

THE SPIRITUAL DISEASES OF COMPARING, MEDDLING AND DEFLECTING

JOHN 21:15-25

Sermon Outline & Devotional Guide

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- † James 1:22-25, “Do what God’s teaching says; don’t just listen and do nothing. When you only sit and listen, you are fooling yourselves. ²³Hearing God’s teaching and doing nothing is like looking at your face in the mirror ²⁴and doing nothing about what you saw. You go away and immediately forget how bad you looked. ²⁵But when you look into God’s perfect law that sets people free, pay attention to it. If you do what it says, you will have God’s blessing. Never just listen to His teaching and forget to apply what you heard” (ERV).
- † John 21:15-19, “So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Tend My lambs.’ ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.’ ¹⁸Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.’ ¹⁹Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death He would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ‘Follow Me!’” (NASB).
- “Gird” is the Greek New Testament word [ζώννυμι; zōnnumi]. This is a term used by an executioner tying _____ around the hands of someone to the crossbeam of a cross.
- † 2 Peter 1:14-15, “. . . knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind” (NASB).
- See the word “imminent?” The Greek New Testament word translated as “imminent” is [ταχινός; tachinos]. It means “soon, swift, quickly, imminent, just around the corner.”
- † John 21:20-22, “Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, ‘Lord, who is the one who betrays You?’ ²¹So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, ‘Lord, and what about this man?’ ²²Jesus replied, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? As for you, follow Me” (NASB).
- † John 21:23, “So the rumor spread among the community of believers that this disciple (John) wouldn’t die. But that isn’t what Jesus said at all. He only said, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?”” (NASB).
- Some of the most crippling spiritual diseases in the church are the diseases of comparison, meddling and then deflecting. This will kill a church. While we madly chisel away at the foundations of peoples’ lives or issues in the church, our attempts to do this then come _____ down on us, and our lives endure _____ due to the consequences.

God’s Medicine for These 3 Spiritual Diseases

1. Accept God’s individualized _____ for you first (vv. 22, 23)

- † Joshua 24:15, “Serve the Lord alone. ¹⁵But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord” (NLT).
- † Psalms 139:13-14, “You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it” (NLT).

2. Agree to _____ God’s individualized calling on others to God.

+ 1 Corinthians 12:12, "The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ" (NLT).

3. Acknowledge that when you compare, your comparison is to another _____.

+ 2 Corinthians 10:12, "We wouldn't dare to put ourselves in the same class or compare ourselves with those who rate themselves so highly. They compare themselves to one another and make up their own standards to measure themselves by, and then they judge themselves by their own standards. What self-delusion!" (TPT).

4. Admit that human comparison always produces spiritual _____.

Additional Spiritual Diseases That Comparing, Meddling and Reflecting Cause

- (a) _____ > "I'm not measuring up!"
- (b) _____ > "I'm actually better than that person."
- (c) _____ > "I can't believe that God is blessing that person more than me."
- (d) _____ > - "I will do everything possible to make the object of my comparison miserable. . .they have no right to be enjoying that, doing that, receiving that, spending that."
- (e) _____ > because you are spending your time and energy by comparing, meddling and deflecting, this will kill the Fruit of the Spirit in your own life.
- (f) _____ > "Why keep trying? There's always someone who is better, smarter, lovelier, braver holier. . . I quit!"

5. Adjust your focus so that it is on the person of _____, not others.

- + Hebrews 12:1b-2, 3b, ". . . let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith . . . ^{3b}so that you may not grow weary and lose heart" (NASB).
- + John 21:25, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written" (NASB).
- + John 20:30-31, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (NASB).

Next Steps Devotional Guide

1. Demons and politicians are not our worst enemies. The person reflecting back to you in the mirror is. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
2. Peter having denied Jesus 3 times. After the Resurrection, Jesus confronted Peter with the same 3 questions, "Do you love Me?" Peter feeling embarrassed and ashamed, resorted to comparing himself to John, meddling in Jesus' ministry and deflecting Jesus' question from himself to the John the disciple. Jesus' response to Peter was, "Leave John to Me. I am talking about you." Jesus is talking to us today, "Will you let Me heal you of these spiritual diseases and will you follow Me free of these spiritual diseases until the day of your death? Will you do this? Why or why not?"
3. When it comes to personal failure, we either push others down so we feel less inferior or we allow shame to bury us at the bottom of the world. Both are wrong God says. Which do you typically do and why?
4. We looked at God's 5 medicines or prescriptions for the spiritual diseases of comparison, meddling, and deflecting. Which one do you need to start with first and why?
5. When it comes to your own spiritual relationship to God, are you a Joshua 24:14b-15 person or a how Paul describes the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 — a church filled with people who were infected with the diseases of elitism. When you look in the mirror, do you see reflected back a person who wants to know Jesus Christ and the power of His Resurrection or a person who compares, meddles and deflects?
6. We saw 6 other spiritual diseases that spiritual diseases of comparing, meddling and deflecting cause. Which of these 6 have you experienced and how did the Lord help you get through them?
7. John wrote that if he were to write everything Jesus said, taught and did, there would not be enough books to contain it all. What do you wish John had included that he did not and why? What difference would that make to your walk with the Lord and why?
8. Will you let the theme of your life be to share and tell your story to others or will you just choose to be a person who compares, meddles and deflects due to an elitist or envious attitude?