

“You Are Your Brother’s Keeper”

Hebrews 12:15-17

June 23, 2019

VIDEO: *“Real Church Growth”*

INTRO: That’s a biblical portrait of real-church life/growth!

- How do you suppose that all happens?
- Whose doing the nurturing, coaching, etc.?
- Where do you fit in that video (and the Church)?
- Today we’re going to answer those questions!

CONTEXT:

- Hebrews: *“Hold On”* sermon series
- Supremacy of Christ! (**read 1:1-3**)
- **5 structural warnings...**
- In exhortation/warning #4

BIG IDEA: **You ARE your brother’s keeper!**

PREVIEW:

- Whose who?
- See to it...
- For you know...

TEXT:

Hebrews 12:15-17 (ESV)

See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; ¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

T/S: You will see today that vv.15-17 illustrate & apply v.14

I. Whose Who?

- A. “See to it”. = all **professing** church!
- i. Gk. Word for “overseer” at root
 - ii. Applies to ALL true Christians

Hebrews 10:24-27 (ESV)

²⁴ And let us consider how to **stir up** one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. ²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

Hebrews 10:39 (ESV)

³⁹ But we are not of those who **shrink back** and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

⁶ And **without faith it is impossible** to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 12:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also **lay aside** every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ **Consider him** who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. ⁴ In your **struggle against sin** you have **not yet resisted** to the point of shedding your blood.

Hebrews 12:7-14 (ESV)

⁷ It is for discipline that **you have to endure**. God is treating you as sons... ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those **who have been trained** by it.

¹² Therefore **lift** your drooping hands and **strengthen** your weak knees, ¹³ and **make straight paths** for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

¹⁴ **Strive for** peace **with everyone**, and for the holiness **without which no one** will see the Lord.

- B. *“...that no one”* = all **possible** Church!
 - i. *“Strive for peace with all men...”*
 - ii. BE the *“good Samaritan”* to all...
 - iii. See the **5 Great C’s** in application...

II. See To It...

- A. *“that no one...”* (cf. John 20:21 & Acts 1:8)
 - i. **Remember:** This is YOUR job!
 - ii. *“fails to obtain” = falls away from*
 - iii. *“the grace of God”*
 - 1. God’s **calling** (personal)
 - 2. God’s **commissioning** (missional)
 - 3. God’s **church-family** (global)
 - 4. God’s **koinonia** (local)
 - 5. God’s **Christ** (eternal)

- B. *“that no root of bitterness springs up”*

Deuteronomy 29:18

Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit,

- i. *“root of bitterness springs up”*
 - 1. Protective shepherds **gardening**
 - 2. Preventative sheep-dogs...
 - 3. Proactive sheep

- ii. *“root of bitterness causes trouble”*
 - 1. Protective shepherds... **weeding**
 - 2. Preventative sheep-dogs...
 - 3. Proactive sheep

“Beware the wolves & koinonia killers!” - JDP

- iii. *“root of bitterness defiles many”*
 - 1. Protective shepherds... **purging**
 - 2. Preventative sheep-dogs...
 - 3. Proactive sheep

“Watch out! The deceptive & destructive, divisive-defilers tend to cause others to grumble, stumble, and rumble with them... all against the faith-filled & faithful family of God. Beware these cancerous goats and cunning wolves in sheep’s clothing.” - JDP

- C. *“that no one...”*
 - i. *“is sexually immoral”*
 - ii. *“is unholy/profane”* = any & all sin
 - iii. *“is like Esau”* = see below...

III. For You Know...

- A. People *“like Esau”*
 - a. They’re short-sighted sell-outs
 - b. They waffle vs. worship
 - c. They take grace for granted
 - d. They miss the mission
 - e. Their tears/fears = self absorbed

- B. Christ-likeness is both divine & direct
 - a. Old Testament
 - 1. Noah
 - 2. Esau
 - b. New Testament
 - 1. Judas
 - 2. Demas
 - c. Jesus directly:
 - 1. Pharisees
 - 2. Temple-clearing
 - 3. The Rich Young Ruler
 - 4. Parable of the Talents...
 - 5. 7 letters to 7 churches...

VIDEO: *“Normal Church”*

- C. One day will be... **one day too late!**

If you (or a person in your life) were going to meet Jesus for judgement in two days, what would your tomorrow look like?

Live THAT tomorrow today & EVERY day! -JDP

CLOSE:

Dear Church...

I urge you to trust these truths & “therefores” from God’s Word...

Accept the privileges AND responsibilities of BE-ing the FAMILY of God!

See once again the God’s family portrait in:

- John 17:21ff
- Acts 2:41-47 (koinonia & homothoomadon)
- Galatians 6:2
- 1 Thessalonians 2:8
- ALL the “one another” passages

See once again the simple & scriptural beauty of our BRIDGE-family, missional manifesto:



One FAITH. One FAMILY. One FOCUS.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will BE My witnesses (locally, regionally, and globally).” – Acts 1:8

One Question: WHAT DO YOU WANT?

One Offer: COME AND SEE.

One Promise: TRUTH IN LOVE!

Our Truth-in-Love Distinctives: We are...

- 1.** Responding to grace & repenting of sin...
- 2.** Trusting the Bible & obeying God's Word...
- 3.** Growing in-Christ & living Spirit-led...
- 4.** Praying for guidance & following by faith...
- 5.** Dying to self & carrying our cross...
- 6.** BE-ing the Church & loving one another...(*truly* loving one another)
- 7.** Equipping the saints & exemplifying supernatural unity...
- 8.** Ministering as ambassadors & discerning matters shrewdly...
- 9.** Worshipping God vertically & experiencing Him horizontally...
- 10.** Proclaiming the Gospel (*no matter what*) & fishing for men...
- 11.** Making disciples-warriors & winning spiritual-warfare...
- 12.** Loving our King & serving His kingdom!

