abrasive, not as disrespectful, not as people pleasing as before, and I'm not as fearful, not as insecure as before...so my masks are subtler, closer to who I am in Jesus. But I now know that self-pity is a root of so much evil (think unhealthy spiritual stuff) of feeling so weak, right, hurt, angry, justified, guilty all at the same time in part, I write about Self-pity in my Essay called, "Killing Pride" found in this Website for the interested reader.

Friday, June 24, 2016

Someone told a friend about a guy who had tattoos all over his body. And the friend became very opinionated saying, "that people with tattoos must have low self-esteem, and that they must have low self-worth because they have to decorate their bodies with other people's art work. That the artists should get the glory. He said that it was more important to have a mind and heart that was healthy." Just then he put on a T-shirt with art work on it, and his friend launched in on him saying: "Any person with a T-shirt on him that has somebody else's art work on it, must not have much of a mind or heart because they are wearing artwork. They too must have low self-esteem and low self-worth". He laughed and said the sword one uses can be used on one."

I need to respect other traditions more. Arguing and debating heated issues that have divided communities often land up becoming mean and judgmental if not downright condemning. Point Made! Debates often lead nowhere. There are always nuances, dark alleys, doubts, weaknesses, and pride in our arguments, and someone who is smarter, wiser, or of a different paradigm can come by and poke holes in our defenses. Making one's mind up after a debate can be the most difficult thing to do if not impossible. The only recourse is to ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and commit to obeying Him in such situations. He who lives by the sword dies by the sword.

Wednesday, August 3, 2016

For many Christians the word "meek" is wrestled with uncomfortably because it is found in the Beatitude: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Cf. Matthew 5:5), and because it in some sense it conveys weakness. A standard lexicon defines meekness as: "1 : enduring injury with patience and without resentment : [but also...] mild. 2 : deficient in spirit and courage : submissive. 3 : not violent or strong : moderate."

Other Bible translations use the word "gentle" instead of the word "meek" in the above verse, but many reject it for conveying even more weakness, cowardice, and low self-esteem. But I beg to differ that seeing it this way is the weak approach. Being genuinely gentle is anything but easy to be when we have anger within that threatens to explode into meanness, hostility, judgment, or resentment because of injustices, hurts, or violations visited on us. The ability to be gentle is a gift that can steer us away from much heated conflict mixed with verbal or even physical violence. No wonder Jesus prized it so much.

I think the truest test of character is not: "Can I conquer my addiction?" however important that is, but: "Can I be human enough to forgive people for the hurts they inflict on me?" Often (not always) addictions are tied to un-forgiveness. When we fight the greater battles the lesser ones can fall by the wayside without a fight. When we are hurt, judged, humiliated, devalued, violated, or insulted, then to process it all and move to forgiveness can seem as difficult as getting a Camel to go through an eye of a needle. Being gentle in the midst of being hurt, judged, humiliated, devalued, violated, or being insulted and not being mean, hostile, and hateful in return is the example Jesus showed us. This takes real strength and love for one's enemies.

When I was a kid I got challenged to a fight at school. I won the fight, but right afterwards a young girl decided to pay me back by fighting me and trying to humiliate me. I could have easily beat her...but I cried tears of self-pity because I wasn't allowed to fight girls. I never resented her for it afterwards for many years, but much later I boastfully and meanly began to retort to myself whenever I thought about the incident that I could have beaten her to a pulp. I then began to realize this attitude of mine was proud, uncaring, unkind, not gentle, but resentful, abrasive, and unhealthy; and it needed to be replaced with gentleness, compassion, sorrow, forgiveness, and caring. So what if I was stronger physically than her, the real test of any person is to be able to respect people and to be gentle in the face of wickedness. Nonviolence as a pathway to peace takes more strength and courage than acting out of our fears, insecurities, and hurts with hostility or rage or violence.

Thursday, August 4, 2016

Knowing It:

When God begins to make our footsteps firm, the temptation is to embrace ourselves as an authority on how things ought to be looked at, understood, and to think our opinions are absolute truth. One of the problems with this is that we become unteachable, proud, and then easily discount what others have to say and contribute. This not a healthy way to live and causes us to disrespect people. Being convinced that we have absolute truth is very deceptive...we do not see all ends only God does. I believe we can and do come to truthful conclusions...but truth always sets us free to love, be joyful, non-mechanical, warm, kind, humble, and to have neither lofty nor low opinions of oneself or others. A humble person is one who can let truth stand up

for itself, and not seek honor when preaching it after having stumbled across it. Humility's aim is to love and build up, not tear down, marginalize, and put into boxes. Proud people not only put people into boxes but also truths...and land up forgetting and discounting both.

