



LAYING THE AXE TO THE ROOT SERIES

Matthew 3:10-12

We have emphasized the wonderful baptism in the Holy Spirit which Jesus provides for us. However, we have neglected that His coming also signaled the time when “the axe is laid to the root” and when the chaff will be burned with fire. Verse 11 that promises the baptism in the Spirit is preceded and followed by verses that talk about a cleansing work. However, so many of us have opted for one without the other. We received the Spirit baptism, but are not willing to allow God to lay the axe to the root.

Part 4 : LAYING THE AXE TO THE ROOT OF LUST Sunday June 05, 2005

Final message in this series.

Lust is uncontrolled, excessive, immoderate, often unreasonable desire, passion, longing, yearning, or craving for something. Covetousness. Inordinate affection.

Lust - The way of the world

Ephesians 2:1-3

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

The way of the world is to fulfill the desires of the flesh and the mind. If it feels good, makes you happy – just do it!

2 Peter 1:4

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

The world is full of moral decay (corruption) because of lust.

God has given us His promises that through them we can escape the corruption that is in the world!

Desire in itself is not wrong.

We must have good and healthy desires.

We desire for more of God, more of His Word, His Presence, His power.

Psalms 37:4 Proverbs 10:24 Mark 11:24

The problem is when we desire for wrong things and when that becomes uncontrollable and excessive.

James 1:13-16

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Temptation occurs when a desire for something wrong is stirred up within us and weakens our will to refuse that desire.

The stirring up of wrong desire could take place by our own selves – when we do not guard our thoughts, reasoning, imaginations and the information we expose ourselves to. It could take place through the influence of other people. Or it could come through suggestive thoughts, ideas and imaginations which demons introduce into our minds.



1 John 2:16,17

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

The lust of the flesh = gratifies the sinful desires of the body

The lust of the eyes = gratifies what we see and want, what we think is good for us, what we think we deserve, what we think we should possess/own, things that would give us power, position, and influence in life.

MANIFESTATIONS OF A ROOT OF LUST

The lusts of the flesh

1. Uncontrollable desire for substances including good food

1 Corinthians 6:12-13

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

Philippians 3:19

Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Their god is their bodily desires or appetites.

Numbers 11:4-6

While being right in the center of fulfilling a glorious plan and divine purpose - the people of Israel went lusting for good food. Their desire for good food took precedence over the fact that they were fulfilling a divine purpose!

Psalms 78:14-32

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

They ended up tempting God. "God do this for me in you really love me"! The Bible tells us not to tempt (test) the Lord our God. (There is another parallel passage in Psalm 106:9-15)

An uncontrollable desire for substances like alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, etc. – we call addictions.

An uncontrollable desire for good food – we call gluttony.

Narcotics Anonymous in their publication make the following notes:

Chapter One: Who Is An Addict?

"Most of us do not have to think twice about this question, WE KNOW! Our whole life and thinking was centered on drugs in one form or another – the getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. We lived to use and used to live. Very simply, an addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive illness whose ends are always the same: jails, institutions and death."



"Many of us did not think that we had a problem with drugs until the drugs ran out. Even when others told us that we had a problem, we were convinced that we were right and the world was wrong. We used this belief to justify our self-destructive behavior."

2. Compulsive habits/desires

Proverbs 5:22

His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

John 8:34

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

2 Peter 2:19

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

Whatever controls us, holds us in bondage as a slave.

Some general examples of compulsive desires:

- More sleep than is necessary
- You must watch a movie at least once a week/month
- You must receive gifts from your husband
- You must have certain luxuries
- You must go shopping every week

3. Sexual perversion

Our sexuality was designed and created by God. Sex in the way God designed it, is pure before God.

However, unnatural sexual acts – forms of sexual pleasure that God did not design are unacceptable before God.

Romans 1:18-32

God allowed them go after the lusts of their own heart.

When people insist on having their own way, pursuing unnatural desires, etc., God steps away and the person's mind becomes reprobate (unapproved, rejected, worthless, good-for-nothing). When a person's mind becomes reprobate, they become so darkened in their thinking process that they believe that their unnatural lifestyle is actually normal. For example, homosexuals think that this is the way they have been made when the Bible calls it sin!

Sexual perversion – immorality (sex before marriage), homosexuality, incest, adultery, bestiality, etc. are unacceptable before God.

