

Speaker: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

**PRAY FOR OFFERING**

**NEXT WEEK: We are going to dive back into our series LETTERS TO THE CHURCH – REVELATION! 😊**

**Philippians 4:9a** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, **put it into practice...**

**Change isn't easy.** QUESTION. Take a moment and think about 1-3 things you need to change. What did you come up with?

**Four categories I want you to think of during the message.**

1. Relationship with God
2. Relationship with others
3. Character/reactions/sin (Be Discipled)
4. Purpose – good works and each one, reach one (Make Disciples.

**Love God, Love People, Be Discipled, Make Disciples**

SUMMER is right around the corner – today I want to encourage you to PUT YOUR FAITH INTO PRACTICE. Don't stagnate. Don't get distracted. Plan it, and then, practice it.

**Colossians 3:1–14 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. <sup>5</sup> Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup> ... anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. <sup>11</sup> ... <sup>12</sup> Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Where do we start with PUTTING OFF & PUTTING ON?

**A. Understand the process of becoming Christlike (CHANGE)**

**Example: GPS –What do you need to chart a course? Destination & current location!**

**This is the SAME with the changes we try to make within our own lives.**

Whether we are talking about a character issue, addiction, anxiety, apathy, worldliness, or parenting strategies. Understanding your starting point, your destination and the steps required to get there is critical if you want to make lasting CHANGE.

**OUR DESTINATION (TELOS)** – Become like Christ – in our actions, reactions, focus, priorities, every other area of LIFE.

**DIAGRAM:** A – B – C – D – E – F..... Z (Christlike)

FOLLOW PROCESS ON SCREEN →

1. **Destination** – becoming like Christ (perfection mt 5)
2. **Starting point – current location** – upbringing, experiences, culture, family, previous choices, etc. ALL influence your starting point, AND God determines where and when you will be born! AND determines your strengths, abilities, and weaknesses.
  - a. **FIRST STEP: “YES” to Jesus!**
  - b. **Starting: B** (trauma, poverty, addiction)
    - i. Next step? C
  - c. **Starting: E** (family loved you, loved Jesus, raised to follow Jesus, good community)
    - i. Next Step? F
3. **DIFFERENT starting points** – SAME destination! Different starting points
  - a. **CRITICAL:** Compare to someone who is starting further behind, and you may feel PRIDE and ARROGANCE and end up fence sitting your entire life – GOOD ENOUGH!
    - i. Compare yourself to someone ahead of you, and you may be paralyzed by discouragement! You aren’t there! YET!
  - b. **IMPORTANT – IF you are at F and you start acting like a C that is SINFUL**
  - c. **But a B moving to C – should be celebrated! (e.g. housing example – bath house)**
  - d. **Luke 12:47-48** to whom much is given, much will be required.
  - e. **James 4:17 (BSB)** Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do, yet fails to do it, is guilty of sin.

#### Direction TOWARDS Perfection

#### WARNINGS:

1. **Do not compare to others!** GPS determine where you are. Honest. Then move forward TOGETHER with others.
  - a. Small groups – HONEST – CONFESSION – ENCOURAGEMENT
  - b. You’ll end up
2. **Do not give in to a victim mindset** – caveat: some of you have been victimized! That is REAL. Some of you may even be in a situation now where you are BEING victimized. I am sorry.
  - a. You are MORE than a conqueror in Christ Jesus. When you stand with Him? You are the majority. PERIOD.
3. **Do not give in to “good enough” and turn into a fence sitter** and “do whatever makes you happy”
  - a. *IF you are truly doing better than the person next to you, that will be shown by how you COMPLETE the Great Commission and Command! (STOP)*

Now let’s break down how we move forward!

#### B. Put it into Practice

**Expectations are important as you follow Jesus! Many people are waiting for Jesus to simply change them from one person to the next... remember... “PUT ON... PUT OFF” we have a part to play!**

**Who wants to experience peace that passes understanding? Anyone?**

**Philippians 4:6–9 (ESV)** <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- YES – that’s what I WANT! Peace that passes understanding!

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

- **PRACTICE** – We PARTNER with God to experience His peace! (His peace is His presence!)

**PRACTICE → Regular practice is how we build skills and habits. This is NO different in our relationship with Jesus!**

**Neurons that fire together – wire together**

**Whatever you do often, you will do well – (or better than you did previously LOL)**

- **TRUE** for good things AND bad things!

**Do you have anxiety? Feel overwhelmed in parenting? Life? What are you PRACTICING?**

- E.g. phone, distraction, running, medicating?
- Or, STAR, inner healing, prayer, counselling, SMALL group, accountability, dealing with the root?

