

Looking in Mirror God Holds, January 23–26, 2025

WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES? **Circle Two Opportunity...**

To become better and better disciples of Christ TOGETHER so we can face **anything** through...

1. Deeper learning of Biblical truth
2. Stronger “iron sharpening iron” relationships

Ephesians 4:12–16 (ESV)

This Learning Community is about processing together... what did you experience and learn Sunday... what are you continuing in response... what questions do you have... what do you need to SLO forward?

Hebrews 12:6–11 (ESV) (pew Bible page 1009)

1. Context for God’s words to us.

- † One of God’s most loving actions is to confront, rebuke, correct
- † One of our most loving responses is to REPENT

2. God’s words to us are invitation to good.

- † For *everyone* – no exceptions
- † Those who love God *desire* to be corrected, no matter how it hurts
- † REPENT, whether aware or unaware, is the response.

3. God’s words to us.

FYI: Not all of these apply to all, but at least one applies to you

The greatest conviction may come in words to your soul from the Spirit rather than words to your ears.

“Of which you are unaware” is an important facet.

After each statement is read ask God, “Is this for me?”

NOTE: if these words are from the Spirit there will be SOUL-DEEP conviction that brings sorrow.

Human instinct is denial, resist, make excuses – to TURN AWAY instead of embrace

- ➔ You believe you are doing better in following Me than you are because you are comparing to yourself or others instead of to Christ
- ➔ Your comfort, ease, possessions, pleasure has made it easy to:
 - ✓ believe you are fully following Me when you are not...
 - ✓ make excuses instead of repent...
 - ✓ ignore or procrastinate obeying and not feel guilty...
 - ✓ straddle the fence of living for Me and living for the world...
 - ✓ spend hours on entertainment and neglect adequate time with Me so that you are more conformed to the world than you realize ...
 - ✓ hold on to hurt, unforgiveness, anger and justify it instead of repent...
- ➔ You know you are to carry a cross, but the cross you carry is a varnished, beautiful decoration you admire instead of the blood stained, splinter covered instrument of death that turns stomachs
- ➔ You intellectually believe in Heaven and hell but you do not live for Heaven and you do not care that people are going to hell
- ➔ You know that I prioritize giving yourselves to sacrificially love Me and people but you do not even understand sacrifice. You view inconvenience as sacrifice and pat yourselves on the back for being inconvenienced while you avoid opportunities to sacrifice for Me and people I give you.
- ➔ Denying yourselves is so much more than you even understand
- ➔ You are allowing and excusing behavior that should not be allowed because you want to be nice
- ➔ You say you trust Me but are preoccupied with worries and fears
- ➔ You have addictions you are excusing that prevent you from fully serving Me...& you don’t see the impact.

- ➔ There are works of the flesh still present and less fruit of the Spirit produced than you think – not so much the “BIG” sins as the subtle sins that often do more damage – anger, jealousy, division, gossip, impurity, poor stewardship and more.
- ➔ You talk about speaking the truth in love but fail to speak parts of the truth that are important because it’s uncomfortable – and that is NOT love.

Galatians 5:7–9, 16-17, 24-26 (ESV) ⁷You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the **desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other**, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

What do we do with this?

REPENT: Accept the truth ➔ In sorrow confess and surrender ➔ Turn around, continue as a lifestyle

When you truly REPENT you will experience: a new level of freedom and the fruit of the Spirit
a stronger sensitivity to God’s voice and nudges
more ability (power) to obey others...

Big Points for Pastor Herb:

- † God is putting a lot of effort into us
- † A model as a point of reference –
Philippians 4:9 (ESV) What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- † Others WANT correction too – **MY PRIDE**
- † Unaware – conviction of sins of which we are largely unaware
- † Repent! is the response to conviction and correction
- † Adequate time with God required
- † Public declaration is attack on dark powers of enemy
- † Sunday was not a destination but to turbo charge us to next level of living in step
- † Holding each other accountable at a high level is essential – truth in love

Takeaways...

