Teens getting “BACK TO THE BASICS"

Selected Scriptures

INTRODUCTION:

***We need to <u>get back to the basics</u> of the Christian life!**

Three safeguards to prevent fatalities (casualties) among Christians:

I. **THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF _____ (Luke 18:1-8)**
(Through prayer, we commune with God)

II. **THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF _____ (I Peter 2:2)**
(Through the Word, God communes with us)

III. **THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF _____ (Heb. 10:24-25)**
(Through the assembly, we commune with each other)

CONCLUSION:

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ILLUS: How Americans are seeking to get "back to the basics" today. People are getting back to "all natural ingredients" in grocers to avoid additives, preservatives, artificial colors and flavors, etc.

People are getting back into fitness (heavy emphasis is on doing that which is good for the heart: aerobics, weight training, walking, running, swimming, biking, etc.).

People fearful of domestic crisis are giving serious consideration to alternatives to public education and are looking into Christian schools and even home schooling.

Many Christians live under the delusion that complex problems demand complex answers. This simply is not true!

***We need to <u>get back to the basics</u> of the Christian life!**

Three safeguards to prevent fatalities (casualties) among Christians:

I. THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF <u>PRAYER</u> (Luke 18:1-8)
(Through prayer, we commune with God)

"Ought" - Prayer is an ought - a necessity, an essential (not optional for a Christian).

"Always" - No matter what the circumstances; at all times (in an eschatalogical context [cp. 17:22, 18:8] God is emphasizing the importance of prayer in the last days).

"Not to <u>faint</u>" - to give up in bad circumstances (this word is often associated with <u>tribulation</u> - Eph. 3:13); to lose heart and become discouraged.

"Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

NOTE: Christ's example of not giving up or giving in. The persistent woman (v. 2-

8).

<u>THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER</u> (why pray?)

When we pray we are not telling God or asking God for something He is not aware of already - so why pray?

Basically for 3 reasons: 1) **<u>it pleases God</u>**, 2) **<u>it glorifies God</u>**, and 3) **<u>it benefits us</u>**.

A. IT PLEASES GOD (He desires it)

Prov.15:8

1. IT IS THE <u>WILL OF GOD</u>

I Th.5:17,18 - *"Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

I Tim.2:8 - *"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."*

2. IT IS A <u>COMMAND OF GOD</u>

Phil.4:6; Eph.5:18; Ps.27:8; Lk.18:1;

Col.4:2 - *"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."*

I Pet.4:7 - *"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."*

Rom.12:12; I Tim.2:1; Eph.6:18,19 (note: the word "*all*")

If it is a command to pray then <u>not</u> to pray is **<u>sin!</u>** and a <u>lack</u> of prayer is **<u>sin!</u>**
(Samuel said to Israel: *"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you"* I Sam. 12:23)

B. **IT GLORIFIES GOD** (He is shown (proven) to be mighty, sovereign, faithful, etc.)

1. IT REVEALS GOD'S GREATNESS
Jer.33:3

ex. Christ's prayer before raising Lazarus (Jn.11:39-42).

The lost (skeptical) world needs to see a God who is alive, and a God who responds. (ex.Elijah I Ki.18:36-39)

2. IT REVEALS MAN'S DEPENDANCE

We are dependant, limited in what we know and can do. We need supernatural power!

Talent, training, & technology can tend to make us:

a) Proud - I can do it!

b) Independent - I can do it without God!

(My observation: Prayer has always been an activity men struggles with [ex. Disciples sleeping in the Garden of Gethsemane] Yet today it appears that it is done less frequently than ever before in history, although tons of books have been written on the subject)

Your prayer life actually reveals how humble you are.

In prayer (worship, praise) you are acknowledging God for who He is.

In prayer (asking forgiveness) you are acknowledging your own sinfulness and need for forgiveness.

In prayer (making personal requests known) you are acknowledging your dependance. (ie. that you do not know all, nor do all - that is - we can't do that which is of eternal worth by ourselves)

In prayer (intercession) you are acknowledging that the world

does not revolve around only you; that others have needs that God is interested in meeting.

C. IT BENEFITS US

1. PRAYER IS GOD'S APPOINTED WAY FOR HIS CHILDREN TO RECEIVE THINGS

   The world expects to get things solely by work, planning, scheming or by accident. *"Ye have not because you ask not"* Ja.4:2 (not because you work not, plan not etc.)