**DO you struggle with bitterness? Holding onto hurts? Forgiveness?**

- Are you working on it? Or ruminating on what the other person did?
- Rumination – overfocusing on your feelings – hurts – leads to mental health problems.
- Rumination is a key characteristic of poor mental health.
  - CAVEAT: not always a quick solution. B? Take steps towards C!

**Do you struggle with an addiction?**

- Are you dealing with your past? Working through hurts?
- Or, wondering why God hasn’t simply removed it?

**Each one, reach one – don’t know what to do? Don’t feel gifted?**

- Are you fence-sitting, waiting for God to change your heart and make you want it?
- Or, are you trying, learning, or practicing? Doing the Way? Joining Colson? Getting equipped?

**Relationship with God – you want passion?**

- I get asked that a lot. How do you cultivate that passion for Jesus and the Word?

- **Simple:** I spend time with Him when I'd rather be sleeping. I serve Him when I'd rather serve myself. I pour myself out for others when it would be easier to avoid it. EASY? NO! worth it? ABSOLUTELY.
- **You can't practice being the best phone scroller and expect to love & enjoy time in the Word.**
- DAILY PRACTICE IS BEST – make daily habits to seek God
- Power of 4 – four or MORE. Equals CHANGE.

**REMEMBER:** God has given us FREE WILL – He wants us to CHOOSE to pursue Him!

**Acts 17:24–27 (ESV)** <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it... that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

- If we pursue Him – we become like Him! This is a process as He slowly RESTORES & RENEWS us from the inside out!
- **The WARNING – if we serve ourselves or idols instead? We become like them!**

**Psalm 115:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.

**1 John 2:28–3:10 (ESV)** If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. <sup>1</sup> ... <sup>4</sup> Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.... <sup>6</sup> No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. <sup>7</sup> Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. <sup>8</sup> Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning... <sup>9</sup> No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. <sup>10</sup> By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

- **QUESTION: What are you practicing?**
- **ANSWER that and you will know what direction you are headed in.**
  - Time – Focus – Money – Passion – what are you practicing?
  - Great Commission & Great Command!
- **IF someone looked from the outside and guessed what you were practicing to BECOME?**
  - Would they say, JESUS?
  - Would they say, like everyone else?

**Hebrews 5:12–14 (ESV)** <sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, <sup>13</sup> for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

- How do I mature in my faith? PRACTICE – ability to discern right from wrong – get in the Word. Study it. Know it. LIVE IT. PRACTICE IT.

**Ezra 7:10 (BSB)** <sup>10</sup> For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, to practice it, and to teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel.

**Romans 12:13 (BSB)** <sup>13</sup> Share with the saints who are in need. Practice hospitality.

- **what are you practicing to become?**

**1 Timothy 4:11–16 (ESV)** <sup>11</sup> Command and teach these things. <sup>12</sup> Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. <sup>13</sup> Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. <sup>14</sup> Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. <sup>15</sup> Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.

- How do you grow as a minister? Disciple of Jesus? PRACTICE love, faith, conduct, speech, purity! Even your gifts – how do you get better? PRACTICE using them.

**2 Peter 1:3–15 (ESV)** His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

- What about this! It says His Divine POWER does it!

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ...

- BECAUSE we have been given His Divine power – the HOLY SPIRIT – FOR THIS REASON – MAKE EVERY EFFORT.... To PRACTICE...

Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

On that note! I know! This is basic stuff! BUT CRITICAL – we want to stand before Jesus with confidence! We also want to pass on our faith to our kids and grandkids and the next generation! AND we want to win a dying world and culture to JESUS!

### **C. Plan to PRACTICE this Summer! Your practices determine your direction**

1. Relationship with God – daily time in the Word & prayer
2. Relationship with others – forgiveness, changing actions/reactions, serving, encouraging, etc.
3. Character/reactions/sin – anxiety, addiction, bitterness, selfishness, worldliness, etc.
4. Purpose – good works and discipling others (each one, reach one)

**What are one or two steps you will put into practice this summer?**

**SPECIAL: Abide**

**AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9 AM and 11 AM**

**MARANATHA!! Come soon, Lord!**

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**SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024**

**Cruise ship → → → → Battleship**

- 1. Life on Mission:** Churchwide commitment to "Each One, Reach One"
- 2. Heart of Southland:** 500 people - Prayer Summit, Set Free! & Bible in a year
- 3. Next Gen:** ❤️ Passion for Jesus, memorization, & finding identity in Christ
- 4. Church Renewal:** Double funding, mentors & CRI Churches in Canada
- 5. Persecuted Church & Israel:** Salvation, hope & perseverance - MARANATHA