

11/13/11

## **Six Words Every Relationship Needs #5 - Transparency**

- this morning there are several very important themes converging on the life of our church...
- one of them is that we are in the middle of stewardship month...
  - we've had some marvelous testimonies here in our morning services...
    - we've also been emphasizing these truths especially in many of our ABF's...
    - but biblical stewardship has been a very important emphasis each November in the history of our church...
      - stewardship is all about being entrusted with something... God given responsibility with accountability...
      - so whether we're talking about our time, our minds, the Word of God, our families, our friendships, our giftedness, our choices, the Gospel, our money, our opportunities... all of that and so much more falls under this important heading...
      - and every November we pause and ask ourselves – how faithful are we being with what God has entrusted to us?... that's why we focus on these...
- **Four Key Principles of Stewardship**
  - 1. God owns everything, you own nothing.**
  - 2. God entrusts you with everything you have.**
  - 3. You can either increase or diminish what God has given you; God wants you to increase it.**
  - 4. You can be called into account at any time, and it may be today.**
- and we hope you're allowing these principles of stewardship to help you evaluate how you're doing in key areas of your life at this time of year...
- the culmination of stewardship month is our annual stewardship celebration...
  - that's going to be held next Sunday evening at 5:00...
  - that program has really morphed over the years... it's used to be a formal banquet over at one of the ballrooms at Purdue...
    - we used to hold it the Sunday night after Thanksgiving... and it was formal, multiple course full meal... and honestly it was a bit pricey, but many of us have fond memories of that...
  - then when we built the community center we moved it here to make the event less expensive... we also held it the Sunday evening before Thanksgiving because so many of us travel over Thanksgiving weekend...
    - and then last year we just decided to make it a dessert event... and make the tickets free...
      - and the question we always receive is – then why do we need tickets?... to be sure we have the proper amount of seating...
    - but here's the big point – we hope everyone will come, even if you haven't formally joined our church yet... because it is a key night and an important step to feel connected to what is going on around here...
    - it's kind of like our church family's thanksgiving dinner together.... just without the dinner...
      - but it is very important for us to spend time thanking God together for His many blessings upon us this past year... we would really be remiss if we didn't do that...
- an added part of the evening this year is that we'll be tallying and announcing the final total for our Faith West Capital Campaign... you won't want to miss that...

- speaking of missing that – I'm assuming that you've already made your commitment to our capital campaign we've been discussing all fall – but let me speak to the person sitting next to you who doesn't believe in peaking too early...
  - today is your last day to participate in this way at this level...
  - and I've been encouraging everyone all fall to do something...
  - don't be tokenistic with the Lord – do your best...even if you feel like your best isn't a lot right now...we're really hoping that every person and family is going to be involved in the sacrifice so we can enjoy the fruit together...
  - so please take care of that today...and then get your tickets for the banquet this am and plan to celebrate stewardship with us next Sunday at 5:00...
- so we have the convergence of the end of Stewardship Month and the culmination of our Capital Campaign...which is a lot...but around here, that's just the beginning...
- because we're entering a season of the year where outreach and community ministry are especially welcomed and can be especially effective...
- and here's what I want to encourage you to especially be thinking about and praying about in the next several weeks...that we are very intentional and mission focused as we move into all our Christmas ministries...
  - so not just, let's have a Living Nativity...but why do we have it, and how can we connect those who come who are un-churched to other ministries here – what does the connection process look like?...
  - that's true when it comes to Christmas for Everyone, and our Christmas Musical on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and our 3 Christmas Eve services, and our four services on Christmas Day...
    - what are we trying to accomplish and what specific steps can each one of us take to use those events to their very fullest?....
- now, something else I'd like you to know about Christmas is this year's Christmas Series...we want our church services to be a natural opportunity for you to invite your friends and co-workers and neighbors...
  - and we wanted to have some fun this year – we've been working really hard around here, so let's lighten it up...so we're going to talk about:
    - **That Crazy Family of Yours...**
      - we are all going to be around people in the next several weeks who are part of our extended family who are just a bit challenging...everybody has an uncle Joe...and some of it is funny and some of it isn't...
      - but what does God's Word say about relating to our extended family members and the other challenges that sometimes come with the holidays?...
      - we want to end our annual theme of **Living Life Together** by thinking about how we live wisely during the Christmas Season...that series will begin 2 weeks from today...
      - and isn't it great that there are so many ways to serve the Lord together...this convergence is very energizing if we'll allow it to be...
- now where does that leave us for today and next Sunday?...
- we're still having this very important conversation... **6 Words Every Relationship Needs...**
- so far we've talked about **Grace, Encouragement, Loyalty, Forgiveness...**this morning we want to talk about **Transparency...**
- to understand more about what that means, please open your Bible to 1 John chapter 1...page 185 of the back section of the Bible under the chair in front of you...

