

INTRODUCTION

This morning, I begin a new series entitled “God’s Medicine for Hurting Families.” For the next six weeks we are going to examine what God’s Word says about families. Today I’m going to speak to men. Next Sunday, I am going to speak on “Where are the Proverbs 31 Women?” Sometimes married men don’t know how well they really have it.

A couple had been married for 30 years and also celebrated their 50th birthdays. During the celebration, a fairy appeared and said because they had been such a loving couple all those years; she would give them one wish each. The wife told the fairy that she wanted to travel around the world. The fairy waved her wand and boom! She had first-class airline tickets in her hand, along with spending cash, travel books, and a new wardrobe. Next, it was the husband's turn. He looked at his wife and said, “Well actually, I'd like to have a wife 30 years younger than I am. The fairy picked up her wand and BOOM! Suddenly he was 80 years old!

Not long ago, Cindy and I were laughing at a rerun episode of the TV comedy, *Designing Women*, a show about the trials and tribulations of four true Southern women who run a decorating business in Atlanta. Mary Jo read a book that told single women where to go to find a good, decent man. So she and her friend, Suzanne, tried out the book. They went to the grocery store to shop—not for groceries—but to find a decent man. That didn’t work. Then they enrolled in a night college class for advanced auto mechanics and the only students there were other women looking for a man. It was pretty funny. There may be some women here looking for a decent man.

There’s a funny story about the unmarried lady who went to church for the first time. She made a \$100 offering. It was a small church, and the pastor was so impressed that he said, “Because of your generosity, we are going to allow you to choose three hymns.” She stood up and said, “I’ll take him, him, and him.”

But single women aren’t the only ones looking for a good man. II Chronicles 16:9 says, “The eyes of the Lord range throughout the entire earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” God is also looking around this planet for good men, godly men, so he can make them stronger.

Today, families in America are in trouble. Forty years ago, the “Leave it to Beaver” family was typical. There was a daddy and husband who worked, and the mom stayed home and provided domestic support. Mom and Dad were in their first marriage and every evening they sat down for dinner with their two boys. The typical 21st century family doesn’t resemble the Cleavers or the Waltons or the Little House on the Prairie.

For example, in 1960, only 10 percent of American couples living together were not married. In 1998, 33 percent of all couples living together were not married. The most typical American family now is two unmarried adults living together with no children. A real part of the problem today is the “Disappearing Dad.” It is alarming how many children are being raised without fathers. The National Center for Health Statistics reported recently that births to unwed mothers are at an all-time high. In 1998, 1/3 of all babies were born to unwed mothers. What do you think

is going to be the future of America if one out of three children grow up without fathers? And even in those homes where there is a father, he is often not there or too busy to give quality time to his children.

Wade Horn: "If we stay on the current course, one day the U.S. will be known as the country of the founding fathers...with no fathers to be found."

I believe that one of the biggest problems facing the family in America is that men have copped out on being the leaders in their families. God has designated men to be the spiritual leaders of your family and if you aren't doing that, your family is going to suffer.

This message asks the question "Will the real men please stand up?" A few years ago there was a book entitled *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*. I've seen billboards that say, "Real men don't do porn." I agree. What is a Real Man?

I heard about a preacher who was preaching on this one Sunday and he said, "I want all the real men, those who call all the shots at home, who wear the pants, who are the undisputed boss to stand up." Only one mousy-looking guy stood. The pastor said, "Why did you stand up?" He said, "My wife told me to."

Look at the first three words of Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man..." Our culture has a convoluted idea of what makes a real man. We aren't even sure of the answer to the question, "When does a boy become a man?" Is it at age 18, age 21, or when he gets married? When the Bible makes a reference to a man, there is no confusion about who is being addressed.

