

The Seven Deadly Sins and the Fruit of the Spirit

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 November 2010

Preacher: Dr. Paul Stevens

[0 : 0 0] I'm sorry I'm not here every week, but I know you're having wonderful sessions because I've been keeping on top of the topics that are announced every week.

This topic today is really quite close to my heart because just two weeks ago I published a book called Taking Your Soul to Work. And the nice thing about the book is that I didn't write all of it.

It was co-authored with an Asian student from Regent who's a very mature student, Alvin Ung. And he's from Malaysia. It's an East-West book, so we start every chapter with a conversation that is Asian and Caucasian.

And it's very, very interesting to do it that way. And I think it's very rich because of that experience. But the theme is that in our everyday life and in our workplace situations, we do have struggles.

Soul-sapping struggles. And at the same time, we can have the experience of growing in God, which has been called in the scripture the fruit of the spirit and in the history of the church the virtues.

[1 : 1 1] I'm going to read just a short passage, not to expound it, but just simply to give you this as a scriptural basis of our time together from Galatians chapter 5.

The acts of the sinful nature, sometimes translated flesh, but it doesn't mean the body. It means life outside of Christ as though Christ had not come.

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious. Sexual immorality, sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

And I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

And you can do these all you want. No, it says, against such there is no law, which is a beautiful expression. Now, I'd like to ask you a question. This is a cartoon.

[2 : 2 6] We find the defendant guilty of pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and sloth. Why would we never have this happen, the foreman of a jury speaking to the judge in court?

Why would that not happen? These are not criminal acts. And in fact, they're not actually sins.

They're inclinations towards sin. And I've been reading in some of the fathers and mothers of the church, and they all express that, that it's very much, these things lead to murder and to adultery and to all kinds of really harmful things for people.

So, why would none of those seven deadly sins? And that's the traditional term for those seven things which I've just named. And the reason is, they're not actually sins.

They're dispositions or attitudes. And for that reason, they were called cardinal or capital, which means from the head, since they originate in the head, mind, and heart.

- [3 : 37] And it's the dark side of our lives. The Jewish Simon Veal once said that imaginary evil is romantic and varied. Real evil is gloomy, monotonous, barren, boring, imaginary good, though it's boring, but real good is always new, marvelous, and intoxicating.
- She's a fascinating Jewess who embraced Christ, never joined the institutional church, but did join the twos and threes, which she said, it's in the tetetet that I experience the people of God.
- This is a profound quotation from Careto, who spent his life in the desert living amongst Muslims, and only by his example witnessing to Christ.
- In the depth lodges the most crucial fault, greater than any other even thought to be hidden. It rarely, perhaps, never breaks out in a single concrete action, pushing towards the surface of the world.
- But from the depths, from the inmost layers of our being, it soaks in a poison which causes extreme damage. It's a fault which appears more in general attitudes than in individual actions.
- [4 : 46] But it is this, rather than the actions themselves, which determine the real quality of the human heart. And because it's hidden, or rather camouflage, we can barely catch sight of it, and only after a long time.
- But it's alive enough in our consciousness to be able to contaminate us, and it weighs us down considerably more than the things which we habitually confess. These attitudes envelop our whole life like an atmosphere, and are present in every action or omission.
- They're hidden, or general sins we cannot rid ourselves of, laziness, or cowardness, or falsehood, vanity, from which not even our prayer can be entirely free.
- And they burden our whole existence and damage it. The time for playing games at spirituality, for let's pretend, is over. Once we got as far as knowing one's ignorance, one has got to get as far as knowing one's ignorance.
- One stands on the edge of the abyss, which separates the creature from the creator. And there one can live but on alms, on the grace that can be neither known nor grasped.
- [5 : 55] This is Carletto Carrello. Now, in case you didn't know it, commercially, the seven deadly sins sell. And so, I don't know how many of you drive a Jaguar, but there's a wonderful Jaguar advertisement that used the seven deadly sins to advertise their car.
- Pride, envy, lust, greed, gluttony, sloth, that's a good one, Jared.
- More comfortable than what you're sitting on. Considering anything else would be a sin. And I didn't actually show this, but Harper's Journal actually asked seven advertising agencies in Wall Street to advertise the seven deadly sins.
- And they came out with some pretty marvelous things. We got what we call the seven, and they're roughly parallel with what I read to you as the fruit of the works of the flesh, works of the sinful nature.
- But we got them largely through the history of the church, starting with Evagrius, who was a monk. And sometimes these monks who went into the desert to be with God.
- [7 : 22] And if you've seen the film Agora, you can have some reason and perhaps some understanding of why these monks left a worldly compromised church and sought integrity, perhaps is the word, to say in the desert.
- But in the desert, they were alone and had to deal with themselves. A bit like my president, Walter Wright, when I became dean of Regents, who said, in this job, you're going to have to deal with yourself.
- And that's what happened. And so they formulated what it is that was the soul-sapping struggles that they were dealing with in their lives. Not just in work, but in every other aspect of it.

