

Introduction:

- Loving Clean: Bringing Relationships to Life
 - We have identified toxic behaviors that are common to us as people.
 - Because toxins are poisonous, they cause the body to expend energy repairing itself rather than building itself. Therefore we have looked at the importance of detoxing spiritually.
 - We have looked at steps to detoxing spiritually.
 - Last week we examined how Jesus lived spiritually healthy in a toxic world. We looked at how do we live life in a toxic world.
- How many have heard the term organic? Organic means to be grown or made without the use of artificial chemicals. Organic is all the 'rage' these days. Organic beef, organic chicken, organic juice, organic lettuce, organic apples and the list goes on.

I. What is Organic Christianity

- A. If organic means to be grown without the use of artificial chemicals. Organic Christianity means to live free of sinful behaviors or sinful expressions.
 1. Toxins are poisonous substances that when introduced to the body slowly begin to kill it. They weaken it. They cause it to expend vital resources to repair it. They cause it to become diseased and if not treated will kill it. Toxins in relationships are sinful behaviors that are poisonous to the relationship. They weaken them. They cause them to become diseased or dysfunctional and if not dealt with will eventually cause it to die or not be productive.
 2. Remember the Disney characters: Snow Whites mother and sisters, Cruella DeVille, The Beast from Beauty and the Beast (Hostage taker) All Disney princess are obsessive, Wendy of Peter Pan was an enabler. Anger, rage, control, manipulator, rebellion, etc.
- B. What is an example of Toxic Christianity?
 1. Ie. The Corinthian church is an example. On the outside the Corinthian church was pretty amazing. According to Paul, they lacked nothing regarding spiritual gifts. They were healing, prophesying, sharing words of knowledge, praying in other tongues, discerning spirits etc etc. They were going to church, youth group, small group and doing outreach. With all that activity they were also growing numerically. But look at what was going on inside the Corinthian church.
 - a) They were full of dissensions and quarreling 1:10-13
 - b) They were full of jealousy and strife 3:3-4
 - c) They were full of conceit and boasting 4:6-7 and 5:2-6
 - d) They had grievances against one another 6:1-8
 - e) They had pride of knowledge and were insensitive to one another 6:8
 - f) They were selfish – 11:17-ff
 - g) They were doing things sexually that Paul said, the heathen don't even do that! Sounds like the Corinthian church was toxic.
 2. How can you move in spiritual gifts, read your Bible, go to church, listen to worship music and still be toxic? You do all those good things by faith. But while you are operating in faith you can still be allowing/introducing toxic behaviors into your

Christian life. That is why we examined the importance of detoxing spiritually so we can Love Clean and bring relationships to life.

- a) To live life and not deal with sinful behaviors and attitude in our life will kill relationships, defile people and cause relationships to be unfruitful.
- b) These were things that confused me as a youth who was taken to church regularly: How can they tell me I am out of control with rebellious behavior when they are so huge because they cant push away from the table. How can that board member who is head of spiritual life talk to my dad the way he just did? How can that preach be so powerful in the pulpit but be having an affair? How can my parents who drag me to church every week treat each other the way they do? ANSWER: They refuse to grow up spiritually in character. They allow behaviors and reactions that are not Godly to continue. Therefore the sinful habits they learned in life still lord it over their life. What is needed is renewal of the mind (learning to think like Christ), putting to death the 'old man' (our sinful ways) and concentrate on growing the fruit of the spirit.
- c) "People destroy with their character what they have built with their gift unless transformation has occurred." Graham Cooke

II. Loving Clean

- A. Loving Clean is a choice. Just like eating clean is a choice.
 1. Our theme is Loving Clean: Bringing Relationships to Life. It is interesting that when Kelly and I have done extended fasts and we meet people we haven't seen in a while they comment on how young and healthy we look. Skin is clearer, face is brighter, less weight. The body has detoxed.
 2. Think of what your relationships would look like if you Love Clean. It would bring your relationships to life.
- B. Paul's answer to the toxic Corinthians: LOVE
 1. Five 'ifs' vs. 1-3. If I can do all of this stuff and do not have love I am nothing. If I do all 'the stuff' and I do not love, I am toxic and it's counts for nothing. Let me show you a more excellent way. 12:31
 2. *"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NLT)
 3. Jesus was not toxic spiritually. Why? 1 John 4:8 God is love! You cannot be toxic and love at the same time. The more you walk in love the less toxic your life will be. So to love clean requires that you choose to walk in love.
- C. Love Is
 1. Patient
 2. Kind
 3. Rejoices in truth
 4. Never giving up
 5. Never losing faith
 6. Always hopeful

