

A BETTER LIFE (PT 2)

I. I need to increase my faith.

- A. There is no way to please God in this life, without faith (Hebrews 11:6).
 - 1. Trying to please God without faith is like trying to breathe without oxygen.
 - 2. As the verse states, it is impossible to do.
- B. Faith is created when God's word is taken in (Romans 10:17).
- C. As water and oxygen are essential to our physical lives, faith is essential to our spiritual lives.
- D. A strong faith will stand the tests of Satan.
 - 1. Job could not be shaken from his faith in God when Satan threw his best at him.
 - 2. Abraham believed against hope (Romans 4:18-22).
 - 3. Many other examples are found in Hebrews 11.
- E. A weak faith will cause us to fall away.
 - 1. It made Peter sink in the Sea of Galilee.
 - 2. It allowed Judas to turn against our Lord.
 - 3. All those times in our lives when we failed to please God, it was because of a weak faith.
- F. When we fail to attend like we should, we are missing opportunities to strengthen our faith.
- G. When we fail to read and study God's word, we are missing opportunities to strengthen our faith.
- H. We look for ways to get out of things that will help when we need to be looking for ways to increase our faith.
- I. A stronger faith is a key to a better life.

II. Give encouragement to those living right and receive it as well.

- A. Jesus was one who gave encouragement to others.
 - 1. He spoke highly of the centurion (Matthew 8:5-10).
 - 2. He encouraged Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42).
 - 3. Many other examples can be found of Jesus giving encouragement.
- B. How encouraged do you think Paul was when Barnabas stood up for him?
- C. Encouragement is necessary in the realm of Christian living.
- D. I hope you encouraged Vince and Chris last week.
 - 1. I'm sure you did.
 - 2. Do you know how hard it is to get up in front of people and speak?
 - 3. By encouraging them now, and David and Kevin when they have, or these young men who do Wednesday night devotionals, we are spurring them on to greater things.
- E. We all know life is hard at times and when those hard times come, discouragement can come with them.
- F. Each of us has had moments when a pat on the shoulder or a card in the mail is exactly what we have needed.

- G. Encouragement is also needed, though, when we are doing right.
- H. Good coaches encourage their teams when they are doing right.
 - 1. This ingrains the good things they are doing in them.
 - 2. It increases the likelihood of them continuing to do that which is right.
- I. When was the last time you encouraged someone just simply for doing what is right?

III. I need my sins rebuked to live better.

- A. As much as we might dislike it, it is a vital part of preaching and teaching.
- B. 2 Timothy 4:2.
- C. We all get off line from time to time.
 - 1. If we are really striving to live right, we will know it and correct it before someone has to tell us to do so.
 - 2. Sometimes, we don't do that very well.
 - 3. We get caught up in the sin and try to justify it.
 - 4. That is when we need someone to hold us accountable.
- D. Your spouse should be such a person if they see the sin.
- E. Sometimes, we can hide things from our spouses.
- F. A faithful brother or sister is often needed to point out something that is amiss in our lives.
- G. It takes a strong person to handle rebuke properly.
 - 1. Sadly, many brethren just get mad.
 - 2. However, if viewed properly, some realize they are being loved instead of mistreated.
- H. Someone who ignores our sins does not love us.
- I. Having our sins pointed out in the proper way will help us live better lives.

IV. I must remember I am an example to others.

- A. People are watching what we do.
 - 1. It may be someone at work or school is watching how I am handling a particular situation.
 - 2. It may be our children at home who are watching mom and dad.
 - 3. So many people see us and how we respond or react to things, and many times we aren't even aware of their eyes being on us.
- B. All people, whether good or bad, are examples.
- C. A famous athlete made a commercial in which he stated he was not a role model.
 - 1. All of us are role models.
 - 2. Some of us are negative or poor role models, while some are good or proper role models.
- D. There are always eyes on us when around others (Romans 14:7).
- E. People see us and what we do.
 - 1. This will either lead them to God or away from God.
 - 2. Which way are we leading people?
- F. Matthew 5:16.

1. People should be lead to glorify God by our actions.
 2. If not, they will be lead to blaspheme God by our actions.
- G. The next time you are in a public place and are tempted to act or react in a way that does not bring glory to God, remember there are eyes on you and it will help you to live a better life.

V. I must do some self-examination.

- A. We must look at ourselves before we can look at others (James 1:22-25).
- B. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to do this very thing (2 Corinthians 13:5).
- C. It is easy to call out the bad in others isn't it?
1. We can spot bad behavior a mile away in others.
 2. It stands out like a sore thumb.
- D. What about in our own lives though?
1. We like to brush that under the carpet don't we?
 2. We even tend to ignore it in our lives.
- E. Matthew 7:3-5.
1. Get that 2x4 out of our eyes first.
 2. Then we can help others.
- F. We are often more judgmental of others than we are of ourselves.
- G. I believe many times that is because we hate in others what we despise about ourselves if we are truly honest.
1. We know our areas of weakness and they make us mad.
 2. When we see them in the lives of others we get to feel better about ourselves and get the heat off of ourselves.
- H. That is intellectual and spiritual dishonesty.
- I. Let us be honest examiners of ourselves and then we can help others.

From an outline by Leroy Brownlow