And then Thomas Aquinas developed an extensive treatment of the seven, making a distinction between what he called spiritual sins of pride and anger, envy and covetousness and sloth, and the carnal or bodily sins of lust and gluttony, the former being preoccupied with the body of another and the latter being preoccupied with one's own body.

Gregory the Great came along in his morals. He elaborated the generative capacity of these sins. The comment I made earlier, they're not so much sins as they are inclinations to things that are really, really harmful to people.

[8 : 47] From envy there comes hatred, whispering, detraction, exaltation, at the misfortunes of a neighbor, and affliction at his prosperity.

And from anger are produced strife, swelling of the mind, insults, clamor, indignation, and blasphemies. So, we need to deal with the fact that in our everyday life, as well as in the workplace, and many of us are volunteer workers in this room, but nevertheless, whether in the home, the office, the factory, the medical clinic, the university, the school, the not-for-profit, the neighborhood institution, I'm trying to include everybody in the room here, or at St. John's, which is a workplace as well, we experience these struggles.

Some of them. And some of us experience some more than the others. Sin is whatever mars, mauls, inflates, depresses, distorts, or abandons our humanity.

We are sinners and have inclination to sin, and the inclination to sin doesn't happen in a vacuum. It happens in the context of work, and life, and relationships.

And our struggle with one or more of the seven is an arena of spiritual growth. That's the major theme I'm wanting to explore with you. Now, one of the seven deadlies is pride.

[10 : 15] And they really speak of this as the beginning of the seven, because it's the start. Egotism, where status is all important. Everything is for number one.

I became a Christian at 18 years of age. I was baptized in a Baptist church at 16, but I wasn't a Christian. And you know that's not supposed to happen, but it does happen in the Anglican church.

But at any rate, it wasn't supposed to happen. It did, but I became a Christian at 18. But I often think back to the fact that at 16, my father, who was such a gracious man, I cannot remember a single negative thing my father said to me in my entire life, except when I was 16.

He took me aside and he said, Paul, it's all for number one, isn't it? My car, my girlfriends, my position, student council, school, you know, all that stuff were number one.

Pride. Autonomy. In fact, it's the fundamental sin of the human race back in the garden, the autonomy tree. I'm going to be my own gods, as Frederick Nietzsche himself said.

[11 : 23] And you have to be then a controlled freak with that. Covetousness. Acquisitiveness. Being defined by your house or car or cottage. Finding joy in acquiring.

Your meaning is in things and you see human beings as consumers. Lust is treating persons as bodies or as objects.

Using people as instruments for personal gratification. And not treating people as image-bearing creatures. And that can happen not just outside of marriage, but even inside marriage.

Envy is constant comparing yourself with the performance of others or wishing you had someone else's gifts or talents or opportunities or calling or leading to a kind of vocational contentment.

William Perkins, the Puritan, spoke about that. That envy leads to vocational discontentment. Gluttony. Living to eat rather than eating to live.

[12 : 24] But I think parallel to it, we say sometimes so-and-so is a glutton for work or a glutton for fights.

But I think it's parallel to workaholism, which I know something about. Feeling guilty when you're not working. Constant busyness. You can't take a vacation or Sabbath.

You fill up every cancellation in your date book. It's really a spiritual issue of idolatry. And sloth is an aversion of labor through a carnal love of ease.

Anger is wrath or it's emotional manipulation using anger to control. It exhibits a lack of self-control. People can use anger to create submission.

It's really not submission. It's compliance. Compliance is a psychological adaptation to pain where it's easier to go along with it than speak up because you're going to get a volley of torrent of anger if you do.

[13 : 29] So, that's what some people do. And I invite you for just a minute to think of whether... Oh no, you don't have any of these. No. I'm looking over the group and I say, this has got to be the most holy group I've ever seen, spoken to, experienced, got to know.

