

How Shall We Die?



David Eells

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

Scriptures are taken from the *American Standard Version (ASV)* of the Holy Bible because of its faithfulness to the ancient manuscripts and Bible Numerics.

Numerics is a system designed into the Bible by God to prove authenticity. The Greeks and Hebrews used their letters for numbers. Therefore, the whole Bible is also written in numbers which show perfect patterns as long as the God-inspired original words are not departed from. It mathematically proves the original text and where it has been added to or taken away from. The *Numeric English New Testament (NENT)* is based on the numeric pattern and is quoted from when necessary.

We have departed from the *ASV* only in the name Jehovah and Lord Jehovah which we replaced with Lord and Lord God, respectively. Neither represents the original YHWH but Lord is less confusing to many and we did not want this to distract from the teaching. The vowels were added by men to make the name “Jehovah.” We apologize for sometimes using partial texts but this book would have been much larger had we not. Rarely, where italicized words were added to the text and changed the original meaning, we left them out.

This book is dedicated to our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave up His life for us so that we would be empowered to give up our lives for Him. Many know John 3:16 by heart but not the next step: ***(1Jn.3:16) Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*** Also, many tend to ignore this: ***(Mat.16:24) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.***

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Books of the Bible Abbreviation List

Old Testament

Gen.	Genesis
Exo.	Exodus
Lev.	Leviticus
Num.	Numbers
Deu.	Deuteronomy
Jos.	Joshua
Jdg.	Judges
Rth.	Ruth
1Sa.	1 Samuel
2Sa.	2 Samuel
1Ki.	1 Kings
2Ki.	2 Kings
1Ch.	1 Chronicles
2Ch.	2 Chronicles
Ezr.	Ezra
Neh.	Nehemiah
Est.	Esther
Job	Job
Psa.	Psalms
Pro.	Proverbs
Ecc.	Ecclesiastes
Son.	The Song of Solomon
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Lam.	Lamentations
Eze.	Ezekiel
Dan.	Daniel
Hos.	Hosea
Joe.	Joel
Amo.	Amos
Oba.	Obadiah (<i>1 Chapter</i>)
Jon.	Jonah
Mic.	Micah
Nah.	Nahum
Hab.	Habakkuk
Zep.	Zephaniah
Hag.	Haggai
Zec.	Zechariah
Mal.	Malachi

New Testament

Mat.	Matthew
Mar.	Mark
Luk.	Luke
Joh.	John
Act.	Acts
Rom.	Romans
1Co.	1 Corinthians
2Co.	2 Corinthians
Gal.	Galatians
Eph.	Ephesians
Php.	Philippians
Col.	Colossians
1Th.	1 Thessalonians
2Th.	2 Thessalonians
1Ti.	1 Timothy
2Ti.	2 Timothy
Tit.	Titus
Phm.	Philemon (<i>1 Chapter</i>)
Heb.	Hebrews
Jas.	James
1Pe.	1 Peter
2Pe.	2 Peter
1Jn.	1 John
2Jn.	2 John (<i>1 Chapter</i>)
3Jn.	3 John (<i>1 Chapter</i>)
Jud.	Jude (<i>1 Chapter</i>)
Rev.	Revelation

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INTRODUCTION

This book is not destined to fly off the store shelves, nor is it likely to be given as a graduation present. The message contained herein won't be uttered from many a preacher's lectern or quoted by the hospital chaplain.

Yet, this doctrine of dying-to-self, unpopular and neglected as it is, may be the most important teaching in the New Testament. Our Lord Jesus Christ instructs us to deny ourselves, to take up our cross and follow Him. Where? Well, His footsteps lead to the crucified life, in spite of everything in us that demands we do the opposite. It's that old man inside us that needs to be nailed to the cross and not allowed to come down, even though our reason and every natural instinct we have will try to let him live, so we can justify ourselves and indulge in our sweet self-righteousness.

The Holy Spirit uses David Eells to take us on a journey through Scripture to show us that God's Will for us is to be brought to a place of weakness, in order to really trust in Him and know His perfect strength to deliver us from self, which brings to pass the resurrection life of Christ in us.

Eric Tagg

CHAPTER ONE

Nailing the Old Man to the Cross

I want to share with you something that's probably one of the most hated and denied doctrines and, yet, one of the most important doctrines, if a person wants to bear fruit and walk in the steps of Jesus. I'm referring to the question of "How shall we die?" There is the death-to-self that comes as we repent day-by-day, that comes as we read the Word of God and realize what the Will of God is for us. "Repentance" means "to change your mind." When we read the Word, the "old man" dies and the "new man" comes to life, because the new man is the Word bearing fruit in our soul.

Laying Down Our Life to Take Up His

In this chapter, I want to focus on a little different area concerning this. ***(Zec.13:7) Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones.*** Wow! Jesus quoted this in Matthew 26, speaking about Himself being the Shepherd, and the scattering of His disciples being at least the beginning of God turning His "hand upon the little ones." It sounds very much like the Lord is out to kill us all. The Lord Jesus was the first, the Example, the Sacrifice, and without Him nothing else would be possible. He made it possible for us to die.

Is God really out to kill us all, to "turn" His "hand upon the little ones," just as He turned the sword against His Son? You know, the Lord took credit for that. We will read some verses that absolutely confirm what I'm saying here. The Lord took credit for crucifying Jesus Christ. He used wicked men to do it. But now, He says, He is turning His Hand upon the little ones, too. So, what is it about us that has to go to death, that has to be crucified? ***(Gal.5:17) For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.*** There's a war going on because the flesh and the spirit are enemies.

The flesh, representing the old man, must die. ***(1Co.15:50) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*** So, yes, the Lord's Hand is against the old man, to put him to death. It doesn't necessarily mean the death of the body. It means the death of the flesh

which, of course, includes the mind of the flesh and speaks of the soul of man. We're told that the flesh is contrary to His way and His Will. **(Rom. 8:7) *Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of god, neither indeed can it be: (8) and they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*** The mind of the lower nature, the mind of the fallen man, the mind of the old man, is the enemy of God.

What we have to do is cooperate with God in this process of the crucifixion of the old man. Our Lord Jesus gave us a perfect example of that: **(Joh.10:17) *Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.*** Does the Father love all of those who are willing to lay down their life? Of course He does. Jesus said the Father loves those who obey the Son: **(14:21) *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. ... (23) Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*** Of course, obeying the Son is obeying the Word and obeying the Son is laying down your life to take up His life.

The Father loved Jesus because He laid down His life so that He might "take it again." **(10:18) *No one taketh it away from me....*** Jesus is our example. He wants us to be willing to take up His life. No one else can take the life of the self, the old man, from us, either. People can kill you, but they can't take that self-life from you. We have to give that up. **(Joh. 10:18) *No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power*** (literally, the word here is *exousia*, meaning "authority") ***to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.*** "I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again." We have authority!

When we were baptized, we reckoned ourselves to be ***dead unto sin, but alive unto God (Rom.6:11).*** We reckoned that the old man was dead, that we were crucified with Christ and we don't live anymore. It's now Christ Who lives in us. We received authority to lay down that old life and we can say no to self; we can say no to the devil. We received authority and, likewise, anybody who loses their life will gain their life. If we lay it down, we have authority to take it up.

You know, Enoch was translated by faith. He was intricately involved in the resurrection life that came in him because he had already walked in death. He had been well-pleasing to God, having already walked against the self-life, against the stream of humanity. Because of that God loved him. Enoch laid his life down to take it up again. Jesus, as our Example, cooperated with this process. He said, "I lay it down of myself. I have power

to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. ... This commandment received I from my Father.” Of course, we have received the same commandment and we do have power because of what Jesus did at the cross.

We have power, or authority, which is the correct word here – *dunamis*. This authority is the right to use power. We use God’s power to lay down the old life and to take up the new. Whether we will or not is a decision we have to make, individually. Not everyone will be a disciple of Jesus Christ, ***For many are called, but few chosen (Mat.22:14)***. So, although we have this command of the Lord to lay down our life, He said that it’s quite conditional upon us. Some people think it’s all over; well, it is, by faith. We see the end from the beginning but we have to cooperate with God in this process of laying down our self-life.

Losing Life to Find Life

It’s all about denying self. ***(16:24) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*** “Follow me” indicates that this person is a disciple, which is a learner and a follower. Denying self and taking up the cross are synonymous. We are not permitting self to live through this body. We deny self, take up our cross and follow Him.

Of course, that is to the death. ***(Mat.16:25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it***. Many seek to save the life of self. They seek to justify self and, when they do, they are giving up the opportunity to have the life of Christ and bear fruit. ***(25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it***. The word used here for “life” is *psuchē*, and it’s talking about your soul life, or self. We lay down the old self in order to take up the new. We lay down our old soul, our own mind, will and emotions, in order to take up Jesus’ mind, Will, and emotions. This is our cross. We have this opportunity to advance in this every day, if we’ll lay down our life to have the life of Christ. This is a condition and it should make many people tremble because this is a condition that’s given to all Christians.

Those who don’t bear fruit in this area will not have eternal life. It doesn’t matter what they have by faith; it matters what they manifest before they leave this life. Those who walk by faith will receive power from God to walk the crucified life and they will love, they will embrace the cross! They

will embrace death-to-self. **(26) For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?** Again, the word *psuchē* is translated here as “life,” but there’s still another way it’s translated: **(Luk.9:24) For whosoever would save his life (*psuchē*) shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life (*psuchē*) for my sake, the same shall save it. (25) For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self (*psuchē*)?** That’s the same word, *psuchē*, translated as “life,” “soul” and “own self.” It is a person’s mind, will and emotions. We will have His life if we’re willing to give up our mind, our will and our emotions for His. The renewed mind of Christ comes from submitting to the Word of God.

Suffering Death to Self

Besides just knowing the Word and submitting to it, there are some very important things we can do to cooperate with God in bringing this to pass: **(1Pe.2:19) For this is acceptable, it for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully.** Obviously, we suffer wrongfully at the hands of the world, at the hands of the wicked and at the hands of the curse. We suffer wrongfully and, if we do it because of “conscience toward God,” this is okay. **(20) For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted [for it,] ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer [for it,] ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.** The word “acceptable” here is actually the word “grace” and may be read, “this is grace with God.” When we do what we’re called to do, what the Scripture commands us to do, and we suffer for it, this is grace with God. The Lord says, ***My grace is sufficient for thee (2Co.12:9)....***

So, we’re called to a cross and we’re going to suffer if we do what’s right. **(2Ti.3:12) Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.** The world is going to come against us if we bear our cross. If we’re willing to accept exactly what the Word of God says and if we’re willing to submit, in circumstances, to God’s commands, we’re going to suffer death to self. And it’s good because it’s the only way to bear fruit. **(1Pe.2:21) For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when**

he suffered, threatened not; but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously. When Jesus was reviled or threatened, He turned the other cheek; He resisted not the evil (Matthew 5:39). He knew that this was God's method to bring Him to His cross and the next two verses speak of exactly that: **(24) Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.** So, by not defending self, we come to our cross, just as when Jesus refused to defend Himself, He came to the cross.

At the Hands of Lawless Men

There is a well-known chapter in Isaiah concerning the cross and what Jesus bore there: **(Isa.53:7) He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.** We know this is true when He was before Pilate and when He was before Herod. He didn't defend Himself. He knew that this was the Father's Will for Him to go to the cross, so He denied Himself and went to the cross. He could have said quite a few things that probably would have served to defend Him, but He didn't.

When we defend self, we're proving that we want to save this life, rather than lose this life. **(Mat.16:25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it....** Many people, during the coming Tribulation, for instance, will seek to save their life, but they're going to lose it anyway because, in the great and terrible Day of the Lord, those who have proven themselves to be the Harlot are going to be destroyed by the Beast. They could have accepted their cross during the Tribulation. They could have accepted their deliverance from this world by the crucifixion of self, but since they cast it down, they will lose everything during the great and terrible Day of the Lord.

We don't have any choice about losing our life – it's lose it now or lose it later. The point is, if we lose it now, we don't have to endure the Day of the Lord. Jesus was our example here because "he opened not his mouth" and did not defend self. He went to the cross. Today, many people defend themselves when you bring the Word to them. When you show them that they're doing something wrong, they take no correction; instead, they defend themselves, refusing to go to the cross.

Well, Jesus was the Way and gave us the method. God had many people around Jesus who were willing to help Him go to the cross and so do we.

We have many people around us whose only purpose in life is to help us to go to this cross. This is God creating His sons. We're still in this creation mode. **(Act.2:22) *Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; (23) him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God....*** Jesus was delivered up to His cross "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Are we? Absolutely. He said He would turn His "***hand upon the little ones***" (Zec.13:7).

However, we still have to cooperate with God. He gave us a decision to make: either lose our life to gain our life or save our life and lose our life. So we have to cooperate. No man takes our life; we have to lay it down. Of course, they can take your physical life but they can't do anything to take that self-life. We have to lay that down. **(Act.2:23) *Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay.*** He is speaking to "Ye men of Israel," who today are what we loosely call the "Church." The Harlot church will use the Beast to bring about the crucifixion of God's true disciples. I'm not talking about physical crucifixion. What happened to Jesus in His crucifixion was a sign representing the crucifixion of self. We are here to lose our life, our *psuchē*, our fallen, soulish life. Not every Christian will die, but every Christian will lose their life or they won't be Christian.

So God used the hand of Israel here and used these lawless men to crucify Jesus Christ, to bring Him to His cross and to life again. There is no eternal life without the cross. No cross, no crown. People are deceived by the devil into thinking that they can justify themselves, that they can defend themselves in the presence of the Word of God, instead of embracing the truth there and letting it put to death their old life. We call baptism a sign and it surely is a sign of the water of the Word putting to death the old life. We accept it at the very beginning of our Christian walk but as we continue our walk in the Lord, as we read the Word of God, putting it into our hearts, repenting, the Word now replaces the old man, the old life (which is the mind, the will and the emotions of the old man).

We're embracing the cross if we repent, if we do not justify ourselves. Notice that God has helpers. He has got the Harlot and the Beast to help bring us to our cross. **(Act.4:27) *For of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate (that's the head of the Harlot of apostate Judaism and the local head of the Beast), with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel....*** That's the whole world, folks. We're going to be "***hated of all***"

the nations for my name's sake"* (Mat.24:9), the Lord says, because all nations are cooperating to help us to take up our cross, deny self and follow Jesus into everlasting peace and life. Notice the purpose that the heads of the harlot, the heads of the Beast, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, "were gathered together": (Act.4:28) ***[T]o do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to come to pass. Then, it was to crucify Jesus; now, it's to crucify us.**

Again, we don't all have to die a horrible death on the physical cross but, as we've noticed, the Scriptures are teaching a spiritual cross, a death-to-self; that's what we're here for. Jesus' commands demanded that we do this but we have to make that decision.

Wrestling with Self-Denial

Jesus was very explicit about the most important method of cooperating with the wicked world around us: (Mat.5:38) ***Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: (39) but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*** Isn't that the example He gave to us? He didn't defend Himself. He was as a lamb led to slaughter and, in type and shadow, that's exactly the way we need to be. Do not defend self; self is the enemy.

You should be standing on the Lord's side. The people around you are all gathered around you for a purpose. I'm talking about the wicked, whether it be the wicked in the so-called "church" or the wicked outside the "church"; it makes no difference. They have a predestined work of God to do on us and it is crucifixion. We need to cooperate with them, the vessels of dishonor used of God to bring us to our cross, because no one is in your life by accident. The Bible says, "***A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven***" (Joh.3:27) and God "***worketh all things after the counsel of his will***" (Eph.1:11). Just know that no one is in your life, as obnoxious as many of them are, without God having sent them and put them there for this purpose.

Jesus demands here that we "Resist not him that is evil." We know that this is not talking about the principalities and powers because the Bible says to "***resist the devil***" (Jas.4:7). We also know that we wrestle "not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places]" (Eph.6:12). So what He's saying here is, "Resist not man who is evil," especially in any physical way.

We have some brilliant theologians who came up with the idea that Jesus was preaching this to people who were to obey it in the Millennium. They should be ashamed of themselves. First, if Jesus was going to give the Sermon on the Mount as rules for the Millennium, He could have waited another couple thousand years before giving it, when He came back. Second, the people in the Millennium are going to have a new body. Why do they have to worry about not resisting the wicked? The wicked can't touch them; they're in a new body.

He's speaking this to His disciples because He was demanding that they resist not the wicked around them, just as He resisted not, so that they would go to their cross, too. We're in the Hands of the Lord, a sovereign God; nothing can happen to you. You may ask, "What will happen to me if I do this?" Well, you will die to self, but you'll be in the Hands of the Lord. It's His decision to make and it's His demand. He commanded, ***"Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also"*** (Mat.5:39). So we can justify self, we can make up some fairy tale like, "This is for the Millennium" and we don't have to go to our cross. But, ultimately, we're going to die if we don't go to our cross. What we need to do is embrace this and learn to turn the other cheek.

Do you know what happens when you resist not the evil around you? People are going to come against you with this and come against you with that, but when you resist them not (I'm talking about personal now, not about governmental for the Church), your flesh rises up. The very one that you want to deny, the one you want to put to death, that's the one that rises up within you and wants to retaliate, to be angry, to be unforgiving. That one is the one that's contrary to God, the one who is the enemy of God. The easy way to put him to death is to just refuse him. God has harder ways to deal with that old man.

As I noted, this is not a governmental issue. We're told very plainly, ***"whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever [sins] ye retain, they are retained"*** (Joh.20:23). Jesus gave them governmental authority. For instance, the example of Paul turning a man over to ***"Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"*** (1Co.5:5) was governmental authority. It wasn't because Paul didn't forgive the man. He forgave him personally, as Jesus told the disciples to do in John 20, but he didn't forgive him for the Church because ***a little leaven leaventh the whole lump*** (1Co.5:6).

We are to ***"Put away the wicked man from among yourselves"*** (13). Again, we're referring to personal forgiveness here; we're not talking about governmental forgiveness for the Church. There are

people in the Church we're commanded to throw out; for instance, the ones who cause division. We're to have no company with them. The ones who are outwardly immoral, we're not even supposed to eat with them (1 Corinthians 5:11). There has to be some governmental unforgiveness, if you will, for the Kingdom. When a person has been chastened or turned over to the devil, as Paul did to Hymenaeus and Alexander, it's because they haven't been forgiven for the Kingdom, not because they haven't been forgiven for themselves. At the personal level, because we have to go to our cross, we always have to forgive.

Keeping the Old Man on the Cross

Here's an example of what it is to "Resist not him that is evil": ***(Mat. 6:14) For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*** Remember that Jesus, on the cross, didn't retaliate. He said, ***"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"*** (Luk.23:34). Anger is retaliation and resisting the evil. Anger is siding with evil against evil, literally trying to overcome evil with evil, but we're told to overcome evil with good.

Unforgiveness opens the door to bitterness, wrath and all kinds of evil things. ***(Mat.5:43) Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: (44) but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; (45) that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.*** These are two things that speak to what resisting not him that is evil is talking about. We have to love our enemies and we have to forgive those around us, both of which our flesh resists strongly.

That's why people around us do the things that they do, in order for this old man to rise up in us. Then we're able to face what may have been hidden to us and make the decision whether to lay this down or justify self. Do I take my cross or do I align myself with evil, with the old man? So, Jesus tells us to love our enemies, which is truly resisting not him that is evil. If you love someone, and if you forgive them, you are not going to retaliate against them. Can a person love their enemy and shoot them? No. Can a person forgive someone who does them wrong and then shoot them?

No. Nor, if you forgive them, can you retaliate in any lesser way. You just have to take it and resist not the evil.

This pacifist doctrine that Jesus had is railed against in most churches today and they give all kinds of reasons why this can't be what Jesus meant, though He said it over and over and demonstrated it over and over. If you don't want to go to your cross, if you don't want to have more of Christ, just listen to these people because they are refusing to go there. No matter how religious they are, they're refusing the fruit of Jesus Christ. They're refusing to take up their cross so that the old man dies. All you have to do is deny him and he'll die. All you have to do is not feed him and he dies. When you indulge in anger, retaliation, hitting back, all the things that normally come to mind when you're attacked, then you're feeding the old man and he will live. He'll be there the next time to try you again because he won't die at all.

You see, he's nailed on the cross and it's up to you to not let him come down off that cross. He wants to come down; he wants to live. He doesn't want this Word and he loves to pervert this Word so that he can live because this Word means death. Just as when the children of Israel told Moses, ***“Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exo.20:19)***. The Word of God would bring death to them and they knew it. It brings death to the old man today. So, if you humble yourself to what God says right here, to “Resist not him that is evil,” it's going to put you in a position to die. If you love your enemy, if you forgive those who trespass against you, you are going to be put in a position to die and the more you do this, the easier it will come because the old man is passing away. You're putting him to death at the edge of the sword, the Word of God. He's passing away because you're submitting. You're not resisting the very people whom God sent to bring you to your cross. Now suppose Jesus would have retaliated and drawn His sword and not gone to the cross! He had to submit of His own free will and we do, too. We can say, “No!”

God is not going to reward those Christians who only love those who are nice to them. ***(Mat.5:46) For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others?] do not even the Gentiles the same? (48) Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*** And how is that? By loving your enemies and resisting not him that is evil. Wow! Is this what God has called us to? Yes, of course. We can do this daily and actually come into more and more fruit of Jesus Christ. ***(2Co.4:16) Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our***

inward man is renewed day by day. If the outward man isn't decaying, the inward man is not being renewed because they occupy the same territory. That old man has to die for the new man to take his place. This happens when we cooperate with these people around us whom God has sent into our life, many of whom are totally obnoxious, and they're warring against us. But, the Lord has sent them to take us to our cross. You'd might as well go peaceably because if you don't go to your cross, you're going to lose your life. Going to the cross is easier than the alternative.

Starving the Retaliatory Man

Here's something our flesh doesn't want to do: ***(Rom.12:14) Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.*** Our flesh doesn't want to pray for those who do evil to us, but it's a command from God and if we do it, we die a little every time. The old man that wants to live, that wants to retaliate, that wants to be angry and wants to be justified in doing it, won't live if we don't let him live.

That's what fasting is all about, by the way. If we don't feed the old man, he becomes weaker and weaker. It's a parable. Not that fasting is not very good for us – of course it is, but if we don't feed him, he becomes weaker and weaker. If we do feed him, he becomes stronger and stronger. Now when we fast, we do it for the purpose of weakening the old man so that the new man is strong and it's true, too, in the natural. When we feed the old man by giving him what he wants, he becomes strong in our life. ***(15) Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. (16) Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. (17) Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.***

In the natural, how do we “render to no man evil for evil”? How do we practically bring that to pass? Well, people are accosting us all the time with words, with deeds and so on, and when that old man rises up, don't let him live. He wants to react, even in self-righteous indignation, but for your own self and your own life, you have to not feed him. “Render to no man evil for evil” is all-encompassing. ***(Rom.12:18) If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. (19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath [of God]....*** Do not avenge yourselves, do not retaliate, do not get angry, do not get back

at anyone. “Of God” was added in there after “wrath,” but it’s just basically telling us, “give place unto the wrath.” Let it come. God’s in control of it and He won’t allow you to be tempted beyond what you’re able. If you give in to it, whatever comes will be from God and you can trust Him. He’s in control of the cross; men are not. **(19) ... For it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.** Truly, if you don’t retaliate and if you don’t hit back, God will; but the person will learn a lesson, if God does it. If you do it, they’ll only become angrier at you and they won’t learn any lesson from it.

When I trained my two eldest sons, I would tell them, “Now if you get mad at him, don’t you hit him. You come tell me and I’ll take care of it.” If they disobeyed me, if one of them did something to the other one, and the other one retaliated and hit him back, when they complained to me, I would have to say, “Wait a minute. Didn’t I tell you to come and tell me and not to hit him back? Now I’ve got to spank you because you disobeyed me. You already hit him back so he already got his punishment because you hit him back.” Is that what God does with us? Of course He does. If you retaliate, you hit back, you return evil for evil. They got their “just deserts,” but now you’ve got to be punished because you disobeyed.

God’s people are retaliating and disobeying Him, so He has to spank them. The easiest way is going to the cross; the hard way is to rebel against it. **(Pro.13:15) ... But the way of the transgressor is hard.** So when my children would hit back, I would have to spank the one who hit back because I told both of them not to do that. Well, notice what it says here: **(Rom.12:19) ... Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. (20) But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.** This “coals of fire” is not an easy thing here. It’s God’s retaliation, God’s chastening, upon them. At least then they’ll learn something. **(21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.** That’s what the Lord is calling us to do. The first place we need to overcome evil with good is in our own life. If we’re going to retaliate, we’re not learning the lesson. We’re letting the old man live; he’s doing what he wants and he doesn’t die at all.

The Alternative to the Cross

Here is something very similar: **(Mat.5:39) but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy**

right cheek, turn to him the other also. (40) And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Wow! That really comes against the flesh. If a person is going to sue you and take away something, give them something else, as well – more than what they asked for.

