

FBC Today



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MAIN SERVICE
[Physical & Youtube]
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YOUTH SERVICE
[Physical]
Sundays 9:00am

SUNDAY SCHOOL
For Ages 3 to 12
(Preschool to std 6)
Physical Classes
8:45am / 11:15am

U N L E A S H I N G T H E G O S P E L **ENGAGE | ENCOURAGE | EDIFY**

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Respectable SINS

*Excerpts from transcript of a sermon given by Steven Lawson of Ligonier Ministries titled **Respectable Sins** in 2010 at Pastors Conference, Peace, Purity, and Unity in the Church.*

It is the call of the personal holiness of the man of God. It is a call for the pursuit of Godliness, in the lives of those who minister the Word of God.

Spiritual leadership begins with what we are and who we are. More important than our giftedness, is our Godliness. Before God does a work through us,

**NEXT
WEEK'S
SERMON**

March 10, 2024
**The Church's
One True
Calling**
1 Corinthians 1:1-17
PREACHER
Dr. Peter Ng

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information
will be
available
soon, watch
this space.

He must do a work in us. If there is to be authentic spiritual leadership, then there must be genuine spirituality in the leaders of the Church.

We cannot take people when we ourselves have not already gone. We cannot impart what we do not possess. Our personal holiness is the platform on which we stand as we preach and teach the Word of God. If there is no personal holiness in our own lines, we have no sure place to stand in the local Church.

We must first be something before we can do something that is honourable to God. We must first be personally in the pursuit of holiness before we can call others to do the same or we have become hypocrites like the Pharisees, who cleaned the outside of the cup but the inside of the cup remains dirty.

Spirituality in the Church must begin at the top. It must begin with the Elders. It must begin with those who serve in leadership in the Church, for the Church can rise no higher than the Godliness and the spirituality of her leaders.



Respectable sins are those sins we pamper, those sins that we tolerate. They are said, sad to say, to be acceptable sins. Respectable sins are not like those that are blatant and obvious, to the contrary, respectable sins are discrete sins, usually hidden within the heart.

They are not sins that in most cases will remove you from the pulpit, but they are sins that will remove the power of God from the pulpit in your preaching. You will continue to preach, you'll continue to have a ministry but "Ichabod" (without glory) will be written across the pulpit.

Respectable Sin#1 – Discontentment

Every Pastor and Church Leader wrestles at times with a sense of discontentment and part of it because we minister in a fallen world to imperfect people and there are struggles and there are challenges, and many times it leads to discouragement which leads to discontentment.

Unfortunately, many times this marks our own heart as we find ourselves in the midst of ministry and it can lead to, in our minds fantasizing and imagining how much better it would be if I was serving the Lord someplace else. Many times we serve the Lord and our body is in one place, but there is discontentment that grows and it brews, it festers and we begin to with our mind and our heart wander and dream of another place where we would serve the Lord. The fact is if God by His sovereign providence has placed us where we are, then we do need to be content in the work of God and, in the will of God and to

put our shoulders to the plow, and to give 110% of ourselves to the work when we are until God by His Sovereignty in His perfect timing moves us someplace else.

1 Timothy 6:8 – “If we have food and covering, with them we shall be content”

Luke 3:14 – “Be content with your wages”

Be content with where you are and where God has placed you. “Wherever you are, be all there” – **Jim Elliot**

Being content means that we are satisfied with who we are in Christ, with what God has given, and that we are satisfied with what circumstances He has placed us in. It is a respectable sin to be discontent when we have an abundance of the sufficiencies of the grace of God at our disposal. God uses the adversity in our lives to mature us, deepen us and conform us to the image of Christ.

Respectable Sin #2 – Impatience

Impatience is a sin by which we fail to wait upon God and fail to wait upon God’s perfect timing.

They wanted the ministry, they wanted their lives to be like going through a fast food drive-through where they could just be in the Promised Land just so quickly. The people became impatient because of the journey. It was the spirit of impatience that was exasperating that carnal cry.



In waiting for the Lord, there is a willingness to accept the painful situation in which we find ourselves and to remain grounded there until God chooses to move us elsewhere. It is the ability to endure injuries inflicted by others.

Respectable Sin #3 – Sins of Envy

It is a resentful discontent. It is an evil feeling; a wrong desire to possess what belongs to someone else.

Greek word – that is the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage of the prosperity of others.

