



Topic: Unplugging From the Matrix

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and truth shall make you free.

~John 8:31-32~

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Introduction to the Lesson.

The Matrix. What is it and where is it? If we recall from the movie *The Matrix*, we know that the synopsis behind the movie is a computer hacker Neo who is contacted by underground freedom fighters who explain that reality as he understands it is actually a complex computer simulation called the Matrix. As long as Neo was plugged into the matrix, his life, though dysfunctional as it seems to him, was controlled by a force guiding and perpetuating all he knew as reality. Created by a malevolent Artificial Intelligence, the Matrix hides the truth from humanity, allowing them to live a convincing, simulated life while machines grow and harvest people to use as an ongoing energy source. The leader of the freedom fighters, Morpheus, believes Neo is “The One” who will lead humanity to freedom and overthrow the machines. Together with Trinity, Neo and Morpheus fight against the machine’s enslavement of humanity as Neo begins to believe and accept his role as “The One”.

Let’s explore the movie a little deeper....

Meaning & Interpretation of the Movie.

Neo believes he’s living a normal, but slightly troubled life in 1999. By day, a computer programmer for a large, generic software company; by night, a hacker, providing the fruits of his labors to other troubled souls. He lives alone, he doesn’t sleep, and there’s a profound emptiness in his life, but it’s something he can’t put his finger on - until he is contacted by Trinity. “It’s the question that drives us”, she whispers in his ear, to which he correctly responds “What is the Matrix?” It is the question that has gnawed at Neo seemingly his entire life, yet he’s never put it into words before now. It is the voicing of this question that begins his transformation into The One. Neo’s journey in the movie bears many hallmarks of classic myths. He is the Chosen One, the reluctant hero, the savior, and the one who will lead his people to freedom. In order to do that, he must sacrifice himself, and rise from the dead. He faces progressively greater challenges through the course of the movie, and as he begins to believe in himself, he is able to overcome these challenges, including beating his ultimate adversary, Agent Smith.

Now, let’s see through the eyes of the Spirit that give light and life to men....

What have we said about the Matrix? From the reality of the true life, the matrix is living as if all there is to life is what we see, hear, feel, taste, and believe with our natural mind. It’s living from one day to the next with no true sense of the direction our decisions will ultimately have on the whole of our life.

The matrix is false. It's what the enemy of our soul presents to us claiming it is the reality of all we are and all we should ever be. It's the suggestion of the enemy of our soul that our happiness is contingent on what we bring to the table of our life. The matrix attempts to present a counterfeit version of life hoping that we are so consumed by all the matrix presents that we never seek to ask the question(s) that lingers in our mind, heart, and soul: "Is this all there is to life; do I just exist to experience what I do and then die; what happens after my existence in this life is over?"

Life before the Matrix....

- Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7. Man was created in God's image (created with moral, ethical, and intellectual abilities; created as living symbols of God on earth to represent His reign.) Man was created in God's likeness (created to reflect God's majesty on earth.) Man was formed of the dust of the ground. Although God created light with a mere word, He created man by fashioning a body out of mud and clay, transforming the clay into something new. God breathed the breath of life in man and he became a living soul. In breathing in man, God infused the human spirit, with its moral, intellectual, relational, and spiritual capacities. This breath of life makes humans distinct from all other creatures. God showed tender care and intimate concern in the way He shaped man.
- Genesis 2:8-9; 16-17. The planting of a garden in creation is a touch of God's meticulous, personal care. Eden was an extraordinarily appointed garden, with choice specimens of the finest trees and plants. In his created state, man could do almost anything he wanted. In His great grace, God gave permission before He gave restriction. And the permission was broad (of every three), while the restriction was narrow (a single tree). In his created state, man was able to enjoy pleasant sights—something that would later become corrupted by sin and give rise to lust or give rise to what we will call "The Matrix" that distorted man's view of life. Though shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is not to suggest that God desired to withhold man's opportunity to grow in wisdom and knowledge. To the contrary, God wanted man to learn wisdom, but wisdom tied to his relationship with his Creator God.

Life in the Matrix....

- Genesis 3:6-7. So when the woman saw. In our obedience to God, we mustn't let what we see distract us from continuing our steadfastness. As we see from these verses, the woman allowed the adversary of man (our Agent Smith) to infiltrate her senses by introducing her to the sight of something that "appeared" good to the satisfying of the flesh. From here, scripture tells us that not wanting to act alone, the woman introduced her action to her husband who along with her entered in to this state of disobedience to God. And this, my brother and sister is how life in the Matrix was birth into humanity. See the Matrix portrayed partaking of the tree in the midst of the garden as the opening up of something to make one wise when in reality, partaking of this tree was the opening of something that covered all that was real and attainable (man's intimate fellowship and relationship with God) thus making man's very spiritual state of existence no longer attainable.
- Acts 28:27. Through disobedience to God, man became a slave to the Matrix or to living life apart from a spiritual sensitivity and consciousness of God. Now left with a false sense of life

living with a heart that has grown dull or hardened and ears that are heavy and hard of hearing and eyes that are shut tight, man is unable to perceive or have knowledge or become acquainted with that necessary for converting man back to his original created state of fellowship with God.

Man is now plugged into the Matrix with no knowledge, strength, nor ability within himself to effect liberation from life in the Matrix to life outside the Matrix. While man desires freedom, how to be a freedom fighter, man knows not.