The most important thing is coming against the flesh. It's not who wins down here on earth. ***"I die daily" (1Co.15:31)***, Paul said. He daily came against that flesh. We have to learn to do this and God is going to help us in the days to come. We're coming to a time of great trial and tribulation and God is going to assist us with this. He also has this army of people who are willing to help us. ***(Mat.5:41) And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two.*** We find almost the same thing repeated here. ***(1Co.6:5) I say [this] to move you to shame. What, cannot there be [found] among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren, (6) but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? (7) Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?*** So he's saying it's better for you to turn the other cheek, to take the wrong, to be defrauded. Of course, you can't do anything if they drag you to court, but when you attempt to use the worldly law against your brother, Paul calls that defrauding because you're hitting back. Now God has to hit you. ***(8) Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that [your] brethren. (9) Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?*** In other words, if you don't take your cross, then you're not inheriting the Kingdom of God.

That only leaves the wrath of God. You see, the cross is the easy way. The cross is something we have to embrace to bear the fruit of Jesus Christ. He said, ***Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luk.14:27).*** That's pretty dangerous. If you don't lose your life in this world, you cannot be a disciple of Jesus Christ. If you don't lose your life, you will not gain your life. That's conditional. Some people have many unconditional-eternal-security-type thoughts and teachings and they want to do away with things like this because this is crucifying. They don't even think it possible to live this life of the Sermon on the Mount. They try to put it off to the Millennium. The truth is, that's a dangerous thing for them to do. They are selling their own soul to the devil.

Kingdoms in Conflict

Here's another admonition: ***(Mat.10:16) Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*** You remember that Jesus was a lamb led to slaughter and God's hand would be turned against the little ones. Now, He sends His disciples forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Jesus said, ***As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world (Joh.17:18).*** As Jesus was sent as a Lamb led to slaughter, Who opened not His mouth, Who resisted not the evil, now we're sent in the same way, to be sheep in the midst of wolves. And, as sheep, we are to be "harmless as doves."

The whole world teaches contrary to this and most of you out there who are patriotic have a spirit that is totally contrary to the Word of God. Our allegiance is to our Kingdom, which we will study in the next chapter. Our allegiance is not to the kingdoms of the world. Our Lord told us to be harmless as doves, to turn the other cheek, to resist not him that is evil, to love our enemies and to forgive. If we don't, we're not bearing our cross, we're not losing our life, we're not gaining our life. We have to lose one to gain the other because they occupy the same territory. ***(Mat.10:17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you*** (of course, if they're told to resist not the evil, they're going to be mistreated in this way); ***(18) yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.*** Your old man says, "No, we want to escape that, Lord." But the Lord says, ***"ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake" (Mat.24:9)***, meaning that God's Name (*onoma* – His nature, character and authority) will be manifested in us. We are hated by these people so that the life of Christ is manifested in His people.

Another verse that I like is found here: ***(Mat.10:23) But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.*** So we see that God's people have permission of the Lord to flee, but we have no permission to fight, to wrestle with flesh and blood. We do have permission to deal with principalities and powers that use flesh and blood. We have more power by exercising our authority over the principalities and powers than we do by wrestling with flesh and blood. That's why we're forbidden to do this, because the Lord has ordained these people to help us to our cross. He tells us we're to be sheep in the midst of wolves and harmless as doves. He is really putting us in a situation whereby we are weak, but God's ***"power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor.***

12:9). God saves us many times when we resist not the evil because we give up our own power and deny ourselves.

CHAPTER TWO

My Beloved Enemy

We've been focusing on our death – not our physical death but our death to self – and we've discovered that Jesus gave quite a few commands to rush this process along. They are the most hated and ignored commands in the Bible. Sometimes theologians like to put them off to the Millennium because they don't think that they really apply to the here-and-now. But, of course, we can't grow in life until we grow in death – the death, burial and resurrection in Christ. ***(Mat.5:38) Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: (39) but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*** A hated doctrine, true, by the fleshly man, but Jesus demonstrated it in His death, burial and resurrection. It was the only reason He was crucified, in that He resisted not the evil.

Of course, we resist the devil, but we don't resist carnal man, we don't wrestle with flesh and blood. Our wrestling is with the principalities and powers and rulers of darkness. Jesus came at a time when this seemed like a new message to Israel, and you can see, even today, the overwhelming majority of Christianity fights against it. They say, "He couldn't have meant what He said, because..." and they lean upon their reason, their understanding. However, He did mean exactly what He said. He gave this to us in the Sermon on the Mount and, as a matter of fact, it's in the Old Testament, but God's people didn't see it, didn't want to see and still don't like it.

Who Hath Ears to Hear

There's a parallel between Jesus' day and our day. We've talked about that already because history repeats, just with larger groups of people. Sometimes it may start with an individual body, but end up a corporate body in the end-time, just like we have a corporate body of the Beast and a

corporate body of the Harlot around the world, and a “firstfruits” body of Christ these days in the Man-child of Revelation 12.

Let’s look at the following verses: ***(Isa.50:1) Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, wherewith I have put her away? [O]r which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away.*** As we know from Romans 11, the natural people of God were broken off the olive tree. ***(2) Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stink, because there is no water, and die for thirst. (3) I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.*** Why was it that He ended up breaking off the unbelieving Jews, the ones who didn’t believe in their Messiah or His message? It was because they had a terrible lack of hearing. ***(4) The Lord God hath given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I may know how to sustain with words him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught. (5) The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward.*** It’s so true that hearing comes ***“by the word of Christ” (Rom.10:17).***

If we humble ourselves to the Word of God, we will have the ears to hear and know what’s about to happen. Today, multitudes of Christians do not hear when this doctrine of resisting not evil, of turning the other cheek and of loving your enemies is preached. ***(Isa.50:6) I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (Isa.50:7) For the Lord God will help me; therefore have I not been confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. (8) He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand up together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. (9) Behold, the Lord God***

will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? behold, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up. Those who don't hear, in Jesus' day and our day, are apostates who will be reprobated.

The Man-child Ministry

Remember that there is to be a repetition of what happened in the days of Jesus. It was called a sign, or an omen, of something to come (Isaiah 7:14). When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, that was a sign of a much larger happening to come in our day (with "larger" meaning many more people, not more important). The woman Church is much larger than it was then, and the Man-child of Revelation 12 is a much larger group of people than it was then. God is going to renew this same doctrine and understanding of death-to-self, of resisting not him that is evil, of turning the other cheek, of loving your enemies and so on.

When Jesus came the first time, it was like a new doctrine for those people. Even today, most of Christianity rejects it, but we have a great many examples that Jesus demonstrated. He resisted not personal affronts from other people quite often and, in some cases, when He did resist, it wasn't to defend Himself but to defend the people who were listening. For instance, when Jesus was accused of doing His works by Beelzebub, He told them that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven and that Satan does not cast out Satan. He didn't do this to defend Himself, He did this to defend His disciples. He did not defend Himself in front of Pilate or the people who wanted to crucify Him. He did, however, defend the sheep from the apostates, from the leaven of Herod and the leaven of the Pharisees. So He did defend, but not Himself, because He knew there was a ministry of death-to-self for Him. He says the same thing to us. If we don't take up our cross and follow Him, we cannot be His disciples. Thus, there are many people who are not disciples; there are a lot of Christians (loosely called) but few disciples.

We need to hear the message of Isaiah 50. When the natural Israelites who didn't believe were cut off, this revelation came. The same thing is going to happen in Christianity. The abundance of Christians-in-name-

only, who don't have ears to hear, as this text speaks about, also will not receive this doctrine of death-to-self because **“whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it” (Mat.16:25)**. The word for “life” is not the physical life, but *psuchē*, or the soul life, the self. The Man-child ministry is going to come again in our day to restore this message of our having to go to our cross and our having to cooperate with God in this process with the wicked people around us.

In Acts, chapters two and four, we see that God ordained the people of Israel and the Gentiles to crucify Jesus Christ. The wicked all around us have this ministry for us of crucifixion. Not only Jesus demonstrated this, but King David before Him demonstrated this is his day. King David and Jesus are two types of the Man-child.

Sanctification: The Reward of Death-to-Self

When King David was fleeing from Absalom, we read of the following event: **(2Sa.16:5) And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out thence a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out, and cursed still as he came. (6) And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David; and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. (7) And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Begone, begone, thou man of blood, and base fellow: (8) the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son; and, behold, thou art [taken] in thine own mischief, because thou art a man of blood.** Of course, this was a lie. David wasn't guilty of the blood of the house of Saul at all, so this was a personal affront against him.

We're going to look at some examples in which David did not take the challenge. He found out that it was to his advantage not to take the challenge, but David did defend the sheep. Even in his youth, he defended the sheep against the lion and the bear. Just as he killed them to defend the

sheep, he killed Goliath to defend the people of Israel. He defended God; he fought God's battles. As the head of the government of the "church" in those days, he defended his people from the apostates and from the beast armies around him. But, although he was a fighter, he wouldn't defend himself in the same way.

Now let's look at this next passage because it describes for us the same ministry Jesus Christ depicted for us and the ministry that pleases God today. This ministry is going to be restored in these days when the people who are going to first manifest Christ are walking in death-to-self. They are denying themselves for the work of Christ. **(2Sa.16:9) Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.** That would have been the easy way, right? **(10) And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Because he curseth, and because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David; who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?** Do you believe that the Lord put this in the mind of Shimei to curse David? I believe David was absolutely correct here. The Bible tells us, **The Lord hath made everything for its own end** (or, "for His own purpose"); **Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil (Pro.16:4)**. And a little further down, it says, **A man's heart deviseth his way; But the Lord directeth his steps (9)**. This means, of course, that a person walks after their own self-will or they walk after the Will of the Lord, but either way, God is going to use them as vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor, as Romans 9 teaches.

Now, what is the work of the wicked? God raised up these monstrous beast kingdoms all through history, every time His people apostatized, to come against His people and bring them to their cross. God's people have always been outnumbered by the wicked for the purpose of bringing them to their cross. A good verification of this work of the wicked is found concerning King David: **(2Sa.7:14) I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; (15) but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.** God said He was going to use the

wicked as a rod, as a chastening to His people, if they commit sin, and He has been doing that all along.

God has put it in the heart of the wicked to come against His people, to bring them to their cross. They came against Jesus because He had to bear our sin and take the penalty for it. We see that what God said about using Shimei to curse David is factual. The Lord works all things according to the counsel of His Own Will (Ephesians 1:11). People think that the devil rules this world, but he's not the god of this world because he rules this world; the devil is the god of this world because he is worshipped by the world and they don't even know it. God is the One Who rules.

The Bible speaks about David being moved by Satan, both in 1 Chronicles 21 and in 2 Samuel 24. There are two different versions of the same text that say two different things. In one place, it says that Satan moved David to number Israel, for which he repented. However, in the other text, God moved David to number Israel. So, how can they both be right? It's very simple. God rules over vessels of honor and over vessels of dishonor. Satan is the head of the vessels of dishonor, whose purpose is to come against the people of God. Without this, there will be no sonship. It is important that we have an enemy. It is important that that enemy is given free rein over us when we walk in sin because God uses them to chasten us, to motivate us to depart from sin and to hide in Christ, to abide in Him. It's very important that we have this enemy and David agrees. **(2Sa.16:10) ... Because he curseth, and because God hath said unto him, Curse David; who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? (11) And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, who came forth from my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more [may] this Benjamite now [do it]? let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him.**

I wonder if that's also true of us? Remember, the Bible says, ***“smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones” (Zec.13:7)***. In the previous chapter, the question arose, “Is God out to kill us all?” Yes, He is, but not in the way we might be thinking. In death-to-self, He is out to kill us all, ***“Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God” (Rom.8:7)*** and he must die. Jesus said, ***For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and***

whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it (Mat. 16:25). We need to gain our life and we need to gain it here. This is where it happens, not in the sweet by-and-by, as many people have told us. That's a lie.

That wrongly lets people walk to the end, thinking that their sanctification is going to come later, yet that's what we're here for, **"the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14)**. So David said, **(2Sa.16:11) ... For the Lord hath bidden him. (12) It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done unto me, and that the Lord will requite me good for [his] cursing of me this day.** Yes, because David didn't resist the evil, God blessed him. The blessing that God gives us is, first of all, death-to-self. When we obey Him and we let this crucifixion happen, as He commanded us to do, that's the biggest blessing because after death-to-self comes the resurrection life of Christ. **(13) So David and his men went by the way; and Shimei went along on the hill-side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.** Shimei insulted David. Have we been called to be insulted, assaulted, spoken against and lied against, as Shimei did to David? Yes, we have, and God will see to it that we go through this. God will send us help, for we know that these wicked people are our help. Jesus couldn't put Himself on the cross, so God sent Him help by turning the whole world against Jesus.

Burning Up the Wood, Hay and Stubble

We will see here that King David learned quite a lot from his experience. **(Psa.38:12) They also that seek after my life lay snares [for me,] And they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, And meditate deceits all the day long.** Wow! Why would God treat us so? It's because of that evil nature inside of us. God said, "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men." We need to understand that it's not always the action of sin that God chastens, it's the nature of sin that He chastens.

So we go through things and we think, "This is unjust; this is not right," like David. But was God chastening David for overtly sinning or was He

coming against the old man on the inside? The whole point is that God doesn't just want us not to sin, He wants to change us, to deliver us from the nature and the power of sin. That's His plan. David had all these people coming against him for this good purpose from a faithful God. **(13) But I, as deaf man, hear not; And I am as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.** The Bible says, ***I have been crucified with Christ...*** **(Gal.2:20).** That means you're a dead man. Paul said, ***"[R]eckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus"*** **(Rom.6:11).** So, what does a dead man do when he is slapped on the cheek? Why, he just turns the other one. He doesn't resist and he doesn't talk back.

He learns through the Scriptures and through experience to let the wicked rail as they will. What rises up on the inside is what God wants to crucify and we need to deny. **(Psa.38:14) Yea, I am as a man that heareth not, And in whose mouth are no reproofs. (15) For in thee, O Lord, do I hope** David put his trust in God to bring him through this crucifixion. **(39:1) I said, I will take heed to my ways, That I sin not with my tongue ...** When the wicked are around us with all their accusations and falsehoods, this is where the Lord wants us to restrain our tongue. We truly need to ***"be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"*** **(Jas.1:19).** **(Psa.39:1) I said, I will take heed to my ways, That I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, While the wicked is before me. (2) I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; And my sorrow was stirred. (3) My heart was hot within me; While I was musing the fire burned: [Then] spake I with my tongue: (4) Lord, make me to know mine end, And the measure of my days, what it is; Let me know how frail I am.**

While David mused, the fire burned. We know how it is when people are doing these kinds of things to us. We can sometimes even feel the fire burning. What it's burning is the old man – the wood, hay and stubble of the old man. We can feel it happen in the spirit and we can feel that the old man cries out and wants to speak, but he's not permitted, so this is part of the crucifixion. **(Psa.37:7) Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way**

.... We think they're prospering in their way, but they're not. They are coming to the time of their own judgment, but we're in our judgment of God judging our old man, that old life. This is going through our judgment, but for those who resist not the evil, God will resist the evil. We don't do it; He will. He will chasten them and bring judgment upon them. They will learn their lesson.

So David says here, "Don't be fretful because of what appears to be someone who is prospering in their way." **(7) Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. (8) Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: Fret not thyself, [it tendeth] only to evil-doing.** The more we think about what the wicked are doing, how wrong it is and how dishonest they're being, the more we want to jump up and take care of it. But the Lord says, "Don't do it! Hold your tongue." **(9) For evil-doers shall be cut off; But those that wait for the Lord, they shall inherit the land.** Let them have their time, as Jesus said of them, "**but this is your hour, and the power of darkness**" (Luk.22:53).

Our time is later; we're going to inherit the land. Today we're in disrepute, disliked and spoken against, but when that day comes, those who have patiently waited on the Lord will come into their inheritance and the wicked will be judged. Not that the wicked aren't judged in the here and now, in life, living under the curse. They don't understand it's God. There's this neat doctrine, they think, this total free-will doctrine, and that this is really not God bringing all these judgments upon humanity. They don't understand that it is God's wrath upon the wicked for how they're treating His people. **(Psa.37:10) For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be. (11) But the meek shall inherit the land, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. (12) The wicked plotteth against the just, And gnasheth upon him with his teeth. (13) The Lord will laugh at him; For he seeth that his day is coming.** That's right, let the wicked rail but their day is coming. **(Psa. 37:14) The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay such as are**

upright in the way. (15) Their sword shall enter into their own heart, And their bows shall be broken. So what we have to do is endure our trial today.

After the Counsel of His Own Will

There's still more to David's story here. As Absalom had come into power, rising up against David and basically running David out of town, Ahithophel, one of the very wise counselors in Israel, had become a 'Judas' to David and was now giving counsel to Absalom. ***(2Sa.16:23) And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if a man inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.*** His counsel was wisdom like the wisdom of God, as he gave it to David and as he gave it to Absalom. He gave counsel to Absalom to gather a force of only 12,000 men who would immediately go in pursuit of David.

However, God brought another man in there, Hushai the Archite, to give bad counsel to Absalom. ***(17:11) But I counsel that all Israel be gathered together unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person. (12) So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground; and of him and of all the men that are with him we will not leave so much as one. (13) Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there. (14) And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.*** So, obviously, Hushai, in the text, was bringing forth a delaying tactic.

It would take quite a while to gather all Israel to go against David and, by that time, he would have escaped into the wilderness, which is exactly what happened. That was Hushai's plan. So God defeated the good counsel of the

wicked who came against David and ordained that they would accept bad counsel and not be able to capture David. Of course, the Lord does that with us. There is no good counsel against the Lord or against His anointed.

Recognizing Good Advice

Here's a story that I'm sure many of you know – the story of David in the wilderness, fleeing from Saul. David's men ended up being a defense for a man named Nabal, who had shepherds in the field watching his flocks. David defended these people and he was a protection from the enemies of Israel who were probably robbing and plundering Nabal's flock. When the servants of David came to ask Nabal to contribute something toward the feeding of the men of Israel who were with David, Nabal spoke harshly to them. ***(1Sa.25:10) And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there are many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master. (11) Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men of whom I know not whence they are? (12) So David's young men turned on their way, and went back, and came and told him according to all these words.***

Of course, they went back to tell David and David determined to go “take care” of this man. ***(13) And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the baggage. (14) But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed at them. (15) But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything, as long as we went with them, when we were in the fields: (16) they were a wall unto us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. (17) Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his***

house: for he is such a worthless fellow, that one cannot speak to him.

Well, Abigail took that warning and went to beg mercy of David and she gave some very good advice to him, who received it, because he was one who learned from the Lord, quickly and easily. **(23) And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and alighted from her ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. (24) And she fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me be the iniquity; and let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine ears, and hear thou the words of thy handmaid. (25) Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this worthless fellow, even Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him** (“Nabal” means “fool”): **but I thy handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send. (1Sa.25:26) Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from bloodguiltiness, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now therefore let thine enemies, and them that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.** I dare say that this was a rare thing spoken in the Old Testament, where the prevailing culture was, **“An eye for an eye” (Mat.5:38).**

However, Jesus said, **“Resist not him that is evil” (39).** We are to turn the other cheek. So here is a revelation coming forth from the life of David which, by the way, Jesus and Paul spoke of: **(Rom.12:17) Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. (19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath [of God]; for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.** This is a command of the Lord. If we disobey the Lord, He will chasten us.

Many people are going through chastening because they don't forgive. **(Mat.18:34) And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. (35) So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts. (Rom.12:20) But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so**

doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. If we are disciples of Christ, we will take seriously what the Lord says.

This was a revelation of truth that came into the life of David, and Abigail was sharing with him that he was being “withholden ... from bloodguiltiness and from avenging [himself] with [his] own hand.” **(1Sa. 25:27) And now this present which thy servant hath brought unto my lord, let it be given unto the young men that follow my lord. (28) Forgive, I pray thee, the trespass of thy handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord; and evil shall not be found in thee all thy days.** Note that this is also said here: **(1Sa.18:17) ... Be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord’s battles.** We’re not called to fight our own battles or to defend ourselves. We’re called to defend God’s people, God’s doctrine and so on. We’re not called to defend the one who is to die, that is, self, the old man, the one going to the cross.

When Abigail said, “Because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord; and evil shall not be found in thee all thy days,” she was talking about “bloodguiltiness,” about David avenging himself with his own hand. God is offended with this and it’s because we’re not cooperating with Him and we don’t realize that we deserve His judgment because of the old man. The old man is contrary to God; he is the enemy of God and the one that resists us coming into the image of Jesus Christ. The old man is the one that wars against us, tempts us and is a vessel through whom the devil can manifest himself in us. **(1Sa.25:29) And though man be risen up to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul, yet the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as from the hollow of a sling. (30) And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee prince over Israel, (31) that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood without cause, or that my lord hath avenged himself. And when the Lord**

shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thy handmaid.

(32) And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me: (33) and blessed be thy discretion, and blessed be thou, that hast kept me this day from bloodguiltiness, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. (34) For in very deed, as the Lord, the God of Israel, liveth, who hath withholden me from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light so much as one man-child. (35) So David received of her hand that which she had brought him: and he said unto her, Go up in peace to thy house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

(36) And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. (37) And it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, that his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. (38) And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, so that he died. So the Lord did have vengeance on the wicked, as He usually does, if we resist not the evil. The wicked feel justified when we retaliate. They just know they were right. But when we don't retaliate, the Lord will do it.

(1Sa.25:39) And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Lord, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept back his servant from evil: and the evil-doing of Nabal hath the Lord returned upon his own head. Oh, yes! And David sent and spake concerning Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

Making Room for the Davids

The story of Saul in the next chapter is the same situation. Saul sought to capture and kill David and God delivered Saul into David's hand twice, so

that David could certainly have killed Saul, but David did not kill him. **(1Sa.26:10) And David said, As the Lord liveth, the Lord will smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall go down into battle, and perish** (which is what happened). **(11) The Lord forbid that I should put forth my hand against the Lord's anointed: but now take, I pray thee, the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go.** So David let his enemy go. He could have smitten Saul, but David called him “the Lord’s anointed” and refused to slay him.

When David faced Saul after his near-assassination, Saul seemed to be somewhat repentant. **(21) Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my life was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. (22) And David answered and said, Behold the spear, O king! let then one of the young men come over and fetch it. (23) And the Lord will render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness; forasmuch as the Lord delivered thee into my hand today, and I would not put forth my hand against the Lord's anointed. (24) And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. (25) Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail. So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.**

David wouldn't touch Saul because he called Saul “the Lord’s anointed,” but was he really the Lord’s anointed? If we go back to chapter 24, the Lord delivered Saul into David’s hand there, also, and David let him go. But even earlier, the Lord took the Spirit from Saul and gave it to David, so Saul really wasn't God’s anointed anymore. **(1Sa.16:13) Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him** (David) **in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. (14) Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. (15) And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.**

How Shall We Die?

So was Saul still anointed? No, he wasn't, but David was giving him the position of anointing because Saul had that position in Israel and David respected that position. However, Saul wasn't anointed and it's much the same today. Many people are spending a lot of time attacking the position of the anointed, even though they're not anointed anymore. The Lord said to me one time, "I'm moving the Sauls out of the way and I'm making room for the Davids." See, history just keeps on repeating but, even back then, David wouldn't rise up. David had two opportunities, as we've seen in these texts, to take Saul out, and he wouldn't do it.

I remember years ago, when I moved to Pensacola, there was a man who was really a Saul. He did a lot of things that were just plain wrong and anti-Scriptural. I asked the Lord one day, "Lord, what do I do about this man?" And God said, "Let the Philistines take him out." I remembered how that's exactly what happened with Saul and what David prophesied there, that the enemy should kill him in battle, and the Philistines did take him out. David never did do it, but the Beast did. The Beast destroyed the Harlot in that case and so it will be with us, folks.

Perfect Enemies

I'd like to share with you something that's been a real blessing to me and I think would be a blessing to you. It's called, *My Beloved Enemy*. The author, Bill Britton, has been dead many years and I think this is one of the best things that he ever wrote:

YOU are not really my enemies at all. In reality, you are some of the best friends I have. You who have lied about me, and about this ministry, who have tried to destroy people's faith and confidence in me, who have spread false and damaging rumors about my life and teachings. Through your efforts there has been a work of grace wrought in this heart of mine that could never have happened without you.

My friends have been many, and loyal, and faithful to stand with me in many hours of trial and need. They have been strength to my weakness, added joy to my heart in time of sorrow, and have girded up my faith amidst raging doubts. They have brought me before the throne

of grace innumerable times in their seasons of prayer. I could not have continued long in this spiritual conflict without these wonderful friends.

But, believe me, I speak in sincerity and truth, there can be no perfection in the lives of God's elect without the chastising work of a real enemy. For when a bitter, vicious person begins to do all they can to destroy me and my work for God, then there is a work done that brings out all the wrong and evil attitudes and spirits that lie hidden and deeply rooted in my heart. When a friend extols all my good virtues and praises me from their heart of true friendship, I feel nothing but love for them. But, when I hear of an enemy who has unjustly brought shame upon me, there rises up a spirit of defending myself, and a spirit of "righteous indignation" to refute the enemy. It is then that the precious Holy Spirit does His office work and reveals to me the wrongness of my own spirit. I see in me then the things I did not know were there before. With repenting and sorrow of heart I cry to God, and He delivers me from that which I have seen in my life. It was hidden, lying dormant, until you, my beloved enemy, brought it to light with your crucifying process. The prophets of old would never have had the glory of being stoned for the Word of God, and no martyr's crowns could ever have been won by the early Christians without real enemies.

