

MORE

John 10:10

¹⁰ The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

This is the last installment of our series titled **M.O.R.E.**

As our theme verse expounds, Jesus said,

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

My contention with this series is that we have settled for LESS life,

Lives that are consumed with

LOVE of self

**ENTERTAINMENT or EXCITEMENT
STUFF
SENSES.**

Yet Christ came that we might have MORE

Lives full of

MEANING

OPPORTUNITIES

RELATIONSHIPS

ETHICS

In my previous messages,

We contrasted to this point

Lives of meaning versus love of self

And

Lives of entertainment versus opportunities.

Lives of full of stuff versus lives full of relationships.

My hope has been that by contrasting this you would see that what God truly has more planned for your lives.

Today I want to contrast a life driven by your senses and one that is driven by your ethics.

When I speak about driven by your senses what do I mean?

We live in a highly sensual society.

While preparing this sermon my mind raced around the things that I desire.

Tesla...

All the images we see and the sounds we take in are focused on stimulating desires within us.

Whether it is food, sexuality or our passion for the stuff we have,

We have this insatiable something going on inside us that drives us,

Compels us to consume.

The tragedy is that it often results in us making decisions based on those desires.

Purchases we should not have made.

Food and substances we should not have consumed.

Relationships we should not have embarked on.

All driven by our desires.

Where did this come from?

The Bible says,

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Genesis 3:6

She saw...

A hint that this is about the senses.

Good for food – taste.

Delight to the eyes – sight.

Desired to make one wise – gratification.

All sensual words.

Enticed, the text tells us that she ate of the fruit.

That's why the Bible says,

But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Romans 7:8

The result is we are driven by our senses,

And this due to our sinful nature.

The Bible says,

...each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. James 1:14-15

Jesus said,

“What comes out of a person is what defiles him. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.” Mark 7:20-23

We are broken.

The tragedy is

We think we can escape the repercussions of our wicked desires.

But God says otherwise.

The Bible says,

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption,

**but the one who sows to the Spirit will
from the Spirit reap eternal life.
Galatians 6:7-8**

These desires are not from God.

We live in a world where we are told that
these desires are “normal”.

Yes. They are.

Sinful.

The Bible says,

**For all that is in the world—the desires of
the flesh and the desires of the eyes and
pride of life—is not from the Father but is
from the world. 1 John 2:16**

They find as their source our sinful nature.

This is not from God.

That's why the Bible warns:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:15-17

Pursuing our desires has at least three negative impacts on us:

- 1. They destroy our relationships**

We become consumed by the desires at the expense of our relationships.

The Bible says:

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. James 4:1-3

2. They take captive our minds

We begin to obsess over them.

They become the center of our focus.

Jesus, knowing this about us, in speaking of the seeds sown amongst the thorns said,

And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for

other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. Mark 4:18-19

What is interesting about them is that in speaking of them,

They do not grow up but instead are overtaken by the thorns.

In short, He is saying that our worldly desires have the potential to overtake our desires for Him.

Who of us has not been overtaken in our desire for more “pleasant” things when we are engaged in the things of God?

That’s why Paul declares,

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of

evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. 1 Timothy 6:9-10

3. They corrupt our desires.

We become more and more perverted in our passions.

As a result of our sinful pursuits the Bible says,

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. ²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a

debased mind to do what ought not to be done. Romans 1:26-28

God's remedy: ethics.

Ethics is defined as:

“Moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conducting of an activity.”

We are called to be governed by what we believe, not what we desire or feel.

Our feelings have the power to deceive us.

Jeremiah 19:9 declares,

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? Jeremiah 17:9

Proverbs 21:17 says,

17 Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man... Proverbs 21:17

Paul declared in 2 Corinthians 11:3

But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3

As a result, we must be driven to follow after what we know about God and His righteous requirements.

Proverbs 28:26 declares,

Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered. Proverbs 28:26

The call to the Christian is to seek to find our passions in God.

The Bible says,

Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4

We are called to find our joy in Him.

The Bible says,

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4

God is looking for a people who have set their hearts on Him.

Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all of your heart...

God is looking for a people who will love Him above all things.

Jesus said,

You cannot serve two masters. You will love the one and hate the other.

God is not looking to compete with your affections for the world.

Yet we cannot help ourselves.

These desires come into our lives.

As Christ says, they come and choke out the things of God.

What do we do?

There are three things we need to do in response to our worldly desires.

- 1. Confess them.**

We must confess them for what they are,

And be honest with ourselves about where we are in them.

The Bible says,

**¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,
¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age...**

Far too often we try to rationalize them.

Christ stands waiting to forgive and cleanse us from them.

The Bible says,

If we confess our faults...

- 2. We need to remove them from our lives.**

Confession is not enough.

We must turn from them.

We must come to an understanding of their destructive nature and bring them into submission to the law of God.

The Bible says,

...destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...2 Corinthians 10:5

How do you remove them from you life?

The Bible gives two ways.

2a. The first way is kill them when we see them.

This means eradicate them when we see them in our lives.

The Bible says,

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming. Colossians 3:5-6

Christ is looking for us to demonstrate a desire to be rid of unwanted passions.

The Bible says,

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Galatians 5:24

God is looking for a people who actively move from

2b. Second, we are called to keep them from coming in the first place.

This is about resisting them.

We should flee at the first sign of their presence in our lives.

The Bible says,

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22

What does that mean?

It means to fight not to give in to them.

Peter encourages us,

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 1 Peter 2:11

Too many times we give in the pressures.

Christ is looking to give us the strength to overcome.

- 3. Finally, it is not enough remove them from your life.**

God is looking for us to replace them with godly passions

The Bible says,

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. Romans 13:14

The image here is to take off our wicked passions

And put on godly passions.

That's why Ephesians says,

...put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt

through deceitful desires,²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:22-24

Christ is looking for a people who want to renew their lives in Him.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Philippians 4:8

In closing,

God wants to transform our worldly desires into Godly passions.

It only can happen as we understand what His will is for our lives.

This will is only going to happen as I allow His Word to govern my life.

Ethics.

It was Psalm 119 that states,

**How can a young man keep his way pure?
By guarding it according to your word.
Psalm 119:9**

He goes on to say,

**I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you. Psalm
119:11**

It is only as we delight in the law of God that our passions are made right before Him.

The psalmist reminds us,

**My soul clings to the dust; give me life
according to your word! Psalm 119:25**

He says,

If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

Psalm 119:92

That is why he closes by remind us that,

Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path. Psalm 119:105

My friends, the only way we can overcome ungodly desires is by immersing ourselves into the Word of God.

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷ For 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. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18