



John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you;
My peace I give to you;
not as the world gives do
I give to you, Do not let
your heart be troubled,
nor let it be fearful.”



Statistics on Evangelical Pastors *shilohplace.org*

- 50% of pastors' marriages end in divorce.
- 70% of pastors continually battle depression.
- 80% of pastors and 85% of their spouses feel discouraged in their roles.
- 70% of pastors do not have a close friend, confidant, or mentor.
- 50% of pastors would leave the ministry if they had another way to make a living.
- 40% of pastors have had an extra-marital sexual affair since entering ministry.
- 80% of seminary graduates who enter ministry will leave within five years.
- 80% of pastors' wives feel their husbands are overworked.
- 80% of the adult children of pastors sought professional help for depression.
- 90% of pastors said their training was inadequate for ministry.
- 85% of pastors report that their biggest problem is dealing with obstinate leaders.
- 90% of pastors said the hardest thing about ministry is uncooperative people.
- 70% of pastors are grossly underpaid.
- 80% of pastors' wives feel unappreciated by the congregation.
- 90% of pastors said ministry was completely different then expected.

1

Anger and Anxiety
are symptoms of a deeper problem.



Anger & anxiety
can reflect
a commitment
to a false
messianic hope.

2

SPIRITUAL AUDIT

- ✓ How do you understand anger and / or anxiety in your ministry?
- ✓ How much of your personal sense of worth is attached to the fruitfulness of your work?
- ✓ What do you talk about with other pastors and with God?
- ✓ To what extent are you a testimony of “shalom?”

3

Pastoral Stress *can come from*
making an idol of ministry.

- ✓ **Focus on the Kingdom,** not the King.
- ✓ **Unrealistic expectations** of God, ourselves, and others.
- ✓ **A toxic church culture** that is narcissistic, pragmatic, and punitive.



**“Too many Christians
Worship at work
Work at play
and
Play at worship.”**

4

Messianic Idolatry
is at the core of all idolatry.

Distinguishing the “Figure Head”
from the “Functional Head.”

- ✓ Where do we find our identity?
- ✓ What directs our major decisions?
- ✓ What gives us hope?
- ✓ To what do we make sacrifices?
- ✓ **What makes us feel alive?**

Whatever makes me feel alive is my
“**FUNCTIONAL MESSIAH**”



✓ People



✓ Money



✓ Status



✓ Pleasure

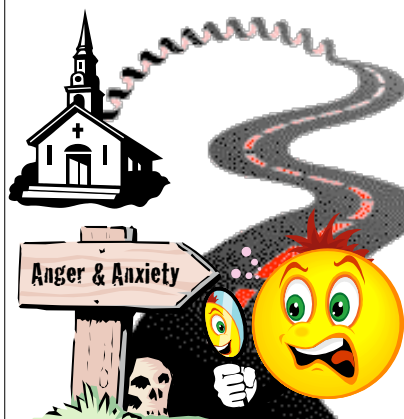


✓ Ministry



5

Ministry can be a golden calf.



Our anger and
anxiety are often
related to our
posture toward
our ministry.

This should be
no surprise.

6

Worldliness is a mindset.

Ephesians 4:17

“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord,
that you must no longer **live** as the Gentiles do,
in the futility of their thinking.”

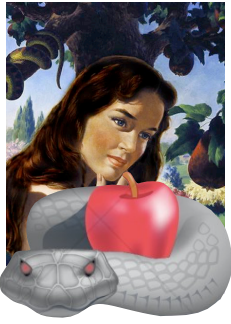
1 Peter 1

“¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed
to the former **lusts which were yours in**
your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who
called you, be holy yourselves also **in all**
your behavior;”

The father of lies
wants us to find
hope in anything
and everything but
Jesus.



