

Will I be a Christian by 10:00 am? Friday night? At work?

- *Compartmentalize*
- *Acting vs. Reacting*
- *Circumstances*
- *Revert back to old patterns ('ruts')*

Goal (Need a LIFE TOOL!) → consistency ... (perhaps) integrity

### **Acts 20:17**

Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and summoned the elders of the church.

### **Acts 20:18**

When they came to him, he said to them, "You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, **how** I was with you **the whole time** ...

### **Acts 20:18-21**

When they came to him, he said to them, "You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, how I was with you **the whole time**, <sup>19</sup> **serving** the Lord with **all** humility, with tears, and during the **trials** that came to me through the plots of the Jews. <sup>20</sup> You know that I did not hesitate to **proclaim** anything to you that was profitable and to **teach** you publicly **and** from house to house. <sup>21</sup> I **testified** to **both** Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.

- **Paul was consistently Christian ...**
  - **Even when afraid (courageous)**
  - **Even when plotted against**
  - **Even when tempted to "look out for #1"**
- **Paul was a Christian to the MAX ...**
  - **Not just an ethical, ritual, and/or traditional Christian**

Paul ("**serving the Lord with all humility ...**")

- **Understanding of himself in relation **to the Lord****

Paul had integrated into his life the beauty and power of the **self-image** given to him by God in the Gospel.

- **Self-Image: *how we think about ourselves***

### **Commercials:**

- **Car:** think of yourself in relation to what you have
- **Beer:** think of yourself in relation to the "good life"

- **Life insurance:** think of yourself in relation to your family
- **Clothing:** think of yourself in relation to your body
- **Athletic gear:** think of yourself in relation to how you perform

#### **At 10:00 am? On Friday Night? At Work?**

- Think of yourself in relation to what you could gain or lose
- Think of yourself in relation to what others think of you
- Think of yourself in relation to what is happening to you

#### **The Christian's Self-Image:**

- **God-given**
- **Gospel-bought**
- **Kingdom-driven**

#### **Colossians 3:10-11**

... have put on the **new self**. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the **image of your Creator**. <sup>11</sup>In Christ there is **not** Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but **Christ is all and in all**.

#### **Psalms 23:1 (YLT)**

Jehovah [is] my shepherd, **I do not lack** ...

#### **Genesis 3:5-6**

... God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will **be like God**, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup>The woman saw that the tree was **good** for food and **delightful** to look at, and that it was **desirable** for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

#### **Matthew 3:16-17**

When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from heaven said, “This is **my beloved Son**, with whom I am **well-pleased**.”

#### **Philippians 3:7-8**

... everything that was a **gain** to me, I have considered to be a **loss because of Christ**. <sup>8</sup>More than that, I also consider everything to be a **loss** in view of the **surpassing value** of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

### **At 10:00 am? Friday Night? Work?**

- We “lose” the self-image of a Christ-follower
- Instead ...
  - We have to earn, control, defend ... (= unloving)
  - Adversity is an existential threat (= fearful; anxious)
  - Life is to be controlled OR complained about (= w/o peace)

### **Acts 20:22-24**

“And now I am on my way to Jerusalem, **compelled** by the Spirit, **not knowing** what I will encounter there, <sup>23</sup> except that in every town the Holy Spirit **warns** me that chains and **afflictions are waiting** for me. <sup>24</sup> But I **consider** my life of **no value to myself**; my purpose is to finish **my course** and the ministry I **received** from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.

### **2 Corinthians 5:14 (NASB)**

For the love of Christ **controls** us ...

### **Living with a Christian Self-Image:**

- Clarity about **who and do**
- The will of God and providences of God are not **threats**
- Difference between **loss and waste** of life
- **Vigilance & Stability** = **perseverance**

### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

... If anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!