

Love Reaches!

Part 3: "Things that Hinder Our Hearing!"

"You are anxious and troubled by many things – but choose the better portion which can't be taken away!" **Luke 10.41,42**

Our third session on *reaching up to God... because we know where our life comes from!* We were created to be *very near* Him and when we lost contact Jesus reestablished the connection!

Hebrews 10.18-22 "Where there is remission of sin by the blood of Jesus *we have the assurance that we can draw near to God!* It's an all new and alive pathway which He opened for us by the offering of His flesh, *so let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,* having our hearts washed from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." **With the invitation to draw near, we reach!**

Three Ways We Reach... *Thru His Word!* This is our initial introduction... and the bedrock of our understanding of Him! ***Thru fasting!*** It's where we break the gravity of our flesh/to meet with Him in the Spirit! ***Thru "prayer!"*** It includes the petition approach... But it is about "near conversation!" The kind we cannot live without!

The way we prepare! We come in faith believing that if we ask Him to speak, we will get Him! We set aside time to be with Him, to get to know Him, to exercise our hearing! We get quiet and listen and judge what we hear! We practice His presence until we can recognize His sound, His soundness and "the something only we would know!" We humble ourselves! We are not God's equals, so we come submitted, without attitude! We need Him, what He knows, what He has to say! We open the conversation and we listen with "our eyes!"

"I direct my prayer toward You and look up!" **Ps5.3**

He wants to speak... It's completely natural for Him to speak back to us! We on the other hand don't always want to hear from Him! Because it puts us on the hook! "if we hear the voice of God any more we will die!" **Deut 5.25** We like it if He speaks to someone else so that we can dismiss it as an opinion! But once we hear for ourselves... DONE!

Monday morning 5:05 – 5:26 a.m. Demonstration!

I come to you talking about abstinence from alcohol! I know it's a heated debate so I come prepared with the word!

"Anyone who wants to be an overseer in the Body of Christ must be... vigilant, sober... not given to wine..." **1Tim 3.2,3**

Person says: alert and "sober" that just means not drunk... not given, overtaken. Totally reasonable... "Gotcha! You just have an abstinence/no fun agenda!"

"Study to show yourself approved unto God a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed (to learn), rightly dividing the word of truth." **2Tim3.15**

An overseer (someone who wants this good work) must be (without regard, it is necessary) to be above reproach... vigilant (nephalios: ***sober, circumspect***)

An overseer (someone who wants this good work) must be (without regard, it is necessary) to be above reproach... vigilant (nephalios: *sober and circumspect*; ***heedful of circumstances/consequences***)...

An overseer (someone who wants this good work) must be (without regard, it is necessary) to be above reproach... vigilant (nephalios: *sober and circumspect*; heedful of circumstances/consequences)... sober (sophron: ***sound minded***)... ***(YOU STILL HAVE NO CASE FOR ABSTINENCE!)***

Nephalios: from Nepho: to abstain from wine. Abstain: intransitive verb \ab-'stān, ab-\ : to choose not to do or have something. Full Definition of ABSTAIN: to refrain deliberately and often with an effort of self-denial from an action or practice <abstain from drinking> — ab·stain·er noun

Medical Definition of ABSTAIN: to refrain deliberately and often with an effort of self-denial from an action or practice (as consumption of a food or a drug or indulgence in sexual intercourse)

Why do we have such clarity on “abstinence” when it comes to talking to our teenagers about sex... and we can’t find the right definition when it comes to drinking?

An overseer (someone who wants this good work) must be (without regard, it is necessary) to be above reproach... vigilant (nephalios: sober *and* circumspect; heedful of circumstances/consequences)... sober (sophron: sound minded)... ***not given to wine...***

An overseer (someone who wants this good work) must be (without regard, it is necessary) to be above reproach... vigilant (nephalios: sober *and* circumspect; heedful of circumstances/consequences)... sober (sophron: sound minded)... not given to wine (***not paroinos: not even near wine***)...

Pretty air tight case...

And yet it’s still possible for some to toss it aside because it’s “just Paul,” not the “red letters,” too “legalistic!” But when you hear God say, “I don’t want you to hold on to anything that could cause others to stumble...”

The point is simple, God is speaking to His kids, on all topics, all the time, in many different ways... Thru the word, other people, implanted thoughts, and by His voice... all, and only because He wants us to get life right! And only the most unthinking would turn their backs on the God who holds the future!

Things that hinder us from hearing!

Intentionally hardening our hearts! “Today, if you hear His voice, don’t harden your heart, as some did in the day of contention and fell!” **Heb 3.8,15** 4.7 “*Marah:*” Life is bitter/hard! **Ex15.23ff** “*Throw in the tree!*” **v25** “*Kibroth-hatavah:*” Lusting! **Nu11.1ff** “*Make no provision...*” **Rom 13.14** “*Meribah:*” dry and thirsty!” **Ex17.1ff** “*Come to Me and I will give you living water!*” **John 4.10ff**

Active, intentional sin! “the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: *But Your sins have separated us!*” **Is59.1,2** “they have hardened their necks, that *they might not hear my words.*” **Jer 19.15** “I spoke to you in your prosperity but you said, I will not listen! And it has been your way since youth, *that you will not obey My voice!*” **Jer 22.21**

Distractions! “The sower sows *the word* and Satan comes and steals it (spiritual domination). Others receive the truth gladly but turn away when things get tough and they are offended (no discipleship). Others let the anxieties of life, the false offerings of riches and the lusts for other things take away His words!” **Mark 4.14-19**

There’s just too much “noise” in our lives to hear anything from God!

Love Reaches... but before anything else our love does, it must reach up to God – the source of life and strength!