

The Last Sunday after Epiphany ~ Sunday, February 23, 2020

“2020 Vision: Victory Over the Inner Conflict”

Romans 7:14-25

THE PROBLEM

“I don’t understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. But I can’t help myself because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things. I know I am rotten so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can’t make myself do right. I want to, but I can’t.” (Romans 7:15-18)

There is a \_\_\_\_\_ going on inside of us—a war between right and \_\_\_\_\_; light and \_\_\_\_\_; good and \_\_\_\_\_.

“The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:41)

This \_\_\_\_\_ within us is part of our \_\_\_\_\_ nature and we can’t escape it. In fact, we’re most aware of this battle when we try to \_\_\_\_\_ a bad habit.

Good \_\_\_\_\_ are not good enough—it takes more than just \_\_\_\_\_ to change.

Sentiments like these may be heart-felt at the time, but they often lack the \_\_\_\_\_ to have any lasting effect on our lives. Why? Because the \_\_\_\_\_ to do something is often stronger than the desire \_\_\_\_\_ to do something—especially during times of stress or when we’re feeling weak or out of control.

3 CONSEQUENCES OF THE INNER BATTLE

• \_\_\_\_\_  
“I don’t understand myself.” (Romans 7:15)

• \_\_\_\_\_  
“I have the desire to do good, but not the power.” (Romans 7:18)  
The problem with self-help books; motivational speakers; and conferences is that even though they may offer some good \_\_\_\_\_ ideas and advice, they don’t give us the \_\_\_\_\_ to change.

• \_\_\_\_\_  
“Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?” (Romans 7:24)

GOD’S PROMISE

“When you know the truth, the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

“For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (2 Corinthians 3:17)

The secret to transformation and victory in our lives is Jesus and His \_\_\_\_\_.

When we change the way we \_\_\_\_\_, it changes the way we \_\_\_\_\_; and when we change the way we feel, it changes the way we \_\_\_\_\_.

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.” (Romans 12:2 MSG)

We need to allow God to change the way we think—we need to let His Truth and His Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ in our hearts and minds—then we will know and experience His \_\_\_\_\_ to change.

Behind every self-defeating act is a \_\_\_\_\_ I’m believing.

Whatever it is—it’s an \_\_\_\_\_ belief that isn’t true—a belief that I’ve either consciously or unconsciously \_\_\_\_\_, and allowed to have control in my life—the way I think, a speak, and act—the way I view myself and other people.

Change doesn’t start in our \_\_\_\_\_, it always starts in our \_\_\_\_\_ and we have to expose and uncover the lies that we’ve accepted and focus on the truth.

Transformation doesn’t start with our \_\_\_\_\_—it always starts in our mind, and we have to expose and uncover the lies that we’ve accepted and focus on the truth.

THE PRESCRIPTION: 4 STEPS TO VICTORY

Step #1: \_\_\_\_\_.  
Many people go through life with a vague feeling that something’s \_\_\_\_\_, but can’t quite put our finger on it. The good news is, God knows exactly what’s wrong—we have an \_\_\_\_\_ problem and God has a word for it: \_\_\_\_\_

“So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.” (Rom. 7:17)  
Sin always starts in our \_\_\_\_\_–and it’s our thoughts that produce sinful \_\_\_\_\_.

We sin when we try to play \_\_\_\_\_. We think we know \_\_\_\_\_ than God; we do what we want to do instead of what God wants us to do.

What makes it worse, is that we can live in a state of \_\_\_\_\_ about our sinfulness.

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)

**Principle of Life:** Sin always involves \_\_\_\_\_ the moment I’m sinning, I’m deceiving myself because I think what I’m doing will actually produce better results than what God said.

**Fact of Life:** To stop defeating myself, I must stop \_\_\_\_\_ myself. I’ve got to take an honest look at my life, face the truth, and deal with the issues.

**Step #2:** \_\_\_\_\_.

“Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:24-25)

The answer to our problem is a \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_! However, in order to experience Jesus’ \_\_\_\_\_ work in our lives, we need to ask ourselves: Who is going to be \_\_\_\_\_ of my life?

Only Jesus can set us \_\_\_\_\_. When we’re mastered by Him, we can master our \_\_\_\_\_–because He alone has the \_\_\_\_\_.

“For the new spiritual principle of life in Jesus Christ lifts me out of the old vicious cycle of sin.” (Romans 8:2)

**Step #3:** \_\_\_\_\_.

“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

\_\_\_\_\_ is a Biblical principle of recovery—a prerequisite for healing and \_\_\_\_\_.

Confession is important because it brings what’s \_\_\_\_\_ in the darkness out into the light; it \_\_\_\_\_ it and weakens it’s \_\_\_\_\_ over us.

“But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

We can’t know the \_\_\_\_\_ until we’ve confessed the \_\_\_\_\_ and brought them into the open.

**Step #4:** \_\_\_\_\_.

“Don’t let sin control the way you live. Don’t give into its lustful desires. Instead give yourselves completely to God since you have been given a new life.” (Romans 6:12)

In order to experience \_\_\_\_\_ and victory in our lives, we need a power that’s \_\_\_\_\_ than our own.

We’re all \_\_\_\_\_ by something—and \_\_\_\_\_ only comes when we make the right choice of what that will be. When we choose \_\_\_\_\_ to be the controlling factor in our life—when we’re mastered by the Master—He gives us the power to \_\_\_\_\_ everything else.

### COMMITTING TO JESUS

- \_\_\_\_\_ that I’ve been trying to play God and that I can’t change on my own.
- \_\_\_\_\_ ask God to help.
- being willing to be \_\_\_\_\_ with someone else about the things that need changing in my life.
- Giving Jesus total \_\_\_\_\_ of my life.

“God keeps His promise. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond your power to resist and at the time you are tempted He will give you the strength to endure it and so provide you with a way out.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)



If you’ve tried and tried, and you’ve failed—stop \_\_\_\_\_, and start \_\_\_\_\_. God gives us the choice to either \_\_\_\_\_ on Him or on ourselves—and the result is either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.



**Do you really want to change?**

**Are you willing to take the first step?**