



MAY 1999

.... I wish I **May**, I wish I might... Well, did we hear some good words at the prophetic assembly? Absolutely! Will everything spoken come to pass for everyone? Regrettably, it's not likely.

There's nothing wrong with the words given. They represent the mind and counsel of God at a given point of time. They represent not an accomplished fact but an opportunity or ideal to work toward. Serving God is a divine partnership, and we have responsibility for both faith and works.

The Bible is filled with examples of men and women who fell short of God's plan. Many portions exhort us to 'grow up' and take hold of everything God has for us. One of the purposes of the renewal these last few years has been to set us free from little bondage's that were arresting our growth.

In First John 2 we see believers divided into three levels of maturity: little children, young men, and fathers. The little children knew their sins were forgiven. They'd crossed from death to life and had a great testimony. But they'd not yet experienced God's overcoming power. They had yet to confront and conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Sometimes, as believers, we need to take a good look at ourselves and realize that we're still little children in some areas. We grow up as we begin to fight and win battles against temptation and carnality and actually begin to influence our environment for the kingdom of God.

One of the saddest things we encounter are believers who just refuse to grow. After being saved for years they are still lying in their spiritual bassinet wondering when the next preacher will toss them some spiritual num-num. Hebrews 5:12-14 tells us that good decisions and moral choices are necessary for growth. We must learn to overcome and learn by overcoming.

Last month we began to look at the *seven deadly sins* of medieval piety. Pride, covetousness,

envy and sloth have had mention- now it's time to look at the rest.

LUST is usually first on our list when we think of sins. Here it's fifth, but since they are all considered deadly, the point may be moot. Although there are many lusts beyond the sexual, sensual ones, they are otherwise dealt with, so let's look at sexual purity here.

Singles find it all too easy to excuse themselves morally, assuming marriage would meet all their needs and take care of any problems. It's false expectations like this that destroy marriage.

Those in the marriage relationship must be able to give of themselves regardless of whether personal needs have all been met. Ideally they will be, but that's a goal two partners strive for. It doesn't just happen as a given, especially right at the start.

In addition, it's not reasonable to expect our partner to meet every need we might come up with at any given moment. No matter how much they might wish to cover our bases, we're all fallible just because we're human. The saying is, *Love can wait to give, but lust can't wait to receive!*

A person with lust burning in their heart isn't nice to be around. They tend to be secretive and devious, running hidden agendas, their true desires and goals kept out of sight. The words of their mouth contain a measure of defilement. God deliver us from that!

GLUTTONY isn't a sin we hear much about these days. Food was involved in both the original temptation and in Jesus' testing in the wilderness.

The overriding principle is that all of our resources were given for a purpose and if we use them foolishly or selfishly we will one day give account. The word *disciple* is a variation on the word *discipline*. A disciple lives a life of watchfulness, not being mastered by anything except God's will.

Proverbs 23:20-21 links gluttony with drunkenness and cites it as a cause of drowsiness leading to poverty. In my own

experience, too much, too rich food, especially meat or milk, are energy robbers and contribute to slothful behavior.

My personal answers have come largely through the Fit For Life books by Harvey and Marilyn Diamond. More than just a diet, they showed me how my body really worked and how to cooperate with it to build strength rather than burn it up.

Most of the men we look to as mighty men of God have been regularly involved with fasting. While a discipline can easily become a dead work, there's much to be said for confronting our appetite head on. And if the truth be told, most of us live under deeper bondage than we care to admit, pausing only in our denial to comment on how much weight we've gained. Christ came to speak liberty to the captives, including some trapped inside of, oh, well, you know...

ANGER is another biggie. Bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness all come out of the same black pool. Ephesians 4:26 gives us the golden rule of anger- if you don't settle the matter by the end of the day, you're in deep trouble! Anger held beyond that time limit is an open invitation to Satan, and he never misses a chance to stake out a claim in our mind.

Both Bible study and personal experience have taught me one thing, that anger and its variations are at the root of most if not all the cloying, stubborn problems that attach themselves to our life. We're talking oppression, depression, deception, spiritual strongholds, erratic behavior, and many physical illnesses.

Some of Jesus' strongest statements and teachings have to do with the terrible consequences of unforgiveness. There is some reason to fear that anger unchecked could cost a person their salvation. It will definitely rob a person of most of the blessings of God.

So that's the seven. Anything we need to be working on? I want to be one of those hearts in the Bible that brought forth a hundred fold harvest. That means get after the weeds!

Events

Several people in our age group did get touched by the Eternity play. We will be planning a get acquainted time as part of our monthly meeting on the 28th at S-'s. Bring something that can go on the barbecue and we'll call it a potluck.

Cinco de Mayo is back! Looks like the city center celebration will be carry on through the eighth. Let's meet at the Gateway Transit Center before 11AM and be take the Maxx downtown for a good day. Bring your walking shoes and enough money to eat on.

Xavier's has been highly recommended to us as a good place to eat. The easiest way to get there from the church is to go West on I-84, then take the 181st St. exit. See you there on the 2nd, just after the 11 AM service gets out (2 PM).

By the way, for those of you who have email access, let us know how to reach you. We can drop you reminders of upcoming events or changes in plans, or even send you this newsletter if you so desire. (That would be the newsletter only unless you have a Calendar Creator program on your machine.

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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