So, you can't really have been experiencing any of these but I can tell you, I do. I do. And it comes out not so much in a vacuum, you know, in the middle of a church service or something or prayer time but often times in the very context of life, work, relationships, doing things and so on.

Interesting to me to try to make a parallel between the seven deadly sins and the works of the flesh. And basically, they're not absolutely parallel but pride seems to be relating to idolatry, selfish ambition which leads to discord and factions, greed, selfish ambition, lust, sexual immorality, impurity and orgies, envy into jealousy and envy, gluttony, orgies, debauchery, drunkenness.

Very interesting on workaholism which I suspect just one or two people of us in St. John's might experience but there is a, as some of you will know, workaholism is the respectable addiction.

In fact, that's the title of a book by Barbara Killinger and she has a whole chapter on erotica and is saying that it's an experience of eroticism to go to work for a workaholic.

[15 : 13] It's a kind of, I'm not going to use the word orgasm, I just did. But that's gluttony and then wrath, fits of rage and I don't think sloth actually appears in the works of the flesh.

But we're in a culture where people are talking about values. Even churches now have value statements but all businesses seem to feel like they've got to have their values up front.

So you go into a retail store and they might say we value quality merchandise at lower prices you know, or whatever it is. That's, values are cherished ways of behaving.

That's probably the simplest definition of what values are. The problem with values is that they have no opposites. Especially in a postmodern culture, you have your values and I have my values.

They have no opposites. And it's very interesting to reflect on that because values are something that everybody's talking about today. In education, in business, and even in Christian enterprises we have our values.

[16 : 27] Yeah, that's fine. But are those values in any sense absolute? Are they... How do you know that even? They don't have any opposites. Whereas virtues have opposites.

They have vices. virtues. And virtues are more than just cherished ways of behaving. They are, in fact, ingrained character traits that are a building to others and oneself.

See, there's quite a difference. And I think the fruit of the Spirit is talking about really virtues. It's about ingrained character traits which God, the Holy Spirit, reveals in us in a kind of cooperation, a divine human cooperation.

We can't pull ourselves up by the bootstraps but neither does God, I think, give us those wonderful dimensions of fruit spirit, spirit fruit, without our cooperation.

And spirit fruits are outworkings and inworkings of the Holy Spirit forming Christ-like character. So you see the parallel between spirit fruit and virtues.

[17 : 36] In the classical world, the virtues were taught and encouraged and to be gained by moral education. And interestingly, you could say there's some difference between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church on this matter because Roman Catholic educational systems believe that you really can gain virtues by moral education in the school system.

And Protestants are not so sure about that. But it's there and it's one of the distinguishing marks between Catholicism and Protestantism. Now, the Christian faith has not actually totally adopted you might say the classic Greek world's view of virtues, but adopted them in a way as an expression of character traits which are desirable for the people of God.

You don't find in the New Testament the classic virtues as a list. And even in Philippians when he says, you know, think on these things, and he gives a list of things that are really good, it's an ad hoc list.

He's not saying, you know, here's a definitive list of character traits which you are to, with God, to develop in your person. There's nothing like that in the New Testament.

But they are in fact, somewhat parallel. And so, I'd like to spend a moment on the virtues. Prudence, which is roughly parallel to wisdom.

[19 : 17] I find it's fascinating because I'm in the area of marketplace theology and teaching courses on spirituality and work as well, that there are now several books on virtues in business.

Not just values, but virtues. British businessperson, Clive Wright, for example, *The Business of Virtue* is the title of his book.

And Conger, whom I quote here, this virtue is practiced when we habitually assess in the light of moral standards the situation or issue around which a decision is required.

And the assessment includes the likely favorable and unfavorable consequences of the decision for ourselves as well as for others. Some of you may know that wisdom in the Bible isn't just information, it's actually practical know-how to deal with the issues of life.

And so it's more than just having a thought, it's actually the weavers had wisdom. Bezalel, the craftsman in Exodus have wisdom.

[20 : 25] Justice requires us to strive constantly to give others what is their due. And due is interpreted to mean more than legal rights, includes whatever others might need in order to fulfill their duties and exercise their rights as individuals.

Fortitude or courage. courage. This is the courage to take risk for an ideal that is worthwhile. A courageous person faces difficult situations and strives to act positively to overcome obstacles in order to do what is right, good, and noble.

And one of the underlying characteristics of fortitude is perseverance and endurance against great odds, even if necessary, the risk of injury to ourselves or our property.

temperance is sometimes translated as moderation or self-control. Of the cardinal virtues, temperance is the only one that focuses on oneself, and the practice of this virtue involves distinguishing between what is reasonable and necessary and what is self-indulgent.

