

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a **Savior** has been born to you; he is the **Messiah**, the **Lord**. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth **peace** to those on whom his favor rests.”

I. **Jesus the Savior** : Rescuer; Deliverer; To make well.

II. **Jesus the Christ** :

- Def: Anointed one; Messiah; Set apart for God’s service
- God respects us and our God-given ability to understand
- 354 prophecies that all came true through the life of one man

Probability: 1 in 10^{157} for just 48 prophecies to be fulfilled. Number of electrons in the universe is *about* 1×10^{79} .

III. **Jesus the L.O.R.D.**: Supreme in authority-- has the power of decision.

Has the right to tell us what to do. Read Mt 7: 21-23; **Phil2:10,11**

1) **Loving Him** with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind Luke 10:27

2) **Obey my commandments**, if you love me... John 14:15

I. Two main callings in life—(Salvation(Sanctification) & Service)

1. **Missional Calling**—Primary calling (**L.O.G.** on to God :)

Love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength Luke 10:27

Obey all His commandments—i.e. love your neighbor as yourself John 14:15

Go into all the world--make disciples/preach the Gospel Mt 28:18,19; Mk 16:15

2. **Occupational calling**—secondary calling Col 3:23,24; I Peter 4:10,11

Natural talents, acquired skills, (spiritual gifts). Mt 25:14-30; Ro 12:4-6

II. We must keep these two callings in the right order and be led by Him.

“Therefore, **as you** received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk** in him.” Col 2:6

3) **Repent**-- confess Mt 4:17, 18:15; Ja 5:16 Change your mind—story of the prodigal son—**Admitted, Turned, and Embraced** his father at home

4) **Depend on Him—abide in Him; unity** Jn 15:7, 17:21

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘**Lord! Lord!**’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ But I will reply, ‘**I never knew you.** Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

Mat 7:21-23

“If you declare with your mouth, “**Jesus is Lord,**” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Rom 10:9\

Everyone is going to live somewhere forever. Do you know where you will be living? Jesus left His home so you could come back home with him where your almighty, all-loving, and all-holy Father lives. John 17:3, 21

5) How do you defend yourself against a relentless counterfeiting culture?

How do you stay **S.M.A.R.T.** in an age of deception? Gen 1:27 Answer: By testing everything against these five characteristics of someone fully in God’s image. This is the standard we must live by:

Spiritually—“*God is a Spirit and those who worship him must him in spirit and in truth.*” John 4:24 Worship Him honestly—tell him your real thoughts.

Morally-- “*No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God*” (1 John 1:9). First Peter 1:16 “*Since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*”

Artistically—We are most like our Creator when we create. We are most like our Holy Father when we are holy. We are most like our loving Father when we are loving. Let’s keep this in perspective. Proof--God’s creation. Christians ought to be the most creative people on earth because we know our creative God! We need to be the pioneer pacemaker in society.

“*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they*”

should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” | Peter 4:11-13

Relationally—socially-- Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day. Hebrew 10:25 | Peter 4:10,11 *“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”* Eph 4:32

T hinking—rational—critical thinkers and problem solvers.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2

“5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Cor 10:5

So where do we go from here? Whatever in a culture that works against these non-negotiables of SMART, is working against our God. Every decision as to whether we should participate in a new cultural experience must be tested by how well it is doing to support the growing of God's image in our lives outlined by these major five guidelines above.

Questions for follow up: (family devotionals, fellowship groups, etc.)

- 1) How did God's truth **speak to you** this morning from His word?
- 2) What **adjustments** do you need to make in your life as a result?
- 3) What fears do you have in your life today? Health? Future? Pray.
- 4) How has God given you peace and joy in your life? Be specific.
- 5) What steps do you need to take to make Jesus **L.O.R.D.** of your life?
- 6) Have you actually said a prayer like Romans 10:9 in your past? Do it now!
- 7) In which areas of **S.M.A.R.T.** are you weakest in? Talk and pray about it.