

## Beginners Guide to Predicting your Future pt. 4: The Pull

### **-Review:**

*-Last 3 weeks have been focused a reality: “Direction Determines Destination”*

-REALITY Is JUST WHAT IS,,,Reality cannot be broken,, whether we agree or like it does not impact it in any way

-we either benefit from reality, or we are hurt by it

#### ***-Illustration: Story of Staple through Thumb***

-i didn't believe that stapler was loaded

-i didn't believe it was harmful

-regardless of what I thought I knew,,, that thing was LOADED,,,

-when I pushed that lever that stapler was going to push a metal staple through whatever was in its path,,, *useful or hurtful*

-This reality, “Direction Determines Destination” has been the centerpiece now for 3 weeks.

-each week we have explored slightly different warnings pertaining to it

**-we warned that most personal problems cannot be fixed, but they can be avoided**

**-we warned about the Intention Direction Disconnect**

-Direction **not Intention**, determines destination

*-that regardless of what we intend,,, paths that we take have certain outcomes, if you get on a road that only takes you to Florida, it doesn't matter how badly you want to go to South Carolina,, You can only **wind up where the road you are on ends up***

**-then last week we talked about what it really means to Follow**

-we talked about trusting the direction and intention of Jesus and what he asks of us, even when we don't understand or agree

-that is what it really means to follow,,, to follow when we would otherwise prefer something else.... Those are actually defining moments...

**-You don't have to like or totally agree with where Jesus leads, you just have to be willing to trust him enough to follow,,,,, He is the only one who has been where you want to get to in life**

**-Today we are going to assume that You have said Yes to Following Jesus.**

**-But, even when intentions are good there are forces inside of us Pulling us toward things that would lead us off course.**

**Problem: We have Desires that generate Strong Emotional Pull.**

-Think about some of your Regrets; choices that brought pain or complicated your life.

**-they were typically accompanied by a strong emotional pull**

-you knew he was trouble but the way he made you feel,, you knew she wasn't good for you, but she was just so attractive....

-you knew that purchase wasn't the responsible thing,, but you just HAD TO HAVE IT

-That argument should never have happened,

-something inside kept pushing you to Prove your point,, make them admit you were right,,,

-now that friendship is just over,,, that is a part of your family you just don't communicate with anymore.....

-you wanted to look cool or fit in,, or feel good so you ::: smoked it , drank it, took the pill,, started going to the place

-you knew it was not actually solving anything but the emotions involved were just so hard to say no to

**-We rarely, if ever, Reason our way into regrets.**

-choices that lead to regret tend to be driven by desires with strong emotional pull

**-That emotion causes us to have blind spots for what should be obvious.**

-that emotion causes us lie to ourselves and to Reframe Reality in favor of our "want"

*-they is why "other people just don't understand" ,,,, because you have reframed reality to allow yourself to see things how you need to see them*

-nobody else "gets it" because they are just looking at reality :)

**-Story of Peter:** *-one of the 12 chosen by Jesus to Lead*

-Peter was a Leader, being a Leader is a Nobel Calling

-There are Risks that come with being a Leader: the attention and power it provides **can feed sinful tendencies in us.**

**-True Leadership is about Building Up and Empowering Others.**

**-When Sin corrupts, Leadership becomes about Exalting and Serving Ourselves.**

-If you think about it there are all these Times when what Peter says or does is **Really about Serving Himself.**

-Examples:

-Peter asks Jesus this question: "how many times must I forgive a brother who sins against me? 7 times? **(he is not concerned with how forgiveness benefits the one forgiven, only with how it inconveniences him..)**

-Luke 9 The Transfiguration: Jesus bring Peter, James , John up a mountain where they witness Jesus transformed into his HEAVENLY Glorified state (like looking at lighting)

and Moses and Elijah appear and are having a conversation with Jesus,,, **rather than sitting like (awe look) and watching,,, Peter Interrupts and Inserts himself in a situation where he cannot possibly contribute anything**

-actually says “Jesus, Lucky for you I am here, I can build 3 houses for you guys and you can just live here together”. Then the Bible actually says in parenthesis, “he had no idea what he was saying”

**-There is a sin called “Selfish Ambition” that was so strong in Peter that when it started pulling on him, he went where it pulled.**

-He needed to be seen and heard. He needed to be Somebody. He needed for things to be About Him.

-When Peter gave in to that Pull, He did things he regretted,,,,,

**-Lets talk about Peter’s greatest regret.**

-Jesus was arrested in the Garden,,,,, He had just finished telling everyone that he would be arrested and then KILLED

-While Peter was confidently saying that he would go with Jesus,,, Even to death,,, Jesus told Peter **“before today is over you will disown me 3 times”**

-That is exactly what happened: Jesus was being interrogated in the Temple, and Peter was trying blend into the crowd that was watching.

