

Alignment (Week 5)

Small Group Lesson

In this series we have examined what it means to be righteous, self-righteous and justified. We are bringing our life into alignment by adjusting the way we see ourselves through the scriptures. Wouldn't it be great if once we understood these truths we could relax and enjoy life without ever being tempted to sin again? Well, sorry! Just because we know the truth does not mean our enemy (Satan) has given up on us and is going to leave us alone.

As men we all face daily temptations to compromise our walk with God but here is good news "We can WIN the battle of SIN!". In the next two lessons we will explore 5 reasons you do not have to lose the battle with sin. Jesus did not endure the suffering of the cross for you to live a victim's life. He desires that you live the life of an overcomer.

Look at the man next to you and say with conviction; "I'm going to win my battle with sin." Every man faces this battle. It doesn't matter who they are or what their position in life, the draw of sin is a reality. Now let's be clear, your battle may not be the same as another man. One man may battle with lust and controlling his eyes, while another struggles with being honest. One may have angry outbursts and another may be bound up with bitterness and unforgiveness against another or thoughts of racism. Sin is sin and one is just as bad as another but all have been paid for by the blood of Jesus and His death on the cross.

5 reasons you can "win" over "sin" (Here are the first two)

Reason 1 "Because I have peace with God" (Rom. 5: 1-11)

One of the great benefits that are available to believers is Peace with God. Before salvation my sin made me an enemy of God, opposing His plan for me and living as I desired (Romans 8:7). After salvation I now have peace with God.

"Peace" means "no more war." Our sins made us enemies with God, but when we are "justified" (made not guilty), there is no more hostility between us. God is no longer "angry with you" when you receive Christ because all His anger against you was directed at Jesus on the cross. We are now "reconciled" (v. 6-11).

Alignment Question: Before being saved, did you give much thought about how your sin made you an enemy of God? How does this truth adjust the way you look at sin?

What about the storms?

Because we have this peace with God, we can go through storms and trials with a different perspective. All those storms and trials do is strengthen our perseverance, our character, and our hope (v. 3-5). We also glory in tribulations. Now that sounds strange, doesn't it? The Romans had what was called a "tribula" that was pulled behind a beast of burden and stood on to crush wheat or grapes or whatever. It means to be crushed. The word "glory" here is a verb signifying an action. It means even when I go through a crushing time no matter what happens I am going to conquer this thing and I am going to give God glory through it all! All it is going to do is make me stronger. It develops my character.

Alignment Question: What does the word Character mean to you? Why is Character important?

Reason 2 "Because I am in a new race" (Rom. 5: 12-21)

Adam was the first man. Sin and death entered the world through Adam's disobedience. All people of all races received the sin nature and therefore are subject to death. When Christ came, the bible said He was the second Adam who started a whole new race of man. A new bloodline was created. This is why Jesus had to be born of a virgin. If not He would have been just another son of Adam. Christ has become the new head of a new race (v. 15). All of the goodness and favor Christ has with God belong to me because now I am "in Christ." Death "reigns" over the human race in Adam. When we come into the new "race" of Christ Jesus, death no longer has power over us (v. 17). You can't make it any more clear than this. You are either under Adam's race or you have been transferred over to Jesus' race.

Alignment Question: Coming into alignment means being "in Christ" and a new type of man. The more we walk in this new life, the more it becomes the new "natural" for us. What is the correct response when the old nature or life of man tries to assert himself?

App. Point: When you are tempted to sin, remember who you are! You are no longer a son of Adam but you are a child of God and not a slave to sin. Even the psalmist had to encourage himself in the Lord (Psalm 42:5) and tell himself to trust in God. When tempted, tell yourself "I will win the battle against sin!".

Leader: Take a few minutes and ask how men are doing in the battle. Minister to them as needed also lead your group in prayer for the names of men that your group is agreeing for their salvation. Look for opportunities to serve in outreach at your campus.