CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

Kansas City, Missouri

A SIX-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Successful Biblical Living — Part 5

The Call Is Coming from Inside the House:

Confronting the Parasites That Feed on God's Purpose — Part Two

> *"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 (NIV)**

From the message by Dr. Stan Archie

Dr. Stan Archie

Senior Pastor & Co-Founder

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 8, 2026

DAY ONE

CLEAN WATER IN A DIRTY CUP: ADDING GOOD WITHOUT REMOVING BAD

SCRIPTURE READING

ROMANS 12:1–2 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 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.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Sunday Dr. Archie picked up where he left off the week before, with the parasites that live inside us, and he began with a co-worker from his years at Sprint. Every morning at 6:30 the man was at the gym with the rush-hour crowd, faithful as the sunrise—and month after month, nothing changed. Then one day he opened his desk drawer, and there it was: not a fun-size candy bar but a whole bag of king-size ones. He was doing something good. He had simply never stopped doing something bad.

We all know a version of that story. The diet shake meant to replace a meal, drunk alongside the meal. The medicine given to settle a restless child, followed by a handful of candy. And, Dr. Archie said plainly, the Christian who comes to church, carries a Bible, and attends Bible study—and has stacked all of it on top of a life that never let anything go. We are not short on good things. What we lack is the willingness to remove what we already know is wrong.

> ***"All you did was add what you thought was good to what you knew was bad. I can put clean water in a dirty cup and pretend that because the water is clean, the dirt is gone."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

That is why Paul does not say add Christ to your routine. He says be transformed—become something you have never been—by the renewing of your mind. Transformation is not accumulation. And notice the order: only then will you be able to test and approve God's will. His good, pleasing, and perfect will does not surface in a life still running the old patterns underneath the new habits.

Then Dr. Archie reached back to a 1979 thriller. A woman kept answering terrifying phone calls. She locked the doors, posted police outside, watched the windows, and had the line traced—until the operator gave her the answer: the call was coming from inside the house. We spend so much energy watching the windows. But the devil did not make us do it. Each of us is dragged away by our own desire, and distance from a sin is not deliverance from it. Wake that parasite up, and it will let you pick up right where you left off.

So before you add one more good thing this week—one more podcast, one more devotional, even this one—ask what needs to come out. Then pour the clean water into a clean cup.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *What good things have I added to my spiritual life this past year—church, study, devotionals—and is there an honest area where I added good without removing anything bad?*

2. *What is the "candy drawer" I keep within reach while doing everything else right? Why have I protected it for so long?*

3. *If Romans 12:2 began working in me this week, which pattern of thinking would need to be renewed first—and what would look different by Saturday?*

4. *What is one thing I need to remove—not add—this week, and whom will I tell so that it actually comes out?*

DAY TWO

A HEART THAT DEVISES WICKED SCHEMES: WHAT DAVID KEPT LOOKING AT

SCRIPTURE READING

2 SAMUEL 11:2, 14–15 (NIV)

One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful… In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, 'Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.'

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Proverbs says God hates "a heart that devises wicked schemes." Sunday Dr. Archie pointed out what the verse does not say. It does not say a mouth, or a hand, or even a plan carried out. It says a heart. A scheme can be fully built before anything is done—deliberate strategies to deceive, manipulate, exploit, or undermine someone else for my own objective, turning a God-given capacity into an instrument of harm.

Most of us assume schemes belong in crime novels. Dr. Archie brought them home. The driver who passed you, and you know the lane ends ahead, so you pull alongside to make sure he cannot get back in. The new clothes brought out of the closet one at a time so no one asks where the money went. The television that suddenly "changes channels too slow" a week before a 95-inch screen comes through the door. Small things. Same heart.

