



Pursuit of Holiness

Chapters 13 thru 15



Have you sensed a theme?

- Have you noticed any common threads running through the ABF lessons and the sermons?
- We're hitting the same theme from a number of different angles...



Picking up where Jared ended...

- Our responsibility for pursuing holiness
 - Conviction & Commitment
 - Perseverance & Discipline
 - Guarding our Body & Spirit
- What's underneath all of these?
 - Our will! The will to hold a conviction, to persevere, etc...

What is our will?

- “It is the will that ultimately makes each individual choice of whether we will sin or obey. It is the will that chooses to yield to temptation, or to say no. **Our wills, then, ultimately determine our moral destiny, whether we will be holy or unholy in our character and conduct.**” (p.124)

The Problem: Our will is weak. [1]

- Romans 7 from two weeks ago, again:
 - “I do not understand my own actions. *For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate...* [N]ow it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. **For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.** For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.”
(vv15, 17-20)

The Problem: Our will is weak. [2]

- Paul got it...
 - We are no longer under the reign of sin...
 - Where we previously were capable of nothing but rebellion, we can now will/choose to be holy.
 - But we frequently make the wrong choice!
- Why? And how do we fix it?

Garbage in, garbage out...

- “The point of all this is to emphasize ... the interrelation of the mind, emotions, and will. **While the will is the ultimate determiner of all choices, it is influenced in its choices by the strongest forces brought to bear upon it.**”
(p.125)
- What influences your will?
- How do we strengthen our will properly?

The Foundation of Everything...

- Psalm 119: 9-16

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!

I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes! With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth. In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. *I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.*

Guard your heart! [1]

- What caused Eve to sin?
 - “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate...” (Genesis 3:6)

- We must watch our desires carefully! Our desires war against our will and can topple it.
 - “[W]e should watch over [our desires] diligently and bring the Word of God to bear on them constantly. This is not asceticism; it is spiritual prudence.” (p.127)

Guard your heart! [2]

- Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. So **flee youthful passions** and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- Joseph and Potiphar's wife! (Genesis 39)

It's a nasty habit...

- The old phrase is true: “We’re creatures of habit”
- We must put our sinful habits to death.
 - “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (Romans 8:13-14)
 - Note: We must depend on the Spirit of God in this endeavor. “The determination that “I’ll not do that anymore,” based upon sheer human resolve, has never once broken the shackles of sin.” (p.133)

Healthy Habits

- “[I]n dependence on the Holy Spirit, we must systematically work at acquiring the habit of saying no to the sins that so easily entangle us.” (p.133)
 - Frequent repetition of the *right* behavior
 - Never let an exception occur
 - Be diligent in all areas to ensure success
 - Don’t be discouraged by failure

Full of Faith [1]

- Hebrews 11 – Our heroes
 - “by faith” occurs 19 times in the Hebrews 11 (ESV).
 - Faith is not *only* needed for salvation...
- We must believe and value Christ above all other things... We must **live by faith!**
 - Because living a Godly life is often in stark opposition to the world around us!

Full of Faith [2]

“For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. **You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine.** It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land...

The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and dwell in it securely. And if you say, ‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?’ **I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will produce a crop sufficient for three years.**” (Leviticus 25:3-5, 19-21)



Q & A

- We'll never get to this slide, either. But if we do...