

Come As You Are (CAYA) Service # 2
Wednesday, February 4, 2009
Rev. Howard-John Wesley, Alfred Street Baptist Church

It's Complicated

Call To Worship - Scripture reference – Matthew 6:25-33

New International Version

25"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life.
28"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Reference to the Refrigerator Story from January 2009:

Take into consideration a man moving a refrigerator in his home. He is struggling to get and a man walks by, offers his help. The two men begin to move the refrigerator, but they aren't making any progress. The second man finally says to the first man, "Man, I can't understand why we can't get this refrigerator in your house!" The first man replies, "While you were trying to get the fridge in, I was trying to move it out!"

The same thing happens in our daily lives. God wants us to move one way and the devil continue to try to push us in another.

In our relationship lives, all of us have that one person that we hope **never** calls again.

- You know, they know how to push that button in us and make us go against everything that we left them alone for in the first place.

Last month, we reviewed the four top things that cause young Christians to struggle (#2 will be addressed in this lesson):

1. Failure to prioritize time – especially time with God
- 2. Inappropriate relationships (48%)**
 - a. These things “call” you away from your time with God**
 - b. Learn to conquer your temptations**
3. Personal weaknesses and addictions (26%)
4. Emotional issues (anger, insecurity, fear, etc.) (17%)

We struggle with relationships because they can cause us to be drawn outside of God's line (see 2 Corinthians 6:14)

For those of us that have Facebook, one of the items on your profile is your relationships status (single, married, etc., or **it's complicated**).

#1 Relationships are complicated.

Relationships draw on two individuals from two different pasts and perspectives

- The struggle of ME vs. WE
 - How much of ME do we invest in WE and what will be the return on WE with my ME investment.
 -

Marriage violates one of the laws of physics: two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

One of dealing with relationships is challenge: two people with two different perspectives and past and we are all unique.

#2 Relationships come in all different sizes and shapes

- Ex's, lovers, family, friends, etc.
- None of the above operate with the same set of rules

NOTE: Go to the CAYA website or the Facebook CAYA group page and submit your relationship questions to Rev. Wesley.

Biblical realities/foundational truths about relationships

1. We are all created to be in relationships! This is God's way of helping us fulfill His assignment on our lives.

- Everybody needs somebody, sometimes (read Genesis 2).
- Desire for relationships comes from our desire to share.

Relationships are one of the most defining things about us.

- WHO we are connected to speaks volumes about us.
- How we value who we are determines who we put ourselves in a relationship with.
 - i. We consider ourselves a pearl, but keep hanging out with pigs?!

2. Every relationship is not made to last forever

- More relationships end in breakups than staying together in the Bible
- God causes breakups (read the book of Judges)
- God will put people in our lives to push us where we need to be

3. God is very concerned with who we invite and allow in our lives

- Who we share ourselves with
- People can either push us towards God or pull us away from God
- Howard Thurman quote: "...in life, there are two important questions to ask ourselves, 1) Where am I going? 2) Who is going with me? If you ask the questions in the wrong order, you are in trouble."

- Being equally yoked – a yoke is a tool/brace that farmers use on two cows to plow fields. The thought process is that two get more done than one.

- i. Successful: Must be some agreement on the objective we are trying to achieve.
- ii. Agreement: Equal commitment to make this work. Pain comes in relationships with you are giving 120% and the other person is giving 10%.

- Look at necessity vs. option.
- iii. Complimentary strengths: the worst relationships are when two people come together who share the same weakness!
 1. Know that the devil will draw us those who will comfort us, not challenge us!

Note: the relationships above cover **ALL** relationships (friends, family, etc.)

Focus: Romantic Relationships

Samson and Delilah – the most dysfunctional relationship in the Bible.

Why are romantic relationships so complicated?!

1. No matter how warm and fuzzy, they change over time.
2. Difference between men and women, but even greater, fundamental differences between brothas and sistas.
 - a. Learn their language
 - b. Emotions get involved
 - i. Wherever you invest emotions, you expect a return. When you don't receive that return, one of two things happen: you become bitter or you hang around, hoping for a change. We want to receive what we have invested.
3. Sex – it complicates things
 - a. **FACT!** Whomever you have a sexual relationship with you will have a **SPIRITUAL** connection to them! Even when you want to walk away, you are spiritually bonded to that person.
 - b. Once you open the door to sex, it's hard not to become addicted.
4. Ignorance of self – not knowing who you are
 - a. A new relationship gives the opportunity to re-present (not represent, RE-present) yourself.
 - b. The longer you are in a relationship, the more the **REAL** you comes out.
 - c. We all have issues that we need to deal with
 - i. We do one of two things: deal with the demon or get mad with the other person

Delilah didn't just "happen" to Samson

- Read Judges 16
 - Read Judges 14 and 15 for background where you'll find the three problems with Samson that led to a dysfunctional relationship with Delilah.
 1. Samson was prophesized at birth to have great strength (divine call and purpose). In Judges 14, Samson hungers after a wife before understanding his purpose/God's purpose on his life.
NOTE: If you are single, understand your purpose in life before sharing it with another.
- Samson never spent time alone.
- a. Our loneliness will drive us into relationships before we understand our life purpose.
 - b. No one completes us (scene from the movie *Jerry McGuire*).
 - c. God sends us mates to complete His assignments, but not us as individuals.
 - d. Search for completion on your own.

- e. Don't sacrifice your call and purpose to be in an ungodly relationship. It's always a raw deal when you sacrifice God's purpose for a relationship.
2. Samson compromises his relationship with God for his relationship with a woman.
 - a. Know your pet peeves and desires. How important is it for someone to be in a relationship with God and us being in a relationship with them?
 - b. How important is it for that person to KNOW God shows on us; if it isn't important to them, our relationship with God isn't important to us.
 - c. In the first to conversations you have with a new person, it should show how important God is in your life. Anything you care about, you talk about!
 - d. Samson had a tendency to go after women who didn't love God.
 - e. "A woman's heart should be so hidden in Christ that a man should have to seek Him first to find her."
3. Samson had a distorted definition of love.
 - a. There is no rule to how long it takes to fall in love
 - b. How do you know if you love someone if they love you?
 - c. What triggers your love button (refer to *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman)?
 - i. Sweet talks?
 - ii. He loves your curves?
 - iii. Physical attraction?
 - iv. Gifts (no one has ever spoiled us before?!)?
 - v. Acts of service
 - vi. Sex, lust and love ⇐ CONFUSION!

According to Jesus, there is one true love:

John 15:13 (New International Version)

13Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

Four non-sacrifice things that kill relationships:

1. Addiction to being right – the person should ask for forgiveness, instead
2. Finances
3. Friends – anyone we are friends with that our spouse doesn't like, we are wrong (outside influences). It shows that that friendship is more important than our relationship with our mate.
4. Family

Next month's lesson will be on Wednesday, March 4, 2009. Rev. Wesley will continue to teach/preach from the book of Judges (Judges 16).