**-Curious onlookers Recognize Peter and ask “Hey weren’t you one of his followers?”**

-3 different times Peter answers that question, **“No I am not a follower” and the third time he curses and says “I don’t even know him”**

**-that moment the rooster crowed marking the end of that day**

-he realized the magnitude of what had just happened and he WEPT BITTERLY

-Peter had just Disowned Jesus!

-I had always assumed Peter was afraid, but now as I look more closely I see **something else pulling on Peter.**

-Peter was not afraid, he was willing die,,, to “go down swinging”

-He stood next to Jesus and Struck the First Blow,, he was cutting off EARS...

**-What Pulled Peter into Disowning Jesus was SELFISH AMBITION**

-once Jesus was on trial he thought it was all over,,,, the Messiah movement was dead

**-it was not in his best interests to be associated with Jesus right now,,, he was making his choice right now BASED ON “WHAT IS GOOD FOR ME”**

**-Within a week a Regret Filled Peter finds himself 80 miles away back home in Galilee Returning to His Fishing Business.**

-Peter saw the Resurrected Jesus, but in Peter’s mind HE HAD DISQUALIFIED HIMSELF,,, he disowned Jesus,,, so he figured it was over for him.

*-Peter's tendency to let his Selfish Ambition Pull him around had now moved Peters life totally off course.*

*-just imagine the Regret*

*-Galatians 5:13-24 (Common English Bible) You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses, but serve each other through love. 14 All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. 15 But if you bite and devour each other, be careful that you don't get eaten up by each other!*

*16 I say be guided by the Spirit and you won't carry out your selfish desires. 17 A person's selfish desires are set against the Spirit, and the Spirit is set against one's selfish desires. They are opposed to each other, so you shouldn't do whatever you want to do. 18 But if you are being led by the Spirit, you aren't under the Law. 19 The actions that are produced by selfish motives are obvious, since they include sexual immorality, moral corruption, doing whatever feels good, 20 idolatry, drug use and casting spells, hate, fighting, obsession, losing your temper, competitive opposition, conflict, selfishness, group rivalry, 21 jealousy, drunkenness, partying, and other things like that. I warn you as I have already warned you, that those who do these kinds of things won't inherit God's kingdom.*

*22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against things like this. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the self with its passions and its desires.*

## **Point: Our Sinful Selfish Desires Possess a Unique Emotional Pull.**

*-verses 19-21 gives us a quick "grab bag sampling" of sinful desires that live in us.*

*-another translation calls it our "Fleshly Desires"*

*-I like the word "selfishness", because it speaks to the heart of the issue.*

*-the sin involved here is to selfishly choose to gratify our BASE LEVEL Appetites regardless of the impact on US, Our Futures, or Others and Their futures.*

*-Base Level Selfish Desires have a unique ability to Activate our Emotions.*

*-Example:*

***-you don't have a relentless desire for peace and reconciliation in the same way that Anger, Rage, or Hatred PULL on us***

*-we are invited into the wisdom and beauty of the Path Jesus laid out,, the path of Forgiveness, Prayer for those who mistreat, and Enemy Love*

*-but it does not PULL on us the way our Fleshly desire to LASH OUT does*

*-Have you ever wondered why we Progress Toward things that are not right SO Quickly and Effortlessly; but Progress Toward Good Things can feel like Rowing a Boat Upstream?*

*-it is because the Sinful Selfish Desires are able to use our Emotions like a Motor on a Boat.*

-For Peter, his Selfish Ambition would Pull on his Emotions and he would respond and move in that direction.

-The strong emotional pull of the Thing keeps us from paying attention to WHERE that is thing is actually taking us.

- How this person makes us feel, not where we will end up because of our connection to them
- How much I want this car or house or new outfit or latest thing,,, not where this pattern of spending is taking us
- it is the emotional physical Pull I feel toward fulfilling MY LUST now in this moment,, but not noticing the slow erosion of my marital intimacy and closeness,,, or the degradation of my thought life

-Dont be fooled by Strong Emotional Pull.

-In Fact, Strong Emotional Pull should be a Red Flag that causes us to look more closely.

-Why do I want this thing so badly??

-Does this Serve me at the Expense of Someone Else?

-Does this Serve Right now at the Expense of the Future?

**-these are indicators that it is Sin Pulling on our Emotions**

**Point : The More We Respond to “The Pull” the Stronger its Gravity becomes.**

-The more we choose to move toward our flesh, the less it is actually a choice.

-it becomes automatic

**-We become a SATELLITE, caught in the Gravity of that thing**

-And when and where it Pulls, we go.

-Eventually your life is almost defined by that : addiction, relationship, self centeredness, laziness, idolatry, or anger.

-We become Prisoners to things we once thought Pleasures.

**But we have been Invited into a Life of Freedom.**

-Jesus Invites us into Freedom.