You see, I cannot crucify myself, and friends will not do it. So it takes you, my enemy, to bring me to the cross. And to the cross I must come, if ever I am to come to the glory of perfection. But I have much progress yet to make before coming to the image of my lovely Jesus. There is so much I must yet learn. And, my enemy, you are teaching me. I have learned that the road to glory is by way of the cross. Without you I would not have found the way. Someone had to crucify my Jesus. Not his friends, not his disciples, and He could not do it Himself. So Satan and the princes of this world stirred up hatred in the hearts of His enemies, and the work was done. Had they known that they were bringing Him into His glory, and bringing about the salvation of lost mankind, they would not have done it. And I'm sure that if you knew the good your efforts are working out in my life, you would not want to help me so much. But the work is being done, and I have learned to love you because of it. "Love thy enemies," He said, and I wondered how I could

do it. But you have taught me. For because of you I have grown in God, increased in His Grace, and partaken of His divine nature.

Also, because of you, many have been turned away and refused to hear the truths imparted unto this vessel. Their ears have been filled with lies, and no doubt have thought that “no good thing could possibly come from such a one.” But even here I have seen the hand of God. For those who have had ears to hear the voice of the Spirit have not believed the lies you have told them, and they have opened their hearts to the message for these last days. Thus, God has weeded out the chaff from the wheat, and is in the process of separating His own unto Himself. All things are working together.

So, my friends, for in reality I have no enemies in flesh and blood, your work has been sharp and cutting, and many times I was hurt and wounded deeply. But out of these trying experiences I have come forth a better Christian, and further on my way to being an overcomer. I doubt that you will receive any rewards for your lies and your efforts to destroy me, for “Woe unto them through whom these offences come.” But I want you to know that though your loss may be great in the day of judgment, I love you and appreciate the ministry you have had in perfecting this life of mine.

Now just a word to all who have read this: I trust that you have understood that this word has been applicable not to me only, but should apply to all of God’s dear children, as well. May the Spirit speak to your heart and open your eyes to this great truth: that without chastisement and the work of enemies, we can never come into full Sonship. And when we see how much our persecutions and afflictions mean to us in maturing our spirits and bringing us into His image, then we can truly love our enemies (Matthew 5:43) and bless them that curse us (Luke 6:28). Praise God for His marvelous plan! And remember, all the enemy can destroy in the fires of persecution is wood, hay and stubble (1 Corinthians 3:12) and all they will melt and bring into His image is the gold, silver and costly stones (1 Corinthians 3:12). So let us be willing to burn that which will burn, so that those things which will not burn may stand forever!

CHAPTER THREE

Dead Men Don't Fight Back

This study could have been named, "How Shall We Live?" because Jesus said that unless we lose our life, we won't gain our life (Matthew 16:25). So, we're focusing on how we cooperate with the Lord in this death experience. We have discovered that if we just obey the Word of God, we'll be cooperating with Him and that will make this experience possible. If we don't, it will not be possible.

I tell you, religion is not going to get us there. We need to find these principles that have been ignored for centuries and go back to obeying them. As I shared with you in Chapter One, I think this is probably one of the most hated, ignored, maligned and pushed-off-to-the-Millennium doctrines out there. The fact that the Lord Jesus has told us to resist not him that is evil (Matthew 5:39), turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39), love your enemies (Matthew 5:44), and do good to them that despitefully use you (Matthew 5:44), puts us in a position of weakness. It doesn't let us defend the old man. Instead, His "power is made perfect in (our) weakness" (2Co.12:9) and God becomes our Savior. All this denying of our ability to defend the old man, of course, brings him to a place of death and that's what we need. The only way to get to the Promised Land is through this death and we have to cooperate with God in this process. Glory to God!

In this chapter, I'd like to share some of the experiences the Lord gave me that helped me to understand that I was responsible to cooperate with God. ***(Amo.3:3) Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?*** We want to walk with Jesus, but Jesus' walk is unto death. He said, ***"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mar.8:34).***

Walk This Way

Many people say that they know Jesus, but only the ones who keep His commandments are the people who really know Him. ***(1Jn.2:3) And hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*** Because they love Him, they desire after Him and they desire to embrace their cross and follow Him to the death, burial and resurrection. ***(4) He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; (5) but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been***

perfected. Jesus said, **If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments (Joh.14:15).**

(1Jn.2:5) Hereby we know that we are in him: (1Jn.2:6) he that saith he abideth in him ought himself to walk even as he walked. Jesus demonstrated for us how to walk to the cross, how to deny ourselves and how to not defend ourselves. Of course, we saw also that David was another really good example, as was Paul. All the apostles taught this non-resistance to evil.

When we're facing some obnoxious, persecuting people, it never feels good and, as we've read in the Scriptures, the fires burn while we keep our mouth shut and just let them continue to do their thing, as long as it's against us at the personal level. This crucifies very quickly the things we think about when this happens, such as unforgiveness, anger, wrath and bitterness. All these things want to rise up in us when we're faced with our persecutors, but we're commanded to love them. **(Luk.6:27) But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, (28) bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.** Anxiety, pride and strife may also rise up in us when people around us say things against us that are not true. The Lord wants us to just take it, just endure it. Faction, envy, selfish ambition, a competitive spirit – all kinds of things want to rise up and defend self, but God says, “No! Let self die.” And so we let him die. Dead men don't talk back. Dead men don't retaliate. When a dead man is slapped, he just turns the other cheek. **(Rom.6:11) Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.**

Dying to Cooperate

Here is another parable: **(1Jn.1:5) And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: (7) but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.** We see from this that we get rid of sin by walking in the light of God's Word. Commands that many people think are insignificant, not important, Jesus gave for a reason, for the purpose of crucifying self. If we walk in the light, God will cleanse us of sin, of all those

negative attributes just mentioned. Walking in the light is doing what we know God is leading us to do; it's just doing what the Word says. **(Luk. 6:27) But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, (28) bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you. (29) To him that smiteth thee on the [one] cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also. (Luk.6:35) But love your enemies, and do [them] good. (Mat.5:39) ... Resist not him that is evil... (41) And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two.** These are not things anyone likes.

The old man wants to live, but Jesus said, **For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it (Mat.16:25)**. The commands of the Lord are ordained to cause us to lose our old life, so we need to cooperate with God in this. I've had some experiences, starting when I first realized many years ago at the beginning of my Christian walk, that the Lord wanted me to walk this way. It didn't matter to Him whether other people were doing it or not, whether they were justifying themselves and saying that this was something for the Millennium. The Lord wanted me to walk in this and once I realized what it was there for, I began to cooperate with God in it and actually began to enjoy it.

Perfect Weakness

I'd like to share now a few of my experiences through which the Lord taught me in those days. **(Rom.12:19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath [of God:] for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.** We want to take care of that ourselves, don't we? I shared with you how I taught my boys not to fight back or hit back, otherwise the one who hit them got his punishment, but then I had to whip the one who hit back. That's the way it is. If we're not weak and don't let God take the vengeance, we won't see His power involved in this and then we're the ones who are doing wrong and we need a whipping. The Lord said, ***For [my] power is made perfect in weakness (2Co.12:9)***. Notice that all these commands we're focusing on put us in a position of weakness, so that the only power

that saves is God's power. And He'll do that, as He says, "Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense."

"Vengeance Belongeth Unto Me; I Will Recompense"

I remember one time, after I first learned about this and was cooperating with God in it and was attempting to walk in this death-to-self way. We know when we do that, the Lord is going to help us out and send people to us who are going to help put us on our cross and, of course, He sent them to me. And I saw peaceable fruit from it. The Lord always helps us to see the fruit so that we know this is God's way and it's successful; it will work. God's power is there to cleanse us. ***(1Jn.1:7) [B]ut if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*** We're going to bear fruit if we obey all these promises.

Anyway, at that time I worked on lathes, drill presses, boring mills and such things as a machinist in a very large machine shop at a refinery. At this particular instance, I was working in an electric motor shop that was part of a machine shop and we built electric motors, from very small to bigger than automobiles or trucks, motors for industry. We rebuilt these things. Sometimes the bearings had gone out, the shafts had dropped down, the bearing fits had been burned up or the shaft had broken off.

One of my jobs at that time was to machine the rotor, the shaft and the piece of shaft that was broken off, or make a new shaft for it. Sometimes we'd weld up the broken shaft to the rotor and I'd machine it back down. As soon as I got it back down to the original state, we'd put the motor back together. That was my job at the time and, of course, there was an electric motor section that put motors together full-time and I pretty much full-time either made the parts or repaired them. I was always very conscientious and worked hard at my job.

I know that there were a lot of people who, when they got through with their job, would stand by their machine or act like they were busy, but I was always wanting to be useful, so I would walk over to the electric motor shop and help them put the motor together after I'd made the part. There was a blustery fellow over there who decided he just didn't like me. I didn't know why, but his spirit was contrary. Although he claimed to be a Christian, I frankly believe he was just religious. I was trying to be very easy to get along with, but he wouldn't have any of it. He persecuted me and spoke against me, even to my boss, and was very obnoxious to my face, but by the grace of God, I was always kind to him and turned the other cheek because God was helping me. I saw the need in this. It's important to see the need in it

because it will help us to bear with it and go through it. I was cooperating with God. I was listening to the Holy Spirit and He was showing me how to resist not him that's evil and how to love my enemies, and I was doing it.

Turning the other cheek is not popular with the world and a lot of the men who worked around me. They thought, "Hey, what's going on here? How come you're not saying something? How come you're not sticking up for yourself?" The world just doesn't respect non-resistance and they let you know it. They wonder why you don't just reach out and knock somebody's block off, which I did a couple of times before I came to the Lord, but have never done since.

At any rate, he was being very obnoxious and I was kind and helpful to him, but he didn't want me in his sight. He was a kind of a take-control type who didn't have a position over me or anything like that, but he was just being ugly and just kept on and on. I was somewhat tormented by thinking about it, which is one mistake right there. We are not to think about it. We are to think on the good things of God. I went to the Lord, asking, "How long, Lord? How long is this guy going to continue this haranguing at me? Lord, I'm asking You to do something. Your Word says that You avenge, Lord. I'm not avenging, so I'm asking You to. You said You wouldn't put more on me than I can bear, but I'm getting to where I really can't bear it with this guy. I'm asking You to do something to save me. I've been going through quite a bit of this and I've been obedient to You and turned the other cheek, but I'm asking for Your grace."

Well, lo and behold, the next day, I went to work and saw this guy and both of his eyes were blackened. I mean black. I didn't say anything to him because I knew somebody had whipped him really good and I knew he wouldn't appreciate me asking him questions, so I just kind of backed off, but I listened to what other people were saying and how he was answering. I came to find out that he had gone over to his neighbor's yard and demanded his rights, like he and his religion normally do, and the guy stepped out of his door and punched his lights out, blackening both his eyes.

When I saw that, I knew the Lord had answered my prayer, but I wasn't rejoicing to the world over it. Anyway, the guy was somewhat humbled after that, you can imagine, but I never said a word to him about it, not one, because I knew that wouldn't have been appreciated. The depth in his religion was very shallow and he didn't have enough of the Word in him to really help him to endure such a thing as that, so I didn't say anything to him. He wasn't so quick to persecute me anymore and I knew that the Lord was taking the pressure off. The Lord said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," and I learned that if I don't retaliate, He will, and it's a lesson then.

It's a lesson to that person, it's a lesson to me and I won't have avenged myself with my own hand (as David was told by Abigail), which is what the Lord doesn't want us to do. Whether we believe so or not, we're guilty when we do that. We have to forgive because we are forgiven. We have to leave this up to the Lord.

Turning the Tables

Soon after that, I was moved out of that shop and went to work in another part of the refinery. Some years later, I was coming back through the central mechanical building and I walked by this particular area where I'd worked with this fellow and the guy hailed me down. He said, "Hey, David, come here. I wanna talk to you."

Well, he made sure we were kind of alone and he began to ask me some questions. I came to find out that the boss over this area at that time was a very good friend of mine. As a matter of fact, he had been my Boy Scout master when I was young. He was a very conscientious person, a very kind person and a good man, but he had had about enough of this guy and from what this man who had persecuted me was telling me, he believed he was about to get fired. So he came to me, asking me to go and speak to my friend on his behalf.

Can you imagine how things can turn around? You know how fearful he must have been in order for him to come to me and ask me to help him. So I was very kind to him and never acted like anything had ever happened between us. Actually, I had nothing against him in my heart at all, whatsoever. I talked to him there for a few minutes and said, "Okay, I'll go talk to him." And I did. I talked to his boss, who was a very good friend of mine, and I said, "What about so-and-so? How are things going here? I believe he's a little fearful of losing his job and he even wanted me to talk to you. Is there anything I can say on his behalf, further than to have mercy on him?"

And he told me some of the things that so-and-so was doing and, yes, he was thinking seriously about letting him go. But he told me, "David, since you've spoken up for him, I'm going to give him another chance." I replied, "Okay, that sounds good. I thank you for that." But "Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord," and the guy won't forget that.

If you're really going to have an effect on somebody who's in bondage, as this guy was, it's going to be because you walk in the steps of Jesus, not because you justified their retaliation against you in letting them have what they deserve. They will always feel justified, they will always think that they're right when you do that, but they get a conviction when you don't

resist their evil. I'm talking about personal affronts against you, not necessarily someone who is attacking the flock. As the Lord said, ***Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not (Rom.12:14)***; and ***“Render to no man evil for evil” (17)***. These commands put us in a position of weakness if we're going to be obedient. If we're not obedient, not walking in the light that God gives us, then we're not going to be cleansed of sin.

How can people say that God won't perfect this work in us if they've never tried or never cooperated with Him? ***(17) Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. (19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath [of God:] for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. (Rom. 12:20) But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.***

I tell you, it's a sweet victory when it comes. I'm not talking about rejoicing in another man's chastening. We don't want to do that and the Lord warns us not to do that because He'll withhold His hand (Proverbs 24:17). The Lord doesn't take pleasure in the judgment of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11), the Bible says, and He doesn't appreciate it when His children do, either. Still, when God humbles someone who was doing their very best to humble you, it's good for them and it's good for you to see. At any rate, I had quite a few experiences like that, where when I wouldn't stick up for myself, the Lord did. It impresses people when they see that it is God Who does this. I know that there were a lot of people around the refinery who were looking at me when this happened to this man, saying, “I wonder what David's going to say about this? We all know that this guy persecuted him mercilessly.” And they didn't see me say a thing or get a smirk on my face, or a smile, or anything else. They didn't see that from me and I know that's impressive for people, too. We need to take up our cross, walk in the steps of Jesus and be a reflection of Him to the world.

The Shepherd's Staff

The Lord can put His Own fear in people. I remember when I first came to Pensacola, that I was invited to share at a mission church and I did. A mission church, as you know, is sometimes connected with a lot of

homeless people and there were a lot of homeless people there – traveling people with a lot of problems. All the people on the street have problems; that’s why they’re out there.

There was a lot of casting out of demons and healing the sick, praying for needs and all these things. There was a great move of the Spirit in that mission church and it opened the door for me to continue to teach there because the pastor was kind of backing off. I had a lot more Word than he did and the more I taught, the more he just backed off and listened. I thought that was a real move of the Spirit, too.

Actually, when I set foot in that church the first time, I walked in the back door and there was a woman who was also there for the first time and she was way down on the front row. When I stepped foot in the door, she stood up and turned and wheeled around with her finger pointed at me and started prophesying. She was a prophetess and she knew what she was talking about. The Lord God was talking through her, opening a door and I didn’t know it. She prophesied about the Word living in me and she went on for a good while like this. Of course, the whole church was turning around, looking at me, as if to say, “Ooh, who is this guy?” Well, it opened a door for me to be able to share and for people to respect me in a very quick manner, so I could pray for the sick and do the things that the Lord wanted me to do. They began to respect me on a par with their pastor very quickly.

One day, I saw that there were a couple ladies in this church who were just wreaking havoc through gossiping, stirring up strife and causing trouble. I was in a room with the pastor and when these two ladies passed through the room, I took the opportunity to share a little exhortation with them. I wouldn’t call it a rebuke, but I pointed out that some of the things they were doing were hurting people. I thought I was doing it very gracefully, trying to do it very humbly, to make it where they could swallow it, so to speak. But they came right back at me with a very strong rebuke and I just felt a real quietness in my spirit. When they got through saying what they were saying, I didn’t say a word. I just looked down and the Lord spoke to me, just as clear as I’ve ever heard Him speak. He said, “They’re going to get sick.” That’s what He said.

Now, that wasn’t my plan; it wasn’t my wish. The pastor was over on the other side of the room and his eyes were kind of big, but he didn’t say a word, either. I guess he didn’t want them climbing on him. Anyway, they left and in a few minutes I went home. It wasn’t very long after this that I got a call from that pastor and he said, “Did you know that so-and-so and so-and-so are in the hospital?” I said, “No. What happened?” He said, “Well, I don’t know but they both went there sick.” I said, “Well, I knew that was going to happen because the Lord told me that was going to happen.” I discovered a little while later that the doctors had diagnosed their

problems. One of them had a brain tumor and the other had a very bad kidney infection. The symptoms hit both of them at the same time! So they knew something was wrong, in the very fact that both of them got sick at the same time and went to the hospital at the same time.

They came to the pastor and asked, “What happened?” And the pastor told them, “Well, you rebuked an elder and it’s not legal for you to do that. I suggest you go and make things right with him.” So they did. They called me up and spoke to me, asking my forgiveness. Of course, I gave it to them and prayed for them and the Lord healed them, but it was fairly serious, especially with the brain tumor situation. **“Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord” (Rom.12:19)**. You know what? These two ladies got a little bit of respect for elders in the Church after that. They had been thinking and living in the natural and they had no fear of the Lord or of God’s leadership, so God taught them differently. ***(Heb.13:17) Obey them that have the rule over, and submit [to them:] for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this [were] unprofitable for you.***

I tell you, if you have true shepherds, true leadership, you had better take care of them because you don’t want to bring grief to them. They bear a heavy burden and they’re held responsible, and we’re called by God to submit to them. If we don’t, He might discipline us. Now, shepherds aren’t going to take up a stick and whip you, that’s obvious, not in the New Testament. But they do have authority and God does defend them. He will spank us if we make their life miserable. I’ve seen that quite a few times, as a matter of fact. We need to make sure that we don’t ignore His authority. He demonstrates His authority through His leadership in the Church and He expects us to submit.

Blessings and Curses

I remember another time, not too long after that, I was standing around the corner of my house, looking all the way across my front yard out into the street between the front of my house and in front of my neighbor’s house. I saw my son out there with an older boy and they were talking. I didn’t know what my boy and this other boy were talking about, but the Lord said to me (again, one of those very clear “words” in my spirit), “I’m going to bless those who bless you, and I’m going to curse those who curse you.” I know one thing, that the Lord does that, especially for those people who leave things up to Him, who don’t take things into their own hands,

who are not belligerent, not antagonistic toward people and who forgive people. If you do your very best to walk and abide in Jesus Christ, the Lord will defend and take care of you. He will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. I don't know what was going on in that conversation, but I saw them talking and that's when the Lord spoke this to me.

A little bit of background before that day was that this older boy would come over to be around my boys and I really didn't like it that much because he wasn't a Christian and he was a bad influence. One time I had seen him in my backyard with my boys. My elderly neighbor was saying something to him and this boy became very insolent and arrogant and spoke to this older man in a wicked way. So when the older man turned around and went into his house, I told this boy, "Son, I want you to leave my yard and don't come back here until you can talk kindly, especially to my neighbors. I don't like the things that come out of your mouth in my yard. We're Christians here and we like to be kind one to another and you weren't kind or respectful to my neighbor. I'd just as soon you not come back until you decide to change." Well, he left, but again, he had a belligerent attitude.

The next day, I saw the boys standing out front, talking, and I didn't know what they were talking about, but I knew it had something to do with the Lord telling me that those who bless me will be blessed and those who curse me will be cursed. Well, it turns out this boy was over there cursing me to my son and he was an older boy and bigger boy, but my son was doing what I had taught him to do, which was to resist not the evil. He told me later that the boy was cursing me. The day after that, we saw a crowd out there on the street and a very heavysset man lying in the middle of the street, right where the boys had been talking the day before. So I ran out there and learned that what had happened was that this boy's dad down the street had heard a noise in their garage. A man had broken into their garage and was stealing his son's bike and was riding away on it. This very heavysset man took off running after the thief on the bike and he fell dead right there in the street where his son had been cursing me.

I knew then when that happened that that was what the Lord was talking to me about. This was a chastening, of course, to the boy, but it was the father who had put that in the boy. I don't think I ever told my neighbor how all this had come about but, "***Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord***" (Rom.12:19). If you are a person who desires to walk in the holiness of God, pleasing unto the Lord, He will defend you and He will bless those who bless you. You may not always get to see it, but it always happens. So we pray for those who despitefully use

us, as the Bible says, because they may be headed for big trouble and God could even use that to bring them around to repentance.

I shared a text with you, previously, about when Shimei cursed David, and David had said, "Leave him alone and let him curse. Maybe the Lord will recompense me good for this." Of course, that was exactly so. If he resisted not, the Lord was going to bless him because when we deny that old selfish man that rises up in us, the first thing we're doing is starving him. But, at the same time, because we're walking in the light, the Lord is going to cleanse us of that sin. That's a very important part of God's plan for perfection in us. Also, Nabal, the one whose name means "fool," spoke evil against David, and David, by the grace of God, did not resist and the Lord struck Nabal dead. If you remember the story of Ananias and Sapphira, in the days to come, similar events will take place. Why? Because they were attempting by deceit to join themselves to a holy group of people. Would God do that again? Yes, He will, and He has done it before, too. Many people don't connect the dots. The more the church becomes holy in these coming days, the more God is going to defend it mightily.

The church is too busy retaliating for itself, for God to do anything. God's power is made perfect in our weakness. If the church won't cease from its own works, God doesn't do His. In a situation like this, if they don't turn the other cheek and resist not him that is evil, the Lord's not going to do anything. Pray for these people coming against God's children because they're in a bad situation. You're the witness of Jesus. You're the only Jesus some people are going to see.

God's Arithmetic – A Gift's Reward

Another time, I had gone into business with this brother who ran service lines for the city, such as the gas and water lines, and the main lines and the service lines to the houses. We were doing this one day in Zachary, Louisiana, and we had just completed a whole street. As it started to get dark, we were coming to the last house on that street. We had put down the main line and tied in the service line going to this lady's house and we made a mistake. We didn't open the valve before we covered it back up, so all night this lady was without her gas.

Well, we showed up the next morning and this lady was out on her porch with her arms crossed, looking at us like she wished she had a gun. She began to chew us out pretty well and I listened to just a few minutes of this. She was right and I was telling her, "Yes, ma'am, you're right. We're wrong. We made a mistake but it wasn't intentional; it was an accident. We just

forgot.” Well, she continued on for a few more minutes, wanting to make sure that we were getting a good tongue-lashing.

Finally, an idea popped into my head and I asked her, “Ma’am, are you a Christian?” I knew she wasn’t by the way she was acting, but almost everybody tells you they are because they’re not a Muslim or something, I guess. Anyway, she said, “Well, yeah, I’m a Christian.” I said, “Don’t you remember what Jesus said, that if you don’t forgive your brother, then He won’t forgive you? That’s a bad place to be with God, if He’s not forgiven you. Also, in Matthew 18, He said if you didn’t forgive from your heart, He’d turn you over to the tormentors. It seems to me like you ought to forgive us. We’ve asked you to forgive us.” So that quieted her down right there and she just went in the house.

We uncovered her tap there, turned her gas on and covered it back up. We came back to this place in the evening because there was a good place to park our trucks and compressors and equipment across from her house. The next morning we came back to the dump truck that was right across from her house and got in the truck to go on down the road to go do another street, but the dump truck starter wouldn’t turn over. It was dead as a doornail, so we got out and opened the hood. There was no battery there!

About that time, the lady walked out on her porch and she looked over there at us and said, “I know what happened to that battery.” We said, “Oh?” and she pointed down the block to a man sitting in his backyard, saying, “Yeah. Do you see that man right over there? That man got your battery.” We said, “Oh, okay,” and went on talking to one another about going to get another battery. She spoke up again and asked, “Ain’t you gonna go git yo’ battery?” We replied, “No, ma’am. We forgive him. He probably needed that battery.” She just looked at us.

Now, I didn’t even consider this at the time, but later I thought, “I wonder if that lady was setting a trap for us to see if we were going to live what we preached about this forgiveness stuff?” I never did really figure it out, but we knew it was a really good witness of the Lord that we said, “No, ma’am. We forgive him. He probably needed that battery.” So we went and got another battery, put it in the truck and took off. Maybe the man in his backyard was somebody she didn’t like or she wouldn’t have pointed him out to us. She was probably setting a trap for us to go over and jump on this guy to get our battery back, when this guy had nothing to do with the battery. She just wanted to see a war and wanted to see if we were going to forgive.