- while you're turning there, let me also ask you this...have you been looking for opportunities to apply what we've been studying thus far in our series?...
  - could you point to times where you tried to be more gracious, or more encouraging, or more loyal, or more forgiving?...I know that many could because of the feedback we've been receiving...
  - God calls upon us not only to be hearers of the Word, but to be doers...
- to understand this issue of transparency, please listen for the main themes as I read beginning in I John 1:1...**read 1:1-2:2...**
- one of the things I love about the book of 1 John is that like any good author, John explains the **[Introduction] - Three reasons John wrote this book:**
  - one purpose is found at the end of I John in a verse I didn't just read but one I often quote...
    - **1 John 5:13 - These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.**
  - 1. That we would have greater assurance of our salvation.**
    - another one was found in verse 3...
    - **1 John 1:3 - what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**
  - 2. That we would have greater fellowship with God and man.**
    - fellowship – the Greek word koinia...
    - then the last purpose is found in verse 4...
    - **1 John 1:4 - These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.**
  - 3. That we have greater joy.**
- so, greater assurance of your salvation, greater fellowship with God and man, and greater joy in your life everyday...
- now, any book capable of fulfilling those goals is certainly worth studying, wouldn't you agree?...
- and the one that especially dovetails with the series we're doing right now on relationships is the second one...greater fellowship with God and man...and as I mentioned a moment ago, you probably noticed a key principle here that resonates throughout this passage...
- so here's the way we'd like to divide the rest of our time...

#### **I. The Principle Stated**

#### **II. The Principle Explained**

#### **III. The Principle in Action**

#### **IV. The Principle Made Attainable**

##### **I. The Principle Stated.**

- it's pretty simple, isn't it?

##### **A. Fellowship with God comes from walking in the light.**

- **1 John 1:7 - but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**

- so, very simple, right?...the principle is clearly stated -- fellowship with God comes from walking in the God...

- but let me ask you this – what does that mean?...

- sometimes we use Christian phrases without carefully taking time to consider the actual meaning of what we're saying...

##### **B. But what does it mean to walk in the light?**

- if I asked you – have you been walking in the light this week, this month, this year...how would answer?...
- and more importantly, what evidence would you give to support your answer...
- that ambiguity is why we need to move from the principle stated to...

## II. The Principle Explained

- look at verses 8 and 10 again – but this time with the purpose of trying to more carefully understand what this phrase walking in the light means...
- **1 John 1:8 - If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.**

- **1 John 1:10 - If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.**

- when John talks about walking in the light...he's talking about having an open attitude toward admitting your sinfulness...
- I'm willing to have my sin exposed...
- that's what we mean by being transparent...allowing the Word of God to help you see ways you need to change...

- that's what light does – it exposes...here's an illustration of that from the gospel of John...
- **John 3:20 - For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.**

- add that now to our understanding of walking in the light...
- light always exposes something...

- I can prove that really quickly...ladies, does your house appear to be cleaner at high noon, or at 9:00 at night?

- And so put all of this together...

### **A. Fellowship with God comes from walking in the light, and walking in the light means having an open attitude toward having your sin exposed.**

- another way of saying that is...