Other forms of sexual perversion include fantasizing sexual experiences, using things to give you sexual pleasure, bondage to masturbation, etc.

The lusts of the eyes

4. Pornography

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

5. Filthy thoughts / immoral fantasies



Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

6. Covetousness, which is idolatry

Jeremiah 6:13

6:13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Colossians 3:5

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Covetousness is a form of idolatry because it allows a desire for something to take precedence over my desire for God. Whatever comes between me and the relationship I am to maintain with God in spirit and truth, is an idol. It could be a physical object like a picture or statue or it could be a soulish affection for something. God considers this a form of spiritual adultery. What ever takes God's place in my life is an idol – food, sex, career, sports, religion, form of worship, etc.

Exodus 20:17

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Don't covet what belongs to another person.

Luke 12:15

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

7. Desire for money, power, fame, position, influence,

Genesis 3:6

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

There was a 3-fold temptation: the lust of the eyes ("pleasing to they eyes"), the lust of the flesh ("good for food") and the pride of life ("make one wise").

8. Fascination toward good looking men/women

Matthew 5:28

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

9. Worldliness – attraction and fascination for the things of the world

James 4:1-4

- 1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?
- 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.
- 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.
- 4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Some times us preachers/ministers have such a fascination and inordinate affection to go abroad. We religiously call it "going to the nations" when really it is a form of worldliness with a spiritual garb!



We are excited when they have to go to California (we don't need to pray about this). But feel very dejected if they have to go to Coimbatore (we need to fast and pray about this!).

As ministers of God we should be committed to going anywhere, anytime, at any cost!

10. Greed – the desire for more

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

God's will is to bless and prosper His people. However, in our desire for the blessings of God, many have strayed into the dangerous area of lust. We claim a bigger car, a bigger house, more wealth, greater success, a wider ministry, greater recognition, higher position in life, etc., with the pretext that we are claiming the blessings of God. In the process of pursuing "more", "bigger", and "better", we have unknowingly developed an inordinate affection for such things. The desire for these have become uncontrollable and excessive. We have departed from a godly pursuit and healthy desire and arrived at a place of lust. This is dangerous. We must come back to the place where we know that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6). We must pursue the high call of God, the great dreams and noble purposes of God without developing an affection for the tools (money, influence, power, position, things, etc.) that we use to accomplish those purposes.

11. Youthful lusts

2 Timothy 2:22

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Ungodly music (or the many variations of modern music) – which are usually addictive and very destructive in their message.

Addiction to TV, movies, Xbox/Playstation, Internet, chat rooms, etc.

When you are not sure if something is right or wrong - when in doubt, cast it out!

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ROOT OF LUST SPRINGING UP

There are many consequences of having roots of lust in our lives. We list only a few here:

1. Chokes the Word

Mark 4:19

And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

2. Brings bondage – we lose our freedom and become slaves

Romans 6:16

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

3. Brings destruction to the soul and body

1 Peter 2:11

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

1 Corinthians 6:18



Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

A DEEPER LOOK AT THE PROBLEM OF LUST

1. A wounded spirit could drive a person into excessive indulgences.

Proverbs 18:14

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

2. Some of the lusts are demonically energized.

The Scriptures reveal that there are different kinds of demonic spirits that energize sinful behaviour.

Unclean spirits (or spirits of uncleanness Matthew 12:43)
produces immoral lifestyles

Perverse spirits (or spirits of perversion Isaiah 19:14)
produces all kinds of perversion

Isaiah 19:14

This Scripture seems to indicate that God "sends" a perverse spirit. However, from looking at the entire Scriptures we know that God does not need the help of perverse spirits to accomplish His will on the earth. The correct interpretation is that when God saw the continual sin of the people (in this case Egypt), He withdrew His divine protection. This gave perverse spirits that were attracted by the sins of the people an entrance into their lives to lead them into every evil work.

spirits of whoredoms/harlotry (Hosea 4:12 5:4)
causes people to go astray from God pursuing other things, committing spiritual adultery.

spirit of bondage (Romans 8:15)
produces bondage to sin, Compulsive habits, Addictions

spirit of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2)
cause disobedience and rebellion against the truth

spirit of this world (1 Corinthians 2:12)
bring conformance to worldliness

seducing spirits (1 Timothy 4:1 2 Timothy 3:13)
Among other things seducing spirits causes one to be attracted and fascinated by the things of the world – produces worldliness

3. A believer can have strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4-6)

There can be strongholds in a believer's life – areas in the soul that are occupied and controlled by demonic spirits.