We all want the forgiveness, so we all have to give it, don’t we? We’ve all been taken advantage of by people and it’s not bad. The Lord is in control of that. As a matter of fact, it’s good that we get taken advantage of sometimes

because we have an opportunity, when all these things rise up in us (such as, “I’m gonna go get my battery back”), to just turn it into a gift.

If somebody borrows something from you, or takes it, the Bible says we are to ***Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again (Luk.6:30)***. Of course, we can ask it of the Lord. If we have a need, we can go to Him because He said, ***And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Mat.21:22)***. But I’ve had a lot of people borrow things from me, or the Lord had me give something to them, and they’d say, “I’m going to pay you back.” Yet, a good many of those promises were never kept and, of course, your old flesh wants to rise up in you and go demand your rights, but I’ve discovered something the Lord spoke to me: ***(Psa.37:21) The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; But the righteous dealeth graciously, and giveth.*** They borrow from you and don’t pay it back, so you just make it a gift.

You may think, “I’ve lost something and I’m not a good steward because I need to get this back,” and all these reasons come through your mind, but we have mercy on the wicked. The Lord says that He ***maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust” (Mat.5:45)***. If we’re sons of His, we’re going to do what He said. I don’t know how many times the Lord has had me buy a car for someone, or loan a car to someone, or buy a house trailer for someone, or different things like that, and the person might say that they’re going to pay me back. Sometimes I just give; I learned to do that. I learned that if you loaned something to someone and they’re not going to pay it back, then they’re not going to come around you. They’re worried that you’re going to nag them.

If you ever want to see this person or have any kind of fellowship with them, or have any kind of influence with them concerning the Lord, then you need to go tell them, “Look, I forgive you the debt. Don’t worry about it.” I learned that there’s an awesome benefit for doing this because this has happened to me time and time again. I don’t worry about it now because if you loan something to someone and they pay it back, and you’re not charging any interest (Leviticus 25:36,37), then you’re just receiving what you gave and there’s no reward for that. However, if they don’t pay it back and you turn it into a gift, then you get a reward for that: ***(Luk.6:38) Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom....*** Now isn’t that a better deal than just getting back what you’ve given out? Would you not rather have it multiplied back to you because you gave it?

There's a reward for giving because then we're storing up our treasures in heaven. I remember the Lord had me loan a car to someone. It was a good car and they were going to pay me back some small amount per month. They paid about two months and that was the end of that. Gone. Another time, the Lord had me buy a travel trailer for a lady who was on some kind of government subsistence, for her and her son to live in, because I found them homeless. She said, "Oh, I'll pay you back as my government money comes in." Of course, she was doing well then, but she moved on and I never heard from her again. But I don't worry about such things. As a matter of fact, I've called people up and told them, "Don't worry about paying me back. Just make it a gift."

The awesome benefit of understanding God's Word is that it delivers you from what you think you might have lost. You haven't lost anything. God's going to multiply it back to you. He says, "Don't worry about it, just make it a gift." If you do that, if you make it a gift, then He can multiply it back to you.

Just understanding God's Word delivers us from so much anxiety that the devil tries to heap on us. I remember back in the beginning, when I loaned or gave someone something and didn't get it back, the devil would attack my mind. He'd want me to retaliate, or say something, or go ask it again. Jesus said, "***of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again***" (***Luk.6:30***). So I learned from the Scriptures that all I have to do is give it and God will multiply it back. It doesn't always come right then, but it'll come when you need it. If you're walking by faith, you'll understand the great need for that.

Plunder and Provision

In the days to come, people are going to plunder the saints. (***Heb. 10:34***) ***For ye both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions, knowing that ye have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.*** In the days to come, we'll lose our right to do business with the world, unless we take the mark of the beast or fall into their system. We'll also lose our jobs and our houses because we can't pay our taxes, for example.

But the Lord is going to take care of us. The more we fall into a position of weakness, the more His power is going to be made perfect. We don't have to worry about it. Right now, we are storing up for the days to come. Even though the wicked world is going to do everything they can do to plunder the Christians and Jews, it won't make any difference because we'll get to

be the beneficiaries of seeing God's manna from heaven and His water out of the rock. He's going to multiply the fishes and the loaves.

Don't worry about what the wicked take from you because, in a way, they're working for the Lord and they're working for you. They are less an enemy and more an ally in this process of God bringing us to our death. We need to praise God, to give thanks unto God for the wicked around us. **(2Sa.7:14) I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.** Now, would you take God's rod away? Would you kick against the goad (Acts 26:14), as he said to Paul? A goad is something that He uses to get you in line, something that causes you a little pain to get you where He wants you, like a cattle prod.

Would you kick against the goad, not realizing that God Almighty is the One Who's trying to get you into position? He's the only One Who's sovereign and in absolute control of the situation. He's not trusting His children to anyone else. When anyone else is involved, they are there according to the Will of God, just as happened to Job. The Lord permitted the devil to try Job, to persecute Job, in order to cause him to receive much more at his latter end, including humility. Of course, Job is an extreme example and most of us don't have to go through something like that. If Job could go through what he went through, by the grace of God we can go through what we have to go through.

God won't allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able (1 Corinthians 10:13). He always makes a way of escape, as He has always done for me. Praise God! Put your life in His hands; trust in the Lord. Let His power be your defense and don't defend yourself. If you defend self, self will live. If you deny self, self will die. If you don't let self rule through or speak through you, or fulfill its imaginations through you, it's going to die and that's the whole point.

We need to cooperate with God in this cross. He said unless we take up our cross and follow Him, we cannot be His disciple (Matthew 10:38). Trust in the Lord.

CHAPTER FOUR

Vengeance Is Mine ... Saith the Lord

We've learned that the Lord's commands are His method of bringing us to the death of self. Without obedience to His commands, especially the commands that are contrary to our carnal nature, there is no death of self. Our baptism is all about us going down in the water and coming up new men, by faith. By faith, we're crucified with Christ and we no longer live; Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20). By faith, going down in the water puts to death the old man. We accept everything right up front because Jesus taught us, "**All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe ye received them, and ye shall have them**" (Mar.11:24). So we believe everything right up front, accepting by faith all the benefits of God, all the righteousness of God, the deliverance, the healing, everything. Baptism comes at the beginning of our Christian walk for a reason because that is when we accept the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We accept it by faith, but then we need to continue to walk by faith. It's the water that puts to death the old man in baptism, and the water is the Word. Paul called it "**the washing of water with the word**" (of God) (Eph.5:26). Are you determined to use the water of the Word to put to death your old life? Some people get baptized and they have no idea they should walk this out by faith, to become a disciple (a learner and a follower) of Christ. They don't understand that to "fulfill" their baptism, they must walk in obedience to the Word of God, as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Without obedience to the Word, which is contrary to our carnal nature, there will be no fulfillment of our baptism or bearing of fruit from our baptism.

As we have studied previously, we found that some of these teachings that Jesus, David, Peter and Paul gave concerning non-resistance to evil are very much contrary to our carnal nature. That old man doesn't go to his cross easily – he is kicking and screaming all the way. The Word of God is much opposed by very intellectual people and people who love their life in this world, but if we're determined to go to our cross, to see our baptism fulfilled, we have to obey every command Jesus gave us. He said, **And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luk. 6:46)** It does seem kind of ridiculous. Many people have insulated themselves from the world with all kinds of false doctrines but it's only the truth that sets us free from the old man, the old life, the one who died, the crucified man.

We see these doctrines and commands of Jesus: (Mat.5:39) "**Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also**" (39); "**Love your enemies, and**

pray for them that persecute you” (44); and so on, as being hard to do. We need to remember that Jesus gave us power over this flesh, He gave us dominion over this flesh and we don't live anymore – He lives in us. He can do this thing, so we need to put our trust in Him.

The Sword of the Spirit – Weapon of Our Warfare

I'd like to share two Scriptures that have the same theme: **(Pro.20:22) Say not thou, I will recompense evil: Wait for the Lord, and He will save thee.** Jesus said, **“Resist not him that is evil” (Mat.5:39).** I shared a testimony in the last chapter about a man who was persecuting me and how I had discovered from the Scriptures that the Lord just didn't want me to resist any personal persecution. The Lord taught that man a lesson on my behalf and I shared with you how, several years later, he actually came to me to ask me to save him from losing his job.

The Lord made me able to be kind to him the whole time and that bore fruit later because he was willing to come and ask me. He knew I wasn't against him and he knew I wasn't angry with him, so he was willing to come and ask me for help. I had no problem giving it to him because I wasn't holding anything against him, either. **(Pro.24:29) Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.** Did you know that the Lord says that He is going to render to every man according to his works? Do you know that it's just as wrong for you to strike someone back as it is for them to strike you?

People ask, “Well, what about the Old Testament?” Scripture says that they wrestled with flesh and blood, but we wrestle with principalities and powers. What they did was a type and a shadow of what we do; they demonstrated in the letter what we do in the spirit. The verse says, “Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me.” Our sword is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph.6:17). When we demonstrate the Spirit of God, the power of the Lord Himself is behind what we do.

Walking with Immanuel

Another supporting verse is found here: **(1Th.5:14) And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all.** Do you know what longsuffering is? It is suffering long, with their problems,

with their accusations, with their persecutions of us, with whatever it is about them that our flesh doesn't like and rises up against. Whatever it is, we are to suffer long.

When we suffer long, we're denying the old man the right to do what he loves so much to do – to retaliate, to become angry, to be unforgiving, to be prideful, whatever. Being longsuffering is our opportunity to crucify that old man. We're wearing him down, that's what we're doing. If we let him live, he won't stay on the cross. He'll climb down off that cross and he'll begin to rule our life again. Keep him on the cross; don't let him come down. ***(15) See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all.***

What does God call evil? The demands of Jesus Christ and His disciples are that we resist not evil. If we don't do that, that's evil and most Christians don't even know that; they haven't received that. They've heard in their churches that this is not necessary, that this is for the Millennium, or that's not what He meant. And yet, there's no other way for a person to be a Christian than to walk in the steps of Jesus and He resisted not the evil. He turned the other cheek. All that Christ is, we are commanded to be. ***(1Jn.2:6) [H]e that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.*** If we're going to be disciples, we have to be obedient.

Some people say we can't be obedient. Well, these are not people who believe the Word of God. We can do what the Lord commanded us to do because He has given us His life. We don't live anymore; He lives in us. I agree; the old man couldn't do it, but the old man's not in charge anymore. He's dead. He's gone. We've baptized him; we've dunked him under and he stayed there. Now the One Who lives in us is Jesus and He can do this. Do you believe that He is "Immanuel, God with Us"? I hope that you do and I hope that you begin to walk with this in your imagination.

Like Jesus, We Were Put Here to Die

Peter tells us very plainly how to become blessed: ***(1Pe.3:8) Finally, [be] ye all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: (9) not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing.*** We have to be contrary to the thinking of evil for evil, reviling for reviling, and this is for the purpose of inheriting a blessing. We get blessed when we obey the Word

of the Lord and we return good for evil. That's God's demand. **(10) For, He that would love life** (that is, God's life, not man's life; not the fallen life; not the *psuchē*, but the *zoë*), **And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil....** Evil is determined by what the Lord has commanded, not by what the people do around us, or by what the world says is a good man or a good person.

The world is quite contrary to God. The spiritual man is at war with the carnal man. These two are contrary one to another. **(Rom.8:6) For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace: (7) because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God....** So we can't determine what is good or what is evil by the world telling us, but only based on what the Word of God says. **(1Pe.3:10) ... Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: (11) And let him turn away from evil, and do good; Let him seek peace, and pursue it. (12) For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, And his ears unto their supplication: But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil.** Again, we determine evil by what the Lord says it is. If the Lord says, "Do not return evil for evil, but blessing," then, if we don't do that, that's evil. **(13) And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? (14) But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed [are ye]: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; (15) but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: [being] ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: (16) having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ.**

Yes, we need to shame them with goodness; we need to shame them with turning the other cheek, resisting not the evil and showing kindness toward people who don't deserve it. We need to shame them with that. **(1Pe.3:17) For it is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.** Now, we think we shouldn't suffer for doing good. Our self-righteousness just rises up when we suffer for doing good, but God says that it's obviously better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. **(18) Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.** That's our demonstration that we came here to die, just as our Lord Jesus did. We came here to die to self so that we might live.

Graceful Suffering

In chapter two, Peter tells us quite plainly that Christ is an example for us. People think, “Well, He just suffered for us, so that we don’t have to suffer.” But no – He also died and we have to die. He was a physical demonstration of what has to happen to us, spiritually. **(1Pe.2:19) For this is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully.** Praise God! **(20) For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted [for it,] ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer [for it,] ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.**

As pointed out in Chapter One, the word “acceptable” here is actually the word “grace.” This is grace with God. It’s His “favor” that we should suffer the death of self; it’s His favor that we are here to suffer at the hands of people what the world would call “wrongfully.” Now is it really wrongful? Do we suffer anything really wrongfully? Is it not the chastening of the Lord upon the carnal nature of man in us? From heaven’s point of view, we don’t suffer anything wrongfully. From man’s point of view, we suffer things wrongfully. “We haven’t done anything to deserve this,” we think. But yet, we have that carnal nature in there that’s contrary to God and must die. The chastening that we are going through is bringing this death to pass, so that we don’t live the rest of our time in bondage. So, he says, **(20) Ye shall take it patiently ... this is acceptable with God. (21) For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps.** Yes, and if we will obey the Word of God, we will not suffer uselessly the rest of our lives, but we will suffer the death of self, so that the spiritual man can be free. He will now rule your life, **(1Pe.2:21) ... that ye should follow His steps. (22) who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; (Amen!) but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously: (24) who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.**

The purpose of this is so that we don’t live the rest of our “**time in the flesh to the lusts of men**” **(4:2)**. We suffer in the flesh because the flesh is dying; it’s not getting its way. **(1) Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind;** (that is, to suffer in the flesh) **for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (2) that ye no longer should live the rest of your time in flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.** Wow! That’s good news. We’re not supposed to suffer at the hands of

our own flesh for the rest of our life. If we will obey Jesus' commands to resist not the evil, He will do a quick work on our old flesh.

Some people say, "Oh, that's not possible." Again, we have to let the Lord be Lord here. **(3) For the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idolatries: (4) wherein they think it strange that ye run not with [them] into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of [you:] (5) who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead. (6) For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.** So God's plan is for us not to live under bondage to this old flesh for the rest of our lives.

Authority Versus Submission

The Bible doesn't contradict itself, but many see an apparent conflict here between the doctrine of authority that the Lord has given to us and this doctrine of non-resistance to evil. We wonder how these two fit together since we know we can't choose one over the other. If we permit ourselves to choose some Scriptures over others, what we're saying is, "I don't believe that part of the Bible." And usually the parts we will choose to believe are the parts that will permit us to live in the flesh in some other form.

The Lord doesn't want that. **(Psa.119:160) The sum of thy word is truth....** We have to believe all of what God says, so how do we fit together this apparent conflict between this authority that the Lord has given to be exercised in the church over evil-doers and the doctrine of non-resistance to evil? Well, we have examples such as that of 1 Corinthians 5:5, where Paul turned a man over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord. That doesn't sound like resisting not the evil or turning the other cheek. It sounds like he's exercising authority.

We have also shared that, when we're talking about personal affronts, we have to do what Jesus commanded; we have to turn the other cheek and resist not him that is evil. But if there wasn't some kind of authority demonstrated in the church when people walk in willful disobedience, to separate these people from the church, then a little leaven would leaven the

whole lump, as the rest of 1 Corinthians 5 clearly tells us. We can't permit that and the Lord doesn't permit that. However, that's not defending self – that's defending the body of Christ.

In a family, for instance, the man is the head of the household and he has authority. Suppose the child is rebellious and does something willfully disobedient and the father turns the other cheek and resists not the evil. In this case, he must demonstrate the authority of God and he must do something about this evil because if **“*sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, ... the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*” (Ecc.8:11)**. In other words, people have to count the cost; a child has to count the cost and if that child is not chastened, they don't see there being any cost to their sinful life and then they won't obey God, either. So there has to be authority demonstrated there. That has nothing to do with the same man resisting not evil when there is an affront against himself. Considering this verse, the wife cannot afford to resist not the evil of her child. But in an accusation against herself, she could do it, and that's for the death of self.

We have commands in the church and we have demands of the Lord in the church, such as the following: **(Mat.18:15) *And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone....*** In the original manuscript, there was no “against thee” there, nor in any of the ancient manuscripts, and there's no numeric pattern in it. That was added in later. So, to be accurate, it should read, **(15) *if thy brother sin, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (16) But if he hear [thee] not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. (17) And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican.*** There is no resisting not the evil here because it has nothing to do with the crucifixion of self. It has to do with the cleansing of the body of Christ from leaven that's trying to sneak in. This is a demand of Jesus, too, just like “resist not him that is evil,” which has to be obeyed. Many of the verses that have to do with authority fit right alongside of resisting not evil.

The Temptation of the Position of Power

I'd like to share some of what David demonstrated to us about this doctrine. David made war against the enemies of God's people; he defended the sheep. He killed a lion and he killed a bear, but he was learning not to defend himself. He did a very good job here in 1 Samuel 24. In Chapter Two, we learned that Nabal was an affront and David was slipping. He had determined that he was going to go take Nabal's head off for his affront against him. Then Abigail, Nabal's wife, came and exhorted David to not take things into his own hands but to trust in God. Of course, he took that advice and obeyed, after which God Himself quickly took out Nabal.

In 1 Samuel 24, David did a better job and started out right off the bat doing what the Lord was showing him to do. ***(1Sa.24:1) And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi. (2) Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. (3) And he came to the shepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet. Now David and his men were abiding in the innermost parts of the cave.*** That couldn't have been an accident. Obviously, the Lord set this up for a purpose. He was going to try David and was going to demonstrate some righteousness to his men. ***(4) And the men of David said unto him, Behold, the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand, and thou shalt do to him as it shall seem good unto thee....***

What does that mean when God gives a person power over their enemy? Can they abuse it? When David was taking his men to go over and wipe out Nabal and all his offspring, I would say that David was about to abuse the power that he had. So, did God bring him into this situation in order to try him? He gave David a position of power over Saul that Saul didn't even know about, but it didn't necessarily mean that He wanted David to take advantage of the situation. He was just trying David. As a matter of fact, we can see that in what follows. ***(1Sa.24:4) ... Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. (5) And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.*** His conscience smote him, just for cutting off the hem of his garment. ***(6) And he said unto his men, the Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put***

forth my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed. (7) So David checked his men with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. And Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

Torment and Deliverance

We have pointed out before that Saul was the Lord's anointed. We know from the Scriptures that he may have had that position but he didn't have that anointing anymore. **(1Sa.16:13) Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him** (speaking about David) **in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. (14) Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul** (who was no longer the anointed, even though he had the position of anointing), **and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.**

There are a lot of Saul ministries out there today. We don't need to spend a lot of time attacking them. Though at one time they might have had some anointing, a lot of them don't have it now. But we see that David respected the position of anointing that Saul had been given over the people of God, even though he didn't have the anointing anymore. **(15) And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.** Not only did he not have the anointing, he had an evil spirit from God upon him. He was chasing David down for something that David had never even done. Just because David had become popular with the people and Saul was jealous and angry, he didn't have that position of authority in God anymore. **(16) Let our lord now command thy servants, that are before thee, to seek out a man who is a skilful player on the harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.** As we know from the rest of the story, that's exactly what David did.

Think about this. An evil spirit from God is upon Saul and David has the anointing of God upon him. When David was called to play on his harp, the evil spirit that was upon Saul was calmed and he was delivered for a short while. You can read the rest of the story for yourself, but think about that. The Lord Himself sent the evil spirit and, yet, he sent David to deliver Saul from it. This may seem as if the Lord is opposing Himself but that's not really the case. The Lord Himself sent the curse on this world (read Deuteronomy 28) to make people count the cost of evil. But the Lord sent the Savior, too. Although the Lord is chastening people all around us, He's

given us the authority with the Gospel to deliver these same people! This is so they can understand the grace of God that's being offered to them through us, not that we have any authority or any power.

So David was respecting the position of this person, even though this person was not a respectable man. This man was demon-possessed. In all honesty, the people around him knew that and, yet, David was respecting him, not striking back at him. He was resisting not the evil here. When he did do a slight thing, his heart smote him and he repented of it.

Soothing Words

Let's continue reading. ***(1Sa.24:7) So David checked his men with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. And Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. (8) David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth, and did obeisance.*** It seems like a dangerous thing to do. You have all your men in the cave and you step out of the cave and announce yourself to somebody who has an army there waiting to destroy you. But, obviously, the Holy Spirit had a purpose in this. ***(9) And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearkenest thou to men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?*** I don't remember reading anywhere else in the Scriptures that anybody said this to Saul. It was in his imagination that he was angry with David and making him out to be a villain for his own purpose of knocking out a competitor to the throne. That's exactly what he was doing.

But David, who was being very wise, ("***[B]e ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves***" {***Mat.10:16***}), was giving Saul an excuse to save face, telling him, "Don't listen to these people who are telling you that I'm against you." ***(1Sa.24:10) Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to-day into my hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee; but [mine eye] spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.*** Oh, praise God! So he was showing mercy to Saul. This is something we have to do with people because it's powerful to save and deliver them. David begins again and says, ***(1Sa. 24:11) Moreover, my father....*** Notice, he called him also "My lord the king" and bowed down and was humble.

Many people are quick to retaliate, to speak against other people and, yet, God says, ***A soft answer turneth away wrath; But a grievous***

word stirreth up anger (Pro.15:1). If we are humbling ourselves to a man, if we are turning the other cheek, if we are resisting not evil, if we are loving our enemy, then a soft answer turns away wrath. **(2) The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright; But the mouth of fools poureth out folly.** Nabal was a good example of that. “Nabal” means “fool” and he railed against David and railed against his men, and it was about to cost him his life. **(3) The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch upon the evil and the good. (4) A gentle tongue is a tree of life** (the actual translation there is “the healing of the tongue”); **But perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit.** David was very wise with his tongue. He was humble when he needed to be humble and he didn’t want to stir up any wrath in Saul. As we read on down, we’re going to see that he’s even more that way. He wanted to bring repentance to this man.

Sharper Than a Two-Edged Tongue

I especially like the following verses concerning turning people’s hearts: **(Ecc.10:3) Yea also, when the fool walketh by the way, his understanding faileth him, and he saith to every one [that] he is a fool. A fool’s mouth is what gives him away. (4) If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee** (as is happening here in this case), **leave not thy place; for gentleness allayeth great offences. ... (10) If the iron be blunt, and one do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.** I don’t know if any of you have used an axe before, but if you have a blunt edge, you can rear back and slap that axe into some hard wood and it’ll bounce right back out. What it’s talking about here is dealing with people. It’s not talking about using an axe but dealing with people. How do you get past their defenses? How do you get something into this person? The edge has to be sharpened and the tongue is the same way.

Look at what it says next: **(11) If the serpent bite before it is charmed, then is there no advantage in the charmer.** See, we have to get past people’s defenses. Their old flesh is ready to bite, ready to retaliate, ready to be angry. A soft answer turns away wrath. We have to say things in such a way that a person can receive it, even in their fleshly ways. **(Ecc.10:12) The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.** As in Nabal’s case, it was

truly going to swallow him up. We need to be like the charmer, to get around people's flesh. What David was demonstrating here was exactly that: how to get around Saul's flesh and actually get to his heart. **(1Sa. 24:11) Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand; for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in my hand, and I have not sinned against thee, though thou huntest after my life to take it.** Yes, David gave love and grace – grace that Saul did not deserve. People know that when you're doing that with them and they realize it. This is one way that people can come to repentance, when they run up against someone who is acting Christ-like and giving them grace and mercy. **(12) The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but my hand shall not be upon thee. (13) As saith the proverb of the ancients, Out of the wicked cometh forth wickedness; but my hand shall not be upon thee.** Praise God!

Jezebel's Nightmare

Years ago, there was a sister in our little assembly who had a lot of dreams. She had a real gift for dreams but quite a few of the dreams were rebuking her for self-will and a Jezebel spirit. She would keep getting these dreams and bringing them to me to interpret and there was no question, as far as I was concerned. I think anybody else with a gift for interpretation would have given her the same thing and I think she realized that what I was saying was true.

After a while, she decided that she didn't want to hear it anymore. I asked her, "Have you been getting any dreams lately?" All her dreams had been bad for years and they'd been rebuking her for the same thing but she wasn't listening. And she said, "Yeah, I've been getting dreams but I just interpret them myself." She didn't want to hear what I had to say.

Anyway, our assembly always treated this lady well and at a personal level, by the grace of God, I'd sacrificed my life, giving up my job, in order to be able to share with her and the other brethren in full-time ministry. Others, also, were sacrificing their lives in order to serve the people, glory to God. We didn't ask anything; we didn't even pass the hat. We just walked by faith in God. Well, she kept getting these dreams and she had a problem with hearing in one ear. She asked me one day to ask the Lord why her hearing had not been restored and I said, "Okay," and I hung up the phone.