**The greatest lies we tell
are the ones we tell to
ourselves.**



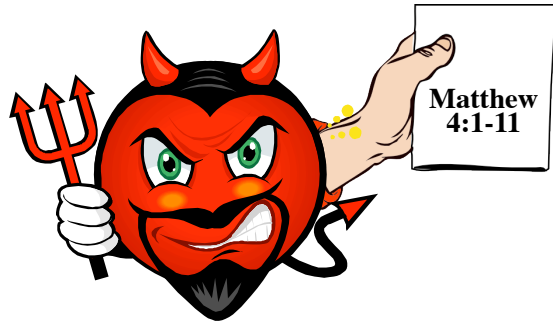
Genesis 3:6

“When the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was **desirable to make one wise**, she **took from its fruit and ate;**”

Misplaced faith, hope, & love with their false expectations are at the heart of Satan’s strategy to defile us.

7

Lifting pages from Satan’s play book



“Lifting pages from Satan’s Play Book”
(We are not unaware of his schemes)

Session #1 Matthew 4:1-11

False expectations and the pain, stress, and depression that go with them.

Session #2 Matthew 4:1-4

When the “Bread of Life” tastes stale

Session #3 Matthew 4:5-7

When the promises of God seem false

Session #4 Matthew 4:8-10

When the fruit of ministry dries up

Session #5 Matthew 4:11

Allowing God to minister to us so He can minister through us

Observations of Matthew 4:1-11

- ✓ The temptation has nothing to do with any of the traditional “**obvious sins**.”
- ✓ The temptation focuses on the “**means**” as the ends.
- ✓ The temptation focuses on the “**abuse of power**.”
- ✓ The temptation appeals to the **authenticity of the man of God**.
- ✓ The temptation focuses on **false hope** or “misplaced expectations.”
- ✓ The temptation is to embrace the Kingdom **without the King**.
- ✓ Jesus seems to **immediately understand** the threat and the needed response.

8

TAKE HOME POINTS

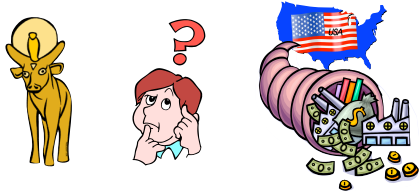
- ✓ Stress is about **misplaced hope**.
- ✓ Misplaced hope is **Satan’s most effective tool**.
- ✓ Anything but Jesus makes a **lousy Messiah**.

PRAY

**that we would
identify and discard
the lies we tell to
ourselves.**

The Old Testament Prophets were most concerned about one particular sin

IDOLATRY



If we do not recognize the idols
we can not destroy them.

Easter is the drama of two different hopes



Palm Sunday's
hope for a
physical utopia



Easter Sunday's
hope for a
spiritual rest

Good Friday



Ended
one

Initiated
the other

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Matthew 4

"¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' ⁴ But He answered and said, 'It is written, '*Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*'"

Jesus had real, personal, physical
needs.

Jesus had power and freedom
to meet those needs.

What was the temptation?

1

The temptation was
to exercise a sense of

entitlement

with respect to this life.



Luke 15

"the parable of the Prodigal Son"



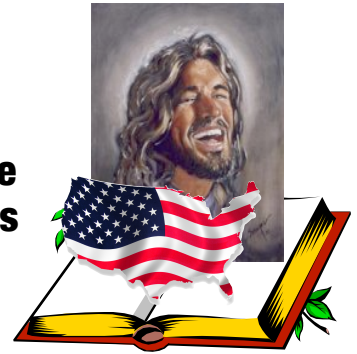
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SPIRITUAL AUDIT

- ✓ How do you interpret feelings of jealousy, or fear of losing your position or possessions?
- ✓ How often do you covet the position, recognition, or blessing, of others?
- ✓ How have you responded when you have lost something in your ministry?
- ✓ Would you be willing to be under-employed, misunderstood, and abused if that is what faithfulness involved? (like Jesus)

3

Our culture loves Jesus as a means to the good life not as the ends of that life.



Jesus
“Chaplain of the American dream”

The American dream is all about this life!



4



Jesus modeled the “abundant life” as did Paul.