Then David. On an evening at home he walked the palace roof, and Dr. Archie, who has stood at that site, noted that David had to go and look. He had two options: keep looking or walk into another room. He kept looking. The sin was not what was outside; what he saw awakened what was already inside. When the pregnancy came, honesty was still available. Instead, David devised. He invited Uriah to dinner, made him drunk, and sent him home, counting on Uriah carrying the same thing inside that he did. But Uriah slept at the palace door. Something was different in Uriah. So David wrote the order, and Joab—with something in him that said yes—carried it out.

> ***"The sin was not what David was seeing outside. What he saw only triggered something that was already on the inside."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

We tell ourselves we are not like David because we have never done what he did. But God's frustration was with the heart that had the capacity, and that capacity shows up in far more places than a battlefield. This week, notice the small strategies—the angle you work, the story you shape, the move you make so someone else ends up behind you. Ask what your heart is building when no one can see the blueprints.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Where have I recently built a "small scheme"—in traffic, at home, at work, or with money—to get my way or make sure someone else ended up behind me?*

2. *What did I keep looking at this month after I knew I should have walked into another room? What did it awaken in me?*

3. *When I am exposed or embarrassed, do I reach first for honesty or for a plan to manage the story? What would choosing honesty cost me in the situation I am facing right now?*

4. *Like Joab, has someone asked me to help carry out their scheme? What would it look like this week to refuse an order I know is wrong?*

DAY THREE

CREATE IN ME A PURE HEART: THE ROOTS OF A CORRUPT MOTIVE

SCRIPTURE READING

PSALM 51:10–12 (NIV)

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Sunday Dr. Archie named the character flaw beneath every scheme: a corrupt motive. We can say the right words and do the right things while steering, all along, toward our own advantage at someone else's expense. And motives do not come from nowhere. He named four roots.

Vengeance is the debt we will not cancel. It may be the parent who left, or who struggled with addiction through our childhood and is doing better now—and some part of us quietly hopes they fall. "I'm over it," we say. But if our motives keep bending toward that wound, we are not over it; it is the parasite feeding on us. Envy is more than wanting a nice car or a good home—wanting is not the sin. Envy says I deserve it more than you, so I keep cataloguing why you don't, and I cannot celebrate you. Jealousy wants control of what belongs to someone else and resents their influence over it. Bias is a miscalculation of equality: I am better, mine is better, and the scale tips before the evidence arrives.

Dr. Archie showed how these roots grow into counsel that sounds like concern: the friend who advises you about your marriage while wanting what you have, the buddy who warns you away from someone he later marries. Deception that looks like care begins in a motive no one examined.

David's answer is the one we need. Psalm 51 does not plead mitigating circumstances. Perhaps it was the years of war; perhaps it was the distance from his own children. David does not argue the cause. He asks for something only God can do—create. God, I don't care why I got here or how I got here. Create in me a pure heart.

> ***"Don't lie to yourself and say, 'But my motive is good.' David said, God, I don't care why I got here. I don't care how I got here. I just want a clean one."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

So do not tell yourself, "But my motive is good." Ask the Spirit this week which of the four roots runs beneath your choices, and let the prayer of Psalm 51 become your own before your next hard conversation.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Of the four roots—vengeance, envy, jealousy, and bias—which do I recognize most quickly in myself? Where did it show up this past week?*

2. *Is there someone whose fall I would secretly welcome? What wound is still steering my motives toward that person?*

3. *Whose success, home, gift, or influence do I find hard to celebrate? What would it look like to honor that person sincerely this week, in word or deed?*

4. *Will I pray Psalm 51:10 each day this week without explaining how I got here—and ask one trusted person to help me notice when my motives drift?*

DAY FOUR

FEET QUICK TO RUSH INTO EVIL: RUNNING TO THE FIGHT

SCRIPTURE READING

MATTHEW 26:14–16 (NIV)

Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?' So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Sunday Dr. Archie took us back to recess. Kickball on one side, jacks and double Dutch on the other—and then someone yelled, "Fight!" Half the playground dropped everything and ran. No cameras, no phones, just the appetite to watch. A few agitators pushed to the front to egg it on; everybody else just looked.