In the Jewish culture in which this Psalm was written, and in which Jesus was raised, it was clearly defined when a boy became a man. When a male baby was born, he was called an "infant" until the age of four. He never had his first haircut until age four. Until that age he was allowed to play and have as much fun as he wanted. At age four, he got his first haircut and he was no longer called a baby. He was now a "child." At age four he was sent to school and he began to learn from a rabbi but he was still a child and he could act and speak as a child. But in the Jewish culture, when a boy reaches the age of 12, he is no longer a boy. He becomes a man. He participates in an important ceremony called his Bar Mitzvah, which means "a son of the law." Modern Jewish girls have a Bat Mitzvah, "daughter of the law." At age 12, a Jewish boy moves from boyhood into adulthood and he must start acting and thinking like a man. People start treating him like a man and he is expected to behave as a man. That's the background to what the Apostle Paul wrote, "When I became a man I put away childish things." (1 Corinthians 13:11)

By the way, this is also true in modern day Israel. When a boy reaches the age of twelve he is considered a man, not a teenager. When I was in the Holy Land in March, I sat with some Israeli teenagers at a Burger King outside of Nazareth. They seemed to be very mature and level headed. Every Israeli teenager, male and female, is required to serve two years in the military at age 18. One of our guides told me they really don't have much of a problem with drug use and rebellion among Israeli teenagers because they are expected to act like adults and most of them do.

I’ve often wished that we had some kind of Christian ceremony in which we could acknowledge that a boy becomes a man at age 12, some way to formally launch him into manhood. I believe if we started treating our teenagers more like adults, they would start acting like adults but because we have created this never-never land of adolescence in which we expect teenagers to sow wild oats, guess what happens?

Even when I was young, since I was the eldest boy in our family, whenever my dad had to go off on a business trip, he would say to me, “Now, son, while I’m gone, I want you to be *the man of the house*.” I remember, that when my dad was gone, I tried my best to *be* the *man* of the house.

Since this message is about Real Men, I want to direct my remarks today all guys who are 12 years old and up. I want any guys who are aged 12 to 18 to stand up right now and keep standing. Okay, whether you know it or not, I now confer upon you the status of manhood. I’m going to start treating you like a man and I want you to start acting like a man. Now, you guys keep standing and I want the rest of the men 19 and older to stand up. Keep standing for a moment.

Now for you guys standing, I want to put you on the spot. I want you to listen to what the Word of God says about being a Real Man. But first I want to pray for all of you. I’m going to ask every female and every child to join me in this prayer:

“Father, I thank you that you created fathers, and husbands, and men. I pray for all these men who are standing today. I ask you to use Your Word over the next few minutes to be sharp two-edged sword to cut to the heart of the matter of these men’s relationship with You, their relationship to their families and their relationship to their church. Deliver these men from mediocrity, from spiritual lethargy; challenge them today to be Real Men. As You are looking through this crowd this morning, may You find many whose hearts are devoted to You. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”

Now, let’s see what this passage says about being a Real Man. First, there are some:

I. PERILS TO AVOID (v. 1)

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.”

The entire book of Psalms begins with the word blessed. We have made the word “blessed” a sort of religious code word. The Hebrew word, *esher*, can best be translated “truly happy” or “very fortunate.” Guys, if you want to know what will make you truly happy, then pay attention.

There are three things mentioned here that you must avoid if you want to be a Real Man. Don’t:

(1) Think like the world

That's what it means when it says don't "walk in the counsel of the wicked." There is plenty of counsel or advice out there. Be careful that you don't follow the wrong instructions. The basic values and philosophy of the world without God can be summarized in three modern propositions. (1) Me first. (2) Enjoy now, pay later (or don't pay at all); and (3) No rules, sometimes expressed as "no limits" or "just do it." Go to any bar, casino, or nightclub in America and you can witness this modern litany. A real man of God recognizes that wicked men should never be consulted—don't even walk with them.

Let me demonstrate to you the mindset of the world. Perhaps you've seen the copy of an e-mail from a Mr. Neugent in Arkansas who had written to a network complaining about one of the programs that aggressively promoted the practice of homosexuality as being normal and healthy. As a Bible believing Christian this offended him so he expressed his concerns to the network. His reply from the network read:

"How about getting your nose out of the Bible (which is ONLY a book of stories compiled by MANY different writers hundreds of years ago) and read the Declaration of Independence (what our nation built on) where it says "All Men are Created Equal"—and try treating them that way for a change!? Or better yet, try thinking for yourself and stop using an archaic book of stories as a crutch for your existence.

That pretty well expresses the attitude of the world toward the Bible. Second, don't:

(2) Behave like the world

It says, "Don't stand in the way [roadway] of sinners."