5

Matthew 6

“¹⁹ Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; ²¹ for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

If it can rust or be stolen it is an earthly treasure.

Don’t lay up for yourself anything that can be taken from you.



6

Levels of human hope

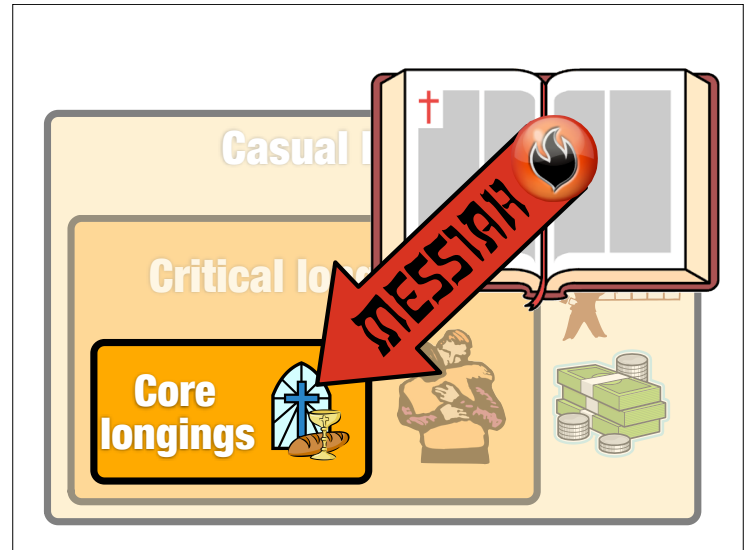
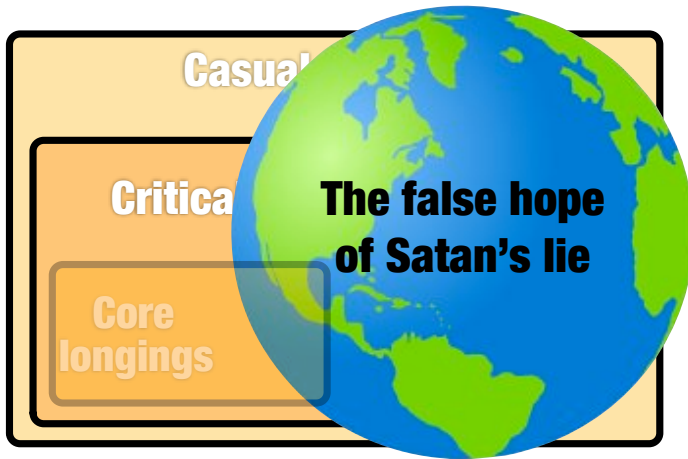
Casual longings

Critical longings

Core longings



A false messiah's focus.



7

TAKE HOME POINTS

- ✓ Keep the bread in its **proper place**.
- ✓ Never confuse the **tools** with the treasure.
- ✓ Find your life **outside** your stuff, your ministry, your family, your position.

PRAY

that we would all
hunger for the true
bread of life.

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(We are not unaware of his schemes)

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Matthew 4

"⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, '*He will give His angels charge concerning You*'; and '*On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.*'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, '*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*'"

Jesus was challenged to use his power to authenticate himself.

The authority of the Word does not insure the wisdom of its use.

What is the nature of this temptation?

1

The temptation was
to exercise a sense of

presumption
with respect to our
authority.

Acts 18
“Paul’s thorn in the flesh”

2

**We are called to
share Christ’s suffering
in this life**

**so that we will
share his glory
in the next.**

3

*Common mistakes we can make in facing
hardships*

#1

**Being surprised
that bad things
happen to good
Christians**



*Common mistakes we can make in facing
hardships*

#2

**Demanding an
explanation for all
suffering**



“it’s the
Devil”



“it’s all
my fault”



“it’s all
your fault”



“it’s
God’s will”