That is what Proverbs means by feet that are quick to rush into evil: willingly, eagerly pursuing what we know God has warned us against, driven by an appetite for it. And the playground has moved into our pockets. If someone opened your feed, Dr. Archie asked, what would they find? What we keep watching and sharing is what keeps showing up. Nobody's algorithm fills with peace by accident.

Judas was not an enemy of Jesus. He thought Jesus was too slow and too peaceful—breaking bread and feeding the poor when He had the power to take on Rome. Jesus always came through in chaos: a boy's lunch fed five thousand, a storm was told to be still. So corner Him, Judas reasoned, and He will finally act. He asked the chief priests what they would pay, took thirty pieces of silver, and began watching for his moment.

Before we frown at Judas, Dr. Archie asked how much we would betray Jesus for. A lottery ticket. A lie. Friends—sometimes not even real ones. Likes. Underneath is an attraction to chaos. Some of us cannot stand peace; when a relationship is going well, we stir something up so the other person has to prove their love again.

> ***"Judas betrayed Him once. Some of us betray Him once an hour—for a lie, for friends, for likes. Let's not frown on Judas as much as we do."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

Confronting it begins with an honest inventory: what entertains me, what I watch, play, and listen to, which people and places I drift toward, what I have normalized. Here is the test: when good news happens, do I simply hear it? When bad news happens, do I look it up—the block, the time, the names—and share it first? This week, when the playground calls, stay at your own game.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *If someone opened my phone today, what would my feed, my search history, and the things I share say about what I run toward?*

2. *When my relationships are peaceful, do I ever stir something up? What need am I trying to meet when I do?*

3. *What specifically—a show, a game, an account, a group chat, a place—needs to leave my life so that I stop running to the fight?*

4. *Where am I impatient with God's slower, peaceful way right now? What would it look like this week to trust His timing instead of forcing a crisis?*

DAY FIVE

A FALSE WITNESS WHO POURS OUT LIES: WHEN TRUTH BECOMES A WEAPON

SCRIPTURE READING

GENESIS 39:11–14 (NIV)

One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, 'Come to bed with me!' But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, she called her household servants. 'Look,' she said to them, 'this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us!'

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The false witness in Proverbs, Dr. Archie said Sunday, is not simply the person who lies. It is the person who weaponizes the lie—distorting someone's words, exaggerating their wrongdoing, concealing the facts that would clear them, all to damage a reputation or control how others see that person. Sometimes the weapon is a lie. Sometimes it is a piece of the truth, carefully trimmed.

Potiphar's wife pursued Joseph day after day, and day after day he refused. Then, with no servants in the house, she caught him by his cloak. Joseph did not negotiate; he left the cloak in her hand and ran. And she turned his integrity into evidence. She laid the cloak beside her, kept it there until her husband came home, and told the story again. The very garment Joseph lost by doing right became the proof that he had done wrong.

Dr. Archie named the flaw: abuse of truth. Truth matters deeply to God, and trust has to be earned—which is why those who abuse truth invest so much in seeming trustworthy. They groom us with small true things until we stop checking, the way a familiar voice on the evening news earns our belief one accurate report at a time. He admitted that he has watched words from this pulpit carried out of the room and reshaped to wound the church and him personally.

> ***"This is not the person who lies. This is the person who weaponizes the lie—who works to make themselves trustworthy so they can misuse your trust."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

The question is not only whether we have been Joseph. It is whether we have ever been the one holding the cloak—retelling a story so it lands just so, leaving out the part that would make the other person look reasonable. Confronting this parasite means facing how often we have misused truth and then pretended it never happened.