Stated differently, it means the exercise of self-control. Now, self-control, that's one of the fruit of the spirit. And I argue that the number one issue in all the interviews that I do with people in, particularly in business, the number one issue people face today is work, what they call work-life balance, or work-life imbalance.

[21 : 58] You know, the kids say, get a life, dad, or get a life, mom. It's work-life balance. And I don't believe in a work-life balance.

I once heard a very famous preacher whose name you'd instantly recognize speak in Vancouver on Jesus as a model of the balanced life. I don't think he lived a balanced life.

There were some times he was so engaged he couldn't eat, but he did live a disciplined life. And he was able to dismiss the crowd in Matthew and go up into the mountain and pray to the Father.

That comes through self-control. You're not controlled by circumstances, but you're able through the Holy Spirit to actually have self-control. Then you have the so-called three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.

And I find in Matthew 25 a very remarkable development of those three virtues, faith, hope, and love, in the parable of the talents, the virgins, and the sheep and goats.

[23 : 00] And the talents, just to not expound, but mention more or less in passing how this man went away and left a billion dollars actually to each of his servants.

And one came and made, the one who had five made five more, and the one who had two made two more. And to each of those the master says, well done, good and faithful.

And then this extraordinary phrase, enter into the joy of your master. But the one talent person did not squander it, throw it away, he didn't abuse it, and he didn't let it be stolen.

So in one sense, you're saying, he preserved it very well, this one talent. And the master's response to it seems all out of proportion. And, you know, you wicked and slothful servant, and cast him out.

You know, I mean, it just seems to be unproportionately, because, you know, he didn't waste it, he didn't throw it away, he didn't allow it to be stolen. But the reason is, he didn't invest it.

[24 : 11] And there is an absolutely fascinating book, which some of you here might like to read, written by a Jew, Bernstein, and it's called Against the Gods, and the subtitle is The Remarkable Story of Risk.

And he says, why is it that the Arabs who invented the mathematical system that we use all the time, never went on to use that system to analyze risk?

And he said, it's because of Allah, and it's because of the gods. You don't play around with that. A Muslim is actually a submitter, and the posture of prayer is significant.

Whereas, he said, when that mathematical system came into the Jewish and Christian world, latched through Spain and Europe, the triune God inspires risk-taking and investment and entrepreneurship and creativity.

And this is marvelously developed in that book called Against the Gods by Bernstein. It's one chapter in a very old book, but a wonderful book by Sir Brian Griffiths called The Creation of Wealth.

[25 : 18] So the parable of the talents tells us something about faith. Faith. Faith in a God with whom you can take initiative and take risks, and he is pleased with that, actually.

The parable of the wise and foolish virgins has to be set in the Middle East where, and to some places today in the world, where weddings don't start until everybody shows up.

And we have to tend a three-month periods in Kenya. So we got to be invited to a lot of weddings, and one of them was 10 o'clock in the morning, and we were two hours drive from there.

We had to pick up a pastor on the way, so we started at 8 o'clock, and we got stuck in a cornfield, and at 10 o'clock we were now picking up the pastor. I said, Sarah, it's getting in fast, we're late.

And he said, no, you must come into the house and have tea. I said, no, we're late. He said, you cannot drive without tea. So we went in and wolfed down a cup of tea and got back in the car, and we arrived there at 10 30, and there's nobody there.

[26 : 25] And then one choir arrived by bus, and at 11 o'clock the groom arrived, and at 1 o'clock the bride arrived. And at 4 o'clock the wedding took place.

And so it doesn't happen until they're all there. Particularly the bride and groom, which you have to need at a wedding. And so what happened was there was a delay.

And the foolish virgins and the wise virgins both slept. They both had lamps with oil. And that's very clear in the text. They both had lamps with oil.

The difference between the wise and the foolish was that the wise had an extra jar of canola oil. That's my father-in-law's invention.

They had an extra jar of oil for a long wait. It has something to do with hope.

[27 : 22] And of course we have a generation of evangelical Christians, especially in North America, I have to say, who do not really have hope. They are waiting for a pretty instant evacuation.

Because there's no way in which God can permit this world to carry on. And Christ will come very, very soon. And I pray that he does. But we should be ready for a long wait.