7. Enduring
- D. Love Isn't
 1. Jealous - wants what others have
 2. Boastful – self centered – arrogant
 3. Proud – self centered – puffed up
 4. Rude – inconsiderate of others
 5. Demand it way – controlling
 6. Not irritable – to stir to anger
 7. Record keeping – calculated reasoning. Ie. Justifying itself, and keeping score.
 8. Happy in unrighteousness...sin...toxic relating.
- E. Loving Clean is a choice. It is putting off the old man of sin and putting on Christ.
 1. *"throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit **renew your thoughts and attitudes.**"* (Ephesians 4:22-23, NLT)
 2. *"Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and **be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.**"* (Colossians 3:9-10, NLT)

III. Bearing Fruit

- A. John 15:1-7 Jesus calls us to abide in Him.
 1. By abiding we position ourselves to bear fruit...much fruit. To abide means to remain. This word means a. "to stay in a place," figuratively "to remain in a sphere," b. "to stand against opposition," "to hold out," "to stand fast," c. "to stay still," and d. "to remain," Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (p. 581). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
 2. If you do not bear fruit you get cut off and tossed away. If you do bear fruit you get pruned so that you are more fruitful.
 - a) The word translated prunes is more accurately translated cleanses.
 - b) The Pharisees cleanses the outside but Jesus cleanses the inside.
 - c) The cleaner the inside the more visible the reality on the outside.
 - d) Christianity is not behavior modification. It is changing the inside so the outside acts differently.
 3. What kind of fruit are we to produce? Paul answers this quite clearly in Gal. 5:22-ff.
- B. If I am abiding then the Holy Spirit is producing. *"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another."* (Galatians 5:22-26, NLT)
 1. There is no law against these things. Means this: If you are doing these you have not need of the law.
 2. Those who live this way have 'nailed' their sinful nature/toxic nature to His cross and crucified them there. They are dead.

3. Graham Cooke "The fruit of the Spirit mostly grows in bad soil. How does kindness grow? It grows in the soil of a situation where someone just says something or does something unkind towards you, and now you have a choice. Do you move in the same spirit and give like for like, or do you move in the opposite spirit and prove who you are in Christ?" That moment of choice defines you. It is what gives you identity. Are you Christlike or Luciferian?
4. Since we live by the Spirit we are lead by the Spirit and follow His leading.
 - a) Therefore you do not have an anger problem you have a love problem.
 - b) You do not have self pity problem you have a joy problem
 - c) You do not have an irritable problem you have a peace problem.
 - d) You do not have a rude problem you have a kindness problem.
- C. God's organization skills brings people and events into our lives to give us opportunity to grow in the fruit of the Spirit and in His grace. If we are 'after Him' we cooperate with the process if we are not we usually respond in a wrong manner.
 1. Toxic people and difficult situations exist to develop us in the things of God. It is His life curriculum!
 2. A warrior in the spirit does not look to run from these things. A warrior in the spirit does not want to be rescued. Warriors look to overcome!
 3. Ie. Conflict exists that we might learn the way of peace. And peace empowers us to overcome.

Conclusion:

- If you find yourself being toxic, it is for the purpose of putting of the old man of sin/detoxing. If you find yourself with toxic people for the purpose of accelerating your growth in love and the fruit of the spirit.
- Organic christianity is living the Christian life free of toxic elements that sin brings into our relationships.
- We love clean by choosing to do so...moment by moment and day by day.
- The more we love the more freely we live of a toxic sinful environment and the brighter our relationships will become.
- It was George Eliot who said, "It's never too late to be who you might have been."