### **B. There is a significant difference between being a “Genesis 3 kind of person” and a “1 John 1 kind of person.”**

- see, how did Adam and Eve respond when they were confronted with their sin?...
- was it walking in the light...was it transparent?...an open attitude toward having their sin exposed?...
- no...they ran, hid, covered it up, and tried to blame it on one another...

- and friends, we have enough on the table to begin asking some evaluative questions...
- do you walk in the light?...do you have an open attitude toward admitting your own sinfulness?...
- and how would those closest to you answer that question on your behalf?...
- now here's something else we need to throw on the table...

### **C. The question isn't the fact, but your attitude toward the fact.**

- **1 John 1:8 - If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.**
  - in case we missed the point – it’s basically restated in verse 10...
- **1 John 1:10 - If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.**
- so the question isn’t the fact...it’s your attitude toward the fact...your attitude makes all the difference...
- that’s true in so many areas of life...
  - cf. a car warranty
- do you realize one business built themselves on that issue – if you buy a tool from us and it breaks for any reason...bring it back and we’ll replace it no questions asked...
- in fact, there was a day when these words were proudly etched over every door...satisfaction guaranteed...
  - we made that tool...we promised that it would never break...if it does, bring it back and our attitude will be – we’ll make that right...right now...
    - we don’t need to know what you did...our tool failed, end of story...
    - do you know what business I’m talking about...Sears and Roebuck...
- and of course the point here is – the question isn’t the fact...it’s your attitude toward the fact...
- I mentioned an important biblical example a couple of weeks ago but we were really flying so let’s think about it again...
- it’s from the life of King David...a man who was imperfect for sure but yet he’s referred to in the NT as a man after God’s own heart...
- events like this might help us understand why...
  - at this point in his life, he’s running for his life from his son Absalom...
  - so David’s with his mighty band of men but he doesn’t want to attack his own son...
  - imagine the shame and misery that would go with an event like that...
  - and yet right in the midst of it appears this man named Shimmei...
- **2 Samuel 16:5-8 - When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came. He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left. Thus Shimei said when he cursed, “Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow! “The LORD has returned upon you all the bloodshed of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. And behold, you are *taken* in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!”**

- so here's the king of Israel, being pursued by his own son...and now there's this added burden of this guy showing up and throwing rocks and duct from up above at the king and his men saying that David's just getting what he always had coming...and that he's nothing more than a worthless fellow...

- **2 Samuel 16:9 - Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and cut off his head."**

- what would you have said in that situation...sounds like a plan?, I'm good with that?...

- **2 Samuel 16:10 - But the king said, "What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah? If he curses, and if the LORD has told him, 'Curse David,' then who shall say, 'Why have you done so?' "**

- see, there it is – maybe this is coming from the Lord...

#### **D. This principle will not affect your relationship God but your relationship with other people.**

- see, look at verse 7 one more time...

- **1 John 1:6-7 - If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**

- here's the question – when you perceive that someone has sinned against you – what do you focus on...what they did, or what you did/or need to do now?...see, are you walking in the light in your relationship with other people?...

- now, there's a very important verse that goes along with all of this...

- **Matthew 7:3 - "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"**

- cf. the electric bill...

- cf. Bethany and the bike wreck...

- cf. why do little leopards have spots?...

- see, fellowship with God...

- now, wouldn't it be great if there was some kind of test to help you to determine how well you're doing at this matter of walking in the light?...

(Principle stated, principle explained...)

## **II. The Principle in Action**

**1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

**A. Fellowship with God comes from walking in the light, and walking in the light means having an open attitude toward having your sin exposed, and you can tell how open you are to it by thinking about how many times you ask forgiveness from God and the other people in your life...**

**B. This is the capstone of the principle.**

- God doesn't expect perfection...

- now you might say...this is hard...that's an understatement...which is why the final point in this discussion is so very important...

#### **IV. The Principle Made Attainable**

**A. Jesus is your advocate.**

- your attorney...

- **Revelation 12:10 - The accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.**

**B. Jesus is your propitiation.**