**How Much Of God Do We Have? How Much Do We Want?**

**Scripture:**Luke 2:41-49

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, **how is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?**

Ask yourself this question: How much closer to God am I now than I was last year?

What did I do to get closer to God?

1.     How much fasting did I do?

2.     How many souls did I win? Or attempt to win.

What is my desire this year concerning my relationship with God?

The answer to the title of this message is simply this: we can never get enough of God. Anything less than a fill-up just won’t do.

When we become satisfied with God we are in big trouble.

I believe we all realize that bad habits are hard to break. And good habits are hard to keep. Amen

It seems that we struggle to overcome bad habits, but look how easy it is to break a good habit.

**Bad Habits:** **When you think about them, you think of some sinful bondage and how hard they were to overcome. You remember how hard it was for you to overcome some things in your life.**

**One thing about bad habits is the longer you do them the harder they are to overcome.**

**Good habits:** You started out good and then as time went on you begin to drift backward it got easy not to do the right things you first did when coming to God.

You overcame things like smoking, drinking, drugs just to name a few and it wasn’t all that easy for some matter of fact it seemed impossible to break free.

**Now I know some say they never had a problem with overcoming those things.**

But what about those other habits that people notice even more:

* Rebellion, unfaithfulness, greed, disobedience, bad attitudes,
* Here’s the worst of them all; Self-righteousness.
* Are you still struggling with those?

Let’s look at good habits: Prayer, fasting, studying the bible, faithfulness to church and to God, giving, sacrificing and loving your neighbor, soul winning, teaching Sunday school-- cleaning the church helping where necessary?

How long did it take to get out of these habits? Did you find it easier to stop doing the things of God than it was the things that had you bound in the world?

Let me tell you why it was easier to stop doing good and why it was such a struggle to stop doing bad.

When you weren’t serving God at all you were addicted to the things of the world.

Let your mind travel back to the times you lived like the world, to do badly didn’t really take any effort at all. You simply did nothing good.

You were addicted to sin!

* But did you ever get addicted to doing good?
* Did you have that craving to pray,
* That craving and hunger that seemed to drive you out of your mind when there was no church.
* You could hardly stand not being in the presence of God.

There are people here that are so faithful in giving, so faithful in attendance, faithful and willing to do anything to please God.

Do you ever crave that intimacy with the Lord? Do you still have that longing to please you heavenly Father?

1.     Were you ever addicted to being a Christian?

2.     It’s not hard to get over God some can just lay Him down and never pick him up again.

3.     And others are miserable but can’t seem to find their way back,

4.      Can’t turn loose of the world, trapped like an animal.

Most animals when caught in a trap will chew their leg off to break free; it’s either lose a leg or lose your life. But the decision will cost the animal one way or another.

* If he chews his leg off he is left cripple but alive he learns to live with the handicap.
* If he just fights against the trap sooner or later he will grow weary and the trapper will check his traps and the animal dies.
* It’s the same with us we can lay in Satan’s trap or make a desperate choice and break free.
* So whether we live or die will have to be our choice.

I believe we can get so addicted to the things of the world that we really are never completely free of them without complete obedience to the Lord.

Look at Israel, they are a prime example of people that were slaves to sin, four hundred years of slavery to hard labor, it was all they knew, freedom wasn’t a part of their life they were always doing the same thing.

They were still slaves even after Moses led them out of Egypt slaves to the past many of them just couldn’t break free of their bondage and they died before they received the promise..

1.     Every day for four hundred years they got up expecting the same ole thing, work driven by ungodly rulers, never a break in life. We know how that feels.

2.     Make bricks; build buildings for someone else, every day the same routine.

3.     It became the norm with them, they cried like we do, “Help us God.”

4.     But they did nothing to help themselves. They never tried to break free.

5.     They had no other choice but to be slaves. No church, only a lonely cry for deliverance that seemed to never be heard by a God that didn’t seem to care.