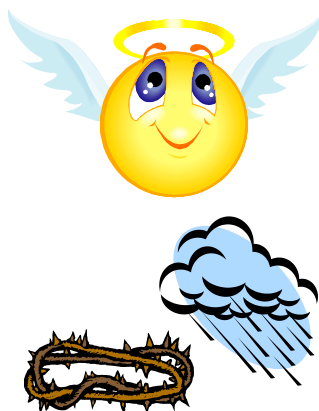
“it’s God trying
to tell me something”



*Common mistakes we can make in facing
hardships*

#3

**Expecting an
escape from
rather than a
way through
suffering.**



*Common mistakes we can make in facing
hardships*

#4

**Failing to see the opportunity in
suffering**



- to develop and demonstrate a heavenly hope and perspective

- to know Christ through the fellowship of his suffering

4

This world is the best possible environment to showcase the full range of God's nature.

5

The temptation was to exercise a sense of

presumption
with respect to our
understanding
the promises.

Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child **according to his (own) way** and when he is old he will not depart from it."

2 Chronicles 7

"and **My people** who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal **their land**."

6

THE GOSPEL STORY



7

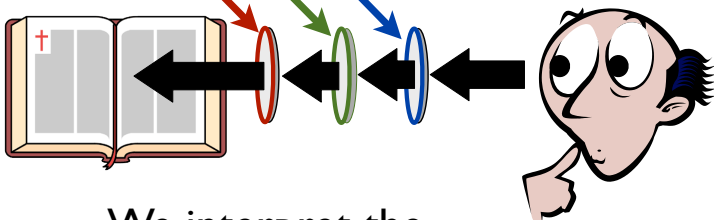
If we misunderstand the purposes of God

we will miss read the promises of God.

Old Testament

Gospels

Epistles



We interpret the Scriptures through lenses.

8

SPIRITUAL AUDIT

- ✓ Do you find yourself confused by, feeling abandoned by, or angry at God for not “coming through” for you?
- ✓ Do you claim promises (from the O.T.) that sound good but were not intended for you?
- ✓ Do you encourage others to be spiritually presumptuous in the name of faith?
- ✓ Can you accept suffering as a gift with special opportunities?

9

TAKE HOME POINTS

- ✓ **Rightly divide** the Word of God.
- ✓ Don't be too quick or confident in **attacking suffering**.
- ✓ Find your identity **outside** your power to call God's plays for him.

PRAY

that we would be wise in our use of Scripture and our response to suffering.

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Matthew 4

“8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'”

The means are a part of the ends in the Kingdom of God.

The world wants the Kingdom but not the King.

What is the temptation here?

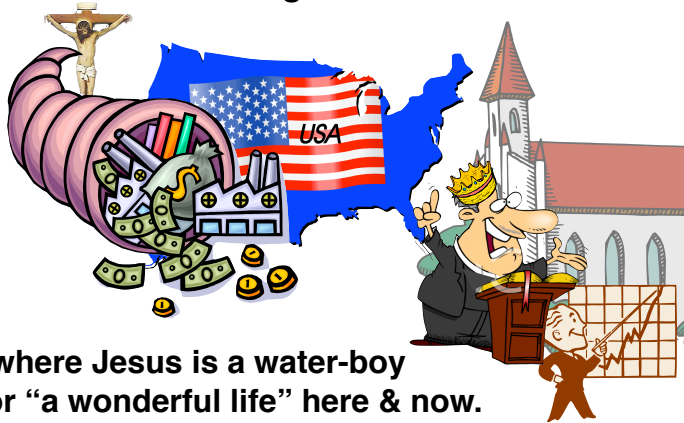
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When the Kingdom supplants the King liberals confuse the Good News with the “secular utopia” -



- where Jesus is a poster-boy for a left wing political agenda.

When the Kingdom supplants the King conservatives confuse the Good News with the “good life.”