As soon as I put the phone down, the Lord spoke to me. He said, "Tell her, because she's not listening." Well, she'd been getting these dreams over and over and not really acting upon them, not really doing anything with them and actually justifying herself. The dreams were basically rebuking her for self-will and Jezebel-ruling over her husband, and taking authority that was not hers in the assembly, and things like that. So I called her back up and said, "The Lord told me to tell you it's because you're not listening." Well, it wasn't long after this that she began to look for reasons to fall out with me because, as you know, people who want to justify themselves will many times look for a reason to not hear what you have to say.

To make a long story short, she began to speak against me and return evil for the good that we had given to her. I didn't have any anger against her but I did point out to her that we had been good to her and I asked her not to take up an assault against me. Since I hadn't done anything that needed defending anyway, the Lord decided that He was going to avenge, like in Nabal's case, and it happened very quickly. First, she got in a wreck and busted her foot up. She was crippled for a while. Then she got sick for about a month. I wasn't angry with her, although I tried to correct her, to help her mend her ways, but it wasn't doing any good. So the Lord took care of it. He was very longsuffering. I was amazed that the Lord wasn't whipping more, actually.

The Conviction of Mercy

Let's read on here: ***(1Sa.24:14) After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. David was obviously humbling himself. (15) the Lord therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand. (16) And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.*** Now here is a demon-possessed man who is angry enough to want to kill David and who is delusional, yet, because David resisted not the evil, when Saul deserved judgment, it brought conviction to the heart of this hardened man. ***(17) And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rendered unto me good, whereas I have rendered unto thee evil.***

Listen to this lamentation coming right out of his heart here: **(18) And thou hast declared this day how that thou hast dealt well with me, forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me up into thy hand, thou killedst me not. (1Sa.24;19) For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that which thou hast done unto me this day. (20) And now, behold, I know that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand.** Wow! Obviously, that had something to do with the way David was handling the situation and the way he had handled a lot of situations. His heart was toward the Lord, therefore he wanted to obey the Lord and to let the Lord have vengeance. **(Rom.12:19) ... Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.**

Amazing Grace

I remember a man who, many years ago, went through the apprentice program with me when I used to work at a refinery. We didn't start out on a very good foot together. This guy said something to me one day and I hit him (I wasn't a Christian). That was the end of the argument but I knew that this guy was holding it against me ever since that day. It came to pass that this guy ended up working for me in a machine shop and I felt that he had a persecution complex about me, that he felt that I was persecuting him. I wasn't really; I was just doing my best to get our job done.

We would get jobs in and he had a particular machine that he liked to use that was very easy. It was all automatic, like a sit-down job, and he really liked it. To him, it was a prestigious job. But the other jobs would come in and we'd have to pull off and get on them. So I pulled him off one day to put him on another job and I could tell he was angry and frustrated and I thought at the time, "You know, he doesn't even know I've changed." I had become a Christian and everybody knew it but him, so I just told him that day while he was in the middle of his pity-party, his persecution complex. I said, "You know, I want to tell you something. I'm not the man I used to be. I'm not doing this because I'm against you. We have to get a job done for our employer here and you're the best man for the job, the most qualified man. I know it's not as easy as the one you're on but I'm not picking on you by moving you off this job and on to that one. Besides, I'm not the man I used to be. I love you. I want the very best for you and I want

to do everything I can for your good. I also want to serve our employer here and do the best job I can.”

As I began to talk this way to him, I could just see his face totally change. I'll never forget the change that came over that man from that day forward, when he understood that I was really trying to be Christ-like, that I really wasn't against him and that I really wanted him to have the very best from God that he could have. It was astounding, the change that came over that man. It was much easier for me to work with him from then on. He was no longer holding anything against me from my former life and ways and we became somewhat friends after that. I was very grateful God used that in his life. I had other situations like that and the Lord demonstrated to me that this was the way to change people's hearts. I believe we should all be this way because God is going to use it to bring people to Him.

CHAPTER FIVE

Judge Not

So far we've been studying all the opportunity that God makes for us to enter into death to self, simply through obeying His commands. He told us to ***“Resist not him that is evil” (Mat.5:39)***, to ***“turn to him the other (cheek) also” (39)***, and to ***“Love your enemies” (44)***; and, obviously, when Jesus did these things, it was so that He could be brought to His cross. We, also, have been called to a cross, in order to have the life of Christ.

I've been sharing with you some of my early experiences after getting this revelation from the Word and being put through trials by the Lord. I discovered that when it's really hard to turn the other cheek or to resist not him that is evil, it's usually because there is some competitive spirit, some pride, some judgment in our heart concerning the people who are coming against us. Our old man rises up, our pride rises up, that competition rises up and we want to retaliate. We don't want to bear that fiery trial; we don't want to bear that cross. But the Lord is teaching us that, when we submit to what the Word of God has to say concerning other people, our mind doesn't get stirred up emotionally against them. Being emotionally stirred up makes it almost impossible to be obedient.

The Bible tells us what we are to do concerning the “weak” brother: ***(Rom.14:1) But him that is weak in faith receive ye, [yet] not for decision of scruples*** (or “to doubtful disputations”). There are people who are weak in the faith, whose doctrine is not what ours is concerning the faith, concerning salvation, concerning the Holy Spirit and many other things. Many times in our church life, we've been taught to judge these people, rather than do what God says, which is to receive them. ***(2) One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. (3) Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. (4) Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand.*** So Paul tells us that there are people who are weak in the Christian faith and that we're not to judge them. We're to give them the time to grow up. ***(10) But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all***

stand before the judgment-seat of God. I had experiences where the Lord taught me this.

Conscience or Compromise

Many years ago, when I went to work in a refinery as a machinist apprentice, there was a brother who was going through this with me. I say “a brother” because, although he wasn’t a Christian at that time, he later became one. We had some fellowship for a few years, as we went through our apprenticeship, and after that we kind of parted ways. He became a union steward and I became a supervisor, so, in effect, we were on two different sides of the fence, if you will.

During that time, we both became Christians of a sort. I don’t remember if he was raised as a Christian or not, but at that time he became a nominal Christian. His doctrine was far from what I considered right and perfect but he listened to me patiently and he looked in his Bible and I shared and studied things with him. At that time, I had become a full-gospel Christian and was seeking to walk in everything I could see in the Bible. However, he was very much limited to the doctrine of his church. He believed in unconditional eternal security and really didn’t see the need for walking in the steps of Jesus. Of course, that doctrine destroys your motivation to walk as He walked, as the Scriptures command us.

Anyway, we came head-to-head one time. I was working an evening shift and there was a man who was doubling over from the day shift. He was working on a very important welding job and I was expected to carry his time sheet, to make sure he worked the number of hours that were on the time sheet, whatever they turned out to be. I was to keep that and hand it in the next morning. Well, this was a very large shop (if I remember correctly, it was something like ten acres), a large mechanical building, and we used electric scooters to get from one end to the other. I passed this man’s workstation, spoke to him and saw what he was welding on and left. As I made my rounds a little while later, I noticed he was gone. I didn’t pay it a lot of attention until the next time I made a round and went checking on other jobs and I saw that he was still gone. Since he had disappeared for quite a while, I went to look for him and found him on the other end of the building taking a nap. He had made up a nice bed there and was sleeping. Of course, he was on the time sheet and I was to keep track of all that. To make a long story short, I called out to him when I found him sleeping and told him, “Don’t you understand, you put me in a really hard situation here? I’m expected to sign your time sheet that you’ve worked for so many hours on this job and, yet, you’ve been back here sleeping instead. I can’t,

with my conscience and loving God the way I do, go contrary to what the Lord has spoken, which is that He didn't want us to be both liars and thieves, you know."

Basically, he kind of blew up. He was a "good ol' boy" whom everybody liked and, of course, here I was a Christian, which people tend not to like, especially when we want to hold to the Word of God. So he said he was going to call the union and he did. So this union steward brother whom I'd known for some years and, as I said, studied the Bible with somewhat and shared testimonies with, showed up and I told him that I really couldn't sign this time sheet since the guy had been gone for a couple of hours. He replied, "David, don't do this. I'm going to have to come against you with the full power of the union." So I just told him that I wasn't angry with him for retaliating and I understood that, because of his church doctrine, he really wasn't thinking that it was very important. In other words, he was saying that my conscience was being overly picky. But to me it was very important to obey my conscience and I didn't care what other men thought. (Oh, I did care, but it was more important to me to obey God.) I just told him, "You're going to have to do what you have to do and I'm going to do what I have to do. I'm not going to lie and I'm not going to sign this man's time sheet."

He exhorted me some more not to do this and I informed him that I would give the time sheet to my boss and would tell him that I wasn't going to sign it. If my boss wanted to sign it, then he could sign it. And that's what I did; I told my boss that I couldn't conscientiously sign this thing because the man wasn't there working. At that time, a lot of people in supervision out there would look the other way and do whatever they could to appease the workers, in order to get them to want to work overtime, but I wasn't interested in doing that. I think that my boss probably signed the time sheet and turned it on in but I didn't ask him or get into it any further.

A Change of Heart

It turned out that these two men stirred up some people against me and I noticed that people were looking at me wherever I went. It was a funny thing, though. In 1 Peter 4:14, the Bible talks about the Spirit of glory that would rest upon us when these things happen, when we're persecuted, and I certainly felt that. I felt the Spirit of glory and I had thought I wouldn't be able to endure this trial or the looks of people, but actually it was a great experience because of that glory. I was feeling the joy of the Lord while I

was going through this thing and I thought, “This is really strange that the Lord would give me this power.” I appreciated it so much.

As it was, I ran into that brother many times because I usually saw him every few days and I would say hello, like nothing had ever happened and I was turning the other cheek. I let him know that there was nothing between us, that I didn’t hold anything against him or anything. Some years later, (remember, he was a believer of sorts, not really taken to discipleship, but a nominal Christian), he came to me and just surprised me because he obviously had had a real experience with the Lord. The first thing he said to me was, “David, remember our problem concerning the overtime?” I said, “Yes, I do.” He said, “Well, I want to tell you that I’m really sorry that that ever happened. I know I was wrong and the Lord has really awakened my conscience. I just ask you to forgive me.” And by the grace of God, I was able to tell him, “You know, I never really held it against you because I cast down any kind of thing in my mind that would be against you.”

I think he understood that and knew that was true because I had always remained friendly toward him. The guy was weak in his faith and the Lord really didn’t want me to judge him. God had a plan for him that included my turning the other cheek, resisting him not and loving him, even though he was wrong. I believe that God even used that to help bring him around. I’d been witnessing to him for a long time about being filled with the Spirit, about the truths of God’s Word and he studied but he was pretty much in bondage for a long time, until the Lord just brought him to a head and began to show him these wonderful things.

Forgive, for They Know Not What They Do

Who is it who can judge in a situation like this? Obviously, the Word of God teaches us that when a brother is weak in the faith, not to judge him. It’s not talking about willful disobedience or outward immorality, which the Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 5 that the church is supposed to judge. So, who is it that God would use to judge? **(2Co.10:6) ... Being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full.** God will not use someone who is not overcoming in the very thing that they’re having to judge someone else.

Jesus said, **“And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority” (Rev.2:26)**, and it’s that way today. The Lord gives authority to people who are walking in obedience to His Word because they are the ones in whom Jesus lives; they are the ones in whom the Word is manifested. Man cannot judge. **(Rom.**

2:1) Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things. So, basically, we know that the “old man” cannot judge but he’s quick to do that and when he does, it’s very hard to turn the other cheek, to resist not the evil, to love your enemy. The devil tries to sow judgment and unforgiveness in our heart to keep us from being obedient, in regard to giving up our life and going to our cross.

We’re plainly told, in 1 Corinthians 5, that we’re forbidden to judge the people of the world, the wicked. The reason for that is because they don’t have any authority from God, no power from God, to be obedient in the first place. They are captive to their old nature. It would be like judging people who have no choice. What can a lost person in the world do that’s righteous? Nothing. Even their self-righteousness is just that. They can do nothing without their new spirit, a born-again spirit, to enable them to walk in obedience to God and, so, to judge them is very evil and very wrong. Once we realize that we should view these people with pity and see them as victims, then it’s much easier for us to turn the other cheek, resist not the evil and so on. **(1Co.5:9) I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators; (10) not at all [meaning] with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world: (11) but as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat.** So the Lord doesn’t permit us to judge the people of the world, but a brother who has power to obey because he has a born-again spirit, these people are to be judged. **(1Co.5:12) For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? (13) But them that are without God judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.**

Children of Wrath or Children of the Promise

I had a man tell me recently that he felt the Lord told him to separate himself from the members of his family who were lost and I pointed out to him this truth by saying, “No. They need a witness from you.” The Bible

doesn't say to separate from them. The Bible says to separate from the people who are called brothers who won't obey, who won't walk in holiness. The devil was trying to separate him and cause him to judge these people because they wouldn't listen to him. Well, who gives us the gift of listening? Who gives us ears to hear? That's a gift from God; faith is a gift from God. ***(Joh.6:44) No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him....*** With this gift of God we come. ***(37) All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*** So this is very plain.

There's another very good reason why we're not to judge the vessels of dishonor, the vessels of wrath. ***(Rom.9:6) But [it is] not as though the word of God hath come to nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: (7) neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise*** (that is, the children who believe in the promise, who stand on the promise) ***are reckoned for a seed.*** Paul even repeated this. ***(Gal.4:28) Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. (Rom.9:9) For this is a word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. (10) And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, [even] by our father Isaac.*** Notice, he calls him "our father Isaac" when he's speaking to the Romans because, of course, we are akin to these people through faith. We are sons of Abraham and sons of Isaac, too, through faith that is in Christ Jesus. ***(11) For [the children] being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth*** (neither one of these children had done anything good or bad, but through the purpose of God, through election, that is, the choosing), ***(Rom.9:12) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. (13) Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*** It's not according to works. What does he mean by that? It means that when we were all bound in sin and "***brought forth in iniquity***" (***Psa.51:5***), there was nothing that anybody could do to be approved of God. God had to make the first move and He did that by drawing us. ***(Joh.6:44) No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him.***

Creatures of Habit, a Captive Audience

We all walked in bondage to the devil once and there was no hope for us ever breaking free from that. It came from God, by grace, which is what Paul is about to tell us here: ***(Eph.2:2) [W]herein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience.*** The people of the world that are vessels of dishonor have never been given that gift of grace. Jesus said, ***“All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me” (Joh.6:37).*** When we try to witness to the vessels of dishonor, to the lost, some listen and some don't. He who is of God hears the words of God and he who is not given unto Jesus from the foundation of the world won't listen and they can't come.

They can't come because their very nature, their fallen nature, doesn't permit them to come. What use would it be for us to condemn them or be angry with them? They are just captive to their own nature; they do what they are. They act in agreement with what they are, with the sin nature that's been passed on down to them. They are just creatures of habit. ***(Eph. 2:3) [A]mong whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*** We're not going to go against our nature. God has to give us a new nature for us to have the ability to turn away from sin because sin is our very nature. To be angry, to be condemning or to be judging of the lost (who are quite often used to bring us to our cross) is a foolish thing to do because they don't have any power to be obedient.

We can't expect them to receive God like we received God, yet we judge them because they don't receive God's Word like we receive God's Word. That's very foolish because when a person says that, they don't really believe in grace. The reason that we believe God is because the Father drew us, He gave us a gift. He said, ***“Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit” (Joh. 15:16).*** And Ephesians says in the next verse, ***(2:4) but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), (6) and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly [places,] in Christ Jesus: (7) that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: (8) for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; (9) not of works, that no man should glory.***

No man can be good enough; no evil man can do good, righteous works. It's impossible; it's contrary to their nature. They just do what they are, so it's very foolish for us to judge them because God gave us a gift to be delivered from the same unrighteous, wicked nature. It's that we got a gift! They didn't get a gift. **(10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which, God afore prepared that we should walk in them.** Many times people get angry at their persecutors who are the people whom God has ordained to bring them to their cross. What they're saying is, "I deserve God's grace but they don't deserve God's grace. I'm not giving them the forgiveness and the grace of God."

Actually, they are to be pitied. I know it looks bad for the natural mind to read such things as, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated," but we have to be submissive to the Word of God. We have to respect the Word of God above our little, finite intelligence. We have to say, "God, You're right. You said it, so I believe it. I'm not going to let my mind be an idol over and above what You say. I'm going to accept what You say until You give me understanding of it." So if God said it, I believe it. We shouldn't give ourselves a right, as some men like to reason with us and cause us, to agree with human reasoning instead of God's Word.

There But for the Grace of God, Go I

Some people look at that verse and they say, "Well, God wouldn't be fair if He did that." **(Rom.9:14) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.** So this is really not unrighteous. But God says that it is righteous that He does this. You know, it does look unfair but the best way I felt that God explained this to me when I asked Him about it is this: Everyone gets justice but only a few get mercy and grace.

God does what's right. The wicked choose their wickedness. They're born into sin and they choose sin and they are guilty. They do get justice. We were of like nature with them, as Ephesians 2 says. We also could get justice because God wouldn't have had to give us mercy or grace but over and above His justice, He gave us mercy and grace.

Now, you and I got this gift of mercy and grace but the vessels of dishonor didn't receive this gift. Shouldn't we pity them? Shouldn't we have mercy upon them? Shouldn't we count them as victims? The Bible commands us not to judge them because they're doing what comes naturally to them; they are in bondage to Satan. The Bible says God **"worketh all things after the counsel of his will"** (Eph.1:11) and

“That to them that love God all things work together for good” (Rom.8:28) – for our good, including these children of Satan. Therefore, it’s God Almighty Who is using them, as we saw in Acts, chapters two and four. God used the people of Israel, the Romans and Pontius Pilate, to bring Jesus to His cross. The foreordained plan of God was brought to pass by God, using these vessels of dishonor. Jesus didn’t retaliate; Jesus didn’t rebuke them; Jesus wasn’t angry with them. Jesus was able to turn the other cheek because He wasn’t judging them and He knew that they could do no better than what they were. They could not rise above their own nature; no one does.

The only reason we rise above the old nature is because God, by His mercy and grace, gives us a new nature. If He didn’t do that, we would be right back there with the lost. So some understanding helps us to be able to resist not the evil. Many religious people judge the lost, the vessels of dishonor, not realizing that it’s only by mercy and grace that they have what they have.

Reaching Out to the Lost

As a matter of fact, we shouldn’t judge before we have understanding and nothing before the time. **(1Co.4:5) *Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God. (6) Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not [to go] beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other.*** Many religious people do become puffed up against one another. They become prideful and competitive.

The very nature of religion is sectarian and competitive. So, in this competition, people get puffed up. They get angry when people don’t agree with them, as if others should be able to see everything that they see. But what we see, if it is the truth, is a gift from God. Seeing and hearing is a gift of God. If someone else doesn’t see things the way we see things, they persecute us because we’re contrary to them. They don’t have the gift of God. Jesus said to His disciples, ***Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to the rest in parables; that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand (Luk.8:10).*** He’s talking about the leaders of Judaism but

it's still true for the leaders of Christianity. To them it's not given, in most cases, to know the mysteries of the Kingdom.

These people will persecute the saints, just as they did in Jesus' day. And yet, we're to turn the other cheek, resist not the evil and not judge them for their blindness. If anything, we are to pity them and we are to pray for them. We are the vessels through whom God brings His people out of this world, so we exercise faith for these people. We turn the other cheek. We make an opportunity for the conviction of God to come upon His people. As we don't judge them and as we turn the other cheek, we make an opportunity for the coals of fire to be heaped upon their head and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them. If we judge them, we'll never resist not the evil. Instead, we'll be angry, we'll be competitive, we'll be prideful. But notice what Paul says here: ***(1Co.4:7) For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*** We received everything – our understanding, our grace to walk with Him, our ability to walk holy – we received all that from God and we have nothing to brag about.

Many people say, “Well, I saw it; I believed it. What's the matter with you? Can't you be convinced?” Just remember, faith is a gift from God. Grace comes from faith. So if God's not giving someone faith so that they can apprehend grace (that is, His favor), then what can we do about it? God is not giving them this gift at this time. Should we be angry with them or should we go to the Father for them? We have to go to the Father for them. We're the ones who can exercise faith here. He put us here in order to be salt, preservative, to bring men into the Kingdom, to fulfill the Great Commission. We can't fulfill that if we judge these people, rather than understand that only God Himself can draw them unto Him. Only God Himself can give them repentance (2 Timothy 2:25). The Bible says, ***I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance (Luk. 5:32); Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (Rom.2:4); and, No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him (Joh.6:44)***

....

Therefore, we need to see these vessels of wrath around us, whom God uses to bring us to our cross and to persecute us, as people who cannot come to God without faith in the Gospel. We offer the Gospel and God either gives them faith or He doesn't. So when we begin to see people in this way and pity them, the spirit of competition and pride doesn't rise up between us. First of all, we don't think that we're somebody because we

chose Him. We didn't choose Him; He chose us and He appointed us that we would bear fruit. So that humbles us. What do we have that we didn't receive? Why would we glory? Why would we brag that we have something, that we believe something, when, if it really is a gift of God, it came through grace and not by our works, as we just read in Romans 9? It came because of election, because God chose. So, these people in the world who have not chosen God, why would we glory against them? Why would we think ourselves better than them in any way? Everything we have has been given to us by grace and we didn't deserve it.

Mercy, Not Judgment

We have to be totally humble. **(Rom.9:15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.** So, everybody doesn't get God's mercy, compassion or grace. "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." I want to tell you something: if we judge the lost as undeserving of God's grace, God can take grace away from us and He does do that. In other words, we have to offer them our forgiveness, our turning the other cheek, our resisting not – we have to give all these things to them because we don't deserve what we have. He can take His grace away from people who are proud and arrogant. **(Jas.4:6) ... God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.**

Understanding that we don't have anything that we deserve makes us humble. If we got what we deserved, we'd get justice. If we get justice, we're going to get what the Esaus of this world get and we're going to get what the world is going to get, which is justice. God gives justice but, over and above justice, He has given us grace. He is not wrong for giving the world justice; He is merciful for giving us grace. That's different.

So He says, "I'll have compassion on whom I will." **(Rom.9:16) So then it is not of him that willeth....** It's not the people who pick themselves up by their bootstraps because there's nobody who can do that. It's contrary to nature for a sinner to become a saint. It has to be something that God will do. It has to be a gift from Him. We can't judge anybody who doesn't get this gift. We should have mercy upon them; we should have faith for them. "So then it is not of him that willeth" because our will, when we were in bondage to Satan, was contrary to Him and there's no way we could conjure up a God-like will. It had to be God working in us **"both to will and to work, for His good pleasure" (Php.2:13).** And if He does that to anybody, they are going to obey God. To the very extent that we

do not submit to God in some things, it's because we haven't come to Him by faith, in order to have His grace, in order for Him to put His Will in us. That's what salvation is: God's will in us. **(Rom.9:16) So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise thee up, that I might show in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth.** If anybody could've possibly gotten mad at Pharaoh, it would've been the Jews, but that would have been foolish because God raised him up to be a vessel of dishonor, in order to bring them to their cross. He was using this man to perfect them, at the cost of his own life.

If anything, these people are not our enemies, when we see this from a heavenly perspective. They are necessary; they are needed by us in order for us to come to our cross and come into the Kingdom. **(18) So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. (19) Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he still find fault? For who withstandeth his will?** When God gives us the grace to will and to serve Him, it is that gift of grace. But when He doesn't give it to someone else and they are still in bondage under the curse, under the law of sin and death and they have no hope but to serve the flesh and Satan, we should have mercy on them and turn the other cheek. They need every bit of grace that we can give them; they need a demonstration of Christ-likeness in this. **(20) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus? (21) Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?** Yes, God has the right and we can't say God is wrong because He gives mercy to some.

How could you prove it was mercy if He gave it to all? There has to be something with which to compare it. How do you demonstrate to the heirs of the promise the difference between good and evil? And how do you give them a choice between good and evil, unless there's good and evil on the earth? Men demonstrated not only evil, but the just deserts of evil. God uses them as a demonstration to us. **(22) What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction** (in other words, "made to be destroyed")? He endures with longsuffering and, of course, we must also endure with longsuffering these people because we can't judge them. We'd be speaking against our own grace if we judge them. **(Rom.9:23) [A]nd that he might make known the riches of his**

glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, (24) [even] us, whom he also called.... Notice again, “which He afore prepared unto glory.” He called us from the foundation of the world and He chose us to be in Christ at this time. “***He that endureth to the end***” (***Mat.10:22***) is also going to be chosen. Obviously, they will be proven to be God’s chosen. (***Mat.22:14***) ***For many are called, but few chosen.***

Grace, Not Condemnation

All of this helps us to understand that we need to be merciful and turn the other cheek with these people. Their only opportunity, by the way, to come into the Kingdom, is here and now, and if we don’t demonstrate Christ-likeness to them, it won’t convict those whom He has chosen to come out from among them. We were all used as vessels of wrath, vessels of dishonor, at one time. The fact that we weren’t chosen to be that has nothing to do with it; we were still all used in that way. So there are some people who, to the eye, appear to be vessels of dishonor, but some of those people have been chosen from the foundation of the world. We, like Jesus, forgive them, love them, pray for them and we offer the Gospel to them. In these ways, we’re able to put up with them, if we understand the nature of the situation.

If we have this Arminian idea that they are just evil because they don’t choose God and we can condemn them as evil because they don’t choose God while we did, then that’s all wrong. That’s error and that doesn’t permit us to relate to them in the way that the Lord Jesus would have us relate to them.