And the parable of the sheep and goats, as so familiar, I was hungry, you fed me, naked and you clothed me. It could be thought of in terms of even many of the works that we actually do, not so much in so-called charity, but even in industry and the business, the clothing industry and food, hospitality.

And I was at a funeral yesterday. I don't know why it is. I teach courses on vocational sermon. I do all those tests and they all say I would make a great funeral director.

But Aquinas says one of the corporals of Steve is burying the dead. But the parable of the sheep and goats is really about love.

[28 : 36] But it's not love that has an end in view for acquiring your own merit. Because the wise, the godly, the sheep, the loving, hear the master say, I was hungry and you fed me.

And they say, yeah, I can remember that. You know, you were sitting beside the side of the road and you had a begging bowl out and I said, wow, this is not really, you know, a homeless man. This is Jesus. I'm doing this for Jesus.

No. When did we see you in all these situations and do it? Oh. And the foolish, when they were told I was hungry and you didn't feed me, they don't say, well, you know, Lord Jesus, we would have gladly fed Jesus.

And he says, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these my brothers, you didn't do it to me. There's something about, and there's a very big but very important English word around this and it's the word gratuitous.

It's the word gratuitous and it means it's not for the effect that you're getting by doing it. But it's intrinsic value. Love has that intrinsic value and it is not simply something that you do in order to get grounding points with Jesus at the end.

[30 : 01] So, in summary, these three what we call theological virtues, working with faith, arising from gospel confidence, that was Luther's phrase really, and directed to the pleasure of God, working with love, and it's characterized by a non-calculating spirit, allowing us to do little things for God, and then working with hope, knowing that even ordinary things done for Jesus will last.

Now, five, six weeks ago, we were in Siena, Italy, my wife and I on a fairly short vacation, and one of the reasons I went to Siena wants to see this, and it's in the City Hall Museum of Siena.

Siena is a medieval city, north of Rome, in case you're not quite sure where it is, and on one wall of this room in the City Hall is a mural that depicts the city of Siena being managed under good government, and on the other wall there is a picture of the governors and what makes them good governors.

Very, very interesting. On the wall that describes the effect of good government, you have a stylized picture of the city of Siena experiencing wonderful work, harmony, interdependence, leisure, and here you've got women dancing in the streets.

When have you last seen people in Vancouver dancing in the streets? But this is very, very old, and yet this artistic representation of the dancers I think is exquisitely beautiful, just beautiful, dancing in the streets because of good government.

[31 : 50] And you have tradesmen up here carrying their materials, masonry, and so on, and I've been a tradesman so I can identify with this. And work is going on, they're able to work and build and create things.

And in the countryside nearby you have sowing and harvesting and threshing and you have people bringing their wares into the town in order to sell and it's again an interdependence of country and city and there's harmony going on.

And bad government, it's got here a horned devil and down here people dying and stuff like that. It's bad, whatever you have now. I'm not trying to get you to both liberal or conservative, please understand that.

But bad government does have bad effects on a city. And so on this panel you have the governors here, they don't quite look like our members of parliament but they are the governors of Siena.

But here's the big bang. Over top you have a pictorial representation of the virtues. Justice carrying the scales, you have the people of the people of the people of the people of the people of the people of the people of the heart of God for justice.

[33 : 13] And it was not impersonal, it wasn't in the balanced scales. And here you have justice dealing with problems in the city, which it must deal with.

These are the governors. governors. And then over top of the governors you have peace on the left, fortitude and prudence.

And on the right you have magnanimity, temperance, and I think it's actually courage on the far right. that Siena is given a symbolic kind of personage to represent the city.

And then over top you have faith, hope, and charity. Wow. that's how you get good government.

Would you wish there was a mural like this in Parliament Buildings of Ottawa or in Victoria, D.C.? And say we can have good government if people are virtuous.

[34 : 24] And that's what's, it's character traits, ingrained character traits. Values are useless if you cannot live by them. But if you can have ingrained character traits, so the ultimate source of empowerment is what I would call the fruit of the spirit or the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.

And for a moment I'd like to reflect on what does make us stick. This applies in family life, in church life, it applies in business life, in academic life, in civic life, in all aspects of it.

And I think many people think that rules are probably the best way of motivating people, of dealing with harmonizing people, groups, principles.

And the primary rules that we're really quite aware of, although they're not really allowed to be central in civic society today, is the Ten Commandments.

here's Moses coming down the mountain with the Ten and he says, is there nothing about smoking? I have another cartoon of Moses bringing down the Ten and he's saying to the people, well there are some good commandments and some bad commandments, but you know they're all good.