May we BE your people AND our brother's keeper!

Let's PRAY!

Hebrews 12:15-17 (ESV)

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CONTEXT:

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² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

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later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those **who have been trained** by it.

12 Therefore **lift** your drooping hands and **strengthen** your weak knees, 13 and **make straight paths** for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

14 **Strive for** peace with everyone, and for the holiness **without which no one** will see the Lord.

ROOT The part of a plant buried in and gaining nourishment through the ground. In Scripture root generally appears in a figurative sense. Root indicates source as when the unrighteous are pictured as a root bearing bitter and poisonous fruit ([Deut. 29:18](#); [Heb. 12:15](#)) or when the love of money is described as the root of all kinds of evil ([1 Tim. 6:10](#)). Deep-sinking roots picture stability ([Ps. 80:9](#); [Prov. 12:3](#)) and prosperity ([Prov. 12:12](#); compare [Ps. 1:3](#)). Exile is termed being uprooted ([1 Kings 14:15](#); [Jer. 24:6](#)), while taking root again pictures return from Exile and the renewal of God's blessing ([2 Kings 19:30](#); [Isa. 27:6](#); [37:31](#)).

Deuteronomy 29:18

Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit,

Seed that fails to take root pictures those whose commitment to Christ is not firm enough to withstand trouble or persecution ([Matt. 13:6,21](#)). To be rooted in Christ is to be established in faith ([Col. 2:6](#)). Root of Jesse ([Isa. 11:10](#); [Rom. 15:12](#)) and root of David ([Rev. 5:5](#); [22:16](#)) serve as titles of the Messiah. In Paul's allegory of the grape vine Israel is the root of the plant, the church the branches ([Rom. 11:16-18](#)).

- **Holman Bible Dictionary.**

1983. episkopeó

Strong's Concordance

episkopeó: to look upon, fig. to care for

Original Word: ἐπισκοπέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: episkopeó

Phonetic Spelling: (ep-ee-skop-eh'-o)

Definition: to look upon, to care for

Usage: I exercise oversight, care for, visit.

HELPS Word-studies

1983 *episkopéō* (from [1909](#) /*epí*, "on, fitting," intensifying [4648](#) /*skopéō*, "look intently") – properly, focus on, look at with real (caring) interest. The prefix (*epi*) implies "looking with *fitting, apt* concern," a looking *on* that requires what that naturally leads to.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from [epi](#) and [skopeó](#)

Definition

to look upon, fig. to care for

NASB Translation

oversight (1), see (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1983: ἐπισκοπέω

ἐπισκοπέω, ἐπισκόπω; **to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for:** spoken of the care of the church which rested upon the presbyters, [1 Peter 5:2](#) (TWH omit) (with τήν ἐκκλησίαν added, Ignatius ad Rom. 9, 1 [ET]); followed by μή (which see II. 1 a.) equivalent to Latincaveo, **to look carefully, beware:** [Hebrews 12:15](#). (Often by Greek writings from Aeschylus down.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

look diligently, take the oversight.

From [epi](#) and [skopeo](#); to oversee; by implication, to beware -- look diligently, take the oversight.

see GREEK [epi](#)

see GREEK [skopeo](#)

5302. hustereó

Strong's Concordance

hustereó: to come late, be behind, come short

Original Word: ὑστερέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: hustereó

Phonetic Spelling: (hoos-ter-eh'-o)

Definition: to come late, be behind, come short

Usage: I fall behind, am lacking, fall short, suffer need, am inferior to.

HELPS Word-studies

5302 *hysteréō* (from [5306](#) /*hýsteros*, "last") – properly, at "the end," i.e. coming behind (to "be posterior, late"); (figuratively) coming *behind and therefore left out*; left wanting (falling short).

[5302](#) /*hysteréō* ("failing to fulfill a goal") means to be *in lack* and hence, unable to meet the need at hand *because depleted* ("all run out"). This *state of lack*(insufficiency, privation) naturally results when a person *misses out on what is vital*.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from [husteros](#)

Definition

to come late, be behind, come short

NASB Translation

am...lacking (1), come short (1), comes short (1), destitute (1), fall short (1), impoverished (1), inferior (2), lack (2), lacked (1), lacking (1), need (1), ran (1), suffering need (1), worse (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 5302: ὑστερέω

ὑστερέω, ὑστερῶ; 1 aorist ὑστέρησα; perfect ὑστέρηκα; passive, present ὑστεροῦμαι; 1 aorist participle ὑστερηθεῖς; (ὑστερος);

1. Active, "to be ὑστερος i. e. behind; i. e.

a. to come late or too tardily" (so in secular authors from Herodotus down): [Hebrews 4:1](#); **to be left behind in the race** and so fail to reach the goal, to fall short of the end; with ἀπό and the genitive indicating the end, metaphorically, **fail to become a partaker**: ἀπό τῆς χάριτος, [Hebrews 12:15](#) (others render here **fall back** (i. e. away) **from**; cf. Winers Grammar, § 30, 6 b.; Buttmann, 322f (276f) cf. § 132, 5) ([Ecclesiastes 6:2](#)).

b. **to be inferior**, in power, influence, rank, [1 Corinthians](#)

[12:24](#) (where L T Tr WH passive, ὑστεροῦμένω); in virtue, τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ; in what am I still deficient (A. V. **what lack I yet** (cf. Buttmann, § 131, 10)), [Matthew 19:20](#) (Sir.

