

Week 4 Balanced Life  
Spiritual The pivot

As Christians we say that the spiritual part of our lives – or the relationship to God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is the most important part of our lives. We say that, yet unfortunately for a great proportion of Christians the expression of Christianity in our lives doesn't show that.

What we say and how we live is sometimes too difficult to bring together.

We are to be a loving, caring and generous bunch of people yet we can be just as negative, prejudice and selfish as any man in the street. Why?

Because we are human. And sometime I think it is because our view of God has become humanised, or we put God in a box and tell Him how He should react in our lives.

We need to find a balance. Just as we have discussed for each aspect, Social, mental and physical we need to a way to work out how this God thing fits into our lives.

I think that statement is part of the problem.

**We can't fit God into our lives – He is too big – we need to fit into His life.** That is our first flip point.

1. The Inner you

What's this about – the inner you? Some would say the real you – I think that is a fairly shallow answer because the real us has elements of social, mental and physical attributes. (That's why we have looked at those concepts)

The inner us is the part that makes the decisions, has the opinions and sets things in process. It is where our world view is formed, it is where every thing comes together and if as a Christian it is not inhabited by God, then we need some readjustment.

Look at these verses.

**Romans 6:15-16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Note the underlining – Slaves to the one you obey. \_ Slaves to the one that makes you jump, and for many – it isn't always God it is work, family, etc.

We need to say who do I obey?

Now again Flip it – **Who do I obey that I shouldn't?**

**Who am I a slave to?**

## 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

<sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation;

New creation – that means we aren't what we were. Sometimes the new creation bit was a long time again and we have gotten stale or old and we aint so new anymore.

We need to go back and visit that first love.

Do this: Close your eyes.

Remember when you first gave your heart to Jesus.

Now capture that feeling – How did you feel?

Sometimes we need to revisit the gospel.

By that I mean we need to go back over the basics of our faith, and remember – We do it at communion once a month in each service – why – to remember.

Close your eyes again – remember your reaction to Jesus.

Keep that in close memory – don't let it fade.

Look at this verse.

## Colossians 2:9-10 (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

<sup>10</sup> and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.

**Remember that first glow of the Jesus relationship now we need to come to grips with this: you have come to fullness in him,**

**You have the opportunity to reach your potential in God** – that fullness of relationship, that fullness of ministry, that fullness of missional lifestyle,

**But get the next bit** – that fullness comes from what?

**who is the head of every ruler and authority.** Our fullness, comes from this amazing God we have this relationship with. **When He is the centre – our lives are at their fullest.**

Ok there is some thought to process.

This placing Jesus at the centre has consequences.

2. **Faith** – Yep our faith increases – becomes real.

## Romans 5:1 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Our faith becomes an integral part of our lives – it starts to affect our relationships both human and God.

## Romans 8:24-25 (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen?

<sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

See our faith becomes so vital that it doesn't depend on the usual expressions of logic. Doesn't have to be tangibly visible for us to accept God's working, we believe God works out of sight or out of our sight – Faith in practice.

Not only that our faith changes the way we think and do things – our faith in an amazing, prayer answering, loving, caring and spectacular God changes our life and lifestyle. Listen to this.

### **Galatians 2:20 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

When we live by faith in Jesus it is His expressions of life that come out of our lives.

One of those expressions is the ability to love and not just love those who love us but extend love to even those we don't know.

### **3. Love**

We are told to love. Interesting we are not told to fall in love but just do it.

Maybe love is a choice as much as a compulsion

### **Matthew 22:37-40 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

<sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and first commandment.

<sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

<sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

### **Two guidelines**

- a. Love God totally
- b. Love others totally.

Listen to this passage

### **1 John 4:7-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

<sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

- a. Let us love each other. Note that it is because God loves us that we love others. Remember we are told to imitate God.
- b. We are told to love each other LIKE God loves us. Sacrificially. God gave us Jesus. God gave us Himself. So we give of ourselves.

Now all this is great but how do we make it practical, how do we so called - live it. We are not left to work this out for ourselves – we have scripture, the bible to give us the templates and ideas for practical and logical Christian living. One big factor is actually doing what the bible says.

#### 4. Obedience

##### **Jeremiah 7:23 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> But this command I gave them, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you."

Acts 5:29 and 32

What is God's voice? Usually – His word the Bible. All of it God breathed for us.

##### **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

<sup>17</sup> so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

This passage is pretty blunt about it.

##### **1 John 5:3 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome,

If we are truly Christian if we truly love God then we will do what the bible says we will live biblical standards of love, care, faith, and example.

If our lives are not typified by these characteristics then we have to go back to God and have a chat.

#### 5. Prayer

Now prayer can be a full sermon series that could take years. It is a huge thing.

##### **1 John 5:14-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

<sup>15</sup> And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him.

Now much can be said about this verses content but I just want to focus on one point. Notice I have underlined the word Boldness. We can be so bold as to go to God Almighty, maker of the universe, sustainer of all life, King of Kings, Lord of all and talk to Him. Communicate to God. We will talk more about prayer in a coming series but my advice to you is just do it.

Prayer – Just do it.