[35 : 50] They are all good. And in fact a friend of mine has written a book on business ethics based on the Ten Commandments and he's done all the historic research on the interpretation of it.

What's the problem of motivating by rules? Just think about that for a minute. And lots of us have done that in homes and families and businesses and rules are fine.

It's not like we shouldn't have rules, but if you rely on rules for motivating, it's not good enough. It's like a fence. And it's very interesting that in the outback of Australia, they have a saying in these huge, huge ranches of animals.

They say, if you want to keep the animals near, don't build a fence, but drill an artesian well. You see the difference? You know, the fence hems them in, but the well attracts them.

And so, I think deeper than having principles and rules is having reasons or values. values. And that, I think, is being recognized very widely today in almost every situation of people groups and so on, that we need to have values and live by values and work by values and so on.

[37 : 09] Some values that are considered, the equality of men and women, dignity of the human person, the intrinsic value of work, fairness and justice, values.

Those are values that sometimes in workplaces people are able to embrace that, sometimes in the church as well. What's the problem of motivating by values?

Well, one of the problems is it presumes that you've got something in your person that can embrace and implement those values. values. So, deeper than values, as I've been trying to suggest, is virtues, ingrained character traits.

These are responsibilities. And primary virtues, and here the New Testament and the classic Greek world are complete in harmony, faith, hope, and love.

But deepest of all, in terms of motivation, what makes us take, I believe, are the resources of God the Holy Spirit and work in our lives and the concrete situations that we find ourselves in at home and neighborhood, workplace, church, and others.

[38 : 25] We call these gifts and graces from God. Spirit empowerment, the grace of God, and inward, continuing, inward renewal.

people. So, in a secular company or organization, how can you inspire people towards virtues and spirit fruit?

I think this is a huge challenge for a Christian leader in an enterprise that's something even like Red Cross. I have a friend who's been in charge of Red Cross for Ontario as a volunteer, interestingly.

how do you motivate in a secular organization towards inspiring people by spirit fruit and virtues? I think that's a big, big challenge.

But behind this, I believe, is a simple but I think very telling statement that what makes work Christian is not the religious character of that work.

[39 : 31] the fact that the Bible is open, God's name is being spoken, but the fact that that work is being done with faith, hope, and love. My friend Don Flo is a Regent grad from way back at the very beginning almost.

Owens several car dealerships in North Carolina. man, I've been a whole week in his business, just observing and being with him and so on. I wrote a hundred pages of reflection just as we went through the week, whether we're meeting with managers or going to the television station to do a commercial and so on.

He says that, and he owns the business, which is a little different from a publicly listed company. He said, I'm trying to build a business that brings glory to God.

It's incredible what he's been doing. He's in full-time ministry. Faith, hope, and love. His pastor, crazily, kept saying to him, Don, when are you going to start to do the work of the Lord?

And by that he meant be an elder in the church or teach Bible class. When are you going to do the work of the Lord? And every time he said this, it really hurt him because he felt he was doing the Lord's work.

[40 : 47] And not that he wasn't attending church and accepting sign responsibility in the corporate life. He finally gave in and taught a Bible class on what the Bible says about work in the adult education program, which by the way is here at St.

church, this is it. And so he taught an eight-week course on what the Bible teaches about work. And at that sacred moment, when you're coming out of learners' exchange and pastors are coming out of the sanctuary from first service or whatever, the pastor said, Don, I'm so glad you're finally doing the work of the Lord.

So, you know, this is a mentality, it's very deep. It came out yesterday at the funeral I attended. You know, I was doing this and then I decided I was going to go into the Lord's work.

Well, the Lord's work is work that's done with faith, hope, and love. Now, this is my last quotation. It's very, very, very profound by the president of Visa International.

He says, hire and promote, first of all, on the basis of integrity. Now, when I was moving from West Point Great Baptist Church as the senior pastor and trying to see what sort of tent-making work I could do, I started looking at the WAD ads in the Vancouver Sun.

[42 : 09] And every ad didn't say integrity, it said experience. Five years experience, ten years experience, a couple of meetings said two years experience. I didn't have experience.

I had lots of experience, but not in what they were looking for. And he says, no, you hire and promote on the basis of integrity. Secondly, motivation.

Thirdly, capacity. Fourth, understanding. And fifth, knowledge. And last and least, experience. Well, the ad you'll read in the Vancouver Sun, it's number one, experience.

