

Lent 2021

A CHANGE OF
HEART
THE VACCINE FOR
ARROGANCE

FEBRUARY 17-APRIL 4



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2021 LENT DEVOTIONAL

WEEK 4

Salem Bible Church

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Dr. Joseph L. Williams, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jasper W. Williams, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

Monday, March 15, 2021

Spiritual Arrogance

Scripture Reading:

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 ESV)

Devotional Reading

For the next 5 days, we will be exploring a concept known as “spiritual arrogance.” This will be our way of seeing how the spirit of arrogance impacts our lives from a spiritual perspective. The 5 ways arrogance impacts us spiritually is as follows: false sense of independence, material expectations, guaranteed success, promised favor, and deserved grace.

Each of the aforementioned perspectives are mindsets that we, the believer can have, that impacts our interaction with God. Each of them are formed from a spirit of arrogance that is manifesting within our spiritual relationship with our heavenly father. The first trait of spiritual arrogance is having a false sense of independence.

In life, we are taught to be independent so we are not depending on others to do for us what we otherwise should be doing for ourselves. To a certain degree, this is a healthy mindset that supports a strong work ethic; however, there are times when this mindset can interfere with our relationship with God.

Some people feel their hard work, education, dedication to a certain project or personal actions in general is the reason for their success, happiness, joy, peace, and progress. As a believer, we must understand all good and perfect things come from above! All things that we can do, achieve, create and accomplish start with our heavenly father giving us the ability and capacity to accomplish the things that we do.

This means, any time something good happens for us, we should give God all the glory, honor, and power! We should be certain that each day we thank God for the things he has allowed for us to do and to accomplish. This should be a basic mindset every child of God has in order to never allow the spirit of arrogance to interfere with our ability to see God in all things that occur in and around our lives.

Reflection

Have there been times in your life when you took the credit without giving God the glory for your blessings? Have there been times when you could have expressed to God your gratitude for the things, he has done for you but perhaps you did not?

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Spiritual Arrogance: I DESERVE IT!!!

Scripture Reading:

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV)

Devotional Reading

I was in a mall one day looking to pick up a few items for a trip I was preparing to take. While looking through the selection of items in front of me, I overheard a young lady justifying her large spending bill with a friend she was talking to on the phone. Her friend was asking her, “Why did you spend so much money on that outfit?” After the question was posed, the young lady said, “I work hard; I KNOW I deserve it!”

To most this story may seem like it’s not a big deal. Perhaps you have thought the same thing at one time or the other. When we work hard, we want to reward ourselves with things from time to time. The problem is when this mindset interferes with our spiritual walk with God.

When you walk around thinking you deserve the biggest and the best, you devalue the Grace and Favor that God has on your life. You feel you “deserve it” because you work hard and you put in the time for that house, car or advancement; however, your perpetual state of sin makes you no better than the man or woman who is living on the street!

Don't be arrogant and think because for your human status that it's superlative to your spiritual nature. Without God, we are nothing! Without the cleaning nature of the Blood of Jesus we will remain filthy. Without him smiling upon us, we are nothing more than a filthy rag!

If I have something great or good, it's not because I deserve it, but because God loved me enough to bless me even though I DON'T DESERVE IT!!!

Reflection

Have you ever thought you deserved the good things in life that you get? Have you ever taken the time to think that your sinful nature makes you no better than the next person?

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Spiritual Arrogance: I KNOW I Got This!!!

Scripture Reading:

The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. (Psalm 28:7)

Devotional Reading

Being a preacher of the gospel, I have learned you can never know for sure how a sermon will be received UNTIL it has been preached! There have been times when I thought a sermon would be great and it was awful and likewise there have been times when I thought a sermon would be terrible, but it seemed to be greatly received. What I have learned in life is you NEVER assume you “GOT IT” because when you do, you will learn that you don’t!

One of the corner stones of our relationship with God must be our faith in God! Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen. This means I must trust in God in the times I don’t see what the outcome will be. Trusting in God has nothing to do with how prepared you are for a given situation. Trusting in God is admitting within myself that the outcome is in God’s hands!

How many times have you taken this for granted? How many times have you assumed things would work out because you did things the “right way?” Life does not work like this. Sometimes we can appear to have it all together and still lose at the end! Likewise, there are times when everything is messed up but God allows us to come out unscathed!

The key to our faith needs to be ALWAYS trusting in God no matter the situation. No matter how big or small it is; I must place all my faith in God. I must know that the outcome is in God's hands and whatever it is, after I have done my best, I will accept it!

Reflection

Have you had times in your life when you depended upon yourself to do something you should have entrusted in God's hands?

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Spiritual Arrogance: Why Favor ISN'T Fair

Scripture Reading:

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands.

(Psalm 90:17)

Devotional Reading

We have all heard and used the term, “Favor Isn’t Fair!” The question is, what does that term really mean? It means that the favor of God is given out indiscriminately. It means God’s favor isn’t given to people who seemingly deserve it or withheld from people who follow all the rules.

This term means we will see instances when “bad” people are given great things and opportunities! Likewise, there will be times when “good people” are experiencing great tragedy in their lives.

One of the greatest stories of favor in the Bible is the story of Joseph. The Bible speaks that he was his father’s (Jacob) youngest and favorite child. Jacob gave his son a coat of many colors and this coat was a symbol that created envy in the lives of his elder brothers.

Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery. They thought this would be his end when in actuality it was a part of his comeback story! In the end, Joseph rose to power and was in a position of Power in Egypt. His brothers saw him in that position and had to eat their words and their poor actions against him.

The point of this message is this: Why did God have favor over the life of Joseph? The answer is no one knows! God gives his favor to those he wants to have it. Clearly it seems like the favor of God that's on the lives of people aren't for them, but rather present to create something that becomes an asset in God's kingdom.

The point being made in today's lesson is this: If the favor of God is on you, what are you going to do with it to advance God's kingdom!? Favor isn't about YOU it's about GOD!!

Reflection

How do you see God's favor on your life? What are some things that have happened to and for you that you know you don't deserve?

Friday, March 19, 2021

Spiritual Arrogance: Greedy GRACE

Scripture Reading:

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. (2 Corinthians 12:8-9 NIV)

Devotional Reading

On yesterday we spoke of favor, but today we will talk about grace. What's the difference? Are the two one in the same? The Grace of God seems to manifest as "sufficiency" meaning I have just enough to get by or through where I am or what I am going through. Favor seems to manifest as "abundance." The favor of God seems to be applied to random people but always for the advancement of heavenly kingdom things etc.

The problem with Grace is people sometimes feel they deserve it or that it is a part of the "package deal." People often times expect it and want to collect God's grace; therefore, the title of today's devotional is "Greedy Grace."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls the phrase "Cheap Grace." This means grace that is obtained without discipline or commitment. This is the person who lives any kind of way; yet he or she expects to be the recipient of God's grace.

This is a spirit of not only arrogance but also ignorance. Arrogance because we once again feel God “owes” us grace. Ignorance because we ignore the fact that our sinful life are liabilities for God’s kingdom advancement.

All the grace that you and I see in our lives has made its way on a person who doesn’t deserve it! If we live with this understanding, it will cause us to engage with the world, ourselves and God differently. We will have a spirit of gratitude and not a spirit of haughty expectation!

Reflection

Have you taken advantage of God’s Grace over your life? Have you been guilty of wanting “Cheap Grace?”