Those who are competitive in life, in sports many times carry that over into the ministry and it is difficult and a challenge at times to not be envious of other works of God, in other places that seem to be prospering more than where the Lord has placed you.

Envy certainly marked our lives before we came to Christ.

“Envy is the painful and often times resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by someone else” – **Jeff Bridges**

We as Pastors and Church leaders must be guarding our hearts and not be envious of the successes that God by His Sovereignty would grant in other places They preached out of envy – interested only in their own self advancements seeking to promote their own prestige. Envy will negate the longing for the Word of God.

Respectable Sin #4 – Sin of the Tongue

We who are called by God to minister the Word of God, our tongues have been set on fire by heaven above.

Our tongue has been loosened that we might preach and proclaim and herald, and declare the truth of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And with this divine calling and with this power, the Spirit of God upon our lives, there is a sacred stewardship that has been entrusted to all of us in the use of our tongues.

It's the call of the ministry that the Lord has for us and how our tongues need to be employed in Godly ways. When we misuse our tongues, we grieve the Spirit of God, who is in us, who has lifted us, and who has empowered us in Ministry.

What we say to others carries weight.

Steven Lawson – “The humor I use with those in Church. I need to be reminded that what I say carries an unusual weight and impact and I can overuse that. There have been many a times, as a young man, that I have to step back into the pulpit on the next Sunday and repent of my tongue. It had a very quick way of putting a restraint on my mouth, knowing that I would have to step back into the same arena in which I had improperly

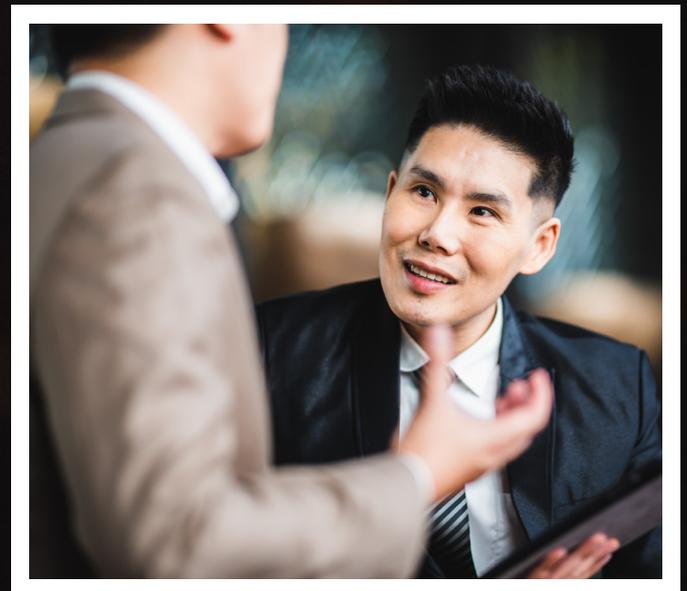
used sarcasm or humour in the pulpit, directed at an individual in the congregation and devastated that person, devastated the spouse, having no idea the weight of being a pastor in the pulpit in front of the congregation. How different this was than merely being on a golf course with some friends.” Ministry involved in coarse jesting and silly talk betrays the call of God upon their lives and bankrupts the fear of God in their hearts. There are unfortunately in the evangelical church today becoming respectable sins.

We must use our tongues to encourage one another, and build up one another.

Psalm 139:23

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

It's only GOD who knows our heart and it is only GOD who can reveal our true heart to us.



Printed with permission of the author Steven Lawson from One Passion Ministry

The full sermon is available at :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-XQJs4pEpA>

Prayer for Our Church Leaders

1. Father, we uphold our church leaders to You. Draw them and their hearts close to You in Your wisdom as You direct them in Your ways through Your grace. We ask that You will help them make the right decision that aligns with Your will and Your plan.
2. Lord, bring them spiritual and physical protection, to protect them from evil, to sanctify them in truth, and to unite them. Shield and guard them from every form of principalities of the power and forces of darkness. Let them not be entangled by the wayward ways, the distraction and the temptation of this world. Let their hearts be lifted up to You, not easily disheartened and be stray away.
3. Lord, give our leaders a teachable attitude and humble them before You as they carry out their respective Ministry to serve You. Reveal their weakness and character flaws so that they can learn to repair and set right. Show them in the areas of growth that You may strengthen them to have a servitude heart and the fullness of joy.

