



SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Spiritual Exercises

Day 1: The devil, the liar, is calling God a liar. “God cannot be trusted,” he says. The devil continues and implies that God is not only a liar, but He is actually trying to deprive us of something good. “God does not meet our needs,” he suggests. Like Eve, some people believe him.

“But the serpent said to the woman: “You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is bad.” (Genesis 3:4-5)

In what ways have you believed the lies that “God cannot be trusted” and that “God does not meet our needs”?

Day 2: Another danger of sinning is that we can become enslaved by sin.

“They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of destructive habits – for we are slaves of anything that has conquered us.” (2 Peter 2:19)

In what ways have you experienced this enslavement? What does/did it feel like? How does/did it impact your life?

Day 3: Sin separates us from God. When we think that God is far away, it can be helpful to examine our conscience, making sure no sin has come between us.

“...everyone has sinned and is far away from God’s saving presence.” (Romans 3:23)

How does sin separate us from God? What concrete ways have you experienced this distance and separation?

Day 4: It is good to understand the sin problem, but it is better to know God’s solution for sin.

“But by the free gift of God’s grace all are put right with Him through Christ Jesus, who sets them free. God offered Him, so that by His blood he should become the means by which people’s sins are forgiven through their faith in Him...” (Romans 3:24-26a)

Free. Gift. Grace. Forgiven. What do these words stir up in you?

Day 5: Many men offer to us plans for making the world a better place. Better education, more technical skills, new political programs, sociological wisdom, drugs, are all offered as solutions. Man-made religions (Buddhism, Bahai, New Age, Zen, yoga, and many others) are presented to us

as the hope of the world. Some even tell us that a Christian moral code without Christ is the solution. But all these are human thoughts, man-made plans. The Lord says:

“Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.” (Is. 55:9)

What solutions have you been offered to cure your woes and fix your problems?

Day 6: God’s answer to the world’s need is Jesus Christ. Jesus was sent into the world to save us, to free us from the power of Satan and of the world, so that we might live a new life now and forevermore.

“Martha said to Jesus, “If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now whatever you ask of God, He will grant you.” Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even if he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord.” She said, “I believe that you are the Christ, the son of God, the one who was to come into this world.” (Jn. 11:21-27)

What areas of your life need God's newness and resurrection?

Day 7: Our freedom costs something. Jesus had to die so that we might live. But God loved us enough to send His son, who willingly died for us. As Paul says:

“It is not easy to die, even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.” (Rom. 5:6-8)

What is your response to this beautiful truth that Jesus would die so that you might live?

NEXT WEEK’S STUDY FOCUS: REPENTANCE

Please Read: Mark 1:1-20; Revelation 3:14-22; and Mark 9:42-50

Take some time each day to slowly read and meditate on the Spiritual Exercise for the day:

1. Read once through simply for content, to get a big picture idea of the topic and scripture.
2. Read a second time slowly to see what words or phrases stand out to you. Talk with God about these words or phrases asking:
 - Why do they stand out to you? What meaning do they have for you currently in your life?
 - What emotions or feelings do they bring up and why?
 - What might they reveal to you about God? About yourself? About some future course of action God is inviting you to?
3. Read the passages one final time lifting up the words as prayer and asking God to help you live the truths he has revealed to you during the time of reflection.