   Our needs are met by prayer:

   God wants to give guidance (An ability to <u>know</u>) Prov.3:5,6; Josh.9:14.

   God wants to give us an ability to <u>do</u> that which we (by ourselves) cannot. Mt.17:21.

   God wants to give us gifts (blessings) to <u>have</u> that which we do not have the ability acquire for ourselves

   Song: "My Father is rich in houses & lands, He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands; Of Rubies and diamonds, of silver & gold, His coffers are full - He has riches untold."

2. PRAYER IS GOD'S WAY FOR CHRISTIANS TO HAVE FULLNESS OF JOY

   How happy is a child who never asks & receives from his parents?

   Prayer is the secret to gaining real joy!
   Jn.16:24 - *"that your joy may be full"*

3. PRAYER IS NEEDED TO GIVE US SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

   "It is foolish and wicked to try to do God's work without God's power" II Chron.7:14

The power of the Holy Spirit is vital! Cp. the book of Acts - the power & boldness of the disciples because of prayer. See acts 6 - the results of the apostle's praying.Cp.Eph.3:19

We are always looking for better <u>methods</u> (programs), what we need is

better men - men & women of prayer.

Prayer is a necessity ("don't leave home without it")
(if Christ prayed, how much more should we?)

II. THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF THE WORD (I Peter 2:2)
(Through the Word, God communes with us)

"Desire" - this word is an imperative, a command. God is calling on us to crave His Word. To long for it (like David did - Ps. 119:131 - *"I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.")*

God often refers to His Word as food:

--*Meat* (Heb. 5:14; I Cor. 3:1-3)

--*Bread* (Mt. 4:4)

--*Necessary food* (Job 23:12)

A. THE PRE-REQUISITES TO DESIRING THE WORD (v. 1, 3)

1) ***"Wherefore laying aside" -***

Sin will rob your appetite for God's Word. You must get rid of certain things that prevent the Word from benefitting you.

(cp. James 1:21 - *"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.")*

"Malice" - bad attitudes toward others

"Guile" - deceitful behavior toward others

"Hypocrisies" - phony (fake) pretense in front of others

"Envies" - Covetousness toward others

"Evil speakings" - back-biting or slandering others

2) ***If so be"*** (v. 3)

One who has not *"tasted"* the Lord's grace will not have an appetite for His Word.

B. THE PURITY OF THE WORD (v. 2)

"Sincere" - pure, no bait, traps or tricks. God's Word is unhypocritical and unadulterated.

It is the "pasteurized," "homogenized" Holy-Spirit-energized Word.

The **purpose** of the Word: ***"that ye may grow"***

"Grow" - to increase in size and strength. God's Word will nourish you, strengthen you, build you, etc.

We grow spiritually as our faith grows and our faith only grows by hearing and reading God's Word (Ro. 10:17).

III. THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OF THE ASSEMBLY (Heb. 10:24-25)

(Through the assembly, we commune with each other)

"Consider" = to pay careful attention to one another; to focus our thoughts on the needs of others; to take interest in one another; being thoughtful or considerate of others is the idea.

"To provoke" - a strong word, meaning to incite (EX; of a mob); to spur on (EX: of a horse); to stimulate a response; to stir up to action; to irritate; to push someone or practically compel them into doing something.

NOTE: The word order is not "good works and love" but "love and good works." Why? Because good works flow out of an attitude of love. Love is the motivation to good works.

"To love" - an agapa love toward God and man (Mt. 22:37-39); having such love will fulfill every law! (v. 40 - cp. Rom. 13:8 ["Owe no man anything, but to love on another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law"]; and Gal. 5:14 ["For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"]). True love may confront and love may rebuke, but true love never neglects.

--Passive Christianity is unBiblical!

--Laissez faire ("hands off") Christianity is sin!

--Being an isolationist, or spiritual hermit or monk is a violation of Heb. 10:24
After the exhortation of V. 24, the question now is: "How can we provoke one another?" "In what setting does this mutual encouragement take place?"

Answer: In the assembly (v. 25)

When a believer becomes lax in his assembling with God's people, other believers are to speak to him about it and provoke him to do what is right.

A. We have an important WARNING to assemble (v. 25a)

"Forsake" = to leave behind; to neglect something or forget about it.

Just as Christ will never abandon His bride (Heb. 13:5), so we should never abandon our brothers.

To forsake the assembly is to be inconsiderate of others (Note: the participle *"not forsaking"* is modifying the verb consider [v. 24]).

"The assembling" = the gathering together ("epi-sunagoga"). This word points to a specific gathering; and an organized gathering.

"As the manner of some is" - Skipping church is not merely a contemporary problem, but has been a frustration to pastors throughout church history.

"Manner" = habit or custom, a pattern of life

"Of some" = thank God not every believer has this problem; just "some"

The best habit any believer could have is to be faithful to at least each of the main services of their church.

Why do people forsake the assembly?

1. Because they are not saved

I Jn. 2:19 - "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

2. Because of sin

   a. Laziness

   b. Worldliness

   c. Embarrassment (to face their friends after they became unfaithful)

   d. Because of ignorance (of the importance of church attendance or of God's command)

A Christian who says he worships God every Sunday morning on the golf course is really worshipping golf on God's course!

Prepare for Sunday on Saturday. Beware: the devil begins working on Saturday to disrupt your Sunday!

Excuses that keep believers from church:

1. Headaches, muscle aches (SEE: Green ILL. #171)
2. Visitors at home
3. Inadequate clothing
4. Common colds
5. The weather (too cold, hot, rainy)
6. Too tired
7. Children have the sniffles

Let's declare next Sunday a "No-excuse-to-stay-home" Sunday!

What do you miss when you miss?

--You miss out on perhaps hearing the very message you needed to hear

--You miss out on being a blessing to someone else, by your words of encouragement or by simply the encouragement that your presence brings (ILLUS: the Empty Restaurant)

Never minimize the importance of your presence

Ask yourself, "Is my example of faithfulness to my Christian brothers a stepping stone, or a stumbling block?"

B. We have an important REASON to assemble (v. 25b)

"Exhorting" - a word intended to convey the opposite of forsaking. Rather than forsaking one another, we should be exhorting one another.

The main purpose of church is exhortation! That is, encouragement and comfort that comes from the public preaching of God's Word!

Such exhortation is God's way of equipping each church member to serve Him (SEE: Eph. 4:11-12)

"Most people think of the church as a drama, with the minister as the chief actor, God as the prompter, and the laity as the critic. What is actually the case is that the congregation is the chief actor, the minister is the prompter, and God is the critic" (James Kennedy).

We all need exhortation! Heb. 3:13 - "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"It is interesting to note that the emphasis here is not on what a believer gets from the assembly, but rather on what he can contribute (give) to the assembly" (Wiersbe, p. 115)

So many people today are not looking for a place to serve but for a place to be served.

There is strength in knowing we are not alone. We have the greatest support group available! We are a co-dependent and unified body!

C. We have an important TIME to assemble (v. 25c)

"And so much the more" = And all the more

The Lord is telling us that assembling will be all the more important, as ye see the day approaching.

What is meant by the phrase ***"the Day?"***

ANSWER: "The Day of the Lord"

The phrase "the day" is a technical phrase when it occurs without an antecedent, pointing to a most momentous Day; a great and awesome Day; a vitally important Day - namely, The Day of Christ's return (Rapture) and the wrath of God which follows.

"The Day" = the Day of Christ's return (SEE: heb. 10:37)

Rom. 13:11-12 - *"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."*

II Thes. 2:2 - *"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."*

Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" . . . That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ . . . Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice int eh day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."*

"Ye see the day approaching" - The mention of us "seeing" the time of Christ's return drawing near is indicative of the fact that there will be clear, visible indications that Christ's coming is near; yea, even prophetic fulfillments which will precede the Day of the Rapture.

SEE: II Thes. 2:1-3. Two definite signs that will transpire before the Day of Christ are:

1) Apostasy (v. 3a; cp. I Tim. 4:1_

II Tim. 3:1-4 - "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"

2) Antichrist's appearance (v. 3b)

If there was ever a time when assembling together was important, it is today! The day is approaching! Apostasy is on the horizon; the greatest onslaught of the devil's deceit and destruction is yet ahead. You need to learn God's Word! Be faithful to its proclamation. Arm yourself for what lies ahead!

ILLUS: of the fireplace (Green #170)

CONCLUSION:

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