And nobody even mentions integrity. Without integrity, motivation is dangerous. Ah. You know, yes, but what does it lead to?

Without integrity, motivation is dangerous. Without motivation, capacity is impotent. Without capacity, understanding is limited.

[43 : 16] And without understanding, knowledge is meaningless. Without knowledge, experience is blind. Experience is easily to provide, quickly put to use by people with the other qualities.

in some ways, it sums up what I've been trying to share, that we have soul sapping struggles in our lives, in the workplace, home, family, even in the church.

And yet, those soul sapping struggles, partly are because we're hardwired to grow in God. And that hardwiredness leads us to want, desire, pray for, and to cooperate with God in releasing those qualities of character which we know in the Christian faith and the Christian scriptures as the fruit of the spirit.

In the classical world, they were known as the virtues. And so we become more and more like Christ in the actual context of our daily lives.

Well, thank you very much for listening. We have, I think, 15 minutes before we have to vacate. And if you have questions or comments, this would be a good time for them. Yes?

[44 : 35] How does the story of the sheep and the goats fit with the doctrine of justification by faith? Ah, interesting. That's a very interesting question.

Related to it is, I thought you were going to ask about Mother Teresa. You know, because she said that she saw herself as caring for Jesus and all the people. And in no way would I want to diminish the, faith or spirituality or integrity of that incredible person.

I actually went to meet her in Calcutta. And of course she died just before I got there. But I was spending some time with the sisters there.

Justification by faith is just that though. It's interesting that a Roman Catholic cardinal, whose book, by the way, is one of the very best on spirituality work.

It's Cardinal Wyszynski, who was the mentor of the late Pope John Paul II. His first title of his book was Working Our Way to Heaven. It's actually a great title, but it could be easily misunderstood.

[45 : 44] So now it's all those who labor. Because it's misunderstood to say that what we do is going to accomplish merit with God. And that's for justification by faith alone, as Luther would add.

Because it's true. It's only by our trust in God that we're accepted. And not by the accomplishments. And I think what's behind the parable of the sheep and the goats is the possibility, at least, which neither the sheep nor the goats actually did.

Which is that they could have done those good things to achieve merit. with the master. And they didn't. The sheep didn't do it because they had gratuitous love in their hearts.

And they were doing it because they had a needy person and they had the love of God in their hearts. And the goats didn't do it because they couldn't see that there would be the opportunity for gaining merit.

So I think that's where the connection really is. But justification by faith, Billy Graham's simplification, just as though I hadn't sinned, it is a legal term and it's one of the great metaphors of salvation in scripture.

[47 : 00] It's not the only metaphor. There's other metaphors. But justification is a court. Why am I mentioning courts here? Is this on our minds or something?

But it's a court image. church and it's where people who really are guilty are declared not guilty and accepted as not guilty and welcomed into the family of God, not on the basis of any merit or accomplishments, but solely and simply their trust in Jesus and what he has done.

So that's what justification is. very interesting.

Interview the person's husband, wife, family, family. But you know what you are saying is really very significant because often times in business we're in a situation of employing somebody really without knowing the whole life context of that person.

And it's that life context that would enable us to discern who that person really is in their character. So putting it differently, how do you go about assessing the character of a person, especially in a politically correct society where you can't ask any questions about their personal life.

[48 : 42] You can't even ask, are they married or are they single? You can now definitely ask if they're straight or gay. I mean, these are possible questions to ask in an interview today.

So how are you possibly going to get hold of integrity? I think it's very difficult. Except that if you employ somebody at a, you might say, a lower level, you will find in time whether that person has integrity.

And that's why I think D. Hawk is saying the hiring is more difficult than the promoting. You can promote on the basis of integrity. Hiring is really, it's a tremendously challenging thing as you well know it, or you wouldn't have asked the question because you're going oftentimes on the basis of resume and people have professional writers for their resumes to make them look as good as possible.

Sometimes there's false who it's hard to track down even those falsehoods. They have a degree from a university which they paid \$50 for and stuff. You know, like that.

It's very difficult to track down all those things in a resume. And this is where you need real wisdom. I think as an employer, you have to make assessments about persons.

[50 : 02] And preferably several interviews. And if possible, connecting with previous employers and anything that you can legally do to assess.