51:24; ἵνα γινῶ τί ὑστερῶ ἐγώ, [Psalm](#)

[38:5](#) (); μηδ' ἐν ἄλλω μηδενί μέρει ἀρετῆς ὑστερουντας, Plato, de rep. 6, p. 484

d.); **μηδέν** or **οὐδέν** followed by a genitive (depending on the idea of comparison contained in the verb (Buttmann, § 132, 22)) of the person, **to be inferior to** (A. V. **to be behind**) **another in nothing**, [2 Corinthians 11:5](#); [2 Corinthians 12:11](#).

c. **to fail, be lacking** (Dioscorides (?) 5, 86): [John 2:3](#) (not Tdf.); **ἐν σοι** (T WH Trmarginal reading **σε** (cf. Buttmann, as above)) **ὕστερῃ**, [Mark 10:21](#).

d. **to be in want of, lack**: with a genitive of the thing (Winer's Grammar, § 30, 6), [Luke 22:35](#) (Josephus, Antiquities 2, 2, 1).

2. Passive **to suffer want** (Winer's Grammar, 260 (244)): [Luke 15:14](#); [2 Corinthians 11:9](#) (8); [Hebrews 11:37](#) (Sir. 11:11); opposed to **περισσεύειν**, to abound, [Philippians 4:12](#); **τίνος**, **to be devoid** (R. V. **fall short**) **of**, [Romans 3:23](#) (Diodorus 18, 71; Josephus, Antiquities 15, 6, 7); **ἐν τίνι**, to suffer want in any respect, [1 Corinthians 1:7](#), opposed to **πλουτίζεσθαι ἐν τίνι**, [1 Corinthians 1:5](#); **to lack** (be inferior) **in excellence, worth**, opposed to **περισσεύειν** (A. V. **to be the worse ... the better**), [1 Corinthians 8:8](#). (Compare: **ἀφυστερῶ**.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

to lack, need

From [husteros](#); to be later, i.e. (by implication) to be inferior; generally, to fall short (be deficient) -- come behind (short), be destitute, fail, lack, suffer need, (be in) want, be the worse.

see GREEK [husteros](#)

1776. enochleó

Strong's Concordance

enochleó: to crowd in, i.e. to annoy

Original Word: ἐνοχλέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: enochleó

Phonetic Spelling: (en-okh-leh'-o)

Definition: to crowd in, to annoy

Usage: I disturb, cause tumult, trouble, annoy.

HELPS Word-studies

1776 *enoxléō* (from [1722](#) /*en*, "in," which intensifies [3791](#) /*oxléō*, "to mob") – properly, *in* (amongst) a tumultuous crowd (mob); (figuratively) to vex someone, as with the force of a raging *mob* (a mighty momentum) to carry someone along.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from [en](#) and [ochleó](#)

Definition

to crowd in, i.e. to annoy

NASB Translation

causes trouble (1), troubled (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1776: ἐνοχλέω

ἐνοχλέω, ἐνόχλω; (present passive participle ἐνοχλουμενος); (ὀχλέω, from ὄχλος a crowd, annoyance); in the classics from Aristophanes, Xenophon, Platoon; to excite disturbance, to trouble, annoy, (ἐν, in a person); in Greek writings followed by both τινά and τίνι; passive with ἀπό τίνος, [Luke 6:18](#) T Tr WH; absolutely of the growth of a poisonous plant, figuratively representing the man who corrupts the faith, piety, character, of the Christian church: [Hebrews 12:15](#) from [Deuteronomy 29:18](#) after manuscript Alex. which gives ἐνοχλή for ἐνχολή, which agreeably to the Hebrew text is the reading of Vat. ([Genesis 48:1](#); [1 Samuel 19:14](#), etc.) (Compare: παρενοχλέω.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

trouble.

From [en](#) and [ochleo](#); to crowd in, i.e. (figuratively) to annoy -- trouble.

see GREEK [en](#)

see GREEK [ochleo](#)

3392. miainó

Strong's Concordance

miainó: to stain, defile

Original Word: μιαίνω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: miainó

Phonetic Spelling: (me-ah'-ee-no)

Definition: to stain, defile

Usage: I stain, pollute, defile, corrupt.

HELPS Word-studies

3392 *miainō* – properly, to *stain* (with paint or dye); (figuratively) to *stain* (defile) the soul, i.e. like when sin taints by its polluting effects ("moral, spiritual stains").

The root *mia-* ("tainted at the *source*") shows everything *passing through it also becomes stained* ("reconstituted," *polluted*).

[[3392](#) (*miainō*) literally means "to dye, stain with color." Figuratively, it refers to rendering something morally (spiritually) defiled.]

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. verb

Definition

to stain, defile

NASB Translation

defile (1), defiled (4).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3392: μιαίνω

μιαίνω; passive, 1 aorist subjunctive 3 person plural **μιαίνωσιν**; perfect 3 person singular **μεμίανται** (unless it be better to take this form as a plural; cf. Krüger, § 33, 3 Anm. 9; Alexander Buttman (1873) Gram. § 101 Anm. 7; Ausf. Spr. § 101 Anm. 13; Buttman, 41 (36); (Winer's Grammar, § 58, 6 b. β.)), participle **μεμιασμενος** ([Titus 1:15](#) R G) and **μειαμμενος** (ibid. L T Tr WH; also Wis. 7:25; Tobit 2:9; Josephus, b. j. 4, 5, 2 edition, Bekker; cf. Matthiae, i., p. 415; Krüger, § 40, under the word; Lob. ad Phryn., p. 35; Otto on Theophil. ad Autol. 1, 1, p. 2f; (Veitch, under the word)); from Homer down;

1. to dye with another color, to stain: **ἐλέφαντα φοίνικι**, Homer Iliad 4, 141.

