

April 7, 2024

Developing A Heavenly Perspective

by George Slover

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (Hebrews 11:13)

Several years ago I was working with a prospect having serious problems with alcohol. Several studies led them to baptism. However, it was not long after their baptism that old habits raised their ugly head. The result was two years of trying to counsel this person in how to overcome their addiction.

There were times when things went smoothly for this person. However, there were moments when they would confess: "I messed up again." Then they would ask: "Why do I keep messing up?" Ultimately, the decision to abstain from the world or to yield to temptation is a faith issue.

I encouraged this new Christian to develop daily habits that would help them with their addiction. Habits such as daily Bible reading, daily prayer, and frequent connection with someone "spiritual" (Galatians 6:1) to whom they were accountable can benefit the addict. Learning to stay away from places where they are tempted, and staying busy with things that are productive is also helpful. But, if one is to really change, they must change their perspective. They must develop a heavenly perspective!

The heavenly perspective means we must learn to deny ourselves. (Galatians 2:20) Self-denial is hard. How does one say "no" to self in a world that says "no" to nothing?

Jesus provides an answer.

In Luke 9:19 Jesus asked his disciples: "who do you say that I am?" (Luke 9:20)

Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." (Luke 9:20) Thoughts of Jesus being the anointed of God may have prompted thoughts of exaltation and glory. However, this was not to be the fate of Jesus: "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." (Luke 9:22) Jesus followed this prediction by saying: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. (Luke 9:23) The very life of Jesus was the model of true discipleship. The cost is high, but we must learn to deny our self.

The heavenly perspective also includes saying "yes" to God's final reward. It is easier to have a greater confidence in the tangible (the bottle of alcohol) than in an invisible heaven. We are so easily motivated by what we touch and feel- by instant gratification. The true disciple embraces (Hebrews 11:13) and seeks (Hebrews 11:14) a home they've never seen. Thus, gratification is deferred for the moment. They acknowledge they are sojourners in this world. For the time being they must endure the pain and wait for heavenly bliss.

Pauls says: For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18) What about you? Do you believe?

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Ladies' Class - Tuesday, April 23 at 10 a.m.

Gospel Meeting - Leon Valley with Warren Berkley, April 14-17

Gospel Meeting - Live Oak church of Christ, Kerrville, with David Watson, April 19-21

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

A Sound Mind

by Rickie Jenkins

I have seen it. I have seen people lose their mind. I am not referring to temperament. I am talking about people whose mind was once vibrant, strong, analytical, and creative. I've seen the empty look in their eyes. I've seen the confusion when asked a question. I've seen their once vibrant mind, that is now so diminished, that they do not even recognize their own loved ones. It's hard. It's so tragic and sad! It's heartbreaking!

Yet there is something far worse than this dreaded senility. "Sound" means "healthy" and that involves more than just being able to reason and remember. Many bright people do not have a sound mind.

A sound mind includes right values. A brilliant fellow sacrifices everything to make lots of money or to hold some high job. Yet, he loses his family, deserts the Lord, and wrecks his health, all for his job and money. I wonder, "Is that a sound mind?" Another really smart fellow walks away from God and sacrifices heaven for a few occasional minutes of immoral pleasure. "He just went crazy," says a surprised friend. Real close! He lost his sound mind. Everyone recognizes it, except him. Still another is so selfishly oriented that he ignores brethren and insults the Lord (Matt. 25:31-f). He surely lost his sound mind. The focus of love, as well as reason, has been lost. Have you lost your sense of values, and thus, your sound mind?

A sound mind requires the right attitude. No matter how smart, the malicious man does not have a sound mind. Hatred of men is not of sound mind. Contentiousness (the love of fighting) is not of sound mind. Such attitudes are often excused, even glorified, but that is perverted reasoning. Meanness, hatred, and contentiousness are opposite to kindness, compassion, and a forgiving spirit-- all necessary ingredients of a sound mind. Smart brethren with such mean attitudes have lost their sound mind, and it is really sad, far sadder than memory loss.

A sound, healthy mind also needs faith.

Worry and fretting are like sand in the mental machinery. Ask any mental health professional if worry is detrimental to mental health. Many mental and physical disorders are directly traced to inordinate worry. More importantly, ask Jesus about worry (Matt. 6:25-33ff). Faith in God, not worry, makes a sound mind. Faith in God displaces worry. As faith increases, worry diminishes; full faith eliminates worry. Faith connects us to God who is greater than our worst concern. Ask Jesus about the consequences of the worries of this world. The gospel seed found willing hearts, but eventually the cares of the world destroyed them (Matt. 13:7, 22). They died spiritually. From what? An unsound mind!

Ask, "Do I have a sound mind?"

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson's lymphoma has returned and is suffering cognitive and balance issues.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is at home and still on constant oxygen.

Debbie McMurray has received good test results but is still under treatment.

Terry Behrns is recovering at his sister's home

Elaine Kersh is back at The Brixton in Horseshoe Bay on hospice care.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

Evangelist

Darrell Trammel
512-756-4493 Office
Darrell@
oakswestchurchofChrist.com

Elders

George Gresham
Darrell Trammel

Contact Us

Address:
P.O. Box 675
Burnet, TX 78611

Call:
(512) 756-4493

E-Mail:
oakswestchurch@gmail.com

Website:
oakswestchurchofchrist.com