

#29

KILLER SINS

The GREAT ESCAPE...
HINDARANCES

THE GREAT ESCAPE!

LAST WEEK

FREE!!

In Christ, I don't have to give-in to my cravings and desires!!

Even "neutral" cravings!

? **What must I do** ?

TO GAIN THIS FREEDOM?

must have a prominent place in your *daily* life – influencing what you think about and how you live.

The Old Testament uses the concept of "meditating" on the Word:

Using your mind to think about God and his ways –to fill your mind with God's instructions and to learn how to apply them.

It's quite the opposite of the world's counterfeit "meditation," which teaches you to empty your mind!

This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; **you are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it.** For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.

Joshua 1:8 (CSB)

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--**think about such things.**

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--**put it into practice.** And the God of peace will be with you.

Philip. 4:8-9 (NIV)

The New Testament uses other words that have the same focus.

THIS WEEK

O.K. Now...

- ✓ God has provided a way of escape.
- ✓ I'm no longer a slave to sin; I'm free.
- ✓ I at least try to keep focused on the Bible.

WHY DO I STILL FEEL TRAPPED?

✓ WHY DO SINS, CRAVINGS, HABITS, AND ALL THE REST → STILL BOTHER ME?

WHY

does the refrigerator *still* look so inviting at 3 a.m.?



IT'S 3 A.M.!!
I'M SURE I CAN FINISH ALL THIS BY BREAKFAST TIME!

WHY

DOES THERE OFTEN SEEM TO BE A BARRIER BETWEEN "ME" AND "FREE"?



HERE IS FREEDOM. KEEP OUT!



THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST OF ALL...

- ✓ The devil is a sore loser, and doesn't like to admit it.
- ✓ He doesn't want us to admit it, either.

I'M THE WINNER, SO YOU NEED TO SURRENDER TO ME!

YOU ARE "THE FATHER OF LIES." (JOHN 8:44)

IT IS FOR FREEDOM THAT CHRIST HAS SET ME FREE! (GALATIANS 5:1)

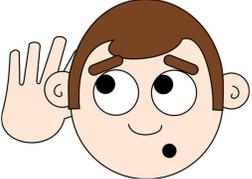
- ✓ The "Flesh" is determined to keep to the path of sin. ["Flesh" – referring to the sinful nature that is totally attached to our physical "self."]
- In our "Before Christ" days, our repetition of sins and excesses turned them into habits.
- As we rely on Christ's power to develop new habits, we will grow in our victory over the flesh.
- COMPLETE victory will occur when Jesus returns.

YOU'RE TOO WEAK!

YES! BUT IT FORCES ME TO RELY ON CHRIST'S POWER!

WHEN I ADMIT I AM WEAK, THEN I BECOME STRONG! (2 CORINTHIANS 12:10)

OUR RESPONSE WILL BE GREATLY INFLUENCED BY WHAT WE LISTEN TO.

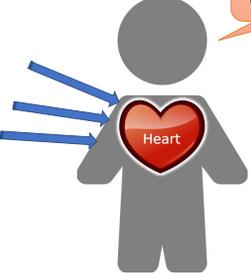


- ✓ THE DEVIL USING THE FLESH – bombarding us with lies 24-hours a day. (He also uses the media, people, etc.)
- >> OR <<
- ✓ THE SPIRIT, USING THE BIBLE – to whatever extent we are willing to give God's Word our focus.

- ✓ Sometimes we are aware of the truth, but it hasn't yet "sunk in" to our hearts.

"SKIN-DEEP"

- Even unsaved people can quote Bible verses!



YES, I KNOW THAT VERSE!

"HEART-DEEP"

- This is when it makes the most impact on our lives!

I have hidden your word in my **heart**, that I might not sin against you.
Psalm 119:11 (NLT)

✓ It may be that we just don't believe the truth.

- We may also have more *love* for our sin and habits than we are willing to admit.

EXCUSES ...

I KNOW I SHOULDN'T DO IT, BUT ...

YOU CAN'T EXPECT A PERSON TO BE "PERFECT" ...

EXCUSES ...

JUST ONE MORE TIME ...

EXCUSES ...

EXCUSES ...

EXCUSES ...

✓ We might be wavering between *believing* the truth and *not believing* it.

- This is a matter of *trust*. Do we really *trust* God?

SOMETIMES THIS IS OUR PROBLEM →

"... if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."
"If you can't?" said Jesus.
"Everything is possible for him who believes." *

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I **do believe**; help me overcome my unbelief!"
Mark 9:22b-24 (NIV)

* ("Everything" that is consistent with God's will and nature.)

✓ Sometimes we aren't dealing with the *real* issue.

- This is a common problem in *many* areas of life.

(EXAMPLE) →

I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY FOOD FOR MY CHILDREN!

COULD IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOU SPENDING MOST OF YOUR PAYCHECK ON ALCOHOL, CIGARETTES, LOTTERY TICKETS AND DRUGS?

✓ Temptation does not exist in a "vacuum," separated from the rest of life.

- We can't expect change in *one* area of life, while refusing to change in others.

I WANT TO DEAL WITH THIS ONE ISSUE!

I'M HAPPY WITH THE REST OF MY LIFE!

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS illustrates this focus:

- The topics aren't listed separately, but are combined and mixed together ... *the way life comes at us!*

✓ Sometimes we rely on emotions, instead of truth.

I DON'T FEEL VICTORIOUS!

✓ Too much stress.

✓ Not enough sleep.

✓ Failure.

✓ Sickness.

✓ Worry.

✓ Etc.

GOD'S WORD is the only foundation on which a right response to sin and habits can be built.

ANY substitute is a flimsy failure.

A WORTHLESS PILE OF SPLINTERS!

SEEMS STRONG ENOUGH TO ME!

As Jesus said...

BIBLE

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a **wise** man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ...

NOT BIBLE

... But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a **foolish** man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)

God's Word

- ✓ Teaches us responses to specific problems.
- ✓ Guides us in the rest of life.

IT SHOWS US

- ✓ Values and priorities.
- ✓ Prayer obligations.
- ✓ The need to encourage each other.
- ✓ How to respond to temptation.
- ✓ Our duty to be focused on the good of others.
- ✓ The need to distinguish between genuine and fake.
- ✓ Etc.

★ Taken together, these things show us the way to victory over sin and habits. ★

REMEMBER THIS:

JESUS HIMSELF SAID THAT FOLLOWING HIM WOULDN'T BE EASY.

★ **BUT THE ALTERNATIVE IS WORSE!** ★

And if the righteous are barely saved, what will become of the ungodly and sinners?

1 Pe 4:18 (NET)

THIS WEEK:

⇒ **CONSIDER** these various issues and how they might influence your daily victory or defeat.

⇒ **ACCEPT** and **USE** the power that God has given you.*

* (If you are not yet following Jesus, you first need to repent of your sin and trust him for salvation.)

Credits (1)

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