**We must never get used to bondage, we must be free.**

But they were just like us they were slaves and so were we, slaves to sin, doing the same ole thing every day.

* Get up go to work, come home take a bath, eat, go to bed and the same routine every day.
* Worry how we are going to make ends meet then things get dangerous we begin to think, what’s the use?
* Then we start looking back trying to convince ourselves we would be better off. That is the voice of the trapper {Satan}

But today Satan has made it easier for some, especially ones called to follow Christ. Satan took Israel’s freedom and made them slaves to hard living

We have it much better,

1.     We have homes cars, vacations, some money

2.     We can go to work or choose to take the day off, just call in sick.

3.     We can pay or bills or decide to let them go, it’s our decision.

4.     We can send the kids to school or let them sleep in just call in sick for them.

5.     We can go to church as long as we don’t get too involved.

***Israel was slaves to one thing and we to something else.***

We are slaves to pleasures, 2 Tim 3:2 says we become, lovers of ourselves, covetous (Want more even if we don’t need it), boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. And the list goes on.

It’s easy to take a day off and go for a drive in the country, or to go shopping, or out to eat, or whatever we decide.

    But here’s the catcher now, listen, how many times did you call in or take a vacation day to do something for God?

    How many times did we just take some time to spend one day fasting and praying for the lost or to ask God to help us to grow stronger in our love for him?

    How many times have we called in or took a day off to do something around the church?

Don’t get me wrong, I’m not trying to make you feel bad-- I am trying to let us see where our priorities are.

I’m trying to see how dedicated we really are.

A.    We find it easy to stay home, just because we don’t want to go to church.

B.     We find it easy just to think that no one will expect you at prayer meeting.

C.     We find it easy not to sacrifice, a dollar is plenty we have money in the bank now, so it won’t matter if I don’t give.

It’ like the story I told Sunday morning about the man who had a celebration and all he asked the guests to do was bring a cup of their best wine, so one man said I will take a cup of water no one will even know. And what difference will it make; one cup of water won’t make any difference anyway.

So everyone came and poured their cup into the barrel and when the host took a cup out of the barrel and tasted it he said, **“This is water I ask for wine.”**

So you see everyone had the same mindset, but look at the outcome, everyone thought someone else would do what was right but no one brought wine.

Aren’t people the same today? This man came with a cup of water, but, he was expecting to drink from the same barrel as everyone else, he brought water but expected wine.

1.     God doesn’t care if we have leisure time with our families I believe it is necessary for our relationships to stay intact.

2.     I believe that families should spend quality time together.

3.     You need it your children need it.

4.     It is good for a husband and wife to spend good quality time together without the children-- it’s good for the marriage relationship.

5.     We should never neglect our families.

But in our schedule we should also spend quality time with our church family and especially with our heavenly family Jesus.

We should never neglect quality time with God. We allow too much to distract us from what really matters.

We allow our flesh to rule over our Godly Spirit.

We very seldom will miss work because we need the money to survive.

**Personally I admire a man or woman that is dedicated to their work and have good work ethics, showing up early and sometimes staying late to get finished.**

I admire people who try to further their education and make things better for their family, I admire your dedication.

Mark 8:36-37.. **For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?**

**37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**

I pray that we all become dedicated to our Lord in the same way, I pray we stop missing church, missing prayer meetings, **fellowship**, I pray we get addicted to being in the presence of God.

The things I listed above are very important, family work, pleasure they are all good, but they are temporal. They will all burn in the last days all that you have will be of no use to you or anyone else.

2 Peter 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat the ***earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.***

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwell righteousness.

But the things we do for God will be for eternity and our rewards are eternal.

Isa 65:17-19

17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

 {You won’t even think about what you had on earth.}

18 ***But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create***: for, behold***, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.***

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people: ***and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.***

2 Peter 3:13-14

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwell righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Let’s get addicted to the work of the Lord and let’s stop worrying about what we don’t have and rejoice in what God has given us.