2. to defile, pollute, sully, contaminate, soil (the Sept. often for נִחַשׁ): in a physical and a moral sense, **σάρκα** (of licentiousness), [Jude 1:8](#); in a moral sense, **τόν συνείδησιν, τόν νοῦν**, passive [Titus 1:15](#); absolutely, **to defile with sin**, passive ibid. and in [Hebrews 12:15](#); for נִחַשׁוּהֶם, [Deuteronomy 24:6](#)(4); in a ritual sense, of men, passive [John 18:28](#) ([Leviticus 22:5](#),

8; [Numbers 19:13, 20](#); Tobit 2:9). [SYNONYMS: **μιαίνω, μολύνω**: according to Trench (N. T. Synonyms, § xxxi.) **μιαίνω to stain** differs from **μολύνω to smear** not only in its primary and outward sense, but in the circumstance that (like English **stain**) it may be used in good part, while **μολύνω** admits of no worthy reference.]

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

defile.

Perhaps a primary verb; to sully or taint, i.e. Contaminate (ceremonially or morally) -- defile.

“...I wonder why being **overwhelmed** for others in need has been uncommon for me. I think of all the church services I’ve been in week after week, year after year, talking and hearing about the needs of people all over the world. I think of all the sermons I’ve preached about serving those in need. I even think about the books I’ve written, including RADICAL – for crying out loud – a book about laying down our lives, in love for Christ and the world around us. So why has it been rare for me to be so moved by the needs of others that I have fallen on my face before God and wept?

I don’t think this question is just for me. When I think of all those church services, I recall very few instances when other Christians and I have wept together for people who were missing water, food, family, freedom, or hope. Why is a scene like that so uncommon among us?

It makes me wonder if we’ve lost our capacity to weep. It makes me wonder if we have subtly, dangerously, and almost

unknowingly guarded our lives, our families, and even our churches from truly being affected by God's words to us in a world of urgent spiritual and physical needs around us. We talk a lot about the need to KNOW what we believe in our heads, yet I wonder if we have forgotten to FEEL what we believe in our hearts. How else are we to explain our ability to sit in services where we sing songs and hear sermons celebrating how Jesus is the hope of the world, yet rarely (if ever) fall on our faces weeping for those who don't have this hope and then take action to make this hope known to them?

Why today do we seem to be so far from the way(s) of Jesus? ...why are those of us who carry his Spirit not moved and compelled in the same way? Surely God didn't design the gospel of Jesus to be confined to our minds and mouths in the church, yet disconnected from our emotions and actions in the world.

SURELY, SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE.

But how? When I found myself face first on the floor (praying), it wasn't because I heard a new fact about suffering in the world or even made a new discovery in God's Word.... Somehow, staring at statistics on poverty and even studying the Bible had left my soul unscathed. But when I came face to face with men, women, and children in urgent spiritual and physical need, the wall in my heart was breached. And I wept.

Clearly, the change we need won't happen simply by our seeing more facts or listening to more sermons (or even preaching them, for that matter). What we need is not an explanation of the Word and the world, putting more

information in our heads; we need an experience with the Word IN-THE-WORLD that penetrates the recesses of our hearts. We need to dare to come face to face with desperate need in the world around us and ask God to do a work deep within us that we could never manufacture, manipulate, or make happen on our own...

I don't think we need more exposition and explanation. I think we need an experience – an encounter that takes exposed and explained truth to a deeper level in our hearts than it would ever go otherwise.

- **Dr. David Platt**

The most crucial question for the human race is this, what are the distinguishing marks of the people who enjoy God's favor, *those who are on their way to heaven?*

So much good and so much bad are mixed up in the church!

This mixture of false religion with true religion has been Satan's greatest weapon against the cause of Christ. This is why we must learn to distinguish between true and false religion, between emotions and experiences which really come from salvation, and imitations which are outwardly attractive and plausible, but false.

They destroy Christianity far more effectively than outright enemies can do, under the illusion that they are advancing it.

When false religion passes for true religion, the minds of Christians become unsettled. Many doubt whether there is anything real in Christianity at all.

How great the resemblance can be, then, between a false and true Christian!

The right way is neither to reject all emotions, nor to approve all, but to distinguish between them. We should approve some, and reject others. We must separate between the wheat and the weeds.

- Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edward's 14 signatures of the Holy Spirit:

1. True spiritual emotions arise from spiritual, supernatural, & divine influences on the heart.

The Holy Spirit within Christians produces results which are in harmony with the Spirit's own true nature.

The effects which the Holy Spirit produces in true Christians are different from anything men can produce by natural human powers. True spiritual emotions arise from supernatural influences.

2. The object of spiritual emotion is the loveliness of spiritual things, not our self interest.

Men may love a God of their own imaginations, when they have no love at all for the One true God!

Anything is lovely to a selfish person... if it advances his or her self-interest.

In all the joys of false Christians, their eyes are on themselves. Their minds are occupied with their own experiences, not the glory of God or the beauty of Christ.

3. Spiritual emotions are based on the moral excellence of spiritual things.

What a true Christian loves about spiritual things is their holiness. He or she loves God for the beauty of God's holiness.