The reprobate mind is a stronghold of satan. A mind that considers evil good and good as evil, a mind given to worldliness is satan's foothold in a believer's life.

The areas of our thought life which we keep in darkness instead of bringing it into light, those areas that we embrace lies instead of submitting to the truth of God's word – these are the areas that satan has us bound!

Strongholds are thought patterns in our mind where we have become tolerant to sin, where we have compromised and replaced truth with a lie thus giving satan a place of influence and a place of defense



within our minds. Through these strongholds sinful activity is actually defended within us because of the thought patterns we have embraced or allowed in our mind.

A Christian cannot be possessed by demons because the Holy Spirit already dwells in our spirit. However, a Christian can be in bondage, can be oppressed, harassed and have areas of his mind or body occupied by demonic spirits – depending on the entrance he has given to them through his consistent thought and behaviour.

Areas of habitual sin, uncontrollable lust, compulsive behaviour are most likely areas that are demonically energized. Sinful habits become the dwelling place of a corresponding demon spirit that has become satan's stronghold in a believer's life and holds that person in bondage.

We are not attempting to condone ourselves and blame the devil for our sinful behaviour. Rather, we must understand the seriousness of an immoral lifestyle. Consistent immoral thought and behaviour opens up doors of entrance to the enemy into areas of our mind, affections and body.

BREAKING THE POWER OF LUST

1. Receive the Truth

- Your body is the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:15,16)
- Your body was not designed for sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:13-20)
- God's will is for you to be holy (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)
"God wants you to be holy and completely free from sexual immorality." (GNB)

2. Confess, Repent, Renounce

Will lead us in a prayer. Shut the door to demonic influence.

3. Make no provision for the flesh (Romans 13:15)

Understand that there are some areas where you need the help, support and strength of godly people to overcome. There is nothing wrong in recognizing this need and surrounding yourself with the right people to live victoriously.

- Refuse to lust after women/things (Proverbs 6:25)
- Be content with what you have (Hebrews 13:5 1 Timothy 6:6)
- denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12)
- Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16,17,24)
- Incline your heart unto God's Word, and not to covetousness. (Psalm 119:36)

PRAYER, CONFESSION, REPENTANCE AND RENUNCIATION

Satan fears a godly life – a life that is totally yielded to God in holiness and purity. He is not fearful of some one who is very anointed and gifted so long as they have areas of pet sin. In fact he delights in such, because he can now strategically "knock them down" maximizing the devastation their fall will bring to Christians all around. However, satan finds a godly life impregnable – a defense he cannot penetrate.

Heavenly Father I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ. I confess that I have maintained areas in my life that I have not fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ – areas of self, areas of jealousy, areas of pride, areas of lust and tolerance toward sin.

Today in the name of Jesus, I ask you to forgive me and cleanse me with the precious blood of Jesus.

(name, confess and repent of specific habitual sins, behaviour patterns, addictions, before the Lord)



By the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus, I bind every influence of the devil over my life.

I reject spirits of uncleanness and spirits of perversion and give them no place in my life.

I reject spirits of harlotry and refuse to go astray from the Lord God of my life. I pledge total and complete allegiance to Jesus Christ. I refuse to pursue anything that takes God's place in my life. I renounce and tear down every form of idolatry. I refuse to allow any imitation of the true and living God – but choose to worship Him in spirit and truth alone.

I reject the spirit of bondage. In Jesus name, by the blood of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit I break every bondage to sin in my life. I destroy every compulsive habit, uncontrollable desire and addiction. In Jesus' name I am free for Christ has set me free!

I reject the spirit of disobedience and refuse disobedience and rebellion against the truth. I receive the truth and submit myself to the truth of God's Word.

I reject the spirit of this world and refuse to be conformed to this world. By the help of the Holy Spirit I choose to conform myself to the word of God.

I reject the influence of seducing spirits and refuse to yield to the attractions of this world.

By the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God I declare every stronghold destroyed and removed by its foundations from my life. I allow the Lord Jesus to establish His truth and righteousness in the very areas where these strongholds existed. God's Word, His presence and His truth, will be the only stronghold in my life. The Holy Spirit guides me into all truth, purity and holiness. In Jesus Name. Amen.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

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