

Riding High
January 13, 2013
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Isaiah 58:13-14

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

Good morning Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?!

I am excited today! I get to preach a message today that is to me like a bowl of 1905 Vanilla Ice Cream with broken chocolate covered pretzels sprinkled over the top and a cup of really good hot black coffee!

What do you delight in? You know; that which causes you to light up, to get excited; that which brings you pleasure and joy.

We hear a lot about sinful pleasure; but there are righteous pleasures as well that sinful pleasure can't begin to compare to.

Satan has sold some of you a lie that real Christian life is trading in your sinful pleasures for a life of sacrifice and suffering.

Sure, life always requires some sacrifice and suffering; but, if I'm not mistaken your sinful pleasures have already cost you a good bit of suffering and loss.

The truth is that living a real Christian life is a process of trading in your sinful pleasures for greater and righteous delights that leave the sinful stuff in the dust!

Did you not hear the promise from the Lord that we just read? Read this one:

Psalm 37:3-4

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

I know many of you pretty well by now. Some of you have gotten a hold of what it means to delight yourself in the Lord; you are doing or at least beginning to do what you do genuinely for Jesus. You are listening; paying attention; getting faithful; following; doing; giving; not holding back.

You are letting go of what needs to go and more importantly, taking hold of what needs to replace it.

Some of you are not.

I'll tell you what it's like: We are having a Thanksgiving feast; like the one at our house last Thanksgiving. We're having turkey, pheasant, quail, ribs, crisp salad, fresh vegetables, potatoes, southern cornbread dressing; and the gravy...oh that gravy! All the trimmings and we haven't even gotten to the cobbler and the pies yet!

All this while some of you are having macaroni and cheese and a hot dog and won't even taste anything else!

(Somebody said, "Let's wrap this up; I'm getting hungry!")

I feast every day of my life on the goodness of the Lord. I have never given up anything for Jesus that the Lord didn't replace it with something indescribably more wonderful.

I delight in many things.

I delight in my work; both here in God's house and out there in the world as well. (Oh, I don't love everything about it, but the accomplishment that comes from overcoming obstacles and challenges truly is a delight.)

I delight in my beautiful wife; especially when she is speaking my love language.

I delight in my children; especially when I see the Lord working in their lives.

A big fish, a nice buck, a base hit, a lead or a bass line that really comes together; my life is filled with pleasures.

Two of the greatest delights in my life are found right here in God's house with you:

One of them is seeing souls saved: I truly delight in watching folks come to the place where they finally understand and then place their trust genuinely in the Lord.

Another; maybe even more delightful than the first, is seeing my children in the Lord prosper.

I love to see God's people prosper; I know what it takes; I know how it works; and I absolutely love to see Christians walk out of Satan's prison into the glorious life of joy and delight the Lord has prepared for every one of us!

In our text of Isaiah 58, the faithful prophet was ordered to:

Isaiah 58:1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

But their sins that were dishonoring the Lord the most were not what they thought:

These Jews were very much like most of us either were or perhaps still are.

They sought the Lord; they prayed daily, they fasted, they attended worship and they delighted in doing righteous things:

Isaiah 58:2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

All this they did yet things were not working out; they were not experiencing the promises of God like they should have been.

Isaiah 58:3 Wherefore have we fasted, say *they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?...

Why, God? I'm doing what you said; I'm going to Church; I even started giving?

God answers them with the same answer He often sends to us:

...Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors.

Isaiah 58:4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this day*, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Whether it be fasting or worship or serving or giving; they were really doing it all for what they themselves desired and not for what the Lord desired.

God's answer continues:

Isaiah 58:5-7

5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 *Is not this [this is]* the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

7 *Is it not [it is]* to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh [family]?

This is the theme the Lord is addressing to us Lighthouse: we've got to get to the place where the desire of the Lord; what He wants; means more to us than our own.

1Samuel 15:22 ...Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, ...

God's promises are always "**if and then**"; if we do what He tells us, **then** we receive the promise.

"If" we can finally get past our macaroni and cheese and start tasting what the Lord truly desires for us...just take a look at the "then:"

Isaiah 58:8-14

- 8 **Then** shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rearward.
- 9 **Then** shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. **If** thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;
- 10 And *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; **then** shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noonday:
- 11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.
- 12 And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou

shalt be called, The repairer of the breach,
The restorer of paths to dwell in.

- 13 **If** thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath,
from doing thy pleasure on my holy day;
[His holy day is now Sunday, The Lord's
Day because of the resurrection] **and** call
the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD,
honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing
thine own ways, nor finding thine own
pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:
- 14 **Then** shalt thou delight thyself in the
LORD; **and I will cause thee to ride upon
the high places of the earth**, and feed
thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father:
for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

I absolutely want to see you in heaven and I will give you part of my life to show you how to make sure you are going.

I absolutely want to see you blessed so I am always going to tell you the truth because only the truth brings real blessing.

I want to see you prosper; plenty of money and possessions being the smallest part of that; I want to see you go on to become a bless-or, not just a bless-ee.

