



Date: June 14, 2009

Title: "Strive" (Part 6 of the GROW series)

Text: Hebrews 12:1-14

Speaker: Brad Evangelista

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Intro: In this final message of the Grow series, we take a look at Hebrews 12. In this chapter, the writer encourages us to strive for holiness. What exactly does it look like to strive? That's question we tackle in this message.

1. WE ARE THE MOST WEIGHTED DOWN CULTURE IN HISTORY. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

1.1 Question: What is sin?

Well, we could go through the list. But I think the Bible and faithful Christianity gets a bad rap when culture portrays the Bible or God as some sort of killjoy. In other words, these lists of sins in the Bible are just some old school holiness stuffy way of living our lives that saps us of the joy of life. NOT SO! God is for our ultimate and true joy! But the world lies at us and tries to make us think the opposite. Let's talk three categories:

Money: It's more joyful to give and be generous than to hoard.

Sex: It's so much better when you commit yourself to one person in marriage.

Power: It's so much better when you use your gifts to serve others than to prop yourself.

1.2. Question: What is a weight?

Can be morally neutral things that individually can be justified or innocent, but when piled up or made into an idol these things become the weight that has the same effect of sin—it destroys us.

2. TRIALS AND DIFFICULTY PROVE OUR AUTHENTICITY AS CHILDREN OF GOD. (Hebrews 12:3-11)

2.1 Common Objection: If God loves me, then why would he let me go through this _____ ?

2.2. We all need a Copernican Revolution: Nicolas Copernicus—polish astronomer in the 1500's who formulated a heliocentric view of the universe, which is to say that he rightly displaced Earth as the center of the solar system and said that the Sun was the center of the universe and everything rotated around it. The world is not about us—it's about God

2.3 What's the point?

We should rejoice in all things—whether hungry or well fed because God is able and more than willing to glorify himself in all situations in our life. That's the major point of the Paul's letter to the Philippians!

3. STRIVE FOR PEACE, AND FOR HOLINESS WITHOUT WHICH NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD. (Hebrews 12:12-14)

Couple of things to be said about STRIVE

3.1 This verse is not preaching that we are saved by our works or by our grit and effort.
Read it in light of Hebrews 10:14

3.2 We live in an age of spiritual lazyness that likes to cry "Legalism!"

3.3 Question: What is legalism?

1. Taking the Biblical imperatives and thinking that that is where we get our righteousness (Matthew 23).
2. Taking extra-biblical requirements and hanging them on top of the Scriptures