

## **“How Then, Will We Live?” Part 4 “Vain Comparisons!”**

**Previously on HTWWL...** Unlocking our kingdom potential for the times we are living in! *Local demographics changing radically!* Big city “encroachments” coming... *Core changes ahead for our nation!* Losing our “national” mind... Bathroom bill subterfuge/leading edge of anarchy... Not a prudish, anti-LGBT, conservative, Republican issue... Not AFA boycott issue... This is a mom and dad issue... *Division/suspicion/threats/fear issue, the atmosphere of our enemy!* Defeat of constitutional process... Going to require stable “individuals!” *Terror-filled times!* Bombings lighting up newsfeeds... *Seduction of American Youth!* Coming panel...

**We must “be ready to give an account of the hope that is within us!” This is a prime time for the church to shine in the darkness, to bring order to confusion, to bring stability to weakness!**

**Enabled because “we set God in the center of our hearts...”** 1Peter 3.15a And we are “always ready to explain why we live like we do, with the hope that we have...” 15b We “deliver our message with meekness toward men and fear toward God!” 15c Privileged, *but unassuming*, “serving the world for a lifetime with the mindset of Christ!” Phil2

**How Then Will We Live?** Eyes open... alert to opportunity... ready to speak up... confident... yet kind and humbled... for a lifetime!

**“For a lifetime” means we are going to keep a vigil for true freedom... No greater enemy to our operational freedom than the issue of *vain comparisons!***

**The Biblical Case...** “We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who praise themselves; who write their own press. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.” 2Corinthians 10.12

**While there is a wise, right method of comparing to others for possibilities...** *Seeing what one person can do can be inspiring to another person... Seeing what another person can’t do can be instructive as well...* But that is not the tenor here! This is speaking to unwise, vain, comparisons for values sake... Who’s good/best, most qualified/valuable. That takes up a lot of our time/energy!

**Comparing ourselves to others, for value, for character, for assurance is always unwise! “I’m better than...” “I’m not as bad as...” is a sign that we have fallen into a snare!**

**When we unwisely compare... We make unwise judgments...** “I’m not doing it right...” “At least I’m doing better/not as bad as...” **We deny the uniqueness and giftings of God given to us and others!** Comp’s devalue others accomplishments... *We strive to get even or ahead of...* Makes us want to project a façade...

***One of the most common distractions diverting us from our high calling in Christ!***

**Social Media...** Plays a big role in the step up of comparison-distractions! FB/ Instagram/ Snapchat/ Twitter carry challenges for comparison! Got a new car, house, toy, vacation... Picture perfect family... **Some people “post to boast...”** But “every man is *tempted to a bad response* when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed!” James 1.14 To the pure all things are pure! Titus 1.15

**Can be a very good thing!** “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as is in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom 12.15-18 “And when she

found it she called her friends saying, 'Rejoice with me..'" **Lk 15.8** "mind not only your own things..." **Ph 2.4**

**Where it's wisest to compare... Already talked about comparing ourselves to others when it comes to things to "go for" or pull back from!** "If just one person can do something, then so can I given the same playing field!" "If they couldn't do it with their ability and resources, maybe I should rethink it!" We can learn from watching others! Biblical concept of "being a pattern!"

**But at best, comparing ourselves to ourselves (others) is limited... *The mass of mankind is corrupted!*** "None righteous, not even one..." **R3.10 *The best of us are imperfect!*** "Haven't obtained but striving..." **Ph3.12** So, on any scale of value comparison, going to come up short! **Wisest to "compare spiritual things with spiritual..." 1Cor2.13**

**Spiritual, side by side of Spiritual! *Let us compare ourselves to God's will!*** "God has dealt to every man the measure of faith." **Rom 12.3** Living by faith or by sight? "But every man has his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." **1Cor 7.7** Aligned and valuing our gifts? "Search me, O' God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts and see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me to the way forever!" **Ps 139.23,24** Open for searching and leading?

**Let us compare ourselves to God's word!** "How will a young man cleanse his way? *By taking heed* according to Your Word! **Ps 119.9** "I have chosen the way of truth, *Your way I have laid out before me!*" **v30** "*I am the companion* of those that fear You and keep your words!" **v63** "Let my heart be sound in your words that *I won't be ashamed!*" **v80** "*I hate vain thoughts* but Your word I love!" **v113**

**Let us compare ourselves to God's Son!** Not in the Mother's Day, Proverbs 31 way! "She's perfect, we're not!" What a bummer! "He's perfect! We are not Him!" To the novice, *almost* more discouraging than helpful! To the mature, "Yes, He is!" "Amen!" **But a "comparison" is seeing two or more things, side by side... Let's see Jesus side-by-side with us!**

**Spiritual, side by side of Spiritual! *See Him, in His perfection, by your side!*** How does that make you feel? Bad? Or great! Loved! Valued! **See Him with all His resources, *BYS!*** Puny or strong? Afraid or adventurous? **See Him *BYS w/His power, love, healing!*** Weak, helpless, unlovely, sickly, stuck? **See Him with the love that covers all of your sins, *BYS!*** Condemned? Forgiven, cleansed, free, forgiving, generous!

**In the natural, the comparison is intimidating...** But in the Spirit, seeing the spiritual side of our lives, seeing the Firstborn of many sons, our Big Brother, **BYS...**

- Has to give you value beyond measure!
- Has to give you clarity from distractions!
- Grace/mercy for the people around you!
- A heart of loving service for others!
- Has to give you confidence for the battle!

**Jesus *BYS* changes everything!**

**With Jesus by our side... the Beautiful Son of God verifying our value... all the valuation we will ever need!**

**With such a sense of value and assurance that we don't get caught up, carried away, competing with anyone but ourselves!**

**And when we meditate on that truth and let it come alive in us, we will then live differently!**