It is holiness that makes qualities lovely.

4. Spiritual emotions arise out of spiritual understanding.

We need to understand Scripture intellectually, and taste the holy beauty of that meaning with our hearts.

Spiritual understanding sees what is actually in Scripture; it does not make a new meaning for it!

The true spiritual meaning of Scripture is the meaning it originally had when the Spirit first inspired it.

5. Spiritual emotions bring a conviction of the reality of divine things.

A person can only see and feel the desperate depravity of his own heart, if the Holy Spirit gives him the ability to taste the sweetness of holiness and the bitterness of sin.

6. Spiritual emotions always exist alongside spiritual humiliation.

Dear reader, be careful, lest you become proud of your humility! Examine yourself...

7. Spiritual emotions always exist alongside a change of nature.

***The converted person becomes
the enemy of sin.***

***A person who says he has
experienced conversion, but
whose religious emotions soon
die away, has his actions speak
against him much louder than
any religious experiences or
claims may speak for him.***

8. True spiritual emotions differ from false ones, in promoting a Christ-like spirit of love, humility, peace, forgiveness and compassion.

All real Disciples of Christ have this spirit in them.

***Scripture is quite clear about the
absolute necessity of forgiveness,
love, and mercy, as qualities in the
character of every Christian.***

9. True spiritual emotions soften the heart, and exist alongside a Christian tenderness of spirit.

***False emotions may seem to melt the
heart for a time, but in the end they
harden it.***

Such people do not accept Christ as their Savior FROM sin. They trust in him as the savior OF their sins!

They think Christ will allow them the quiet enjoyment of their sins..., and protect them from God's displeasure.

(Jude 4 & Ezekiel 33:13)

10. True spiritual emotions, unlike false ones, have a beautiful symmetry and balance.

A Christian's love must be universal!

Christ's compassion for the people's souls moved him to teach them, and his compassion for their bodies moved him to feed them.

11. True spiritual emotions produce a longing for deeper holiness, but false emotions rest satisfied in themselves.

The more a true Christian hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and grieves that he still loves it so much.

The best sign is a longing for a holier heart and a holier life.

12. The fruit of true spiritual emotions is Christian practice.

Christian practice means 3 things:

- A. The true Christian directs all aspects of his behavior by Christian rules.
- B. He makes holy living the main concern of his life.
- C. Perseveres to the end.

This commitment to total obedience does not mean a mere negative avoidance of evil practices. It also means positively obeying God's commands.

The sign of the genuine Christian is that he perseveres through these problems and difficulties, and remains true to Christ.

“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Revelation 2:10)

People have a defective Christianity because they are seeking their own interests and not God's.

Consequently, they accept Christianity only to the extent that they think it serves their interests. A person's private interests may after a time clash with Christianity. So a person who accepts Christianity from selfish motives is liable to abandon it from selfish motives.

Humility before God inspires obedience, just as pride inspires rebellion.

Until the tree is good, the fruit will not be good.

If an unconverted person tries to live a Christian life, it is like throwing a stone upwards. Nature finally prevails, and the stone comes down again.

The softened heart & tender spirit of the true Christian make him painfully sensitive to sin, creating a profound influence & impact on the way he lives his life.

Christian practice is the most important of all the marks and signs of conversion, both to the believer and to others.

13. Christian practice is the chief sign to others of a convert's sincerity.

Words are cheap.

It is by costly, self-denying, Christian-practice that we show the reality of our faith.

We cannot be certain how far an unconverted person can go in an outward appearance of Christianity.

14. Christian practice is a sure sign of conversion to a person's own conscience.

This is clear from 1 John 2:3... by this we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

John says we can have assurance of salvation if our consciences testify to our good works. See also 1 John 3:18 and 19. Paul also tells the Galatians to examine their own behavior in Galatians 6 verse 4. Moreover, **when Christ says, by their fruits you will know them, this is in the 1st place a rule for judging others, but Christ also wants us to judge ourselves by this rule, as the next verse makes clear.** Listen to Matthew 6 verse 21: “not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father in heaven.”

The Christian has to judge his own practice, not just by what he does outwardly with his body, but by the inward motives of his soul.

Holy motives produce an obedient lifestyle.

Christian practice includes both the inward motives and the outward actions!

Our practical obedience perfects our love for God.

Christian practice perfects faith and love.

If we ignore God's clear emphasis on Christian practice, and stress other things as tests of sincerity, we are on our way to delusion and hypocrisy.

The evidence on which the Judge will accept or reject us will be our practice!

BRIDGE Manifesto!!!

vv.12-13 = Continuance

>>> Quoting Isaiah 35:1-4 <<<

>>> Hebrews 10:24-25 = Provoke

v.14 = Diligence

>>> Practice what you preach

>>> Love God = Holiness

>>> Love people > Peace with all

>>> Worship, Walk, Work, War, wit

>>> Colossians 1:27 / Great C's

>>> Galatians 4:16

vv.15-17 = Vigilance

>>> Overseer

>>> Fail = fall back/away

>>> Root of bitterness (Dt 29:18)

~ Apostates spread

>>> Profane Esau

- ~ Tragically sad...
- ~ No do-over
- ~ Too late
- ~ Tears don't mean anything

Lest any root, etc. I doubt not but that he refers to a passage written by Moses in [Deuteronomy 29:18](#); for after having promulgated the Law, Moses exhorted the people to beware, lest any root germinating should bear gall and wormwood among them. He afterwards explained what he meant, that is, lest any one, felicitating himself in sin, and like the drunken who are wont to excite thirst, stimulating sinful desires, should bring on a contempt of God through the alluring of hope of impunity. The same is what the Apostle speaks of now; for he foretells what will take place, that is, if we suffer such a root to grow, it will corrupt and defile many; he not only bids every one to irradiate such a pest from their hearts, but he also forbids them to allow it to grow among them. It cannot be indeed but that these roots will ever be found in the Church, for hypocrites and the ungodly are always mixed with the good; but when they spring up they ought to be cut down, lest by growing they should choke the good seed.

