

WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION

Heb 13:9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

We have all been asked what our occupation is. Our occupation is what we give ourselves to, where we put our time, energy, and focus. Really there is but three possible occupations that every person on earth has. The first occupation is **self-occupation**. The second is worldly occupation, and the third is Christ occupation.

Self occupation is the root of all sin. The law or legalism is based upon **self occupation**. The law teaches that we must work on our self to be better. We must perform for God better. What have we done? What have we not done? What must I do to be godlier? What must I stop doing to be less ungodly? All this is occupation with self.

Rom 7:15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Rom 7:16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

Rom 7:17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Rom 7:19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Rom 7:20 Now if **I** do that **I** would not, it is no more **I** that do it, but sin that dwelleth in **me**.

Rom 7:21 **I** find then a law, that, when **I** would do good, evil is present with **me**.

Rom 7:22 For **I** delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Rom 7:23 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.

Rom 7:24 O wretched man that **I** am! who shall deliver **me** from the body of this death?

I highlighted Paul's problem in this section of scripture. He had his "I's" on himself. He used terms to talk about himself in these verses 34 times! Paul was occupied with the unholy trinity. He was occupied with me, myself, and I! Notice that as long as Paul was occupied on self, he struggled with sin. Notice his occupation with self was on how he could stop sinning, not how he could sin more and get away with it! How did Paul get out of the sin problem? He changed occupations!

Rom 7:25 **I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** So then with the mind **I** myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul changed his occupation from self to Christ. When he did that, sin lost its hold on him. That is how we will get free from the grip of sin in our life. So many Christians are trying really hard to stop sinning. Many are going to twelve step groups, recovery groups, and specialized classes that deal with their particular sin. These groups can be good if their occupation is correct. However, many of them just make people more self-occupied than ever! If all you do is focus on your sin, what you are doing about your sin, learning steps you must do to stop sinning, then your focus is on

yourself! Self is the source and factory for sin. Again the Law is all about self being better. Did you know what the strength of sin is? It is the Law! [**1 Cor. 15:56**] The more self-focused you get the more you will struggle with sin!

Mar 4:14 The sower soweth the word.

Mar 4:15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

Mar 4:16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

Mar 4:17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

Mar 4:18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

Mar 4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Mar 4:20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

In the most famous parable of Jesus we see the three occupations that believers can have. The wayside is unbelievers. You must enter the way before you can be saved. There are three types of ground in the way. First is the stony ground, the next is the thorny ground, and the third is the good ground. The first ground are those self-occupied! Notice in verse 17

that they have no root **IN THEMSELVES**. There is no root you can draw from to live the Christian life in **YOURSELF!** That is why when pressure is put on them from sin, the devil, or the world then stumble and sin. Those that try to live this way end up with hardened hearts against God and everyone else. They were immediately offended. To be offended means to stumble. Those that regularly stumble in sin are those who are self-occupied. The root of addictions is self-occupation- short and simple. Focusing on your past, pain, what was done to you, or even how you can stop sinning and be a better person and how to be more godly, all have the same source which is **self**.

The second ground is thorny ground. This ground is worldly occupation. This is being occupied with the desires and cares and worries of this life. If you walk through thorn bushes you will end up snared and pierced. Those that are occupied with the world will end up snared and pierced!

1Ti 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1Ti 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

The third type of ground are those who are Christ occupied. Some are 30 percent Christ occupied. Some are 60 percent Christ occupied. Some have become 100 percent Christ occupied. Whatever the percent of Christ occupation you have is the percent of fruitfulness that comes out of your life.

I want to look more at the first type of ground which are those that are self-occupied.

Rom 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Rom 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Rom 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

How did mankind get into their mess? It was because man changed occupations! When man stopped glorifying God and started glorifying himself that is when sin took off big time! Glorifying God is to focus on Him and to worship Him! It is being pre-occupied with God. If you change occupations and are pre-occupied with yourself even if it is to be a better person or to overcome your sin, you still are occupied with self and sin has its fuel to burn bigger and brighter than before! What happened when men changed occupations?

Rom 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Rom 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Rom 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Homosexuality sprang up because of self-occupation! Do you notice that homosexuality is springing up big time in our society? It is because we have left off of glorifying God and being Christ occupied and have become self-occupied. This generation is one of the most self-occupied generations that has ever lived! Everything is about self. Gays will try to tell you that they are the way they are because it is their nature. According the passage above they are actually **going against their nature!** Sin and Satan are deceivers.

As Christians we have a "natural" desire to get out of sin. Our born again spirit hates sin. We used to be a pig that loved the mud. We now are sheep that hates the mud. How can we get free from sin? Many become self-occupied like Paul did in Romans 7 and find themselves sinking deeper like in quick sand. The answer is not in being more focused on yourself! The answer is to become Christ occupied! If we would be occupied with the love of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross where he bore and forgave us all of our sins past, present, and future, and upon the righteousness of God that is given to us freely from God we will become Christ occupied. When we constantly think upon Christ and worship God with thanksgiving and praise for Christ's finished work on our behalf we will be Christ occupied. When we become Christ occupied sin will begin to lose it grip on us automatically. We cannot behold Christ continually and sin still keep a hold on us.

2Co 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

This is being Christ occupied! When we keep beholding in the Word of God the glory of the Lord Jesus, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of God. Notice it is by the Spirit and not by our self-efforts. As Peter kept his focus on Christ he did the supernatural, which was walk on the water. When he changed occupations he sank! We also must keep our focus on Christ and refuse to be occupied with ourself. We must simply trust God and let go of trying to fix ourself and keep beholding our Jesus and trust Him that He will change us as we focus on Him. If we will do this He surely will change us into His image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of God. Amen!