Our Mission: Unplugging from the Matrix

The first and most critical act of unplugging from the Matrix is the realization that what we have known to be living or life thus far is only an illusion presented to us as an attempt to keep us from reaching our fullness of life here and in eternity. We must realize that in our current un-regenerated state, we are outside of fellowship with God; we stand guilty of the sin we were born in and of the iniquity we were shaped in (*cf. Psalm 51:5*). We must come to the knowledge that the sin we have committed was/is against God and him only (*cf. Psalm 51:4*).

Recognizing Our Sinful State:

- 1 John 1:8-10. Self-deceit is an inherent part of man's emotional, mental, and spiritual makeup. We have a hard time seeing it in ourselves because we are experts in hiding reality from ourselves and trying to hide it from others. However, we fool ourselves if we think we can hide our true nature from God. In this portion of scripture, the apostle John is instructing us about the obligation we have due to receiving atonement through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. His death paid for our past sins and opened the way for us to be forgiven.
- John 15:16. When God chose us it was an entirely free choice of God. It did not arise from any character, motive, or condition in us for the Bible tells us that God commended his love toward us, in that we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We were chosen in Christ to be the benefactors of salvation before the foundation of the world. Why were we chosen by God? That we should go and bring forth fruits of righteousness and holiness in ourselves, and be the happy means of conversion from the elements of the world or the Matrix.

If we understand it was God's delight and pleasure to choose to deliver us from this world of sin and impart unto us eternal life through the knowledge of Him through His Son Jesus, we will begin to live a life free from the falsehood that plague those living inside the Matrix.

Embracing a Non-Matrix or a Kingdom Mind-Set:

Embracing a kingdom mind-set takes effort on our part. As Christians, we must put first things first by establishing a kingdom mind-set. It's easy to become distracted by the things going on around us; however, we are God's representatives on this earth. There should be a distinct difference between the saints and the rest of society. It is vital that we gain concept and clear understanding of God's kingdom and what our role is. When we say mind-set, we are referring to a fixed mental attitude or disposition that is responsible for our responses to the situation we face.

- We are a product of what we think about most (Philippians 2:5-8).
- Our thoughts must be geared toward what promotes the perfect will of God which then will be followed by our consistent actions toward this end. (Romans 12:2)

When we begin to have a kingdom mind-set, we begin to be conscious of the fact that God is our ruler and He has a plan for us. It is God who wants to influence and impact our lives. It is in God where everything derives. Therefore, we must know and understand His Word.

God's kingdom is the governing impact of His will over a territory. God wants to influence earth and set the captives free through Christians who stand in the gap serving as God's freedom fighters in the earthly realm. Therefore, as citizens who have been set free or "unplugged from the Matrix of this life, we should impact people everywhere we go (work; home; family; church).

Being Determined To Stand (Making Our Call and Election Sure):

The promises of God for those He has called are great and precious. Incumbent upon us is the duty to make our calling and election sure. It is implied that one's calling and election is conditional and that those who have been called need to make their election sure. How do we accomplish this?

- 2 Corinthians 5:17. When you and I accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior and believed upon Him, we became a new creation in Christ. The Bible tells us that this new man is created in righteousness and true holiness (*cf. Ephesians 4:24*). We aren't just born again, but we have also become sons (and daughters) of God. This life obligates us to live as new creations. Our former or old man and his deeds are no longer alive to govern nor dictate how we respond to situations and circumstances. It is now the new man who is created in righteousness and true holiness that should govern our every thought and action. While we may have the same external body parts, the internal body parts have been made new (ie., heart, mind, will, and intellect).
- 2 Peter 1:10. As Christians, we are to advance our spirituality even in the face of failure. We must be determined that no matter what comes our way, we will advance in the work of the Lord toward us. We must trust and believe that the Lord is able to keep what we have committed unto him (our life to spiritually nurture and sustain); we must seek to learn and grow in our knowledge of the Lord day by day; we must strive to keep our bodies under subjection and not let them be carried away with every slight wind, circumstance, or trial whose goal is to turn us away from the truth of our God.
- Philippians 2:12-16. If we want to remain in a right relationship with our God and not be drawn back into the Matrix of this world, there are things that we must do. We must individually work out our salvation, as the apostle Paul instructs. This obviously is going to require obedience. The Hebrew writer said of Christ that, "having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (*cf. Hebrews 5:9*). Our obedience opens the door that invites God's presence in wherever we are. Our obedience breaks the chains that hold us captive and controlled by the god of this world (our Mr. Smith). Salvation (or deliverance) comes from the grace of God, but we can only receive this gift of grace God wants us to have when we obey His gospel, and this is how we begin to work out our own eternal salvation.

Conclusion.

Living outside of the Matrix (world) takes a heart, mind, and soul made up to trust God and committed to submit to His will. We must be ever in pursuit in our seeking of Him. In doing so, we will find Him and in Him find all things needed for life and godliness to live outside of the world system. Jesus told his disciples that they were no longer of the world because he had chosen them out of the world (*cf. John 15:19*). This is the same message He imparts to us. For our home is with Jesus seated in heavenly places. Therefore, we cannot embrace this world's solution to our problems and situations. In all our ways, we must acknowledge our heavenly Father who has promised to direct our every move along life's path. Be encouraged my brother and sister and know you are created in Christ Jesus unto good works and that all things occurring in our life works out to our good in the end.

God's peace and blessing be upon you....