He mentions bitterness for what Moses calls gall and wormwood; but both meant to express a root that is poisonous and deadly. Since then it is so fatal an evil, with

more earnest effort it behooves us to check it, lest it should rise and creep farther. [257]

- John Calvin

16. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, etc. As he had before exhorted them to holiness, so now, that he might reclaim them from defilements opposed to it, he mentions a particular kind of defilement, and says, "Lest there be any fornicator." But he immediately comes to what is general, and adds, "or a profane person;" for it is the term that is strictly contrary to holiness. The Lord calls us for this end, that he may make us holy unto obedience: this is done when we renounce the world; but any one who so delights in his own filth that he continually rolls in it, profanes himself. We may at the same time regard the profane as meaning generally all those who do not value God's grace so much as to seek it and despise the world. But as men become profane in various ways, the more earnest we ought to strive lest an opening be left for Satan to defile us with his corruptions. And as there is no true religion without holiness, we ought to make progress continually in the fear of God, in the mortifying of the flesh, and in the whole practice of piety; for as we are profane until we separate from the world so if we roll again in its filth we renounce holiness.

As Esau, etc. This example may be viewed as an exposition of the word profane; for when Esau set more value on one meal than on his birthright, he lost his blessing. Profane then are all they in whom the love of the world so reigns and prevails that they forget heaven: as is the case with those who are led away by ambition...

Most appropriate then is this example; for when the Lord designs to set forth the power of that love which he has for his people, he calls all those whom he has called to the hope of eternal life his firstborn. Invaluable indeed is this honor with which he favors us; and all the wealth, all the conveniences, the honors and the pleasures of the world, and everything commonly deemed necessary for happiness, when compared with this honor, are of no more value than a morsel of meat. That we indeed set a high value on things which are nearly worth nothing, arises from this, -- that depraved lust dazzles our eyes and thus blinds us. If therefore we would hold a place in God's sanctuary, we must learn to despise morsels of meat of this kind, by which Satan is wont to catch the reprobate.

[258]

- John Calvin

Barnes N.T. Notes:

He exhorts them to perseverance and fidelity by the fact that if they should become remiss, and renounce their confidence in God, it would be impossible to retrieve what was lost; [Hebrews 12:14-17](#). In illustrating this, he appeals to the case of Esau. For a trifling consideration, when in distress, he parted with an invaluable blessing. When it was gone, it was impossible to recover it. No consideration could induce a change, though he sought it earnestly with tears. So it would be with Christians, if, under the power of temptation, they should renounce their religion, and go back to their former state.

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Looking diligently - This phrase implies close attention. It is implied that there are reasons why we should take special care. Those reasons are found in the propensities of our hearts to evil; in the temptations of the world; in the allurements to apostasy presented by the great adversary of our souls.

Lest any man fail - As every man is in danger, it is his personal duty to see to it that his salvation be secure.

Fail of the grace of God - Margin, "fail from." The Greek is, "lest any one be wanting or lacking" - ὑστερῶν husterōn. There is no intimation in the words used here that they already had grace and might fall away - whatever might he

true about that - but that there was danger that they might be found at last to be deficient in that religion which was necessary to save them. Whether this was to be by losing the religion which they now had, or by the fact that they never had any however near they may have come to it - the apostle does not here intimate, and this passage should not be used in the discussion of the question about failing from grace. It is a proper exhortation to be addressed to any man in the church or out of it, to inquire diligently whether there is not reason to apprehend that when he comes to appear before God he will be found to be wholly destitute of religion.

Lest any root of bitterness springing up - Any bitter root. There is doubtless an allusion here to [Deuteronomy 29:18](#). "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood." The allusion there is to those who were idolaters, and who instead of bearing the fruits of righteousness, and promoting the piety and happiness of the nation, would bear the fruits of idolatry, and spread abroad irreligion and sin. The allusion, in both cases, is to a bitter plant springing up among those that were cultivated for ornament or use, or to a tree bearing bitter and poisonous fruit, among those that produced good fruit. The reference of the apostle is to some person who should produce a similar effect in the church - to one who should inculcate false doctrines; or who should apostatize;

or who should lead an unholy life, and thus be the means of corrupting and destroying others. They were to be at especial pains that no such person should start up from among themselves, or be tolerated by them.

Trouble you - By his doctrines and example.

And thereby many be defiled - Led away from the faith and corrupted. One wicked man, and especially one hypocrite in the church, may be the means of destroying many others.

Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Lest there be any fornicator - The sin here referred to is one of those which would spread corruption in the church, and against which they ought to be especially on their guard. Allusion is made to Esau as an example, who, himself a corrupt and profane man, for a trifle threw away the highest honor which as a son he could have. Many have regarded the word used here as referring to idolatry, or defection from the true religion to a false one - as the word is often used in the Old Testament - but it is more natural to understand it literally. The crime here mentioned was one which abounded everywhere in ancient times, as it does now, and it was important to guard the church against it; see the [Acts 15:20](#) note; [1 Corinthians 6:18](#) note.