This week, before you repeat something about someone, ask three questions: Is it whole? Is it fair? And why am I the one telling it?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *When did I last retell a story about someone so that it landed the way I wanted it to? What did I leave out?*

2. *Have I ever used trust I had earned to steer how people see someone else? What was I really after?*

3. *Before I pass along information this week, how will I practice the three questions—Is it whole? Is it fair? Why am I the one telling it?*

4. *Is there someone whose reputation I have damaged, with a lie or with a trimmed truth, whom I need to set the record straight about or apologize to this week?*

DAY SIX

ONE WHO STIRS UP CONFLICT: THE SPIRIT OF DIVISION AND THE ANTIDOTE

SCRIPTURE READING

JAMES 3:16–18 (NIV)

For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The last of the seven is the person who stirs up conflict in the community—creating division, encouraging hostility, spreading gossip, manipulating disagreements. Underneath, Dr. Archie said Sunday, is a spirit that cannot stand unity.

He made us feel how far that spirit can go. Teaching a seminar once, he showed a photograph from the lynching era: a crowd dressed as if for Sunday service, and children among them, smiling. Then he held up a toy puppy, talked about how cute it was, and snapped its neck. The room was furious—over a toy. How numb, he asked, would you have to become to smile at a real killing? How much division, how many shared lies, would it take to make a six-year-old call that a great day?

Most of us will never see division on that scale. But we have seen the same spirit in smaller rooms: the parent who turns a child against the other parent, the man who hates a father he never knew because of what he was told. We see it in churches, too, in the whisper beside you—why do they always…? Every one of those questions plants a seed. Confronting this parasite means asking: why am I uncomfortable when everyone is unified?

> ***"Stop trying to change the world, because the call is coming from inside the house. Perhaps changing you will work."***
>
> *— Dr. Stan Archie*

Here is where the week lands. The call is coming from inside the house, and God, like the operator, has traced it. We may carry every parasite on this list, because we have taken in so much of the world. We cannot scrub them out ourselves. But Christ offered His blood as the antidote, reconciling to God people who were once His enemies (Colossians 1:21–22). The healing will not all happen overnight. What happens overnight is that God no longer holds it against you. Start there this week—and then go sow some peace.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *When everyone around me is in agreement and things are calm, am I at ease—or do I find myself looking for what is wrong?*

2. *Where have my questions, comments, or "just asking" planted division—in my family, at work, or here at CFBC?*

3. *Is there a relationship in which I have shaped someone's view of another person—a child, a friend, a fellow member? What would it look like to begin repairing it?*

4. *Have I received Christ's blood as the antidote for the parasites I named this week? What one act of peacemaking will I sow before Sunday?*

THE WEEK IN PRAYER

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 8, 2026

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we confess that we have spent our lives watching the windows. We have blamed the world, the culture, the people who irritate us, and even the devil—and all along the call was coming from inside the house. We have added good things to our lives without removing the bad, pouring clean water into dirty cups and wondering why nothing changed. Renew our minds, Father, so that we may finally prove Your good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Search the places in us where schemes are drafted. You saw David on the roof, and You see us in traffic, at the register, in the closet, and in the quiet strategies we work when no one is watching. Give us the grace to walk into another room when we should, and the courage to choose honesty when exposure comes.

Create in us a pure heart, O God. We do not come to explain how we got here—the wounds, the absences, the losses we have carried. We bring You the vengeance we have not released, the envy that will not let us celebrate, the jealousy that reaches for what is not ours, and the biases we have mistaken for wisdom. Make our motives new.

Slow our feet, Lord. Forgive us for running to the fight, for feeding on chaos, for scrolling toward what wounds and sharing it first. Forgive us for the times we have handed You over for far less than thirty pieces of silver. Teach us to love peace, and to stay in it when it comes.

Guard our tongues from false witness. Where we have trimmed the truth into a weapon or groomed someone's trust only to misuse it, convict us and send us back to make it right. Where we have planted division in our homes, among our children, or in this church, make us peacemakers who sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Most of all, thank You for the antidote. We could never scrub these parasites from our own hearts, but the blood of Jesus has reconciled us to You—once enemies, now presented holy in Your sight. The work in us may not be finished overnight, but You do not hold it against us. Keep working, Lord, until everything inside this house belongs to You. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen.