**PRESSING ON**

INTRO:

1. How many times have you said “I don’t feel like it” or I’m not in the mood … so you don’t do it?

2. Or I Don’t feel the Holy Spirit is moving me to do it?

3. Is this how God operates?

**WHAT DOES GOD SAY?**

**Philippians 3:14**

**14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

STORY: About a man (call him Fred) who was very faithful but falls away

Preacher visits him….unfaithful man says “Nothing you can say to me that I haven’t said to someone else”…However, I have been praying to God that I would like to have the desire to go back to worship…

IS THERE REALLY NOTHING YOU CAN SAY?

HE CLAIMS IT BUT IS THAT REALLY THE TRUTH?

**FACTS:**

**1. WHAT ARE THE FACTS?**

**Philippians 3:14** (Apostle Paul inspired by the HS)

**14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Fact #1:** Paul says it is his choice NOT the HS

**Romans 7:14-25** (Apostle Paul …Inspired by the HS…talks about his struggle with sin)

**22** For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. **23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

**1 Corinthians 14** (Apostle Paul...inspired by the HS)

**32** … the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

What does that mean…being inspired by the HS is under the control of the prophet.

**Philippians 3:14** (Apostle Paul inspired by the HS)

**14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRESS TOWARD?** Vine’s says in regards to this passage that “press” means to pursue … “toward”… means in that direction

**Matthew Henry’s Commentary** says this about Phil 3:14 – Press – as he who runs a race never takes up short to of the end, but is still making forwards as fast as he can, so those who have heaven in their eye must still be pressing forward to the mark (or prize) Prize is Heaven.

**WHY DOES PAUL SAY THIS, IF A MAN IS “ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAVED?”**

**1 Corinthians 9:27** (Paul says he can lose his Salvation – Losing imperishable crown **vs. 25**)

**27** But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

**Romans 12:1-2**

**1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(you don’t do this by feelings…our feelings tell us to do the opposite)

**2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

You don’t do this by feelings

**Fact #2** We are to be led by our intellect primarily NOT our feelings

Why?

**Proverbs 16:25**

**25** There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

What about Love…love is a feeling? (**Galatians 5:14**)

God gave us emotions

**Jeremiah 17:9** "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked…”

**Proverbs 29:11**  A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

**Jeremiah 10:23** O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

**IF WE AREN’T TO FOLLOW WHAT WE THINK, WHAT ARE WE TO LISTEN TO?**

**Romans 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

We talked about this in a previous lesson (How Are We Led?)

**Romans 8:4-5**

**4** … the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. **5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Mindset that follows God’s Word as matter of practice

**HOW DO WE DEVELOP A DESIRE TO DO THE THINGS WE KNOW WE NEED TO DO?**

Realize there is a consequence if we don’t – Fred knew this but it didn’t move him…

MOTIVATES SOME….Obvious to me he didn’t love to go to worship

**SO WHAT DO WE TELL FRED IN THE STORY ? (about something we used to LOVE)**

Go back to worship and remember what you used to love **Rev. 2:4** (forgot 1st love)

Doing something that we have forgotten about helps us to remember AND THEN maybe you’ll have THE DESIRE to come back all the time.

As a kid I used to hate going to worship & sometimes as an adult I didn’t want to go BUT 99% of the time when I forced myself to go…afterwards I was glad…other 1% of time generally someone else was probably happy to see me & of course God would be

Reminds me of a tragedy in my life….I loss my wife….depressed, stop doing a lot of things I used to do…I forgot how much I enjoyed listening to intelligent stimulating conversation like talk radio.

So What do we tell Fred? GO Back to worship…and you’ll have the desire again…even if he doesn’t; just go anyway because you know that pleases God.

It is kind of like the Parent & Child relationship where Child doesn’t want to do it But he knows it pleases his parents….God is our Father, WHY WOULD WE NOT WANT TO PLEASE HIM?

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

**58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

**HOW DO WE LOVE SOMETHING WE DON’T LIKE?**

WELL…HOW DO WE ACCOMPLISH THE THINGS WE NEED TO DO IN THIS LIFE?

Like going to work, school or chores (like laundry)?

CHANGE OUR PERSPECTIVE

**Philippines 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

**13** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. **14** For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Work – Don’t like it - Don’t like boss? Like the tasks…its not fulfilling?

chg perspective – What do you tell yourself? Maybe you’ll never like it….that’s why its called work

Laundry – focus on good things…combine it w things you love – sing or talking on phone or do it with a friend

**Ecclesiastes 7:8**

**8** The end of a thing is better than its beginning; The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Joy of accomplishment of any task

Reading – **Ezra 7:10** prepared his heart

**10** For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of **the Lord**, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

**2 Chronicles 12:14** (what happens when you don’t)

**14** And he did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord.

**John 14:23-24**

**23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. **24** He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

READING IS IMPORTANT – Need to seek the Lord

When things become more tolerable or you learn to love it…the day seems better

Consequences to our actions or lack of – can motivate us…fear & love

Jesus is supposed to be OUR FRIEND but when don’t do what Jesus says your letting your friend down…its NOT ABOUT US BUT **ABOUT GOD…**if do we are being selfish

**John 15:13-14**

**13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. **14** You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

**WHAT DOES OUR MIND NEED TO DO?**

1st changing a habit from bad to good – putting off and putting on

Prepare, Learn, desire, doing (practicing)

Need to ask ourselves what can I do about it?

What are the alternatives?

Am I thinking about this right?

**1 Corinthians 13:5**

**5** Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you are disqualified.

Tough situations – like Job (loss children, material possessions and health)

Do we turn away from God or draw near to God?

Job’s wife told Job to curse God and die BUT what did Job do? Hung to his faith

What was the result? He became stronger.

No one wants to be unhappy or hear hard truths … we want to take the easy way

**BUT WHAT DOES GOD SAY?**

**Matthew 7:13-14**

**13** "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. **14** Because narrow is the gate and **difficult is the way which leads to life**, and there are few who find it.

**DO WE WANT ETERNAL LIFE?**

**Philippians 3:14**

**14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Romans 6:23** Calls it the Gift of God…. In Christ Jesus