Thicker Than Water

I remember a sister who fellowshiped with us for many years, through whom the Lord taught me quite a lot. She had adopted three children from birth, all from the same mother, although she didn’t know who the mother was. Social Services would not allow her to discover this. We were close with her and the children and we watched her raise those kids the best she could with the Word of God. She put the Word in their heart and took them to church; she fellowshiped with them and taught them the truth. But the strange thing was, as each of these children passed through puberty, they

all started manifesting the same sinful nature – the exact same lusts, as a matter of fact.

This was very puzzling because the sister knew she hadn't raised them with this and she hadn't put this in them. She was just shocked and, of course, we prayed for them. Eventually, they all came to the Lord, but they all had to wrestle with this fallen nature that was given to them from their biological parents. This sister raised them from babies but when she finally found out who the biological mother was (she told me how she found out, but I'm not allowed to say), she went to see the woman and found out that this woman was living in the exact same lusts as her children were. They had received their nature through their biological mother and they were wrestling with the same demons that she was. She wasn't saved, obviously, and so she was living in the same lusts.

You know, we're all wrestling with that. Without the grace of God, we have no choice. These children were raised in a Christian home but as soon as they passed through puberty, they began to manifest these lusts and it didn't come from their upbringing. It came through the blood; it was passed on to them. Everybody out there is like that; we're like that. We're wrestling with who our parents were. We can overcome it because we've been given a spirit to be able to overcome it – the Spirit of God. We've been given faith and we've been granted repentance, so we can overcome it. But “the vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction” can't overcome it; they are what they are.

So I learned something from that. There are people who argue that we're products of our environment and there are people who argue that we're products of the nature that's been passed on by our parents. To some extent, both are true. But, even though these children were brought into a good environment, they could not escape what had been passed on to them from their parents, except through grace. No one around us who is in bondage to sin can escape that, without grace and a gift of faith from God.

Then what would you say to someone who can't help himself? They're sinners because they can't help themselves. They are in bondage to their lusts. What would you say? Would you judge him? Would you be unforgiving to him or would you offer him the same grace that has been offered to you? If we don't understand these things, we're tempted to retaliate, to not turn the other cheek, to not love, to be angry. Our emotions, because of our false understanding, will overwhelm us and we won't be able to go to our cross, as the Lord ordained. So these people are not actually our enemies at all.

CHAPTER SIX

Rebellion in the Midst

In review, we've learned that Jesus has given us all these commands in the New Testament that people love to ignore. He taught us such things as, ***“Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also (Mat.5:39); “Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you” (44); “Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord” (Rom.12:19).*** He didn't give us the right to return evil for evil; rather, to ***“overcome evil with good” (21).***

So we have a choice. We can either obey or not. If we obey the commands of Jesus, we will die. If we don't obey, we will die, too. We want the first death, though. We want to die to self. If we obey His commands, we are put in a position of weakness, a crucifying state, as we've been studying. But if we don't obey, what I'm going to show here is that we're going to die a wrong kind of death.

We read in Matthew something that is pretty important, especially in this day in which we find ourselves. The text from verses 47 through 53 is the time when Judas is delivering up Jesus to be crucified. Judas was bringing the people with him to take Jesus in the Garden, when Peter took out his sword and cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant. Of course, Jesus 'put' it back on; you remember the story. ***(Mat.26:52) Then saith Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. (53) Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? (54) How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?*** Jesus knew He had come to die and, yet, He really didn't have to.

Aren't we in this same position? We have to make the decision ourselves to give up our life. Jesus certainly didn't need 12 legions of angels; just one angel killed 185,000 men in the Old Testament. There's no power in all creation that could resist 12 legions of angels when the Holy Spirit is behind them.

The Sword of Transgression

But people come back with, “Well, David, that part about taking the sword and perishing – Jesus is the One Who told them to take the sword!” You know, it’s strange that people will look point blank at a verse like this: “Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,” and they will deny it for another verse. They don’t understand that we call ourselves Christians because we believe all of the Bible. They would rather pick and choose.

They will pick something that permits them to continue in whatever they want to do. The verse that they like to choose is in Luke 22. Let’s see how that fits with Matthew 26: ***(Luk.22:35) And he said unto them, When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing.*** We see immediately that Jesus is talking about the fact that, in their weakness, their provision is still sure and that in their inability to save themselves, to provide for themselves, God was going to do it. We can see that very clearly in this verse. He sent them out that way on purpose, so that they would learn to depend upon God as their Savior, Provider, Healer, Deliverer, and so on. He wanted His disciples to be people of faith; He wanted His ministers to be ministers of faith.

If a person is not a minister of faith, they’re not qualified. Frankly, that disqualifies an awful lot of people. ***(36) And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that hath none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword.*** This is totally the opposite of everything He has taught all through the Gospels. Why did He say this? Well, let’s read on: ***(37) For I say unto you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors....*** Who is the transgressor here? Let’s go back because He taught this total dependence upon Him all through the Gospels and here He tells them just the opposite. The people with the swords are the transgressors! The people who provide their own way are the transgressors; the people who depend upon their own supply are the transgressors. It’s very clear there had to be a fulfillment. We see in

Matthew 26:51 that Peter cut off the High Priest's servant's ear and Jesus restored it, rebuking the person who wielded the sword. **(Mat.26:52) Then saith Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.** Why? He was a transgressor! Jesus rebuked him.

So now why would somebody use this Luke 22 verse to justify themselves, so that they can take the sword, the wallet, etc.? Because they want to do what they want to do. However, a person who is trying to fit all these verses together, line upon line, here a little and there a little, can now come to an understanding that's truthful.

Breaking the Covenant

I want to tell you something else very important about this text: **(47) And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.** Now what time was it when Judas brought these people against Jesus? It was at the end of His 3½-year ministry. That means something because throughout the Scriptures, at the end of the 3½ years, we see this rebuke. Why? Because there is going to be an uprising on this earth after the first 3½ years of the Tribulation – a rebellion of God's people taking the sword.

I want to remind you that the Lord told me years ago, and I have shared it in some of these teachings, that everything that happened in the Gospels and the Book of Acts is going to happen again, except the cast of characters is going to be multiplied many times over. Obviously, as time goes by, there are more and more people on the earth and history is going to repeat. **(Ecc. 1:9) That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.** Once again, these things are going to happen.

The 3½ years of Jesus' ministry will repeat as the 3½ years of the Man-child's ministry in Revelation 12. At the end of Jesus' 3½ years, the body of Christ was crucified and there will be a "crucifixion" of the corporate body of Christ at the end of the first 3½ years of the seven-year Tribulation period, at the time of the mark of the Beast. People will either choose the

mark or, in some cases, die because they will not choose to take the mark. So once again, we are coming to the same period of time and a rebellion is going to happen.

A lot of self-willed Christians, like in that verse in Luke 22, don't believe that they need to go to any cross. Let me show you something from Revelation 13. We know that in Revelation 12, the Woman (the Church) is nourished for 1260 days (3½ years). That's the first 3½ years; and what happens at that point? The Beast makes war on the saints, exactly according to type. In Revelation 13, we see the Beast in verse five. He's given to continue for 42 months, which is 3½ more years, so at that point we're at the end of the first 3½ years. That's where the mark of the Beast is introduced. And what is the Beast doing then? In Revelation 13:7, he is making war on the saints because the saints, which means "sanctified ones," refuse to take the mark of the Beast.

What are they tempted to do at that time? ***(Rev.13:9) If any man hath an ear, let him hear. (10) If any man [is] for captivity, into captivity he goeth....*** Obviously, the great temptation for people is not to go into captivity, but to defend themselves and fight against the Beast with all the weapons they can handle, having a war in the flesh. But we know the Bible says that we don't wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and rulers of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). We're forbidden to wrestle with flesh and blood. These people who rebel will be breaking their covenant with God. They are disobeying their Lord, Who said, ***And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luk. 6:46). (Rev.13:10) If any man [is] for captivity, into captivity he goeth.*** That's God's decision. If you are going to go into captivity, don't think you are going to keep yourself out by force of arms; it's not going to happen. ***(10) [I]f any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed....*** Now that's really plain. This is one of God's promises: if you will try to defend yourself with the sword, you'll have to be killed by the sword. ***(10) ... Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.***

Why is this warning coming once again after the 3½ years? Because it's a type and shadow of what is about to happen in this world. There's going to be an uprising. Many ignorant Christians who don't know, or don't want

to believe Jesus' commands, are going to rebel against their own covenant. They are going to break their covenant. We see that in the warning in Matthew 26 the timing of it is the same.

American Rebellion

I want to point out something else the Lord showed me years ago about a civil war that has to do with Ezekiel 17. Since I was about a year old in the Lord, I've been receiving gifts called the "word of knowledge" and the "word of wisdom." I was reading this chapter one day and the Lord opened it up to me, to show me that this was a parable concerning something that is going to happen in America. Let me share that with you because it's an exhortation about just exactly what we've been talking about here.

I'm not going to take a lot of time in this but I do want to point out some things to you. First of all, the story starts out with a parable and then God interprets the parable. In the parable, the people of God were conquered and brought under the authority of "**A great eagle with great wings**" (**Eze.17:3**). As you know, Israel was conquered by Babylon, whose national symbol was the great eagle. By the way, Babylon was also the head of the great image of the beast in Daniel's vision, which included all nations. The great eagle today that is the head of all nations is the United States. Without the understanding that the United States is a Babylon, we miss out on an awful lot of revelation in the Scriptures.

So the people of God were conquered, brought into submission to this great eagle, but then the people of God rebelled and turned to another great eagle. **(7) There was also another great eagle with great wings....** Notice that the description is the same. That's very interesting. How many great eagles with great wings do we have on this earth? We know that America is obviously the great eagle with great wings. As we read the rest of this story and the interpretation, it becomes very interesting, especially when God starts opening our understanding. **(Eze.17:11) Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.** They were under the dominion of Babylon in the first place because they rebelled and God brought them to their cross. (Remember, the Roman Beast crucified Jesus because He took upon Himself our rebellion and our sin.) So here, the

people of God were brought under the dominion of the great eagle. **(12) Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem** (the people of God).... The Bible says everything that happened to the Jews is for a figure. **(1Co.10:11) Now these things happened unto them by way of example** (a type or figure); **and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.** Yes, it means that they are a type and a shadow of the church.

Now we see that the king of Babylon, the great eagle, was taking captive the church. **(Eze.17:12) ... Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took the king thereof, and the princes thereof** (that's the leadership of the church, through the type and the shadow here) **and brought them to him to Babylon.** Many people think New York City is Babylon and they're right because New York City is a Babylon. As a matter of fact, in the parable itself, it says that he carried these people to **"a land of traffic" (17:4)** and **"a city of merchants" (4)**, which pretty much describes New York City. They are going to take them to the United Nations Building in New York City. In fact, they are gathering the leaders of all the religions there and they are going to use them to rule over the religions of the world, in an attempt to bring peace between them. I don't want to get too far into that but I did want to mention it. This is going to happen and they are going to gather the leaders of Christianity, too.

Of course, those leaders are going to regard it as a high honor to be gathered there as the leaders of all Christianity but it's not an honor before God. These are a bunch of reprobates; these are apostates who are being gathered because they have led a rebellious house. They're going to be called up to the U.N., just like Constantine gathered together the leaders of all the religions and made a universal religion, a one-world religion. This is what's going to happen again, on a larger scale. Remember that history will repeat, only with more people on a worldwide scale. Babylon was not only a city, it was a nation. The United States is the same way. It's a Babylon and it has a city that headquarters the U.N. Building.

When I read verse 13, the Lord spoke to me. **(Eze.17:13) And he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant....** When I got to that part, the Lord said, "I want you to count how many verses you go through before

you stop seeing the word ‘covenant.’” So I counted seven verses. God told me, “That’s talking about a covenant of seven years.” And then He told me to count how many times the word “covenant” was in those seven verses. I did and it was six times because six is the number of the covenant (666). So basically, what we are going to read here in verses 13 through 19 is a seven-year covenant and, as we do, I’ll tell you another question the Lord asked me (I think He asked me three or four questions). He asked, “Now when was the covenant broken?” And guess what? It was broken after 3½ verses, exactly where the Bible says the covenant is going to be broken, **“in the midst of the week” (Dan.9:27). (Eze.17:13) And he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him....** The covenant is going to be made not just with the natural Jews, but with all the religions of the world and, yes, the Christians are going to be a part of this covenant. That’s okay.

But they’re going to appoint leaders over us to make this covenant for us. **(13) ... [H]e also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty of the land** (These are the great people of Christianity. That doesn’t say much, does it?); **(14) that the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping his covenant it might stand. (15) But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt....** Now this was the second “great eagle with great wings” in verse seven. “He rebelled” is talking about the leader of God’s people, who rebelled against the covenant that was made with Babylon, which is the head of the Beast. **(15) But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? shall he break the covenant, and yet escape?** There’s the word “covenant” the third time and God is asking this question because God commanded them, through the prophets, to submit to Babylon, to submit to the Beast.

I’m not talking about taking the mark. The mark is coming because there is going to be a rebellion of God’s people breaking the covenant. The covenant is not dangerous; the mark of the Beast is dangerous. Now let’s continue. **(16) As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he**

despised, and whose covenant he brake (There it is right there! This time he broke the covenant. And where is it broken? At 3½ verses – 3½ years.), **even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.** The people who break the covenant with Babylon are going to die. **(Eze.17:17) Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company help him in the war, when they cast up mounds and build forts, to cut off many persons. (18) For he hath despised the oath by breaking the covenant...** Everyone thinks the Beast is going to be the one who breaks the covenant but it's not. The religious people are going to break the covenant. The Beast is going to do something to try to identify these people, by using the mark. **(18) ... [A]nd behold, he had given his hand, and yet hath done all these things** (He gave his word, he took an oath and he made a covenant.); **he shall not escape. (19) Therefore thus saith the Lord God: As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, I will even bring it upon his own head.** The prevalent teaching is that this was the Beast's covenant but, as we see, God told them to submit to Babylon (I'm going to show that in the following paragraphs) and they rebelled.

Romans 13 tells us to obey the governments but here the people are rebelling. Instead of obeying, they went to Egypt. This is talking about a civil war in the midst of the great eagle with great wings. There's only one great eagle with great wings but in this text there are two because they went to Egypt (another nation with an eagle symbol) to defend themselves (historically speaking). The people of God went to Egypt and made a covenant with Egypt to defend themselves against the great eagle with great wings, Babylon. If you have a great eagle with great wings fighting against a great eagle with great wings (which is what happened), you have a civil war.

So what does Egypt represent? It represents trusting in the arm of the flesh. We find this passage in Isaiah 30:1: **Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that make a league, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin, (2) that set out to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt!** As we saw in

the beginning, keeping the Lord's covenant is a matter of depending upon His strength. That's why Jesus sent His disciples out in weakness. He wanted them to rely on His strength, not by the sword of the flesh, but the sword of the Spirit. Now God's people are rebelling; they're turning to the sword of the flesh, to fight with Babylon or, in this day, with the United States. We're told in Jeremiah 17:5: ... ***Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.*** When we trust in the arm of the flesh, we trust in the ways of man; when we trust in defending ourselves with a weapon rather than leaning only upon the sword of the Spirit; we're departing from the Lord.

Trusting in the Arm of the Flesh

Egypt did not help the people of God. ***(Isa.30:7) For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still.*** As a matter of fact, Babylon went down there and conquered Egypt, too. What we're seeing here is that this is referring to a civil war between the people of God, who turned to those who depend upon the sword to conquer the king of Babylon, the great eagle against the great eagle. There is going to be a civil war about the time of the middle of the Tribulation Period in America; and the people of God, who refuse the mark of the Beast, who refuse the dominion of the Beast, who refuse the loss of their country and so on, are going to be involved. But you see, the people of God are rebellious. Didn't He repeatedly call them "a rebellious house"?

They will not submit to their cross; they will not cease from wielding their own sword. ***(9) For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord; (10) that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits, (11) get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us. (12) Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely thereon; (13) therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall,***

swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in an instant. (14) And he shall break it as a potter's vessel is broken, breaking it in pieces without sparing; so that there shall not be found among the pieces thereof a sherd wherewith to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern. (15) For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. They were running down to Egypt for help; they wanted the strength of man. They wanted to defend themselves with the sword and to fight with the king of Babylon. God had told them to submit, but they didn't. He says, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. In other words, our strength is trusting in the Lord – confidence in Him, not in the arm of the flesh, not in the sword of men, but the sword of the Spirit. **And ye would not: (Isa.30:16) but ye said, No, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. In other words, “You are going to be conquered.” Reading the rest of Ezekiel 17, we see what happens to those who break His covenant.**

The last place where “covenant” is mentioned in Ezekiel 17 is here: **(19) ... My covenant that he hath broken....** But why, but how, are they breaking His covenant? Because His covenant commands us to resist not him that's evil. His covenant commands us, in Romans 13, to submit to the governments. His covenant commands us to love our enemies, to turn the other cheek and to overcome evil with good. Here we see total rebellion against God's covenant. How many people do you know who already believe in this rebellion? The overwhelming majority of Christianity believes in this. They don't believe at all in the non-resistance doctrine that Jesus speaks about and they are primed for this rebellion. The Christians are going to be the biggest part of this “Egyptian” rebellion. God told His people to never go back to Egypt, never to go buy horses out of Egypt. He made them ride donkeys because He didn't want them to stand in their own strength, to trust in the strength of Egypt, the flesh.

He wanted them to trust in His strength through their weakness. Whenever they were weak, God was powerful, but when they were strong,

they lost. So once again, He's bringing us to a place of weakness, a place of the cross. **(21) And all his fugitives in all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward every wind: and ye shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it.** And, by the way, God replaces the leadership which was taken captive to Babylon with another leadership here, from verse 22 on down. God says the new leadership which He's raising up – the Man-child, the witnesses and so on, was going to bear fruit.

Whose Side Are You On?

Read what God says about the people who are going to rebel against the king of Babylon, the head of the Beast: **(Jer.27:6) And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant....** Yes, that's right. The Beast is God's servant to bring His people into submission, to bring them to their cross. Every time they rebelled, God raised up a beast: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome – and now a worldwide, revived Rome, a Babylonish nation – to conquer His people again. Every one of these beasts was a type and shadow of the last Beast because they're all included in it as the seven heads. The seed of all previous beasts is in the last Beast, the worldwide Beast, raised up to bring God's worldwide people to their cross. So He says here, "my servant; and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve him." We're talking about the beast kingdoms of Daniel, the nations of men who are the beasts that lined up underneath the head, which was Babylon.

Right now, the beasts of the field are serving Babylon, so don't think it can't happen. We know who Babylon is because we can see who is serving whom here: **(Jer.27:7) And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his own land come....** That's right and we know that after 70 years, the Harlot was destroyed by the Beast, and exactly so, after seven years in the Book of Revelation. "Seven" and "seventy" are equivalent there. That's an abbreviation. In Revelation, after seven years the Beast devoured the Harlot and burned her with fire. Well, that's talking about Babylon and it is in Revelation 17:2 that Babylon is called "Mystery Babylon." At the end of 70 years, God is going to

reckon, to settle up, with Babylon. **(7) And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his own land come: and then many nations and great kings shall make him their bondman. (8) And it shall come to pass, that the nation and the kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. (9) But as for you, hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to your sorcerers, that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon.** Multitudes of people are going to say this, including the leaders of the denominations. They're not going to serve these people when they start putting together their New World Order and coming up with their mark of the Beast and so on.

We don't have to fight them. We don't have to take the mark but we don't have to take the sword, either. We can refuse the mark, even if we go to our cross, or if we flee, or if God hides us. But we don't have to fight them because God is warning us here, you see, about these people who are saying, **Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: (10) for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land, and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish. (11) But the nation that shall bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, that [nation] will I let remain in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.** So submit. We don't have to take the mark of the Beast; just submit. Don't fight; don't war; don't go down to Egypt for strength to fight against Babylon. **(Jer.27:12) And I spake to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. (13) Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence...?** The Lord is saying this to the Christians, the apostate Christians in our day, leading up to the

time of the middle of the Tribulation, when the government is going to be broken.

He's saying to them, "Why will you die?" Because there are a lot of people who are not really Christian – they don't walk as Jesus walked, they don't turn the other cheek and they don't go to their cross, willingly. They would rather fight; they would rather kill others – they would rather kill the very people to whom they are supposed to be witnessing. They don't believe in overcoming evil with good. They believe in warring with their enemies, just like multitudes of so-called Christians are behind this government to war and fight and kill thousands of people to whom we're supposed to be bringing the Gospel.

Whose side are you on? There has to be some repentance among God's people here. We're not here to bring the sword or to kill people; we're here to bring them into the Kingdom. I don't care who they are – we're not a respecter of persons. It doesn't matter what nation they're in; it doesn't matter what race they are; it doesn't matter to what false religion they are in bondage. We're here to bring the Gospel! That's the command of our Lord and He gives us warning here: ***(15) For I have not sent them, saith the Lord, but they prophesy falsely in my name; that I may drive you out, and that ye may perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.*** Yes, God is going to cleanse Christianity of the rebels who are not keeping His covenant in these coming days. Multitudes of people are going to be killed because they are going to fight against the government and against the Beast. God didn't call us to do that. That's not the demand of our covenant.

What did He say? "They despised My covenant and broke it." (Ezekiel 17:16) Our covenant is written in stone, if you will, in the New Testament. If we're not obeying Him, remember that He asked, ***And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luk.6:46)*** If He's not our Lord, He's not our Savior. We have to bear the fruit of Jesus Christ, 30-, 60 – and 100-fold; and Revelation 13 is very clear: if you take the sword, He promises you will die by the sword. What time is it that He promises this? Does this pertain to all the ages past? No, the time He is promising this, the time that He's speaking of is right at the end of the first 3½ years of the Tribulation. We know that because Jesus came as the Man-

child in the beginning of those first 3½ years and He spoke this Gospel. What did He command in the Sermon on the Mount? Resist not him that's evil. That's at the beginning of His ministry. If any man slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other. If he takes away your goods, ask them not again. Love your enemies. Forgive so that you'll be forgiven. That's what He preached there.

You can't forgive somebody and shoot and kill them at the same time, can you? That's not forgiving or loving, is it? See, we're a peculiar people. The problem is, God's people don't know what kingdom they belong to. They think that God's Kingdom is a natural nation like Israel was in the Old Testament. But they were just a parable pointing to a spiritual nation in the New Covenant. God's people are mixed up concerning what their Kingdom really looks like, what their Kingdom is all about. They're confused. They think that America is God's Kingdom and that we should fight for America and kill our enemies; but, you see, Jesus forbade that. What covenant are you in? Do you not believe in obeying what Jesus commanded in our Covenant? Why do you call yourself a Christian if you submit to your religion but you don't submit to your Lord? That's what Babylon is. We have to repent; we have to turn back to the Word of God.

When Jesus came, He taught this non-resistance all the way through His ministry to His disciples. He gave them a right to flee but He never gave them a right to fight. He said, ***I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves (Luk.10:3)***. No fighting; no killing. The very people you are killing, you are sending into eternal damnation. If you die, you go into eternal life. Is it better to die or is it better to kill? If you kill, you're a murderer; if you die, you go into eternal life. Is it better for them to kill you or for you to kill them? Obviously, we're not supposed to take up the sword.

Hated for His Name's Sake

Here's a similar verse: ***(Mat.10:16) Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*** We'll never see a dove whoopin' up on somebody or packing a sword, either. ***(17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to councils*** (This is the time He's telling us to be

harmless as doves – when these people are trying to turn us over to death.), **and in their synagogues they will scourge you; (18) yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles** (to the lost, the heathen). **(Mat.10:19) But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. (20) For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. (21) And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. (22) And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.** We're going to be hated of all men. The whole world is going to turn against Christianity, though not without reason, I might add. They've been saying that Christians are terrorists, which is really kind of crazy when you compare them with the real terrorists out there. But is it really going to happen? Yes, it is going to happen. Christians are going to take up the sword and they are going to fight – and they are going to represent anybody but Jesus Christ, to save their life.

Jesus said, **Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose [his life] shall preserve it (Luk.17:33).** The word “life” there is the word *psuchē*, not the word for the physical body. *Psuchē* is the soul – our nature, mind, will and emotions. It's also the word sometimes used for “self.” If we don't lose that old selfish soul life, we won't gain the new life. We are here to go to our cross. Jesus physically went to a cross but He was a parable of a fulfillment that's coming for the whole body of Christ going to their spiritual cross, losing their self-life. We're going to be hated of all men for His Name's sake, so that His Name will be manifested in us. For some reason, when God's people are persecuted, they grow up in God because they turn to Him. They are very careful not to offend Him, careful to not disobey His Word because they want Him on their side; they want His defense; they want His favor.

When they have an enemy, that's when God's people throughout history have drawn close to Him, in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1). That's when God's people

are going to finally decide to give up on their false teachers and get back into the Word and start obeying Him. I'm talking about the real people of God, the elect of God, not the many that are called, but not chosen. **(Mat. 10:23) But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next** (not gather more arms): **for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.** Wow! It's almost as if He's talking to us in our day.