Or profane person - The word "profane" here refers to one who by word or conduct treats religion with contempt, or has no reverence for what is sacred. This may be shown by words; by the manner; by a sneer; by neglect of religion; or by openly renouncing the privileges which might be connected with our salvation. The allusion here is to one who should openly cast off all the hopes of religion for indulgence in temporary pleasure, as Esau gave up his birthright for a trifling gratification. In a similar manner, the young, for temporary gratification, neglect or despise all the privileges and hopes resulting from their being born in the bosom of the church; from being baptized and consecrated to God; and from being trained up in the lap of piety.

As Esau - It is clearly implied here that Esau sustained the character of a fornicator and a profane person. The former appellation is probably given to him to denote his licentiousness shown by his marrying many wives, and particularly foreigners, or the daughters of Canaan: see [Genesis 36:2](#); compare [Genesis 26:34-35](#). The Jewish writers abundantly declare that that was his character; see Wetstein, in loc. In proof that the latter appellation - that of a profane person - belonged to him, see [Genesis 25:29-34](#). It is true that it is rather by inference, than by direct assertion, that it is known that he sustained this character. The birth-right, in his circumstances, was a high honor. The promise respecting the inheritance of the land of Canaan, the coming of the Messiah, and the preservation of the true religion, had

been given to Abraham and Isaac, and was to be transmitted by them. As the oldest son, all the honor connected with this, and which is now associated with the name Jacob, would have properly appertained to Esau. But he undervalued it. He lived a licentious life. He followed his corrupt propensities, and gave the reins to indulgence. In a time of temporary distress, also, he showed how little he really valued all this, by bartering it away for a single meal of victuals. Rather than bear the evils of hunger for a short period, and evidently in a manner implying a great undervaluing of the honor which he held as the first-born son in a pious line, he agreed to surrender all the privileges connected with his birth. It was this which made the appellation appropriate to him; and this will make the appellation appropriate in any similar instance.

Who for one morsel of meat - The word "meat" here is used, as it is commonly in the Scriptures, in its primitive sense in English, to denote food: [Genesis 25:34](#). The phrase here, "morsel of meat," would be better rendered by "a single meal."

Sold his birthright - The birth-right seems to have implied the first place or rank in the family; the privilege of offering sacrifice and conducting worship in the absence or death of the father; a double share of the inheritance, and in this instance the honor of being in the line of the patriarchs, and transmitting the promises made to Abraham and Isaac. What Esau parted with, we can easily understand

by reflecting on the honors which have clustered around the name of Jacob.

v.17

Though he sought it carefully with tears - [Genesis 27:34](#). He sought to change the purpose of his father, but could not do it. The meaning and bearing of this passage, as used by the apostle, may be easily understood:

(1) The decision of God on the human character and destiny will soon be pronounced. That decision will be according to truth, and cannot be changed.

(2) if we should despise our privileges as Esau did his birth-right, and renounce our religion, it would be impossible to recover what we had lost. There would be no possibility of changing the divine decision in the case, for it would be determined forever. This passage, therefore, should not be alleged to show that a sinner "cannot repent," or that he cannot find "place for repentance," or assistance to enable him to repent, or that tears and sorrow for sin would be of no avail, for it teaches none of these things; but it should be used to keep us from disregarding our privileges, from turning away from the true religion, from slighting the favors of the gospel, and from neglecting religion until death comes; because when God has once pronounced a sentence excluding us from his favor, no tears, or pleading, or effort of our own can change him. The sentence which he pronounces on the scoffer, the impenitent, the hypocrite, and the apostate, is

one that will abide forever without change. This passage, therefore, is in accordance with the doctrine more than once stated before in this Epistle, that if a Christian should really apostatize it would be impossible that he should be saved; see the notes on [Hebrews 6:1-6](#). - Barnes

JUNE 21

The Satisfaction That Defeats Sin

- Devotional by [John Piper](#)

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." ([John 6:35](#))

What we need to see here is that the essence of faith is *being satisfied with all that God is for us in Christ*.

Defining faith this way emphasizes two things. One is the God-centeredness of faith. It is not merely the promises of God that satisfy us. It is all that God himself is for us in Jesus. Faith embraces God in Christ as our treasure — not just God's promised *gifts*.

Faith banks its hope not just on the real estate of the age to come, but on the fact that God will be there ([Revelation 21:3](#)). "I heard a loud voice from the throne

saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.’”

And even now what faith embraces most earnestly is not just the reality of sins forgiven (as precious as that is), but the presence of the living Christ in our hearts and the fullness of God himself. In [Ephesians 3:17-19](#) Paul prays “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith . . . that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

The other thing emphasized in defining faith as *being satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus* is the term “satisfaction.” Faith is the quenching of the soul’s thirst at the fountain of God. In [John 6:35](#) we see that “believing” means “coming” to Jesus to eat and drink the “bread of life” and the “living water” ([John 4:10](#), [14](#)), which are nothing other than Jesus himself.

Here is the secret of the power of faith to break the enslaving force of sinful attractions. If the heart is satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus, the power of sin to lure us away from the wisdom of Christ is broken.

Devotional excerpted from [The Pleasures of God, pages 235-236](#)

“People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise & call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the lack of discipline, the loss of

self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.” - D.A. Carson

***** Spurgeon ***** *"...the holier a man becomes, the more he mourns over the unholiness which remains in Him."*

"Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it. He depends upon himself for his own security." - JONATHAN EDWARDS

"Jonathan Edwards understood the nature of God's holiness. He perceived that unholy people have much to fear from such a God... Edward's consuming need was to preach about God's holiness; to preach it vividly, emphatically, convincingly, and powerfully. He did this not out of a sadistic delight in frightening people but out of compassion. He loved his congregation enough to warn them of the dreadful consequences of facing the wrath of God. He was not concerned with laying a guilt trip on his people but with awakening them to the peril they faced if they remained unconverted." - R. C. Sproul.

