**Getting up when knocked down. *#4***

***Denial to renewal***

**Never underestimate the power of denial.**

*By Pastor George Lehman*

Denial is a weapon we give to the enemy to use against us.

We are not lacking information or even revelation. We are sorely lacking in application. The **‘doing’ part** of what we keep hearing.

Most of us are experts at ignoring the inconvenient facts of life. If we don’t ignore them we must do something about them.

Denial can become one of the most effective tools the enemy will use (if you’ll let him) to keep you knocked down.

The danger of denial is that you prevent yourself from accepting truth about yourself.

You begin to believe that your life, your mess up’s, poor conduct and wilful sin, even your poor attitude is Okay and acceptable!

For many, denial is their way of coping when life knocks them down.

If you start your day without caffeine or pep pills. If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains. If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles. If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it. If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time. If you can take criticism and blame without resentment. If you can face the world without lies or denial. If you can do all these things,

**Then, you are probably the family dog.**

**What is denial?** It is refusing to believe something that is true.

**Matthew 16:24 (Amp) – Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to be My disciple, let him deny himself [disregard, lose sight of and forget himself and his own interests] and take up his cross and follow Me [cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying also].** (Jesus connects self-denial with finding true life)

Many times we are in Denial of the Christ life truth.

Psychologists say: it’s a process by which painful truths are not admitted into an individual’s consciousness.

If I accept it into my conscience, I will have to change or do something about it.

**“The worst lies are the lies we tell ourselves. We live in denial of what we do, even what we think. We do this because we are afraid.” - *Richard Bach***

**Galatians 6:5 (NCV) - Each person must be responsible for himself.**

Our denials can take many forms.

**Denial of fact.**

The obvious way to deny the truth is to lie.

Telling a story, we leave out certain details.

Officer, I didn’t know I was driving so fast.

I never heard you ask me to clean up my room.

I would love to help with your move but I’m busy this weekend.

People lie to avoid uncomfortable situations or to make themselves look better.

**Denial of denial.**

Maybe the most dangerous form of denial is when we don’t even recognize we’re denying reality.

Here is one of those denial stories King Saul’s life…

**1 Samuel 15:16-24 (Amp)** **- 16Then Samuel said to Saul, Stop! I will tell you what the Lord said to me tonight. Saul said to him, Say on. 17Samuel said, when you were small in your own sight, were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed you king over Israel? 18And the Lord sent you on a mission and said, “Go”, utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites; and fight against them until they are consumed. 19Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord, but swooped down upon the plunder and did evil in the Lord’s sight? 20Saul said to Samuel, “Yes, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord and have gone the way which the Lord sent me and have brought Agag king of Amalek and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21But the people took from the spoil sheep and oxen, the chief of the things to be utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal.” 22Samuel said, “Has the Lord as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim (household good luck images). Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king.” 24And Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.”**

Covering up what we look like on the inside is denial we refuse to accept or deal with who we really are! Especially after hearing the word being convicted by the Holy Spirit to change certain things, you just ignore it (That’s Denial)

In the days of royalty in England, Kings and Queens, when an artist painted their portraits, they never were allowed to include their blemishes and flaws. He made them look better than they did.

We call it Photo shop today

**Here are some phrases that a person in denial uses often:**

* I can handle this…
* It’s not really a problem.
* I don’t need help.
* I don’t need counselling.
* I can quit anytime.
* I can work it out on my own.

The problem is we can’t handle it

The truth is you have a problem!

The problem with denial is that the longer it goes on, the more we hurt ourselves and the harder it is to come to terms with the truth.

Think about David after his sin with Bathsheba.

**2 Samuel 12:1-7 (Amp)** **– And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came and said to him, There were two men in a city, one rich and the other poor. 2The rich man had very many flocks and herds, 3But the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb which he had bought and brought up, and it grew up with him and his children. It ate of his own morsel, drank from his own cup, lay in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. 4Now a traveler came to the rich man, and to avoid taking one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfaring man who had come to him, he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for his guest. 5Then David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord lives, the man who has done this is a son [worthy] of death. 6He shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no pity. 7Then Nathan said to David, You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king of Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul.**

So many times, when a personal crises doesn’t work, then God often uses people like a NATHAN.

Psychologists call what Nathan did ‘intervention’.

Going to a person in love and showing them what they are in denial about.

**Galatians 6:1-2 (LB) – Dear brothers, if a Christian is overcome by sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help him back onto the right path, remembering that next time it might be one of you who is in the wrong. Share each other’s troubles and problems and so obey our Lord’s command.**

Has a friend or a spouse or a parent said to you lately, ***“You have a problem”?*** We don’t listen, rather we defend and make excuses. This is a sure sign that you possibly have a problem.

Turning **denial around to renewal** takes a heavy dose of acceptance and a cup of humility blended with a spoonful of courage.

That’s why James talks so firmly to the church.

**James 1:22 (NLT)** **– But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.**

David understood that denial only kept his life in bondage and defeat.

Listen how he protects himself from a life of denial.

**Psalm 139: 23-24 (Amp)** **- Search me [thoroughly], O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there is any wicked *or* hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.**

**Psalm 51:6 (Amp)** **- Behold, You desire truth in the inner being make me therefore to know wisdom in my inmost heart.**

When living with an attitude of denial it will cause you much hurt and knock downs.

The good news is that…

**Philippians 1:6 (Amp)** **- And I am convinced *and* sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] *and* perfecting *and* bringing it to full completion in you.**

God is more interested in what you become than what you achieve.

Only with the support of a caring, loving, healing Jesus you can say, “I am capable of terrible things, but I am absolutely, unconditionally committed to You Lord.” “ I am willing to change.”

**Ephesians 4:23-24 (Amp)** **- And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind [having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude] And put on the new nature (the regenerate self) created in God’s image, [Godlike] in true righteousness and holiness.**

Denial is a destroyer that should be cut off as quickly as possible.

Acceptance and truth ‘always’ are your surest path to peace and freedom.

“Getting up when life knocks you down.”