Fighting Is Rebellion Against God

I also like this verse: **(Joh.18:36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews....** Jesus had one servant, impulsive Peter, who fought, but He was pointing out here that His Kingdom is not of this world. If His Kingdom were of this world, Peter would have been in the right. If Peter was defending a natural nation, that's the way he would have done it but we can't defend the Kingdom of God that way. It's spiritual. It's not in any danger in the first place.

People who are defending worldly nations, full of wicked people who don't know God, go out and kill for the world, defending a nation that doesn't know God and is anti-Christ. They're going to find out that their nation is antichrist because they're going to be persecuted of all nations, saints – all nations, very, very soon. That nation that you defended, that you killed people for – maybe you who were in the military – you thought you were defending something that was good. All nations believe that but God calls them all together “the Beast.” None is good but God. **(Luk. 18:19) ... Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, [even] God.**

What we have to do is find out what His Kingdom is because in His Kingdom, God's people don't fight, even to save Jesus Christ Himself. Notice that verse: **(Joh.18:36) ... My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.** It's not of this world. God has a Kingdom

here that cannot be defended by the sword. If we're defending or fighting anything by the sword, we are fighting for a kingdom that is not His Kingdom and it's rebellion because we are departing from our covenant and making an allegiance with man.

The Best Defense Is Lack of Offense

Here's more of what the Bible says about defending man, fighting with man: ***(Jas.4:1) Whence [come] wars and whence [come] fightings among you? [come they] not hence, [even] of your pleasures that war in your members? (2) Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. (3) Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend [it] in your pleasures. (4) Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God.*** So if we war, if we go out there and we fight for the nations of this world against other nations of this world, all of them belonging to the devil, we make ourselves an enemy of God. We're not fighting for His Kingdom at all. We're fighting for a worldly kingdom. We're identifying ourselves as members of the body of the Beast.

Some may say, "David, if we didn't defend this nation, who would defend it?" The answer is lots and lots of people who don't believe the Word of God would. They would defend it. Lots of Christians who don't believe the Word of God and don't submit to their covenant, they would defend it. Don't worry about that. But unless God defends it, it can't be defended; and unless we're on God's side, it can't be defended. ***(Pro.16:7) When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*** Our best defense is to be pleasing to the Lord. God is raising up a beast kingdom because the ways of God's people are not pleasing unto Him. So if we repent, that's the best defense we can have. Repent and serve the Lord.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Kingdom Warfare

We're discovering that when we submit to the Word of God, we die to our old self. We've learned that Jesus' teachings concerning this non-resistance, submission to governments, loving your enemy, turning the other cheek and so on, are very crucifying, but they're commanded of the Lord and, as we obey Him, He is going to come to be manifested in us. I'd like to continue with this a little further, in the Book of John.

One of the biggest problems I've seen is that God's people have a problem discovering where the kingdom of the world stops and the kingdom of heaven starts. We really need to delineate that very explicitly with the Word of God. ***(Joh.18:36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*** In the Old Covenant the Jews had a natural kingdom, a physical kingdom. In the New Covenant it's obviously not that way – it's a spiritual kingdom, as we're going to see as we read on. Theirs was a very worldly kingdom. They were wrestling with flesh and blood but our battle is with the principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:12).

Jesus said that His servants wouldn't fight, even to deliver Him from death, or from the Jews, or from the Beast kingdom, which was the Roman Empire at that time. His servants wouldn't fight because they were defending a different kind of kingdom and they were using a different kind of sword. We also learned the principle that Jesus went to His cross, physically, as a type and a shadow of us going to our cross, spiritually. ***(Mat.16:24) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.*** Except we take up our cross and follow Him, except we lose our life, we cannot enter the kingdom of God. The word "life" there is *psuchē*, not the physical life, but our soulish life. So, in order to walk in His steps,

we follow Jesus' physical crucifixion by going to our spiritual crucifixion of self.

Part of that is submitting to His Word, even when it disagrees with our worldly desires. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." But since His Kingdom is not a worldly kingdom at all, His servants do not fight, even to defend Him or to defend themselves. However, we do have One Who fights for us, don't we? In fact, His power is far greater than anything we could wield. As we saw in the last chapter, Jesus told His disciples, "Don't you know, I could call 12 legions of angels if I wanted help? You don't have to bring out that puny sword." 12 legions of angels! A Roman legion was between 4500 and 6000 men. And we also have angels. If we depend on God, His power is made perfect in our weakness. If we want to see the power of God to defend us, then we have got to quit trying to defend ourselves.

One Born-Again Nation – All Israel

What kind of kingdom is Jesus talking about? Peter says, "***But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation***" (1Pe.2:9). He is speaking here to those who are born again; it says He "***begat us again***" (3). Those who are born again belong to this holy nation – "holy" meaning separate, sanctified, separated from the world. All of God's born-again people are one holy nation that covers the globe and we know He's no respecter of persons. (9) ***But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for [God's] own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*** He said that they're "a royal priesthood." We know that this is spiritual and not physical because of this verse: (5) ***Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*** We're spiritual priests; we offer up spiritual sacrifices to the Lord. As a chosen generation, we are a spiritual Kingdom, not a physical kingdom, whatsoever.

The Lord has told us in the New Testament that He is not a respecter of persons. Whether He's talking about Jews or Gentiles, He uses that phrase.

When He's talking about servants and masters He uses it, as well. He's not a respecter of persons because He judges them alike. Read what Peter said to the Gentiles: **(Act.10:34) And Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (35) but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.** Out of all nations, God has made one nation of those who are born again. By the way, this nation is still called Israel. As we see in Romans 11, those who walk by faith have been grafted into that olive tree that's called "all Israel." Read it.

We are now Jews according to the Spirit. We are now priests who offer spiritual sacrifices, the most important of which is that we offer up our bodies as living sacrifices. That means we offer this body up to serve the Lord and not to serve ourselves. In this manner, our reason rails against the fact that the Lord does not permit us to go along with the world by warring with one another, or defending ourselves with weapons, or anything like that. He has told us to submit to the governments and authorities around us which, in some cases, does not sit well with our reason, especially when they're so contrary to the ways of the Kingdom. But He says it and we do it because we've decided that He knows more than we do. **(Jas.2:1) My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with respect of persons. (9) [But if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.** The Bible also warns us: **(2Co.5:16) Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh...**

It doesn't matter what nation a Christian comes from – they are our brethren. As a matter of fact, they are our brethren but the natural people around us who don't know God are not. Many times Christians make alliances and allegiances with the wicked people around them, the antichrist people around them. But that's not our Kingdom. We're to "know no man after the flesh." We know no one by skin color, nationality or tongue. We're all one in Christ Jesus, Galatians tells us. There are no physical attributes that God accepts. He only wants born-again people.

Kingdom Warfare
Invisible Kingdom

The Lord says that His Kingdom is quite different than the physical kingdom. ***(Luk.17:20) And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.*** Now what were they expecting? They were expecting a physical kingdom. Many Christians really think this is a kingdom today, a kingdom of some religious organization of people on earth. There's nothing that we can see that is the Kingdom of God – not our church building, not our preacher; everything we're looking at is not the Kingdom of God. It is the born-again man that is the Kingdom of God. ***(21) [N]either shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.***

That's what the Numeric version says but it's a strange thing that the phrase "within you" can also be translated "in the midst of you." As a matter of fact, in the footnote, the Numeric version says that either one of these translations has a numeric pattern because it means both of those things. It means "in the midst of you," as in "among the disciples, between the disciples"; and it also means "within you" is the Kingdom of God. ***"Flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" (1Co.15:50).*** That's why I said, "No, not your pastor," because the man you're looking at there is not going to inherit the Kingdom. It's the spiritual man on the inside. He's even going to get a new body to inherit the Kingdom, if he's born again, serving the Lord and bearing fruit. So there's nothing physical; it is the spiritual that counts and in the spiritual Kingdom of God, we fight with the spiritual methods.

We have powerful weapons that the world knows nothing about and that it cannot resist. ***(2Co.10:3) For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (4) (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds).*** Their weapons are useless against the weapons of our warfare, which are not fleshly or carnal.

Strangers in a Strange Land

Many people fear that if they give up their right to defend themselves or their country, God can't take care of them. Well, as we saw, 12 legions of angels are at His disposal. If He just sends one to be by your side (and we know from the Scriptures that you have at least one), that one could kill 185,000 men, so that angel can certainly take care of you. The more we learn to put our faith in Him, the more we see that our puny weapons are worthless and that we shouldn't make any allegiances with nations that are not our nation.

Many people lean upon patriotism to a natural nation, which is not God's Kingdom and not of God's Kingdom and is a very dangerous and foolish thing to do. In fact, it says we're all just strangers passing through. ***(Heb.11:13) These all died in faith, not having received the promises*** (those are the New Testament promises), ***but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*** This earth is passing away but our Kingdom is eternal. We are not to pledge our allegiance to this world. ***(14) For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own.*** Meaning, of course, that if we're just strangers and pilgrims, that this is not our country. We're seeking after one that is our own. ***(15) And if indeed they had been mindful of that [country] from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.*** Do you know that many people do return to bondage, to allegiances to nations that are not their nation? We belong to one nation; it's a worldwide, spiritual nation, but it's a real nation and we are spiritual priests at that spiritual house with spiritual sacrifices. ***(16) But now they desire a better [country], that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.***

God is not ashamed of those who don't claim that this world is their home or that this nation is their nation, but who claim citizenship of the nation which is spiritual, whose spiritual city, the New Jerusalem, is their capital. For the rest, who are members of the world, who have united themselves with the world, it's a different story. I know that God's grace

covers our ignorance. Thank God for that. We're very ignorant, but God, by His mercy and by His grace, forgives us and that's great, but when we get knowledge and understanding, we have to do something with it. This relates to what we're talking about here. If we don't act on what we see here to become a "holy" nation, which means a "separate, or sanctified" nation, then God is ashamed of us.

Those Who Come Out

We see this separation here: **(2Co.6:14) Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers....** Would you go out and fight for the world? Would you defend an antichrist kingdom? That's what the Bible says you'd be doing. Would you go out and kill the devil's servants for the devil? That happens, too, because we have brothers and sisters all over the world and some of them are ignorant; some are in the foreign militaries and they think they're fighting patriotically for their country.

But we see from the Scriptures that that's not so. We have one country and we are ambassadors for that country. **(14) Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity...?** Even what the world calls "good people" are not our brothers and sisters. We have a holy nation, a separate nation. **(14) ... Or what communion hath light with darkness? (15) And what concord hath Christ with Belial...?** If you're fighting for a nation of this world, guess who is the god of this world? Who is it who causes nations to go out and kill each other by the thousands and hundreds of thousands? Do you think that is righteous? We've been deceived about this. When we join with the world against the world, we're leaving our Kingdom. **(15) ... Or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? (16) And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.** Now what is he talking about? What does it mean to yoke with the unbeliever? Obviously, we can do it with war, politics, marriage, business – we can do it in so many ways but God says, "Don't do it." We can reason our way out of it or we can seek to do His will.

I understand that sometimes a person comes into this knowledge and they're already yoked in a situation like that. We can be unequally yoked in a marriage and God says not to leave them because how do we know that they might not be saved or sanctified through our faith? (1 Corinthians 7:16) We can't tell a Jew by looking at the flesh anymore. They might be one of those chosen from the foundation of the world but we have to wait and see. **(1Co.7:15) Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart....** We're not bound in such a case. After acquiring knowledge, we don't want to enter into an unequally-yoked situation like that. We can marry, but only in the Lord (1 Corinthians 7).

Concerning politics, some people say, "I'm a Republican." Oh, really? Wouldn't you just rather stand for the Lord? Wouldn't you rather do what He wants you to do? And besides, He's going to install any kind of government He wants anyway; and usually they are vessels of dishonor, not vessels of honor, to fulfill His Will. Especially when you're talking about an end-time Beast government that God is putting together to chasten His people, to bring them to their cross, to which they refuse to go. So you see, God doesn't necessarily want good vessels in the government to do that but many people are deceived into thinking that they can vote in godly people. It just hasn't ever worked that way. That's not God's plan. So, with politics, with war, should we become unequally yoked with a bunch of people who are antichrist to go and kill other people for the devil?

There is no physical warfare in our Kingdom. It's all spiritual warfare: turn the other cheek; love your enemy; do good to them that spitefully use you. Why would we reunite, why would we go back to the country from which we are coming out, as Paul said? God is not ashamed to call us His children and Himself our God. If we're looking for that spiritual country, we're not pledging allegiance to a wicked nation of this world. **(2Co.6:17) Wherefore Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord....** Some people think that's just talking about the Harlot. Well, that's part of it because the Harlot is a worldly church. They have more affinity for the world than they do for the Lord. But it's also talking about coming out of the world, if you look at the text. Make no allegiances with the world. **(17) ... And touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you.** We want the Lord to receive us in all things but we're not

willing to give up the world to do it. **(18) And will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.** Notice that sonship comes to those who become separate from the world.

Sometimes God will separate us from allegiances to the world and being unequally yoked. We should accept it when the Lord does that. **(1Co.7:15) Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart....** That's an example but Paul goes even deeper: **(2Co.7:1) Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.** We are not to join with the world in their bitterness, their anger, their lust against other nations, because we don't know anybody after the flesh. We don't have an allegiance to one man who is maybe one color, or maybe one nationality, against another man. The Lord is no respecter of persons and we're also forbidden to do so. James said it was a sin. We don't hold one man more valuable than another man, especially when referring to a bunch of lost people in the world. They all belong to one another. But when we come into the Kingdom, we are one holy nation worldwide and God has called us to be separate, in order for us to be sons of God. Praise God!

You may say, "That's radically different, Dave." Well, no, it's been there all the time. We're just reading the black and white here. There's nothing really hidden about this. **(1Jn.5:19) We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one.** All of the world, what men call "good people" and what men call "bad people," they're all in the devil, all in the evil one and he is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). We are in the world but we are not of the world, according to what Jesus said. We're just passing through, on our way to an eternal Kingdom. God doesn't appreciate it when we make allegiances and alliances with the wicked. He wants us to be separate.

Either Antichrist or Jesus in the Flesh

That's made very plain here: **(1Jn.4:1) Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** So he's talking

about the spirits of people here. **(2) *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God*** (he's talking about the Spirit of God in people): ***every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*** (When we run into the spirit in a person that confesses that Jesus is in that flesh, that's the Spirit of God.): **(3) *and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the [spirit] of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already.*** Lots of people have that theology but every time the word "antichrist" is mentioned in the Scriptures, it's not talking about an individual; in every case it's talking about the corporate body of all lost mankind. Antichrist is as close to us as the next pagan, the next lost person. **(4) *Ye are of God, [my] little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.*** **(1Jn.4:5) *They are of the world: therefore speak they [as] of the world, and the world heareth them.*** There is He that is in you and he that is in the world. These are two nations – the nation of the world and the nation of God's people. **(6) *We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.***

The whole world, Jesus said, is going to hate us; all nations are going to hate us. The reason God is going to do that is to get God's people to join together. What way can God's people come to realize that the kingdom they live in and have patriotism toward is not the Kingdom of God, other than by turning it to hate them? And God will, for His name's sake, turn the whole world to hate His people. He caused the Egyptians' hearts to hate His people and in these days God is going to do the same thing because God's people do not know that this world is not God's Kingdom and that they will never build God's Kingdom in America or any other place. God's Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom.

God's people must also realize who the enemy is. There's He that's in us and there's he that's in the world, who is Satan in the body of all lost mankind. He that is in us is Christ from heaven. The Beast from the pit is in the lost and Christ from heaven is growing in all born-again believers. Jesus said, ***"He that is not with me is against me" (Mat.12:30).*** That's anti (against); antichrist. "The whole world lieth in the evil one," Scripture

says. Satan is the god of this world. Would you be patriotic for a nation overwhelmingly made up of antichrist people? Don't you realize those are the devil's people? No, we're not here to judge them; we're here to bring them the Gospel, to offer them the grace of the Kingdom and find out which among them is chosen of God.

We are to be separate, to have **“no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness” (Eph.5:11)**. “Fellowship” means “having in common.” It means “giving and receiving.” We are not to receive the things of the wicked world. We have fellowship with the world many times when we're just sitting there, feeding on that old TV because we're polluting ourselves. **(1Co.5:6) ... A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.** God wants us to have fellowship, “having in common,” with His Word, fellowship with Jesus Christ. Once a person is joined patriotically to the world, they're joined to a spirit that has murdered as many people as religion. Those are the two major killers of people – religion and patriotism.

Some of you may say, “I never thought of it that way, David.” No, some of you are probably as mad as a wet hen at me right now but it doesn't make any difference. This is the Word of God. Straight out of the Word it says that we need to separate from this wicked world. They live according to their lust; they war against other nations because they think they have a right to. God says that we don't have a right to. We're to love our enemies; that's what He commanded. We're to offer them the Gospel, not a sword.

In, Not of, the World

What does it mean to worship the image of the Beast? We see the image of the Beast in Daniel chapter three and a revelation of it in Daniel chapter two. It is all the nations of the lost people of the world in one image of a corporate man; there's “the Antichrist” right there. Are we members of that? Are we patriotic toward that? **(1Jn.2:15) Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that**

doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Eternal life has to do with our doing the Will of God. Some of these things that we're looking at are not popular but they will separate us from the world and that's what's necessary to be sanctified. ***(Heb.12:14) Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord.***

Sanctification is this process of separating us from the world, from sin, from evil, from these antichrist people around us, unto the Kingdom of God, the one holy nation that does not recognize race, creed or nationality. Obviously, when we get fully in the Kingdom of God, into heaven, we're going to have so many brothers and sisters that we'll be glad for the variety. God is; He created them all. Many a young man has gone out and died for a nation because of the vainglory of life, as he tells us in verse 16, and they think they're going to have great glory fighting for this world, but there's no glory in it. It's contrary to God's way; it's contrary to His nature. He hates it. The people who are being killed are the very people that we're supposed to be offering eternal life to and, yet, we're sending them off to eternal damnation. What are we here for?

Whose Side Are You On?

Wars don't come from God. ***(Jas.4:1) Whence [come] wars and whence [come] fightings among you? [come] they not hence, [even] of your pleasures that war in your members?*** There are no just wars. We are not to go to war along with the world, if we want to enter the spiritual, eternal Kingdom of God and not have God be ashamed of us. But if we're going to war with the world after we receive knowledge, God is ashamed of us. Now I'm not saying that God is condemning our forefathers here in America for the wars that they fought. The great thing about God is, ***To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (Jas.4:17).*** But the Lord wants us to grow up in this day, so when we look at these things, He wants us to act on them. It doesn't matter that our forefathers fought and died to give freedom to America. That has nothing to do with what God is doing with us here and now. He is creating sons of God in these days. Jesus, the Son of God, cannot even be imagined as taking up a weapon and fighting for natural Israel. As a matter of fact,

when He prophesied, He prophesied judgment on natural Israel and talked about the Beast kingdoms encompassing them about, destroying them. And He was on God's side. That's where we have to be, on God's side.

No matter from what nation we come, we have to be on God's side. What does God think? What does He want? **(2) *Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain....*** People fight over land, they fight over oil, they fight over what they think is injustice. They war with other nations and kill thousands of people, and the sad thing is the political Christians today don't understand that that's all of the devil, and they're pushing for it. **(2) ... *Ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not.*** Whatever we need, just ask God. **(Mar.11:24) ... *All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye received them, and ye shall have them.*** What do we need to take away from anybody else? Why is it that people need the world anyway? What's wrong with a simple life? People lust after so much. Wars come from it because people lust after things they could have for the asking. God will take care of it. **(Jas.4:3) *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend [it] in your pleasures. (4) *Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?**** What does he call the friendship of the world? Well, those who go out and fight with the world. **(4) ... *Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God.***

If we're going to go out and make an unholy alliance with the wicked world, we become the enemy of God because now we become a member of the body of antichrist. We want to be separate, sanctified from the wicked world, having "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

Protection in the Secret Place

People say, "Well, David, what am I supposed to do if someone attacks my family? Am I supposed to just stand there and look at them or am I supposed to do something physical to take care of this?" Do you remember the words of Jesus? **(Mat.26:52) *Then saith Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.*** They thought they were just defending

family; He called them transgressors. In Luke 22, those who took the sword were transgressors. “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” That doesn’t sound like you’re taking care of your family. That sounds to me like you’re coming across fighting against God and, ultimately, it will cost you. **(53) Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and He shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?** Does God promise to protect us with His angels? Well, no, not if we protect ourselves. God says that His power is made perfect in our weakness. We don’t ever get to see God defend us until we quit defending ourselves and, basically, that’s what He was saying here.

What did God say about the angels defending His people? **(Psa.91:10) There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy tent. (11) For he will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.** Wow! He’s talking about those who are in the secret place of the Most High, those who are abiding in Christ! How do we abide in Christ? By obeying His commands. **(1Jn.2:24) As for you, let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning. If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father.** What we heard from the beginning is that which is written in this Book right here, these commands that we’ve been talking about. If we abide in the Son, He promises His angels will take charge over us, to keep us. **(Psa.91:12) They shall bear thee up in their hands, Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.** We can’t even have an accident when we’re abiding in Christ. Notice that they will protect you. They will keep you.

If you ask, “But what if somebody attacks?” you’re denying the Lord here. You’re denying what the Word of God says very plainly. **(13) Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: The young lion and the serpent shalt thou trample under foot.** That seems like a pretty dangerous thing to do and it’s a good way to get bitten, if we’re not walking with the Lord, but we’re talking about the protection of God for those who abide in Him. Think about Daniel in the lion’s den. Why did God close the mouths of lions? Daniel was abiding in the secret place. And would He only do that for Daniel? No. **(Psa.91:14) Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him....** Who is it who loves the

Lord? Those who keep His commands. You see, unless you have obeyed these things that we're looking at, you love the Lord and you're abiding in the secret place of the Most High, you've never seen how God can defend you.

Don't think about what things happen in the world, as if you're in the world. Don't compare yourself with the world. If you want to see God defend you, stop defending yourself. His ***"power is made perfect in weakness"*** (2Co.12:9). ***(Psa.91:14) Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*** God holds your faith and your trust in Him very highly, but not all the "what ifs" that the devil can put into your mind. ***(15) He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and honor him. (16) With long life will I satisfy him, And show him my salvation.*** Wasn't Jesus saying this when He was speaking to Peter? "Put up your sword. All they that take the sword are going to die by the sword. Don't you know I could call 12 legions of angels?" What kind of puny defense is a sword or a gun? How many people get killed with their own swords and their own guns? But we're not taking any chances when we lean on God. We can lean on the medical profession and die of all sorts of things. Even their medicine might kill us. Some people think, "Oh, I'll take my chances, David. I need to trust in my gun." You need to trust the Lord. You are taking a chance any other way.

In God We Trust?

Wouldn't you rather have a defense like this? ***(Psa.34:7) The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, And delivereth them.*** You might not even have the chance to get to your gun. I remember a testimony of a man a few years ago who picked up a hitchhiker. The guy shot him three times point blank and he was never touched by the bullets. They don't even know what happened to the bullets. ***(8) Oh taste and see that the Lord is good*** (we just need to taste and see): ***Blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him.*** If you're trusting in yourself, you're not taking refuge in Him. You haven't put your trust in

Him. God will guide you around a lot of these things that happen to the wicked.

We have a Passover Lamb. **(1Co.5:7) ... For our passover also hath been sacrificed, [even] Christ.** The Passover Lamb is for us to be delivered from the curse on this world. The death angel, the curse, passed over the Israelites who had the blood on their doorposts but the death angel destroyed the Egyptians all around them. If we're really going to be believers, we don't need to listen to these horror stories that happen to the world because it normally happens to the world; they're the Egyptians. We have a Savior and part of our covenant is deliverance.

Now, I know that not everybody partakes of all of the Covenant. They take a part, bits and pieces here and there, and in the part that they believe, they partake of. But the part they don't believe doesn't do them any good. **(Hos.4:6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge** (understanding).... God's people are destroyed because they don't agree with this Word. Many are trusting in their ability to shoot straight or to have enough ammunition stored up in the house. And to hold off whom? I have an acquaintance, not too far from here, and when my kids were growing up, I went to his house and it was an arsenal. The guy had bazookas and everything. I said, "Man, what are you getting ready for?" He said, "I'm getting ready for the Russians." So I told him, "You'd better get ready for the Americans because they're going to be coming to get you."

And that's the truth. We'd better get ready for the church to come against us. We'd better get ready for this Beast government to come against us when we don't take their mark. Forget about the Russians. Oh, they're coming, but they're coming to take care of the Americans who persecute the Christians. That's how it's going to happen. But, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." That guy's liable to blow himself up over there with all that stuff, or his wife might fall out with him and just shoot him with something, since it's nice and handy. I hope it's not a bazooka. At any rate, if we trust the Lord, there's nothing that any man can do, if we put our faith and our trust in Him and abide in the secret place of the Most High. So don't give ear to all these horror stories – "What if? What if?" That's just the devil. We have something sure here to depend upon. The Lord says that we have these angels round about us. They won't

Kingdom Warfare

even let us dash our foot against a stone. They'll protect us in the days to come. We can trust in God.

