

## **Note from Pastor Steve**

One of the common storylines in most of the different kinds of stories we watch on television is centered around someone telling a lie. A lie about what they've done or who they are. The story starts with one person lying to another and then going through all the problems that creates. When I was a youth pastor one of the things that was a struggle for teenagers the most was dealing with the lies of their parents, teachers, and other adults they trusted. It was a sad picture to watch how over time they would trust less and less till they become untrusting adults.

I can remember being lied too. I can also remember people that trusting was never a problem. My father was a man of few words, trusting him was easier because he did not make many promises or commitments. Others at church or school said one thing did another. I remember great loving men that I could not trust because something always came up. It is a challenge to trust and be trustworthy.

My daughter ask me all the time to do this or that. I tell her my plans, which do not always come true sometimes she thinks I am not being honest other times she can see that I had no control over what was happening. It is difficult and it is a part of our lives.

Jesus tell us in the sermon on the mount that: *"All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."* Matthew 5:37 This sounds so simple but it can feel so hard to do at times. We want to explain, dream, hope, or just tell people what they want to hear even when it is something we question if it will ever come true. The problem of this is something we have all faced a promise not fulfilled. A event not attended. A phone call not made. A day together that does not happen. It hurts and it becomes harder each time to trust the others. Jesus calls for us to speak simply is for your benefit and the benefit of your relationships with those you love.

**All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." —James 5:12**

## **Vision and Darkness** By: Oswald Chambers

**When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. —Genesis 15:12**

Whenever God gives a vision to a Christian, it is as if He puts him in “the shadow of His hand” (Isaiah 49:2). The saint’s duty is to be still and listen. There is a “darkness” that comes from too much light— that is the time to listen. The story of Abram and Hagar in Genesis 16 is an excellent example of listening to so-called good advice during a time of darkness, rather than waiting for God to send the light. When God gives you a vision and darkness follows, wait. God will bring the vision He has given you to reality in your life if you will wait on His timing. Never try to help God fulfill His word. Abram went through thirteen years of silence, but in those years all of his self-sufficiency was destroyed. He grew past the point of relying on his own common sense. Those years of silence were a time of discipline, not a period of God’s displeasure. There is never any need to pretend that your life is filled with joy and confidence; just wait upon God and be grounded in Him (see Isaiah 50:10-11).

Do I trust at all in the flesh? Or have I learned to go beyond all confidence in myself and other people of God? Do I trust in books and prayers or other joys in my life? Or have I placed my confidence in God Himself, not in His blessings? “I am Almighty God...” — El-Shaddai, the All-Powerful God (Genesis 17:1). The reason we are all being disciplined is that we will know God is real. As soon as God becomes real to us, people pale by comparison, becoming shadows of reality. Nothing that other saints do or say can ever upset the one who is built on God.

“Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?” (Isa. 55:2) How often in my seventy plus years have I disregarded Isaiah’s admonition and sought sometimes desperately, that which is not bread and does not satisfy. Seeking God first is not just good advice; it is the only way to a joyful and faithful life in companionship with the One who made us and loves us without limit.

When I saw my first airplane as a child, I knew at once that I wanted to fly. I became a farmer, student, pastor, husband, father, and still wanted to fly. Throwing caution and common sense to the wind. I joined a flying club and soon was ready for my first solo flight. I will never forget the thrill of breaking the bonds of gravity. When the aircraft broke free from the ground and slowly climbed, I was bursting with the joy of realizing a dream I had nurtured for a lifetime.

Flying still holds a thrill for me, although I have not had the controls of an aircraft for over thirty-five years. When flying club members asked why I quit flying, I responded then, “I’d rather fly than eat, but my children would rather eat.” It is costly to fly! Several decades later, I realize something else was going on: a growing love and desire for God and a growing awareness of stewardship. I still look up when a light plane passes overhead and for a moment feel the sensations of flight, but then I rejoice in the companionship of the One with whom we can all break bonds holding us down and rise to heights greater than we imagine.

— Rueben P. Job