This word for sinners is a most interesting word in the Hebrew. It is a word that means, "to make a loud noise," or "to cause a tumult." It is the idea of provoking a riot, of creating a disturbance, or making trouble. The Psalmist says you can recognize the godly man in that he does not make trouble. He does not provoke riots, he is not at work causing disturbances; he is obedient to the laws of life and of the land. He does not "stand in the way of" those who live to cause trouble. To "stand with" someone means that you support his or her behavior, even if you aren't joining in that behavior. What is the behavior of the world? Anything you want to do is okay, as long as it doesn't hurt anyone else. Anything you want to do it fine, as long as you don't get caught. A real man doesn't stand with that kind of morality.

Notice what Jesus said about how we are to relate to this world. He said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it...As you have sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." (John 17:16,18) We are to be *in* the world, but we cannot be *of* the world. There's a big difference there. Just as the Father sent Jesus into the world to demonstrate what true righteousness is, we are sent into this filthy, sinful world to show them what God's grace and mercy can do. It's like a boat. A boat is designed to be *in* the water, but if the water gets *in* the boat, it's sunk. We are to be in the world to win the world but the world can't be in us.

Third, we are told that if you are going to be a Real Man, don't:

(3) Fellowship with the world

This verse commends the man who doesn't "sit in the seat of mockers." Do you see the progression here? Here's a man who is walking with God, but wicked men draw him aside. First he walks, then he stops, he stands, and soon, he is sitting down with people who aren't just evil, they mock God. It's popular today to tell crude jokes about God or to sneer about the Bible, the church and committed Christians. A real man doesn't sit down with those kinds of folks.

The Christian attitude toward those who scorn, or their attitude toward taking part in this activity is shown in these words of Dr. A. B. Simpson, "I would rather play with forked lightning, or take in my hands living wires with their fiery currents, than speak a reckless word against any servant of Christ, or idly repeat the slanderous darts which thousands of Christians are hurling on others, to the hurt of their own souls and bodies." The old Methodist Evangelist, Sam Jones, used to say, "If you lay down with dogs, don't be surprised when you wake up with fleas." Alexander Pope wrote, "When we see evil, first we are repulsed. Then we endure it. Then we pity it. Then we embrace it." We are told in the book of James to avoid sitting down with the mockers.

"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God." (James 4:4)

There is nothing wrong with being friendly or showing compassion to the lost or spiritually immature. Jesus himself was called the "friend of sinners." But though Jesus was often found among sinners, He always made it clear that He was there to convert them to the righteous life of God. He never sank to their level of sin and depravity. He always raised them toward holiness. He was a friend of sinners, but they had to choose. Ultimately they had to make a choice to go with Him, or go from Him.

Second, if you are going to be a Real Man, there is a:

II. PRIORITY TO SET (v. 2)

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."

Now look at the positive side. Here is the reason why this man is able to reject the world's philosophy. It is because he has learned to delight in the law of the Lord. Now "the law of the Lord" is, in the Psalms, another name for the Scriptures. It means more than the Law of Moses; it includes the whole revelation of God. The positive thing about this godly person is that he has learned that in the book of God he is given a completely different view of life than that he gets from the world. In the book he is told the truth about life. He has learned to delight in the fact that here is a book that tells him the truth, and shows him a whole new way of life, a new philosophy. The reason we don't think like the world or behave like the world is because we have a different set of instructions: the Word of God.

Your main:

(1) Delight must be to know God through His Word

When someone asks you what you enjoy doing, how do you answer? Your job? Your hobby? Your family? Have you ever replied, "Well, my main delight is in studying and meditating on the Bible."

The importance of spending much time with something of great value and beauty is illustrated by a quote from the *National Geographic* magazine about Carl Sharsmith, an 81-year-old guide in Yosemite National Park. "Carl was back at his tent quarters after a long afternoon with tourists. His nose was flaked white and red with sunburn; his eyes were watery, partly from age but also from hearing again an old question after a half-century of summers in California's Yosemite National Park. A lady tourist had hit him with a question where it hurt. "I've only got an hour to spend at Yosemite," she declared. "What should I do? Where should I go?" The old naturalist-interpreter-ranger finally found voice to reply. "Ah, lady, only an hour." He repeated it slowly. "I suppose that if I had only an hour to spend at Yosemite, I'd just walk over there by the river and sit down and cry." A whole lifetime is not long enough to appreciate fully the beauty and learning and value of the Bible. That's why we must take time to study its truths and make them real in our lives.

