

2010 Cycle 1 – Spiritual Growth – Life of Disciples

The basic question we want to explore this week is, “How does our commitment to Christ change the different areas of our life?”

Idolatry

- Ezek 14:1-4 – Idols of the heart
- Eph 5:1-7 – immorality, impurity, greed are equated with idolatry
- Colossians 3:5-17 – “Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
- Rom 1:23f

Charles Finney “Devotion” I am to notice several mistakes commonly made upon this subject.

1. Many imagine that there is a real distinction between devotion and other duties, as if a man could be doing his duty in that which is not devotion to God, the duties of devotion are generally supposed to be closet and family prayer, reading the scriptures, together with singing and praying in the public exercises of God's house. These are called the devotional parts of worship, while the preaching and hearing are called less devotional. On the Sabbath men imagine themselves to be devotional, while on the weekdays, excepting in those few acts which they call religious duties, they are serving themselves, and are supremely devoted to their own interests. Now all such ideas as these arise out of the total absence of true devotion; and individuals who entertain such views have not yet understood what true religion is.-- Nothing is duty that is not performed for God. A man that is truly religious is as truly devotional in his daily business, as on the Sabbath. The business of the world is performed by him in the same spirit, and with the same design as he prays and reads his Bible, and attends the worship of God on the Sabbath. If this is not the case, he has no true religion.

2. Some, who seem to do all for God, and are manifestly in a devotional state of mind, do not, after all, seem to realize that every act devoted to God is as acceptable as prayer or praise. If, by necessary duties, they are kept from spending much time in their closets, and going a great deal to meeting, Satan takes advantage of their ignorance, and brings them into bondage, he endeavors to persuade them that they are neglecting their duties to God, and attending to other things. Now you who are devoted to God should understand that if the providence of God confine you at home to nurse the sick, or prevent you from observing those hours of secret prayer which you are wont to observe, you are not to be brought into bondage on this account, if you are conscious that these other duties are performed for God.

3. Others think that devotion may be sincere, and yet extend only to certain duties, i.e. that a man may pray sincerely, and from right motives, and yet be worldly in the transaction of business. Now a little reflection will convince any honest mind that it is naturally impossible. Devotion to God cannot be sincere any further than it annihilates selfishness. Devotion and selfishness are eternal opposites.

4. It is a very common idea that we are to be more devotional, i.e. more religious, on the Sabbath, and in secret and social prayer, than at other times and in other things. But the text shows that whatever we do--whether we eat or drink--at all times--in all places--and in all things--we are to do all for the glory of God.

5. Many mistake the religion of emotion for that of the will or heart. This is manifest from their lives. You will often witness the gushings forth of their emotions. They weep, and appear to melt and break down. They promise reformation, and entire consecration to God; but attempt to trade with them the very next day, and you will find them supremely selfish--that they are not devoted to God, but to their own interest, and are ready to take any advantage, even of their brethren, to benefit themselves.

Life Activities in Disciple Perspective

Activity	Neglectful	Idolatrous
<u>Housework</u> (laundry, yard work, cleaning, dishes, cooking, etc.)		
<u>Personal Care</u> (cleanliness, exercise, diet, health, etc.)		
<u>Commerce</u> (shopping, spending, saving, etc.)		
Saying “YES” to a request		
Saying “NO” to a request		
Relaxing		

Discussion:

- How do we discern what “in the name of the Lord Jesus” or with “minds on things above” means?
- What is the difference between a purely moral perspective and a discipleship perspective?
- How do we apply this to ourselves? To our view of others?