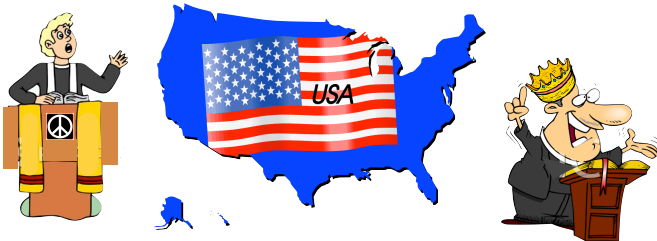
- where Jesus is a water-boy for “a wonderful life” here & now.

Both sides share more in common than they think



- They both are attracted to the Kingdom.
- They both put their hope in this life.
- They both see American culture as key.
- They both see Jesus as a “means.”

The two sides differ in two ways



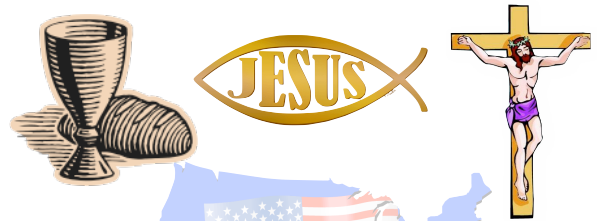
Those on the left put the 2nd commandment ahead of the 1st.

Those on the left see freedom from all restraints as the key to being human.

Those on the right act as though the 1st commandment does not come with a 2nd.

Those on the right see bearing God’s image as the essence of being human.

When the King and his Kingdom are understood and embraced -



- our hope and focus changes from “heaven on earth” to knowing Christ and “the fellowship of his suffering” now, so that we might reign with him later.

2

When the Kingdom (not the King) sustains our soul we end up with -



A pity party or A pride parade

3

Responding to personal disappointment

- ✓ The opportunity for self audit.
- ✓ The opportunity to understand others.
- ✓ The opportunity to share the suffering of Christ.
- ✓ The opportunity to develop character.
- ✓ The opportunity to demonstrate character.

4 SPIRITUAL AUDIT

- ✓ Are you giving more attention to the Kingdom than the King?
- ✓ Do you lead or drive others to unrealistic expectations?
- ✓ Is your security based more on what Christ does through you than what Christ has done for you?
- ✓ Are you looking for some new key or “secrete” to growing your church?

5 TAKE HOME POINTS

- ✓ Don't get the **Kingdom** ahead of the **King**.
- ✓ The **means** of ministry is a part of the **ends** of ministry.
- ✓ **Faithfulness** is our responsibility, **fruitfulness** is God's responsibility.

PRAY

that we will find the
Kingdom and the
King to be
inseparable.

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1

Matthew 4

“¹¹ Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.”

How did Jesus get Satan off his back?

- 1) He understood spiritual warfare as a mindset of assumptions & expectations.
- 2) He won (or lost) the war long before he faced the temptations.

How did angels minister to Jesus?

- 1) Comfort and assurance
- 2) Isaiah 6 - the glory of God, the power of the Cross, the sanctity of calling, & the challenge of perseverance.

2

Matthew 26

“⁵¹ And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. ⁵³ Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen this way?"”

The ministry of angels (messengers):

- 1) Helping us see beyond the temporal circumstances to God's bigger purpose.
- 2) Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12), Joseph's captivity in Egypt (Gen.50:20)

3

Satan does not mind
that we “work hard
in ministry”

so long as we allow him to

- 1) **misplace our hopes**
and
- 2) **keep God from ministering to us.**

4

**The main thing
is to keep the main thing
the main thing.**

Its not about me.
Its not about the church.
Its not about the Kingdom.
Its about the King.

5,6

THE BATTLEFIELDS OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- ✓ Expectations about what makes life worth living.
- ✓ Expectations about God’s timing and His promises.
- ✓ Expectations about the expansion of God’s Kingdom.

SATAN’S STRATEGY

- Confusing the Good News and the good life Jesus is
the **poster-boy for the American dream**
- Confusing God’s priorities & timing with ours
Jesus is the **water-boy at our commands**
- Confusing God’s means and ends
Jesus is the **figurehead of his Kingdom**