When Cindy and I were dating in college, she went to Auburn University and I was at Samford. We used to write letters to each other. I can't tell you how excited I was to go down to the college post office and see a letter in my box. I would rip it open and read it right there. You can really get to know someone who writes letters to you on a regular basis. This book is a never-ending love letter that God has written to His children. Do you hunger to read his Message to you?

Second, your main:

(2) Desire must be for God's Word to dwell in you

Notice the phrase "and on his law he meditates day and night."

Jesus said in John 15:7 "If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." Wow! You mean I can ask for anything I wish? Is God like some wishing well or some genie in a bottle? Where all my wishes come true? The truth is when you are remaining in Jesus and His Word is dwelling in you, God's wishes become your wishes. You never wish for anything selfish for yourself. Instead you wish for and ask for the things that are for the glory of God. How do you know what those things are? By meditating on His Word.

The Hebrew word for "meditate" doesn't mean to just merely "think about" or "ponder." It is a word that means to constantly murmur, to speak it over and over in a quiet voice. When we visit the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem there are always hundreds of Jewish men standing there with their copy of the Old Testament in their hands. They aren't reading the scriptures because they have many of the prayers and Psalms memorized, they are murmuring these scriptures as they bow back and forth in a rhythmic fashion. One prayer they pray every day in Hebrew is "Shema O, Israel, Adonai Elohim, Echa Adonai," which means, "Hear Oh, Israel, the Lord your God is One God." As they say that scripture over and over again, they are doing what this verse is talking about; they are meditating on the Word of God.

That's why it is very important for you to memorize scripture so that you can repeat them over and over again. One of the guys who went through *Experiencing God* with me this spring told me he would quote his memory verses when he was taking a shower, when he was driving down the highway and when he was out walking. He made a wonderful discovery that he shared with me. He said, "You know, I've found that when I am quoting scripture, I don't have any sinful thoughts and those moments that I am reciting my memory verses, it's impossible for me to sin!" He said, "It sure would be nice if I could just quote scripture 24 hours a day!"

He discovered for himself what the Bible teaches in Psalm 119:11, "I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You."

Gipsy Smith, a great man of God from the past said, "What makes the difference is not how many times you have been through the Bible, but how many times and how thoroughly the Bible has been through you." George Mueller said this about God's word: "The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of 54 years. The first three years after conversion I neglected the word of God. Since I began to search it diligently the blessing has been wonderful. Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the word of God."

The problem with some of you is that you seldom go to the Word of God when you aren't in church. If the only time you ever open, or read, or study the Bible is when you are here on Sundays, you are going to struggle for all of your spiritual life. The study and meditation of God's Word is something that must happen constantly, day and night.

I once had a dairy farmer in my church in Alabama. He taught me something about milk cows that I never knew. He said that a good milk cow must be milked every day, or they quit producing milk. Once he sold a milk cow to a city slicker who moved out to the country and after a few weeks the fellow complained that the cow had dried up. The city slicker said, "I can't understand it either, for I was nice to that cow. If I didn't need any milk, I didn't milk her. If I only needed a quart, I only took a quart." The dairy farmer explained that the only way to keep milk flowing is not to take as little as possible from the cow but to take as much as possible. You say, "What's the point?" We are told that as newborn babes we should desire to feed on the Milk of God's Word. With great respect for the Bible, let me say that the scriptures are a lot like a good dairy cow. The more you go to the Word, and receive from it, the more of the Word that flows to you. For some of you men, your Bible has all but dried up because you have neglected it.

Now, we have seen what a Real Man *doesn't do*. We have seen what a Real Man *does*. Now let's see what God says will be the result of this kind of lifestyle. Notice the:

III. PROSPERITY THAT IS PROMISED (v. 3)

"He is like a tree, planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."

