



April, 1999

Spring has done sprung! Out with the cold, in with the warm days and the gentle rains of Spring! The word from the intercessor's conference is a good one for us all—It's Springtime.

Spring is a demonstration of God's love and faithfulness. It is when the earth renews itself and all the energy that hidden during the rigors of the winter bursts forth as new life. We should be like that in this season, making every bit of pain we ever felt pay a dividend, both for ourselves and the Kingdom of God.

Spring is also when weeds begin to grow. The dandelions and blackberries and who knows what all are just waiting their chance. There are weeds in our life too that would like to do their thing one more time. It's just a matter of what we allow.

Recently I read a list of what the Church historically considered **the** seven deadly sins. To be real honest, I never used to give them much credence. To my mind they were an excuse to get away from *Bible* faith and occupy oneself with wishful thoughts and trivialities, not to mention legalism.

However, I'm beginning to re-evaluate many of these judgments as a result of things I've learned since I *knew it all*. They represent the wisdom of persons whose respect I would very much like to be worthy of. Far from being anti-Bible, they are a practical synopsis of much it has to say.

For singles these are relevant issues. Not only will most of these areas hinder one from finding a mate or otherwise fulfilling our destiny but being single we often lack the accountability a mate provides to highlight these areas and motivate us to change. If we've been through a divorce there were probably a little of all of these issues involved in the breakdown.

Due to space constraints this will have to be a two-parter. The first four will be this month, and the remaining three in May. Of course, that does mean that we need to be extra good the rest

of this month, as we wait on the cure. So one through four, here goes...

**PRIDE** is the first of the seven. All sin must originate out of pride, for one will not willingly and flagrantly disobey God without tacitly assuming we know better than He does. Most strife between individuals is rooted here too for a disagreement cannot occur as long as we assume another man's right to an opinion to be at least as valid as our own. (That doesn't mean his opinion becomes mine, only that I give him space to have it.)

Pride then becomes an umbrella that all other sin can hide under. The first step in conquering sin and Satan is to submit ourselves to God (Jas 4:7). The Bible is filled with admonitions for us to humble ourselves, both before God and one another. Is any of that still valid? Hmmm....

**COVETOUSNESS** is listed as number two. Part of the warfare we enter into as believers centers over stuff. Stuff we have. Stuff we don't have but wish we did. Stuff we don't have and if we got what we wanted it would suffocate us. Stuff we are willing to work two jobs and our mate three for 'cause we gotta' have it.

Or how about stuff others own but somehow our attitude flares up? We set aside God's wisdom in what He allowed others to have. As a nation, our law courts are filled with people who feel entitled to a piece of someone else's pie. What about those in the church whom God has raised up as powerful financial engines? Do we applaud them for the good they do or assume there to be some iniquity at the bottom of their success?

On the other hand, there are those who do see gain as godliness (1 Tim 6:5) and seem blind to the propriety of anything they do as long as it turns them a profit. Or how many Christians will sacrifice anything and anyone in order to build what they vainly refer to as *my ministry*. Is that the example of Christ who poured out his life to honor God and bless many, many people?

One of the reasons Christ saved us was to give us victory over 'stuff'. When Paul wrote *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me* that was exactly his context (Phil 4:13). Through

the mighty power of God's grace we can take the things of this life and make them serve both God and man. But don't think it's not a battle.

Closely related to covetousness is **ENVY**. Our culture sells dissatisfaction with every station break. While the Bible tells us *godliness with contentment is great gain*, we're bombarded by an onslaught of things we aren't supposed to be able to live without. Sez who?

The heart of a Christian is designed to run on thankfulness, gratefulness, love and forgiveness. There is no way around it- envy will gum up the works and bring us to a standstill.

**SLOTH** is another of the deadly seven. Sloth can be measured in two areas, time itself, and productivity. On the job, did we really give it our best shot, or do we grudgingly put time in? Did we give the full forty hours or shave it down with late arrivals, padded breaks and long lunches?

On our own, what do we do? All we really have to offer the Lord is our time. Dick Iverson once made the statement, "I have yet to see God work a miracle while I was watching hellavision—I mean, television. But I've seen Him do many things when I turned it off and gave Him some time."

Has God spoken to you concerning areas of ministry? What kind of time are you currently and consistently setting aside to make it happen? This can mean many things, anything from a teacher's library of books and notes to a clean house and well stocked refrigerator of hospitality. Pastor Frank made the observation that a dream without a plan for fulfillment was really only a fantasy. Let's not be slothful!

So that's the first four of the seven. Anything we need to work on this month? Happy weeding!

## Events:

In Sunday School we learned that *eternity* is a long, long time. But *Eternity* goes fast—the play, I mean. Hundreds, perhaps thousands will be saved. And what we do personally can make an eternal difference for an eternal soul. Do we

really believe in salvation, and evangelism? Then put your time on the line, pray, pass out tickets, work the altar, bring a friend. And if you want to know how much fun it is, just ask E- H-.

In addition to that we'll be having our prophetic assembly again this month. Hasn't this been an amazing, unbelievable year thus far? Whenever we spend some God-seeking time we get our socks blessed off! I wish I had a nice religious way to put this, but I feel like a hog to the trough every time someone calls sooey!

Speaking of food, we're planning two SNAC's and a movie safari during the month, so come join us on something. For the movie, we're thinking of going to one of the McMennamin's places. They are hard to plan too far ahead because the movie title isn't announced until the Friday before and we want to be selective as a Christian group. So if you're interested on the 17th give E- a call and she'll know the exact time and location for us.

We'll be having the monthly meeting at B-'s this month. Bring a few snacks, bring a friend, bring a few needs to be ministered over- just come. The well is open, the healing waters are flowing, God is gracious. See you there...

Don't forget prayer in the 13th. We have a powerful God who loves for us to ask things of Him. I expect '99 to be a record setting year for answered prayer, and we're just on the edge of a mighty healing revival. What if your prayer was the pebble that saw the dam break? Come on out!

Looks like that's about it. Let's remember to keep one another lifted up in prayer.

Have a great month!

GAH

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