“Faith is not what some people think it is. Their human dream is a delusion... it is a human imagination and idea that never reaches the depths of the heart, and so nothing comes of it... (Genuine) Faith, however, is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1:13)... It changes our hearts, our spirits, our thoughts, and all our powers, and brings with it the Holy Spirit. And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, as it is to separate heat & light from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of idle talkers who think themselves wise enough to define faith and works, and yet are the greatest fools. Pray to God to work faith in you, else you will remain forever without faith... - Martin Luther

INVESTING: (Acts 28:23)

When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about

Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

T/S: Let's look at Christian "investing" through the lens of this text and the paradigm of biblical R.O.I. (return on investment)

R = RECEIVE those who **RESPOND**

When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers.

- See the providence in the appointments
- Paul went... "they came" (Both/And)
- "...in large numbers..."
 - Obedience + Providence = Attendance

O = OVERTIME (over & above standard expectations)

From morning till evening...

- Compare work-ethic & mission-ethic
- See thru the lens of Matthew 28:19...
- Consider the typical "church-continuum"

- *Defy*
- *Ignore*
- *Scraps given to God*
- *Hobby-like*
- *Part-time (a.k.a. “lukewarm”)*
- *Full-time (“it’s like a 40 hr. job”)*
- *Devoted (up to 99.9%)*
- *Dead-to-self... ALL-in!*

QUESTION:

Where does “born again” begin?

ANSWER:

“Dead to self” per **John 3:3**

I = INFORM, INSPECT, INSPIRE

(From morning till evening...)

*he/Paul expounded to them,
testifying
to the kingdom of God*

*and
trying to convince/persuade them
about Jesus
both from the Law of Moses
and
from the Prophets.*

T/S: Let's take this last section in 3 parts:

1. ***Inform***
2. ***Inspect***
3. ***Inspire***

A. Inform

*Paul expounded to them,
testifying
to the kingdom of God
and
trying to convince/persuade them
about Jesus*

***** 5 Key terms/concepts to grasp *****

- Expound/Explain/Expository
- Testifying/Witnessing/Evangelizing
- Kingdom of God (see Holman Bible Dictionary)

QUOTE:

Jesus made the kingdom of God central in His preaching. More than a hundred references to the kingdom appear in the Gospels, many in Jesus' parables...

The kingdom of God was the central image in Jesus' preaching as clearly seen in [Mark 1:14-15](#), which was a summary of the preaching of Jesus.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Here-in the kingdom of God is the heart of the summary... In His parables (too), Jesus spoke of the kingdom in many different ways. He said that the kingdom is like a farmer

(Matthew 13:24), a seed (Matthew 13:31), yeast (Matthew 13:33), a treasure (Matthew 13:44), a pearl merchant (Matthew 13:45), a fishing net (Matthew 13:47), an employer (Matthew 20:1), a king inviting people to a marriage feast (Matthew 22:2), and ten young women (Matthew 25:1). He spoke also of the glad tidings of the kingdom (Luke 8:1) and of the mystery of the kingdom of God (Mark 4:11).

What did Jesus mean when he spoke of the kingdom of God? He meant, quite simply, the rule of God. The kingdom of God is the reign of God.

- Holman Bible Dictionary

➤ **Convince**/Persuade (URGENT URGING)

** *“Compel them to come”* – Lk. 14:23 **

➤ **“about Jesus”** = Word/Christ centered!

T/S: Mark Dever and his “9Marks Ministry” exemplify the combination of biblical Informing & Inspecting when it comes to Great Commission INVESTING, by in part, expounding 6 (of 9) sanctifying essentials for every healthy church & Christian...

1. **Expositional Preaching / Teaching**
2. **Biblical Theology**

3. Biblical Understanding of the **Gospel**
4. Biblical **Evangelism**
5. Biblical Conversion / **Salvation**
6. Biblical **Discipleship**

*** (7-9 = Membership, Discipline, Leadership)

B. Inspect

*both from the Law of Moses
and
from the Prophets.*

I don't want to impress you...

I want to implore you.

Trust God's Word!

➤ **2 Timothy 3:16-17!**

- Genesis 3:15... the Gospel foretold
- Noah, the Flood & the Ark (a type of Jesus)
- Abe & Isaac – a chosen, covenant people
- Moses & the Passover lamb
- Joshua & Caleb... 40 years later
- Gideon & his 300 men
- David vs. Goliath
- 3 boys + One in the fiery furnace
- Hosea & Gomer...

C. Inspire

- Inspiration is an intangible treasure...

*“Inspirational investing”
generates
eternal dividends!*

- JDP

*“Inspirational investing” is always
Word-blessed, worship-backed,
& work-based!*

- JDP

We are BOTH, inspiring AND investing at our best when we are helping others to see & savior the Savior of the Scriptures... Amen!

- JDP

CLOSE:

Friend, I pray that you, like Paul, will be Christ-like and invest your life (as opposed to simply spending it)... that you will INVEST your life in kingdom service...

For we are never more Christ-like than when we are selflessly, sacrificially, and Scripturally investing our lives in the Great Commandments, the Great Commission, and the Great Conflict

of faith...
in Jesus, the Christ.
– Amen!