One of the many reasons I love the Bible is that it uses such simple, clear pictures. These pictures convey truth whatever the culture or time. Remember a couple of weeks ago in Daniel; God said that those who lead others to righteousness are like stars? Everybody knows about stars. Jesus told the woman at the well that He could give her "living water;" everybody understands water. Here, the Bible says a good man is like a tree; everybody understands something about trees. God promises if you will shun the advice and mindset of ungodly people, if you will hunger for His Word and meditate on it day and night,

Like a healthy tree, you will:

(1) Grow

This past summer on my study leave, I got to visit with a minister of music in Alabama who was in the youth group when I served as a student minister years ago. He asked me last summer if I remembered talking to him about the tree when he was a high school student. I confessed that I couldn't recall what he was talking about. He told me it was a conversation that changed his life. Then he reminded me of what I had said.

We were at a Youth Camp at Mt. Cheaha State Park. Keith was a sharp high school guy and he came and expressed his frustration to me because his Christian life was like a roller coaster: There was no growth. He kept falling back into sin. We were sitting on the edge of the mountain and he told me I said something like, "Keith, look at this tree. How long do you think it has taken for it to grow this tall?" He guessed 100 years. I told him that spiritual growth was the same way, it's never instantaneous; it takes time and plenty of water and sunshine. Next, I said, "Keith, what is it about this tree that allows it to stand firm and grow tall?" He said, "I guess it's the root system." I told him that in order to grow strong and tall as a Christian, it takes time and you must allow your life to be rooted and grounded in Jesus and that roots are invisible. That's the hidden part of our life that feeds on the nourishing water of the Word of God. Keith told me that he has never forgotten about that tree and that it was a...

(2) Fruit

According to the Lord Jesus, our lives are to bear His fruit. He said in John 15:8, "This is to my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." When people examine your life do they see good fruit? I don't know a lot about trees, but I know that when I see an apple hanging on a tree, it's an apple tree! When I see a peach on a tree, my brilliant mind quickly assumes that is a peach tree! Do people see the fruit of Jesus in your life? You may wonder, "What is the fruit of the Christian life? Here it is:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)

According to what Jesus said in John 15, our job is not to produce fruit. We are just branches upon which the vine (Jesus) can display His fruit. We don't produce fruit: we bear it. Jesus said,

“I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

(3) Be a blessing

Notice that it says, “Whose leaf does not wither.” This isn’t some oak tree that produces leaves and then they wither and fall off each season. This is an evergreen tree because its leaves are constantly alive. Have you ever thought about how a tree can be a blessing to others? You can find shade under a tree to escape the hot sun. You can find shelter under a tree to escape the wind and rain. A tree can be a home for birds and animals. A tree is a real blessing to others. That’s what God has in mind here, a real man who delights in God’s Word and meditates on it day and night will be a blessing to others.

There you have it, the qualities of a Real Man, someone who is blessed by God to be a blessing to others. To summarize this passage, you could say that:

A Real Man is:

Separated from the world!

Saturated by the Word!

Situated by the water!

Are you willing to be a Real Man, according to Psalm 1? Are you willing to stand up in your family, in front of your friends and business associates? America needs real, godly men more than ever before.

In his book, *Anchor Man*, Steve Farrar says one reason men are failing as husbands and fathers is that we don’t devote the time to our wives and children. He says too many men try to be NASCAR men in their relationships. He writes, “The most amazing thing about a NASCAR race is not the race itself, it’s the pit stops. When the driver pulls into the pit, seven men jump over the restraining wall in complete unison. At the rear of the car, the gas-can man inserts the nozzle of an 80-pound gas can into the gas tank. The catch-can man holds it in place while the gas-can man grabs a second can. At the exact same time, the jack man raises the right side of the car so that the rear and front tire changers can get the lug nuts off. As soon as they get those lug nuts off, the tire carriers hand them the new tires, which they quickly put on. The jack man then races to the right side of the car, where the tires are changed by the same synchronized process. He then drops the car off the jack, thus signaling the driver to get out of the pit. These guys fill a 22-gallon gas tank and change four tires in 18 seconds. That is nothing short of amazing.”