I want to see you riding high!

Today I am going to give you three simple things you can easily change that will allow all of this to happen:

I. Get more concerned about who the Lord is concerned about than yourself.

There are at least two specific areas the Bible mentions:

A. Jesus is concerned about the lost; you need to get concerned about them too. (The whole Great Commission is centered on this.)

1. You have a debt to pay. Someone loved you enough to tell you about Jesus: this is a debt of love that you owe!
2. The way you repay this debt is to pass it on.
3. What would the soul winning be like here at Lighthouse if we all were really doing what we are capable of?
4. "But I just don't have the gift for that like you do;" Bull-loney!
5. I've been hearing that my whole ministry life: other preachers who don't win souls say, "Yeah, that Brother Dill; he's got a gift all right."
6. My gift is that I am willing to consistently do the work and spend the hours it takes to teach people how to know Jesus: if that's a gift then I guess I've got it.
7. Maybe you have it too: guess how you can find out.

B. Jesus is concerned about your family.

There are two categories of family for a Christian.

1. One is your other brothers and sisters in Christ.
2. They need you; especially the baby Christians:
 - a. Watching you is how they learn to worship.
 - b. Watching you is how they learn to set spiritual priorities.
 - c. Watching you is how they learn how to honor the Lord.
3. Any one of you that a new young Christian looks up to can do or undo more at lunch after Church by your example than I can do in a dozen sermons.
4. Another category of family is your blood relatives; especially those in your own house.
 - a. Keep your kids in Church.
 - b. Set a Godly example at home.
5. Love your wife; love your husband; do it the way the Bible says to do it; get in the Word and learn what that means!
6. Use your Christian liberty to help and not to harm those you love the most.

II. Get more concerned about doing God's work than your work.

A. It is true that there is more to serving the Lord than just being in Church every Sunday.

1. It is also true that those who are not faithful in God's house accomplish little if anything for God's Kingdom.

2. Let me remind you that your employer is not your God: Jesus is!

3. I understand that sometimes you have to miss Church: the Bible even makes exception for this. (Please understand that in the New Testament Church Age, Sunday is "The Lord's Day." Saturday is still the weekly Sabbath but Sunday is the New Testament day of worship.)

4. **Luke 14:5** And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

5. This is about something rare and exceptional: when that critter keeps getting stuck every week, it is time for BBQ!

B. Revelation 1:10 calls our day of Sunday worship "The Lord's Day." That means it is His day, not yours!

1. Read this promise from our text again:

Isaiah 58:13-14

- 13 **If** thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, [that's your work] nor finding thine own pleasure, [that's your fun] nor speaking *thine own* words: [those are your excuses]
- 14 **Then** shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and **I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth**, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: **for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.**

2. I want you to ask yourself two questions: one from each of these verses:

a. Out of the six days the Lord gives you every week, is He not worthy that you be faithful to give Him one?

b. Is throwing away the promise of verse 14 worth what you've been getting instead?

III. Get more concerned about the Lord's honor than your own bank account.

A. Tithing and giving are in themselves the most elementary and basic way we have to honor the Lord.

1. Proverb 3:9-10

9 Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

2. Don't worry, I'm not going to start preaching on tithing and giving: I wouldn't want to offend anybody.

3. Except to give you a short report:

B. Our year-end contribution reports are completed and ready for distribution at the end of the month.

1. The statistics of these reports are quite revealing in a lot of ways.

2. As always we have some members who give at a very high level: I'm talking about 6, 7, 8 even 10 times that of others who actually tithe.

3. This particular group of high level givers is on the increase; even in our somewhat dismal economy this year.

4. We also have a growing group of intermediate level givers who now faithfully tithe and give.

5. And yes, we also have our largest group of givers who hit and miss and have a dismal total far below 10% of what God gave them: some are new Christians; many ought to know better by now but somehow do not.

C. Here is what I would like you to see:

1. Virtually all those midlevel givers were hit and miss givers just a short time ago.
2. Every one of those high level givers; some 10 times and more of others who are now faithful to tithe and give; started out just like the rest but somewhere a few years back made a commitment to faithfully honor the Lord...and kept it.
3. I want to ask you two questions:
 - a. The first is the chicken or the egg question: do you think those high level givers faithfully give their tens of thousands because they have the resources to do so....or do you think they have the resources to do so because they faithfully give like they do to the Lord?

(The second question is about those midlevel givers whose offerings come in like clockwork; faithfully tithing and giving every time they receive an increase.)

- b. As they keep doing what they are doing, do you think they will stay in their midlevel category or will they become high level givers?

4. For the world, this all means nothing. But if you are a real genuine Christian, your genuine answers to these two questions will determine your entire financial future.

In Conclusion:

Real Christians who live every day riding high always have these three traits in their lives:

They are more concerned about who Jesus is concerned about than for themselves.

They are more concerned about the Lord's work than they are their own.

They are more concerned about the Lord's honor than their bank account.

Wouldn't you like to live every day riding high? It is an awesome way to live!