-In addition to Jesus verbalizing and teaching us the way to go, the Holy Spirit of God is constantly Directing us in the way of Jesus.

-Galatians said it like this “the Spirit is Leading you in the Opposite way the Flesh is PULLING you.

## **Act it Out:** *(get a volunteer)*

*-we will play out the PULL and then the same scenario again with the Holy Spirit Leading*

**-But because Jesus does not Coerce or Pull the way our Flesh does, it is always our Free Choice whether to walk in the direction of Jesus.**

*-the leading of Jesus is not the Relentless emotional pull that we experience from our flesh*

*-Jesus gave us his teaching the the Holy Spirit Gently and Invites....*

**-If we are moving in the Direction of Jesus by the Invitation of the Spirit then we will also be moving away from the compulsive ways of our Flesh.**

*-these two Directions are Mutually Exclusive*

*-You cannot be selfish and be Loving Others like yourself, at the same time*

*-Actively Following the Spirit will then KEEP YOU OUT OF SITUATIONS where you FLESH is PULLING on you*

***-the secret to a good spiritual defense against sin is to be on Offense***

*-the secret is to be actively following the Prompting of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit leads you into Obedience to Jesus*

**-Following Jesus under the direction of the Holy Spirit looks like:**

*-love , joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control*

*-these are the things the Spirit will be prompting you and directing you towards*

*-Most Interesting part of this: Against these things there is NO LAW.*

**-We will never need to artificially limits these things, the way we do our Flesh.**

*-because of the compulsive nature of our sinful Flesh we have to have limits::: put filters on our internet, so we don't become a slave to lust,,, we put boundaries around our contact with the opposite sex to protect our marriage,,,, some of us have to put strict limits on how many new outfits we can buy, or other ways to limit our DESIRE FOR STUFF. -we have to put limits on our eating or drinking habits. -we actually have laws governing how, when, and for what reasons we can consume drugs*

**-But you will never have to put a limit on how much you love your spouse or kids or brothers and sisters in Christ.**

*-no one will ever say,,, I JUST HAVE TOO MUCH JOY,,,, I HAVE TOO MUCH PEACE.... -I need some limits on the amount of Peace I am experiencing*

**-people will say, she has drinking problem, or he has a drug problem, or a spending problem,,, or poor sexual choices blew their life apart**  
*-but they will never say,,, they have a KINDNESS PROBLEM,,, they are just too patient,,, to gentle and self control MESSED UP THEIR LIFE*

-The more you accept the Invitation of the Spirit to live in obedience to Jesus, the more your life will look like: -love , joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.

**-you don't have to apply restrictions to that kind of life because it is by nature LIBERATING.**

-The more you walk in this the freer you become.

**-Closing: the Invitation to Follow Jesus under the Prompting of the Holy Spirit is ultimately an Invitation to Freedom and a Future.**

**-Where do we go from Here?**

-After following his Flesh, Peter found himself having disowned Jesus and now was back where he started

**-in galilee on a fishing boat catching nothing**

-Jesus appears and disguises his identity

-yells from shore, "throw your nets on the other side of your boat and you will catch"

*-This instruction would have sounded like nonsense: oh so over here... there are no fish, but over here,,,,,, this is where they all are huh....*

-But never the less they listened to the Instruction of this Stranger and their nets are so full of fish it threatens to sink the boat.

**-“On the other side of your boat”** there is powerful symbolism there

-Dont follow your flesh,, follow me

-“*move the nets to the other side of your boat*”

**-Peter immediately recognizes, THIS MUST BE JESUS.....** (this is what happened when Jesus first called Peter 3 years before)

-Peter forgets about the Fish, the Boat, everything and jumps in the water and swims to shore to GET TO JESUS.

**-Jesus asks Peter 3 times “Do you Love me more than these?”**

*-motions toward the Fish and the Boat*

-Jesus essentially asks, **“Peter is this where you want to be?”**

**-Peter is thinking,, NO I want to be with YOU ,,,, But, I disqualified myself”**

-Through Tears Peter says “You know I love you” So Jesus says “OK THEN FEED MY SHEEP” ....

-No probationary period and no Penance to Pay Jesus invites Peter right back into Service to him, He just had to be clear about WHO HE WAS FEEDING.

*-As a leader for Jesus is Peter going to be about Peter, or is Peter going to be about the Sheep*

-Maybe today you recognize you you have been PULLED by your Flesh in an area rather than being Led into Freedom by Jesus.

**-Jesus invites us to accept his Grace and Forgiveness and to Stop being Pulled and start being Led into Obedience and Freedom.**

-As you progress through life God will continue to reveal Areas where you are Being Pulled by your Flesh rather than Led by Jesus.

*-As those things come into focus accept his grace and MOVE INTO FREEDOM*

**-Direction Determines Destination. The Pull of our Flesh is toward Slavery and Compulsion. The Direction of Jesus is Freedom and the Future you want.**