NASCAR men think they can be husbands and fathers in the same way. On Monday morning they start their engines and go roaring off on the fast track to work. Most days the race is so intense and competitive they don’t even make it home for dinner. Sometime after 7 or 8 that night they come roaring into the pits. They peck their wife on the cheek, gulp down supper, take a quick look at their daughter’s report card, pat their son on the head, and say goodnight as the kids are going off to bed. And the average NASCAR man does it all in 37 seconds, the average time American fathers spend with their children each day. Then this NASCAR man jumps into

bed, mumbles g'night to his wife, catches some shut-eye, and gets up real early to get back into the race before the kids ever get out of bed. That's the NASCAR man and that's the reason so many men are running under the yellow caution flag when it comes to their families!

Steve Farrar, *Anchor Man*, p. 95

CONCLUSION

Coach John Wooden was one of the greatest college basketball coaches in all of history. He won 10 NCAA championships at UCLA, the last one in 1975 (Nobody else has won more than four). He won 88 straight games during one stretch, nobody else has come close to winning 50 in a row. But few people realize the personal qualities and faith that made this man great: He was a real man.

A few weeks ago, Rick Reilly wrote a tribute to this living legend in *Sports Illustrated*. Here are some of the things he wrote:

There has never been another coach like John Wooden, quiet as an April snow and square as a game of checkers; loyal to one woman, one school, one way; He's spent a half an hour the first day of practice teaching his men how to put on a sock. "Wrinkles can lead to blisters," he'd warn. These huge players would sneak looks at one another and roll their eyes. Eventually, they do it right. "Good," he'd say. "And now for the other foot." . . . If you played for him, you played by his rules: "Never lie, never cheat, never steal. Never score without acknowledging a teammate. One word of profanity and you were finished for the day. No long hair or facial hair, "they take too long to dry, and you could catch a cold leaving gym," he'd say. One day, All-American center Bill Walton showed up with a full beard. "It's my right." Walton insisted. Coach Wooden asked Bill Walton if he believed that strongly. Walton said he did "That's good, Bill," Coach said. "I admire people who have strong beliefs and stick by them, I really do. We're going to miss you on the team." Walton shaved the beard right then and there. Now Walton calls Coach Wooden once a week to tell Coach he loves him.

Wooden is almost 90 now, and every month on the 21st he sits down and takes to pen a love letter to his best girl. He'll say how much he misses her and loves her and can't wait to see her again. Then he'll fold it once, slide it into an envelope and walk into his bedroom. He'll go to the stack of love letters sitting there on her pillow, untie the yellow ribbon, place the new one on top and tie the ribbon again. Today the stack is 181 letters high, because it is just a little over 15 years ago since Nellie, his beloved wife of 53 years, died. In her memory, he sleeps only on his half of the bed, only on his pillow, only on top of the sheets, never between, with just the old bedspread they shared to keep him warm. Coach Wooden is a committed Christian who reads his Bible daily. When Rick Reilly left, Coach Wooden said, "I'm not afraid to die...death is my only chance to be with her again."

That, my friends, is a Real Man!

In Ezekiel 22:30, God said, “I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none.” God really *is* looking for a few good men: Are you willing to be God’s Man? Are you willing to stand up and be counted as the man who will stand in the gap for your family? Will you stand in the gap for your nations? Will you stand in the gap for your church?

OUTLINE

I. PERILS TO AVOID (1)

Don't:

1. Think like the world

2. Behave like the world

They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. *John 17:16, 18*

3. Fellowship with the world

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. *James 4:4*

II. PRIORITY TO SET (2)

Your main:

1. Delight must be to know God through His word

2. Desire must be for God's word to dwell in you

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. *John 15:7*

III. PROSPERITY THAT IS PROMISED (3)

Like a healthy tree, you will:

1. Grow

2. Fruit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. *Galatians 5:22-23*

3. Be a blessing

A real man is:

Separated from the world!

Saturated by the word!

Situated by the water!



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If you borrow the majority of a message or outline, I encourage you to simply preface your remarks by saying something like: ***“Some (or “much” as the case may be) of the ideas I’m sharing in this message came from a message by Pastor David Dykes in Texas.”*** This simple citation may prevent any criticism that may be directed toward you.

To put it in Texas terms, “You’re mighty welcome to use any and all of my ingredients; just make your own chili!”

For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes