

Profile of a Healthy Spiritual Life

March 5, 2016

Last year I had the experience of watching a co-worker reduced from a healthy, vibrant able-bodied man to a cancer riddled, thin, sickly person in just a few short weeks. His life ended within a few months of his diagnosis. Just as a doctor discerns unhealthy physical conditions by comparing certain symptoms and examinations, so spiritual conditions are determined to be either "hot or cold" using the Bible to check a person's spiritual condition. Revelation 3'14-17 says this: And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write "These things say the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish that you were cold or hot So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth."

This church claimed to be rich and successful and to have everything that they needed but the reality was that they were unaware of how bad off they really were. They were pitiful, poor, blind and naked God told them to buy gold from him that had been refined in a fire and it would make them rich They were told to buy white clothes from Him to wear to cover their shameful nakedness. They were told to buy medicine for their eyes so that they would be able to see Verse 19 says that God corrects and punishes everyone He loves. He calls on them to turn away from their sins "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your door' If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and we will eat together. Everyone who wins the victory will sit with me on my throne, just as I won the victory and sat with my Father on his throne If you have ears, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches" Let's look together at 1 Thessalonians chapter 5.

Victorious Christians are

- 1 Joyful in their faith (verse 16) Are you rejoicing in the salvation that Jesus Christ provided for you? Philippians 4:4 says to always be glad becausev of the Lord Paul repeats it a second time. Be glad.

I think of Mary Magdalene who was delivered of seven demons by the power of Jesus Christ She was happy and thankful for the change in her life and she followed Jesus to the very end She was determined to anoint his body after the Passover and when she and other women walked along, one of them asked, "Who will roll away the stone?" They continued walking They didn't allow any barriers to keep them from their mission When they found the stone had been rolled away and the tomb was empty, Mary Magdalene stood in the garden weeping and Jesus approached her. He asked her why she was crying She assumed he was the gardener and she replied, "Sir, if you have taken his body away, please tell me so I can go and get him." So deep was her gratitude and love for Jesus that she was willing to go to any

length to take care of his body that had been laid in the tomb. How happy she was when Jesus called her by name for then she recognized Him.

In John 15, Jesus said that He is the true vine and his Father is the vinedresser. Those who do not bear fruit are taken away, and the fruitful vines are pruned so that it will bear more fruit He promises us that if we abide in Him, He will abide in us and whatever we ask in his name, He will do it so his Father will be glorified Jesus said, "As my Father loves me, so I love you" If you keep his commandments, you abide in his love even as Jesus obeyed his Father's will and He abode in His love He said that He spoke these words so that His joy would remain with his people and that our joy would be full We are commanded to love one another.

2 Abstain from evil, verse 22. The Bible tells us how to protect our thinking and our minds. In Philippians 4.8 it says to think about things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, whatever is commendable, excellent and things that are worthy of praise. Proverbs 3:5-7 tells us to trust in the LORD with all our hearts and not to lean on our own understanding. In all our ways acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths. Don't be wise in your own eyes, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. In 2 Timothy 2.19 it says that God knows those who are his and everyone who names the name of the LORD must depart from iniquity.

Romans 12:2; 12:1-2, tells us not to conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of you mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect 2 Peter 1:15 says that God called us to be holy in our, conduct just as He is holy. Ephesians 5:2 tells us to imitate Christ. Titus 1 12 says that we are to be trained to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and are to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present world

We can learn much on how to be victorious over temptation from the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. He had been sold into slavery by his jealous brothers only to face temptation from his master's wife who was determined to seduce him.

Joseph took responsibility for his own actions regardless of the fact that he was a slave and the seductive woman was married to his master. When she tried to persuade him to commit adultery with her, he answered, "How could I do such a thing when I have been entrusted with everything in my master's house except you because you are his wife?" He also recognized sin for what it was and didn't try to make excuses for yielding to the temptation. He refused to sin against God for his relationship with God was more important to him than enjoying the pleasure of sin for a short time He didn't want to grieve God and disappoint his creator. When he recognized what the woman's intention was concerning him, he refused to be in her presence as much as he was able to avoid it. Don't flirt with sin for you are in

danger of getting sucked into sin's web if you attempt to see how close you can get to it without actually falling into it.

Put guards around your heart, your home, and your family. Cherish them and refuse to allow Satan to deceive you into compromising your convictions.

Even though Joseph was a slave, he saw himself as a child of God. He had been visited with visions and dreams and he refused to jeopardize his relationship with his heavenly Father. We are children of the King of Kings. Don't allow Satan to entertain you with the temptations of this evil world Use God's Word to protect yourself. When Joseph couldn't avoid contact with his enemy, he slipped out of his coat, leaving it in her hands and fled the scene He didn't stop to discuss his faith in God; he didn't explain his position again as he had previously; he ran as if his life depended on it. He didn't even return at a later time to retrieve his coat. That coat was used as "proof" that he had done wrong by Potiphar's wife. Once again, his coat was used to cover a lie, just as his brothers had used his coat of many colors to deceive his father into believing that a wild animal had killed him after they had sold him into slavery. God's hand was on Joseph and in time, he was elevated to the highest position in the land of Egypt next to Pharaoh. God vindicated his servant.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 reminds us to stay in communication with God Don't stop praying and never be in a position where you cannot stop and pray to your heavenly Father. Verse 18 tells us to be thankful. An unsatisfied soul is an open gate for Satan's seductions Desire to be obedient to God's word and instruction. Stay open to the Holy Spirit and never quench the Spirit. God uses many things to prick the conscience (show a way of escape to those who are facing temptation). See 1 Corinthians 10:13 It may be the pastor's sermon, a wise counselor, a gospel tract, a hymn on the radio or a radio preacher. It may come to you' through television or a movie It may speak to your heart while reading the Scriptures, don't ignore the voice of God however it comes to you In verse 21 it tells us to test and prove all things so we can recognize what is good. As you allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify you through and through, you will find that you desire more and more the things that are positive, wholesome, righteous and full of goodness. Jesus wants to present us blameless to the Father as He keeps our spirits, souls and bodies in his care. I urge you to walk in the spirit for only then will you conquer the works of the flesh. Galatians 5:16. I want to read the poem of "If Jesus Came to your house."

Words-ofWisdom: IF JESUSTM E TO YOUR HOME.

If Jesus came to your home to spend a day or twos
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.
Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored guest,
and all the food you'd serve Him would be the very best,
and you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there -
That serving Him in your home Is a Joy beyond compare.

But when you saw Him coming would you meet Him at the door
with arms outstretched in welcome to your heavenly Visitor?
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,
or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?
Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard,
And wish you hadn't uttered that last loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?
Would you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?
I wonder if the Savior spent a day or two with you,
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you go right on saying the things you always say'
Would life for you continue as It does from day to day?

Would your family's conversation keep its usual pace,
and would you find It hard each meal to say table grace?
Would you sing songs you always sing, and reads the books you read,
and let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go,
Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,
Or would you sigh with great relief when He as last was gone?
It might be Interesting to know the things that you would do
If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you.