And then I think it would be possible, and I've never seen such an instrument, but it might be possible to ask people to do an inventory. I'd like to see such an inventory developed, and here again people can lie on it, but basically it could be developed in such a way that the way they answer questions of what they would do in certain situations, and some companies have developed these for their own employees, where they answer 320 questions, if you were in this situation, would you do this or that?

it does give you a pretty good reading on whether that person has integrity. A very good question. Thank you. Yes? I heard a woman speak who worked in the resources office at Trinity Western, and she said they do rely quite heavily on references, and they have a set, they have set questions that they ask all the references, but she said, brought up something that I've never heard of before, is they look up the people on Facebook, all the actions, and if they get quite a different picture of who that person is from Facebook, they drop them off the list.

I'm really pleased you mentioned that because that is being done very widely now, that people are actually consensing information on Facebook, and my daughter says to her daughters, having looked at their Facebook things, do you realize that down the road, some employer is going to access this information?

You know, if you're seen in any kind of strange way, or stupid things you say about yourself, it does say something, it's very interesting, your comments, thank you.

[52 : 00] Big brother is watching you, that's the one, okay? Yes, I made a bold statement to my wife the other day, saying that the Bible doesn't teach, equality.

Go ahead. You get this, this argy-gargy between men and women. Well, equality of dignity, for sure, but not equality of sameness, and I think that's what people mean oftentimes by equality, and I'm actually doing research right now on what I call gendered work.

I think that men and women work differently, and I think there's intimations of this in Genesis 1, 2, and 3, that while in Genesis 1, Adam and Eve were both given the commission to rule the earth and develop its potential and to be stewards of the world, in Genesis 2, which is a restatement, it's as though someone asked the question, how is it possible that it takes both men and women to be in the image of God, and so he tells the creation story, secondly, in a different way, and it's the man, there's no man to work the earth, and so he makes a man, and then from the man he makes the woman, and he says, wow, she's fantastic, she'll be called, whoa, man, because she was taken out of that, and then in Genesis 3, and it's not fair to say the women are the cause of sin in the world, they both were held responsible by God, who came to Adam and came to Eve, and he said, what have you done, what have you done, and each was held responsible, but once again, the curse was experienced differently by men and women, with the woman, it's largely in relationships, pain and childbirth, she'll have an oppressive rule by her husband, whereas the man, experiences the curse primarily in terms of work, toil, sweat, thorns and thistles, and so on, so rather than speaking about equality, a sameness,

I think I would say equality, a dignity, and accountability to God, which is absolutely clear, and unfortunately, is denied by many Christian teachers, that would say, going back to Bill Gothard, for example, that God is over the husband, who's over the wife, who's over the children, who's over the dog, no, he didn't say that, a slave, but the point is that man was accountable to God for his wife, and I can remember an elder who said to me one day after a service, he said, on the judgment day, I'm accountable for my wife's spirituality, and I said, David, I'm thankful to God that I'm not accountable for my wife's spirituality, she's accountable for herself, but I am accountable for how I treat her, God.

So, that kind of teaching has done tremendous damage, I think, primarily among women, and certainly in so-called Christian marriages.

[55 : 07] So, equality as equality and dignity and accountability to God, but not shamedness. I'm seeing on the other half of that question.

Yes. That's exactly what I meant. Do you respect, do you honor, inequality and dignity? I don't think Bill understood that that.

He understands how to respect you, it's just that he didn't understand your question. You owe me a lunch.

I think I saved a marriage today. Very worthwhile. Thank you for inviting me. Yeah, it's very good. I think we have to vacate in two minutes.

Is that right? So, thank you very much. Phil. Well, on the question of whether virtues can be taught, first of all, it seems to me your presentation today is a very strong argument on favor, but you've implied that there is a case against.

[56 : 19] Yes. There is some thought that virtues cannot be taught. What is that case? The case is really from the Greek philosophical world, which was you can, by education, inculcate virtues.

Simply by education, with human effort, totally human effort, through education, you can actually achieve this virtuous life. And I think that is the thing which scripture would point a corrective towards, towards which scripture would point a correction, in saying, no, and I use the term cooperation, it is a cooperative effort of God and humankind to develop those virtues.

And that's why Paul in his letters would say, think on these things, cultivate this, keep in step with the spirit. And it's not like we're passive people, you know, saying, God, if you want to do it, fine.

But, God, please, I need this, I need you to reveal that quality in me. And yet, it's not just our own effort, it's what I call a symphony of wills.

So, thank you very much. Delightful to you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[57 : 33] Quite a bit. Yeah, well, I know, I've got to give it to me.