Abraham & Isaac:

I have been told that Abraham loved his son Isaac even as he purposed to and actually offered Isaac on an altar up to God (Cf. Genesis 22). If Abraham decided to hate his son to appease his God, that would have been an empty sacrifice. If we don't love what we offer then that is not true worship; it is not a sacrifice, and it is not true love. When hate is involved it is not a living sacrifice for the one giving the offering. This applies to me and that is why I write it, but it also is true of God. God offered His only begotten Son to the world, and He did it all the way in love through Jesus' incarnation, life, passion, death, resurrection, and glory (that is in friendship with His Son, and care for humanity).

October 30, 2016

Since having schizophrenia, I have had my rights to a healthy brain, mind and thought/emotional environment taken from me. I put up with it for a very long time adjusting to changes and challenges the best I could. But yesterday, I felt violated in ways I'd not experienced so harshly before, that angered me deeply and confused me to no end. The thoughts in my head weren't going where I wanted them to. When a little thing annoyed me and I focused on it, the thoughts that came to mind were utterly toxic, judgmental, hateful, heartless, angry, and unjust. I got angry with God because I had no power over this intrusion, and the only thing I could do to stop the onslaught of accusations was to not focus on things that did annoy me. I wanted to fix it ASAP...but God told me the intrusion was not my doing but the devil's. That did away with the guilt I felt from thinking what I thought...but I felt powerless over the whole situation. What could I do to get back to sanity.

This morning I found the same attacking intrusion in my mind take place again. I felt angry with God and I could not even respectfully vent at God, I could not think a straight respectful thought towards Him no matter how I wanted to. What came to mind shortly thereafter were some scenes from the films of The Lord of the Rings trilogy where evil orcs and wild men attacked, pillaged, hated, hurt, raped, murdered, violated, burned, raged, laughed, and destroyed the homes of innocent villages belonging to a farming community. These wicked people had power, and they flexed it willfully, maliciously, gloatingly, madly, insanely, all to dominate and destroy what God meant for good, to bless, to nurture, to give happiness, and to give life.

This maiming, this disregard for others rights, this willful damaging of good, to frustrate, make suffer, and relegate to chaos, meaninglessness, so as to move the victims to self-pity, resentment, hardness of heart, apathy, and disillusionment are where I felt I was being driven to yesterday, and today again. I felt attacked, disrespected, harassed, and deeply frustrated with myself and God; whereas the demons that were having a "heyday" in my head through my schizophrenia just laughed at me getting angry with God.

What could I do about it. Every attempt to reach out to God was sour, blunt, and eaten up with bitterness, and twisted around to make me seem all righteous, the wholly innocent victim, with God the bad guy.

I have been a fan of Mark Virkler's ministry for some time and today I received heavenly manna from him. He was talking about meekness as a response to anger... and this is a definition he gave quoting a person named Bill Gather:

Meekness: is when personal rights and possessions have been yielded to God and you allow Him the right to return them back to you as privileges.

This gave me perspective, and the ability to feel the softness within me again and accept God's will for my life.

December 11, 2016

Some people think life is all about getting to a happy moment with no thought for the thereafter; yet once, the moment is achieved; fear can set in because of the unknown and a deterioration of the fabric of life begin because there is no knowledge on how to build a lasting relationship or faith to sustain it. Such approaches although enticing initially, keep us from connecting, forming companionship, growing in fellowship and friendship, and conquering the insecurities within by transforming the empty-self-image within towards its destiny. Being able to respect, trust, and care for people, living in each moment, possessing nothing and being possessed by nothing, seeking to love altruistically, and being at peace is the best goal one can aim for. It isn't achieved and a "finished and done with" - type of accomplishment...rather it is a continual learning process, of growing and becoming stronger inwardly yet being vulnerable, and this is done by prayer that ushers in healthy self-talk, people-talk, and a relationship with Jesus who makes it all possible. Being able to healthily process emotions, and make small adjustments in relating as time goes by is key to stability, healthy-self-image, and respect for other people.