

“The Influence of Life: The World or The Spirit III”

Ephesians 5:18-21 (PHILLIPS)

15-21 Live life, then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning and purpose of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days. Don't be vague but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of God. Don't get your stimulus from wine (for there is always the danger of excessive drinking), but let the Spirit stimulate your souls. Express your joy in singing among yourselves psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making music in your hearts for the ears of God! Thank God at all times for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And “fit in with” each other, because of your common reverence for Christ.

- * What truly “stimulates” you?
- * From what do you get your influence in life?
- * What gives you the most “charge” in life?
- * Since Paul uses the example of wine, the question may be; What are you intoxicated with?

1 John 2:15-17 (PHILLIPS)

15-17 Never give your hearts to this world or to any of the things in it. A man cannot love the Father and love the world at the same time. For the whole world-system, based as it is on men's primitive desires, their greedy ambitions and the glamour of all that they think splendid, is not derived from the Father at all, but from the world itself. The world and all its passionate desires will one day disappear. But the man who is following God's will is part of the permanent and cannot die.

- I. Compromise in thoughts, motives and behaviors can come upon us all! A firm foundation of God's expressed standards, His Word, is what instructs and empowers us to live a Godly and holy life!

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NLT)

19 So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. 20 Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. 21 We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. 22 Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

- A. Remember, this series of messages have been about the question of what influences us; the world or The Spirit?

1. What is important to see from scripture is the influence of God in our lives happens from the INSIDE OUT!
2. Contrary to what some of us have been taught, His Spirit dwells within us and influences us from the inside out!
3. Everywhere you turn in scripture we see God's promised indwelling Spirit to help, encourage and empower us!

Ezekiel 36:27 (NLT)

27 And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.

John 14:16-17 (NLT)

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NLT)

16 Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?

2 Timothy 1:14 (NLT)

14 Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you.

Romans 8:11(NLT)

11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

- B. One of the truths this reveals is that during my devotion time, during my work, during my leisure and even during challenges and tragedy... He is there because...He is literally there!

II. In the letter to the Hebrew Christians we see much said about "entering into rest." (in chapter 4)

- A. There are many indications that this is not merely when we "go to heaven" but rather we can enter that rest now!

1. We can rest when we trust God with our life!
2. When we trust Him in our circumstances and situations!

3. Obviously the ultimate rest is when we see Him face to face!
- B. Right in the middle of this very descriptive explanation of the rest that's available for God's people the writer injects something very strange and maybe even awkward!

Hebrews 4:12 (TPT)

12 For we have the living Word of God, which is full of energy, and it pierces more sharply than a two-edged sword. It will even penetrate to the very core of our being where soul and spirit, bone and marrow meet! It interprets and reveals the true thoughts and secret motives of our hearts.

1. The scripture, the written Word of God, is His expression of His promises and will to His creation!
 2. I am so grateful that we have preserved for us these written expressions from the heart of God!
 3. Remember, they are "living and full of energy!"
 4. In light of God's expressed words and will, our thoughts and motives are exposed!
 5. These words are so precious, let's NEVER use them to beat people up or control people. Rather let us use them to show people a loving Father Who wants what's best for us!
- C. God's expressed Word is the expression of His life!

Psalm 119:89 (NASB)

89 Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven.

Psalm 138:2 (NASB)

2 I will bow down toward Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your loving kindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name.

Ultimately, the Word became Flesh and God's expression became obvious...