Mighty to Save

“The angels are mighty,” the Bible says in Psalm 103. But I'm not trusting in angels; I'm trusting in God. ***(Psa.103:19) The Lord hath established his throne in the heavens; And his kingdom ruleth over all. (20) Bless the Lord, ye his angels, That are mighty in strength, that fulfil his word, Harkening unto the voice of his word.***

Did you know that we have to be entitled for these words to be fulfilled on us and for us? We have to walk by faith, so that when the angels hearken unto the voice of His Word, they are “***ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation***” (Heb.1:14). ***(Psa.103:21) Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, Ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. (22) Bless the Lord, all ye his works, In all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord, O my soul.*** The Lord God Almighty is our Savior in all things, and He will defend us and keep us.

Lost in the Translation

Jesus laid down His life but no one took His life. ***(Joh.10:17) Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. (18) No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself...*** When they tried, He just passed through their midst. The Lord told me years ago that bodily translation is going to be common in the days to come. Can you imagine, if you're not able to buy and sell or get on a jet plane to go from here to there, what God is going to do to get His Gospel all over the world? He says that it's going to happen. He can translate you into trouble and He can translate you out of trouble.

We heard a testimony here not too long ago of a minister who was in Africa. He was being accosted by a witch doctor and God snatched up that witch doctor and threw him over in the midst of the deep dark woods; it

took him a week to walk out of there. God can protect you. He can take the enemy out or He can take you out. Or, He can just stop the bullets, but he can protect you. We need to put our trust in Him to find out what that's like. You know, we're in the minority here, as the people who trust in God. All the horror stories, all the statistics that you hear are overwhelmingly about what happens to pagans.

Find some statistics about those who trust in the Lord. That's a narrow group of people, I agree, because even most Christians don't trust in the Lord. We need to find out what that's like because we're coming to the most dangerous time in all of history. Jesus said, ***“ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake” (Mat.24:9)***. God's raising up a great enemy. We're going to need to know how to walk in “the secret place of the Most High”; we're going to need to know how to put our trust in the Passover Lamb, so the death angel will pass over, no matter what. Every one of you out there who is a born-again child of God, you have an angel whose job it is to protect you. Believe me, there's no man on this earth who can do anything to you without God's Will.

God bless you, saints. I just pray that you'll be full of faith and seek out what it is to abide in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Authority and Submission

Jesus is coming soon; it's getting exciting! We're getting to see an awful lot of God's people enter into His blessings and begin to step out and walk by faith. I know we haven't seen anything yet – nothing like what we're about to see. We have learned that we have to cooperate with God. It's in our authority to say no to God, no to tribulation and no to death-to-self, but that wouldn't be cooperating with the life of Christ. I want to remind you of what Jesus tells His disciples: **(Mat.16:24) ... If any man would come after me** (this is obviously a condition that many people want to deny), **let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.** We know that Jesus was used as the physical type and, as we've learned, a physical type precedes the spiritual fulfillment.

Jesus went to a literal cross to literally die on that cross, but He tells us that we follow Him with our spiritual cross unto a different kind of death that He's speaking about here. **(25) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.** We discovered that the word "life" here is actually the Greek word *psuchē*, which doesn't have anything to do with the physical death of our physical body. Our cross is to die to self; it's the death of the old man. The word *psuchē* is "soul" and we know that our soul is our mind, will and emotions. We also know that our soul is somewhat schizophrenic when we come to the Lord because part of the soul is affiliated with the body and part of the soul is affiliated with our spirit man. The Bible says, **For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6).**

We have those two minds: the mind that is spiritual and the mind that is fleshly. Of course, sanctification is the process of "dying out" to the mind of the flesh, or the soul of the flesh, and taking on the spiritual mind. That's what it's all about. We know that it's not physical because, as we read on down, we see what the Lord says: **(Mat.16:26) For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life (psuchē)? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? (27) For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. (28) Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.** This is talking about physical death and it's obvious in the text that the Lord is saying, "No, not everybody is going to die a physical death, but everyone must die a spiritual death."

Everyone must die in order to follow the Savior into the Kingdom. To paraphrase, “Except you lose your life, you won’t gain your life.”

So we all have to have this spiritual death. When He says “taste’ of death,” that’s the word *geuō* and it means, figuratively, “to experience” death. ... ***There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom (Mat.16:28).*** Of course, that’s a type and a shadow, as we’ve taught before, of the times of the coming of the Lord, when we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord will enter right straight into the Kingdom without dying. We have a physical type of the Lord Jesus that’s going to be fulfilled in us, His body, dying to self. That’s what we’re here for.

The Lord’s Helpers

God has some people to help us, as we’ve been studying in this book. He has called us to take up our cross and follow Jesus and, of course, Jesus had all the help He needed from the religious people of His day, who were considered to be the people of God; He had lots of help from the Roman government, which represents the Beast. God ordained this to come to pass, as we discovered in Acts, chapters two and four. God chastens us with men and committing iniquity is one thing that will bring us this chastening. ***(2Sa.7:14) I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.***

God has created the wicked for the Day of Evil, the Scripture says: ***(Pro. 16:4) The Lord hath made everything for its own end*** (or His own purpose); ***Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*** The Day of Evil is the carrying of God’s people to their cross, not just the people in Jesus’ day. The people around our life are not there by accident. There is no accident in the life of God’s people. The verse in 2 Samuel says, “If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men.” Is there another reason that God would use men upon us? Yes, there is a very good reason. Job is a good example of that, so let me share a few things with you. It’s not just the action of sin for which God uses the wicked around us to chasten us, it’s the nature of sin. We may be very obedient to the things that we know and understand but still come under some chastening because God wants to crucify that old nature in us, that old soul life.

When we know something is wrong and we do it anyway, that’s when we are committing sin. ***(Jas.4:17) To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*** Sin is only imputed with

knowledge. When we know something is wrong and we do it anyway, that's when we are committing sin. But what God wants to do is something greater than He did in the Old Testament. He wants to do more than just chasten the action of sin – He wants to do away with the nature of sin that causes the action in the first place. God is not satisfied with just having laws concerning our actions. His laws go deeper; they're in the heart of man (Matthew 5). God holds us accountable for the things that we think and the things that we feel.

What We Don't Know Can Hurt Us

Job was a good example of that. Some people think Job was just a peculiar example but it wasn't. It's a very common example. Now, I admit that Job is an extreme example but when we go through our lesser problems, we should be appreciative that we're not going through what Job went through. At any rate, Job wasn't sinning. ***(Job 1:8) And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and turneth away from evil.*** Job was a good man, but perfect? Well, if you consider that God lives by faith and speaks by faith, yes, Job was perfect. He was walking in what he knew, in what he understood and he was a "good" man.

God sees the end from the beginning and, by the way, because of the Blood of Jesus Christ, God still sees the end from the beginning in us. If we're walking in the light that we know and are obedient to what we understand, God says the same thing about us that He said about Job: that we're perfect. ***(Heb.10:14) For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*** The Lord perfected us at the cross; He delivered us from sin, the sin nature and the actions of sin, so He says this wonderful thing about Job. Does the rest of the Book of Job bear out the fact that Job was manifestly perfect and upright and turned away from all evil? No, not exactly, but the things that God was bringing Job through were to reveal something to him that he didn't know and wasn't held accountable to. That's the great thing about God: "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

If we go, for instance, to Job 32, we see Job being corrected by Elihu. Job had already been persecuted by the other three men who were called his friends (which they were anything but). They accused him and did everything but put faith in his heart; they did everything but try to understand the situation; they accused him of many things that weren't

true. God Himself said that what they said of Job was wrong. As a matter of fact, in Job 42, He said that His wrath was kindled against these three men because of what they said. God even exhorted them to go bring a sacrifice to Job and let Job pray for them, so that God's wrath wouldn't be poured out upon them.

But we're past these three men now and we're talking about the fourth man, Elihu, a man whom God never corrected and who seemed to have said everything right concerning both Job and God. Elihu had some real discernment, even though he wasn't as old as these other three men. It says in **(Job 32:1) So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.** Job was defending himself, basically saying, "I haven't done this or that sin"; and he went down a pretty long list of things that he hadn't done. However, we don't see down deep in our heart the things that are still hidden there. It takes people like these men to bring them out and that's exactly what happened. **(2) Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.** Yes, Job did ultimately blame God and even though he was very righteous in the beginning, he began to complain to God of his treatment, thinking that he was worthy of better. Of course, most people who read the Book of Job consider that he was worthy of better treatment but we see God knew something about Job that most people don't consider and haven't read the book closely enough to find out: Job was self-righteous. Now Job didn't know it and God wasn't holding it against him but He was in the process of bringing this out.

These men and their false accusations against Job caused him to swing too far in the wrong direction and what was really down inside of him was coming out – that he justified himself rather than God. Elihu's wrath was also kindled against his three "friends" because they had found no answer and, yet, had condemned Job. Elihu spoke from chapters 32 through 37 concerning this and gave Job some very good advice. Then God spoke from chapter 38 through 41 and corrected a lot of Job's thinking, speaking about Job's ignorance of God's ways, God's Kingdom and God's creation. When Elihu and God were both finished speaking, Job repented in dust and ashes and he saw himself as somebody who shouldn't have been opening his mouth in the first place, even though he had gone through great suffering and God was, no doubt, mindful of that great suffering. Yet, it was this suffering that caused what was hidden down inside of Job and would have never been seen otherwise, to come out.

Let's go back now to chapter one and see a bit more there. God does chasten us, not for things that we know are sins or not even things that are accounted against us as sins, but the nature of sin. God wants to do away

with sin; He wants to crucify the nature of sin because that's really starting on the end of the stick we need to start on. Obviously, we can deal with the false actions over and over but if you do away with the nature, we're not going to do those actions anymore. That's God's plan for the New Testament. He has a better covenant based on better promises; He wants us sanctified and delivered from the corrupt self-life that causes us to stumble and fall.

The Left Hand of the Lord

We need to see something else here – that God is absolutely sovereign in this process. No devil or no man can take any credit for what God is doing in this process. It is God's love that **“worketh all things after the counsel of his will” (Eph.1:11)** and **“we know that to them that love God all things work together for good” (Rom.8:28)**, in order to bring this to pass. We can comfortably rest in His arms because He is going to take care of us and He knows what He is doing. Nothing can come our way by man or by devil that doesn't come through God. We are His special garden and He is an expert in farming.

When God said to Satan, “Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man,” and so on, this was like waving a red flag in front of a bull. **(Job 1:9) Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? (10) Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side?** (It's true of us, too. If it wasn't, the devil would have snuffed us out a long time ago.) **thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. (11) But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face.** Of course, some lesser people would, some lesser Christians would and they will by the multitudes when they're brought into their Job trial in the days to come. But the righteous will not. They know what's at stake, and they know their Lord. **(12) And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand** (not “power” but “hand”); **only upon himself put not forth thy hand.** **So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.** Notice in verse 11 that Satan said, “But put forth thy hand,” and then in verse 12, we find out who the hand of the Lord is here: “Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand (Satan).” But He made very explicit restrictions on this: “Only upon himself put not forth thy hand.” We

see the left hand of the Lord here is Satan, to bring a persecution, although it's strictly regulated.

We read on what that entailed and it was pretty fiery – a lot more than most of us ever have to go through. The things to come in these latter days, of course, are going to be a little heavier persecution than we're used to, but consider this: ***(Job 1:13) And it fell on a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, (14) that there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them; (15) and the Sabeans fell [upon them,] and took them away: yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. (16) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven (notice they weren't used to blaming the devil), and hath burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. (17) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have taken them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*** All of this was the hand of the devil, wasn't it? But it won't help us any to know that, unless we look behind the hand of the devil and we see the hand of God. We won't have any reason to repent or to cry out to God to find out what the reason is, or anything else.

God was very silent to Job for quite some time during this trial. He was leaving him with his thoughts, with what he knew about God already; He was trying him. Job was crying out but he wasn't hearing an answer. ***(18) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters*** (something a lot more precious to him) ***were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; (19) and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*** That's pretty drastic right there, wiping out his children.

By the way, in chapter one, Job had been sacrificing for his children, lest they had sinned, and he was obviously praying for his children that they would come to know the Lord. I would like to remind you of something: there are good reasons why God takes people off this earth. ***(Isa.57:1) The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil [to come].*** One instance is when they know the Lord because it's not bad to enter into the Kingdom. In this case, we

want to say, “Oh, they’ve lost everything; they’ve lost their life.” No, we don’t lose everything when we lose our physical life; we enter into life. That’s what Jesus called it in Matthew 18, entering into life. When we leave this life, only then do we enter into life.

So it’s not the most terrible thing we can think of. It may be painful for a moment but entering into the Kingdom is not bad. Suppose you would grow up and come to know sin and fall away from the Lord. ***(Isa.57:1) The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil [to come].*** It’s not always as bad as we might think, or it’s not as bad as we would judge God in such an instance.

Prodigal Son

I’ll tell you something else. I got some comfort one time in this years ago. I had a son who was pretty much going his own way, doing his own thing and I was crying out to the Lord for him. God gave me Job 29:1-5. This is a spiritual interpretation but I’m absolutely sure it’s exactly what God was saying to me: ***(Job 29:1) And Job again took up his parable, and said, (2) Oh that I were as in the months of old, As in the days when God watched over me; (3) When his lamp shined upon my head*** (in other words, before all this tribulation), ***And by his light I walked through darkness; (4) As I was in the ripeness of my days, When the friendship of God was upon my tent; (5) When the Almighty was yet with me, and my children were about me.*** That really struck home with me because this son of mine had grown up and decided to get out there and try the world.

I was very sad because I’d raised him right, raised him to know the Lord. The first thing I saw when I read this was, “But God, you killed his sons!” The Lord spoke to me and said, “Job 42 – he got them back. He got double, everything that he lost.” I said, “Yeah, but God, those were other sons.” But, you know, what the Lord was showing me was a spiritual type here. Yes, I lost a son, but the one I get back is going to be a different son. That’s what the Lord was saying to me, that God restored everything to Job.

At the same time, I got Isaiah 7:3 and the Lord showed me Isaiah with his son, Shear-jashub, which means “a remnant shall return.” God gave me those two verses at that time and He let me know that, like Job, I was going to get my son back but he was going to be a different son and it would be Shear-jashub. There is some deep, spiritual revelation of truth hidden here

to show that the things God took away from Job were restored double, which is what Job 42 says.

Truly, we are going to lose some things of this old life but we're going to gain some things of the new life. Here's the thing I wanted to show you: God was absolutely sovereign over the devil, over the Chaldeans, over the Sabeans and over the fire of God that fell from heaven. We can rest in God. He hasn't left us alone ***"to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth for evil"*** (*Jer.24:9*), as the Scripture says. He is still with us and He is sovereign over our trial. We can trust in Him.

There Are No Accidents with God

(Job 1:20) Then Job arose, and rent his robe, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped (praise God that he was able to do that; only a righteous man would still be able to do that, having gone through all this); ***(21) and he said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.*** I hear of many people who begin to trust the Lord and, when they don't see God answer things the way they want, they get angry with God immediately, while not having gone through anything like Job went through, whatsoever. They aren't even interested in suffering a slight bit for the Lord. They get angry and never turn back to God again. I've seen many people do that. But here's a man who went through great suffering and still worshipped the Lord. ***(21) The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*** He gave credit to the Lord for giving it and he gave credit to the Lord for taking it. He didn't give credit to the devil and didn't give credit to the Chaldeans. ***(22) In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*** Meaning, of course, that he was correct in what he was saying here, that it was not sinful to give God the credit for doing this judgment against him.

Job considered that man is worthy of chastening, even the very best of men. We come to this revelation in chapter two, very quickly, that people think that if you're a good person, good in the eyes of man, good in your own experience, that certainly you deserve a lot better. I'll tell you something – we deserve nothing. Even the very best of us deserve the great chastening of God. As a matter of fact, if we didn't get grace, we would all be destroyed. A great judgment is coming upon this world, coming upon this land and if it wasn't for the grace of God and the Passover of Jesus Christ, we would all be destroyed. So the idea that man is basically good, or even that a Christian is basically good, is a faulty one. We're not going to get

what we deserve because of God's grace. If you got justice, you'd be wiped out; I would, too. The point is, God gives grace sometimes instead of justice and we who walk by faith get exactly that.

Job continued to be persecuted. **(2:1) Again it came to pass on the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, that Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. (Job 2:2) And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. (3) And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? (once again, He's waving Job like a red flag before the devil) for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and turneth away from evil: and he still holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. (4) And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. (5) But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce thee to thy face. (6) And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand; only spare his life.** There it is again! The devil says, "Put forth your hand, God," and God says, "Okay. He's in your hand." See, in this case, the hand of the Lord is Satan himself. God is using Satan to do this. He said, "only spare his life." I think that God, being so intellectually superior to Satan, is kind of tongue-in-cheek with this thing. He's dealing with Satan as we would deal with a child, when we reason with them. Why else would He say, "Hey, look at my servant Job over here." He's putting his attention on him so that Satan will want to prove that Job is not as good as he appears.

Satan knows a thing or two about Job and God does, too, but He is using Satan. The Bible says God works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, but He does that with the vessels of dishonor, too. He works in them as well to do of His good pleasure. **(Pro.16:9) A man's heart deviseth his way; But the Lord directeth his steps.** We can choose to be good or bad, a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor, but God is still going to use us. Ultimately, God uses everyone. Everything, the Bible says in Psalm 119:91, serves Him. **(Job 2:7) So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. (8) And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself therewith; and he sat among the ashes.** We might think, "Yeah, we know this is the way the Chaldeans treat us, and we know this is the way the Sabeans treat us, and we know this is the way the devil treats us," but we'd think our wife would do better, right? **(9) Then**

said his wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God, and die. She was angry at God, wasn't she? These were her children, too. This was a great temptation unto Job, I'm sure. **(10) But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.** Yes, we'll receive good from the hand of God and we'll receive evil, and we don't give credit to man because man is just a vessel.

As a matter of fact, this enables us to have mercy upon men. It enables us to turn the other cheek. It enables us to resist not him that's evil when we realize that men are just vessels. They are at the mercy of Satan, their father, and they're at the use of the Lord. **(Pro.16:4) The Lord hath made everything for its own end; Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.** They are at the mercy of God. Of course, they choose evil. Man, who is born into this world in flesh, turns away from God very quickly, turns away from His Spirit very quickly, chooses flesh and God uses them as vessels of dishonor.

You and I, who have been granted grace to believe in God, turn to Him and He works in us **both to will and to work, for his good pleasure (Php.2:13)**. That's grace. But notice that Job didn't give any credit to the devil or man here. Nowadays, if a disaster like 9/11 happens, there are a few people who speak up right away. They say, "That's the judgment of God" and they know what they're talking about. But then they're shouted down by a bunch of wicked apostates who say, "Oh, no, no, no! That's the devil. That's just these wicked, radical Islamists." They somehow don't understand it's God. It's the judgment of God. The Bible makes it very clear that, **"A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven" (Joh.3:27)** and it is God **"who worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Eph.1:11)**, which we deserve.

Remember what Jesus spoke about the tower of Siloam: **(Luk.13:4) Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? (5) I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.** The Lord gave His reason for why that happened. Catastrophes – judgments – happen in the world and maybe some Christians are taken out but they go on to be with the Kingdom. An awful lot of lost people go on out of this world and enter into their eternal judgment. God is sovereign in this whole thing. God was sovereign in controlling Satan through the whole judgment upon Job and He still is today. Nothing can come into your life without God. Nothing.

The Use and Misuse of Authority

Jesus taught us exactly that. Look in John 19, where Jesus was standing before Pontius Pilate as He was being sent to His cross. The Jews were screaming out, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate was trying to get Jesus off with a lighter sentence. **(Joh.19:7) *The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. (8) When Pilate therefore heard this saying, he was the more afraid; (9) and he entered into the Praetorium again, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. (10) Pilate therefore saith unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee?*** The word “power” there, by the way, is really the word for “authority” (*exousia*, not *dunamis*). So it should be read, **“I have the authority to crucify thee.”** **(11) *Jesus answered him, Thou wouldest have no authority (exousia) against me, except it were given thee from above...*** He believed in the sovereignty of His Father, the absolute control of His Father.

You may think, “Well, that was just Jesus. He was the Son of God.” If you’re not the son of God, you’re wasting time here today studying the Word of God. You are the body of Christ. You are the son of God, too, you see. He wants to live in you but He can’t do that without your cooperation. The Bible says, ***Shall two walk together, except they have agreed? (Amo.3:3)*** We have to come into agreement with God, Who Himself is sovereign in all the trials that come into your life, even this crucifixion here. This is a physical crucifixion that points a way to our spiritual crucifixion but Jesus said that Pilate didn’t have authority to crucify Him, except it was given him from the Father, from above. **(Joh.19:11) ... [T]herefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.**

I want to show something important here. Pilate bragged that he had authority but Jesus said, “You got it from the Father.” Now Jesus Himself said, **“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Mat.28:18).** All. What does “all” leave out? He had authority to call 12 legions of angels and He didn’t do it. He had this authority but He knew it wasn’t the Will of God to use authority to keep from going to the cross. He knew it was the Will of God to use authority over the curse, over sickness, over disease and over the works of the devil. He went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him.

He knew it was good to use God’s authority to destroy Satan’s works in the earth but it was not good to use God’s authority to deny the cross. He said, ***“to this end am I come into the world” (Joh.18:37).*** Well, it’s true of us, too. It is not good to use God’s authority to try to keep from

going to our death-to-self. We have authority but we shouldn't be using it for this. Jesus tells us that exact thing. **(Eph.1:20) [W]hich he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places,] (21) far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world (or age), but also in that which is to come** (Jesus was given authority over all this: every rule, every power, every dominion and every authority): **(22) and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head** (so He's the head, not the feet) **over all things to the church, (23) which is his body....** But He put all this dominion, all this authority and all this power under the feet of the body. That means under the very least of us. We have authority. Jesus said, **As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world (Joh.17:18).**

The Father sent Jesus with authority and Jesus sent us with authority. **(Mat.16:19) I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** God is giving dominion to His princes upon this earth but, just as Jesus would not use His authority to deny His own cross, we are not to use our authority to deny our spiritual cross. Could we use our authority to preserve our physical life? Oh, absolutely. That's what the Passover is all about. Some people don't think that we have the authority to do that but I've had opportunity several times to die and I've used my authority to say, "No, I'm not going because I know I have work to do for the Lord." And God honored that.

However, when it comes to the crucifixion of self, God doesn't want us to use authority contrary to His wishes. We can avoid trials; Jesus could have spoken up and said that some of the things that they were saying were wrong but He didn't. They falsely accused Him but He didn't speak up and say, "I didn't mean that and I wasn't saying that. The temple I was talking about was the temple of my body, not this Temple," and so on. He didn't defend Himself. So God was calling Him to His cross and He didn't want Him to deny it. Jesus said, **"not my will, but thine, be done" (Luk. 22:42)**, when He was going to His cross and He knew that it was the way to life. The Lord was passing through this into eternal life here and it's the same with us. There is no way into life but through death.

If we don't die to self, we'll have to physically die. Some Christians will enter into life through physical death, as long as they will be faithful to the Lord in that death. Others are not going to physically die. **(Mat.16:28) Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here,**

who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. So we need to cooperate with God in this process of death here.

Obedience to Law and Higher Law

A part of that dying-to-self is in submitting to authority. **(Rom.13:1) Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the [powers] that be are ordained of God. (2) Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.** When Satan came against Job, his power was of God. He had the permission of God; he had the Will of God. When the Chaldeans came against Job, their work was of God; their authority was of God. When you have a pagan government over God's people, God put them there. "There is no power but of God" was spoken in the time of the Neros, the Caesars and all those other wicked people whom God used mightily to bring His people to their cross, to repent and to turn to Him. God used every beast kingdom in the Bible – He raised them up to come against His people.

These are wicked people. They are not there for us to blame or to judge; they are there for us, to help us to come to our cross. "He that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God." The Word says, "**Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake**" **(1Pe.2:13)**. God has ordinances and one of them is that we have to be subject to men's ordinances. There is always a higher law: when the world wants us to break an important God-law, we don't have to do that. But otherwise, **(13) Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; (14) or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well. (15) For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: (16) as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God.** We are free because we're sons of the King. We serve His Kingdom. We represent His Kingdom but He doesn't want us to be a stumbling block to any of the lost while we're here on this earth. He wants us to be seen as law-keepers, instead of lawbreakers. They're very ignorant of who we are, so we can't tell them and get away with it very easily, even though we are free.

We bring ourselves, in some respects, under bondage, in order to serve the King here. **(17) Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear**

God. Honor the king. That's some pretty wicked people we have to honor, just as Daniel honored the king, because God had put him there in a place of judgment. **(1Pe.2:18) Servants, [be] in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.** We've been set free from bondage but he tells us to serve our masters and in other places to use this, rather, for the Gospel's sake. Even though we're free, we bring ourselves, like Paul said, into bondage to all men, including those who aren't so nice. We serve them anyway and use this, rather, to endure our cross.

Sure, we have authority but they don't know that we are sons of God and that we own everything. "All things are yours," the Scripture says in 1 Corinthians 3:21. We own it all. At the same time, as Paul said to us, **For though I was free from all [men,] I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more (1Co.9:19).** So we're giving up a freedom that we have, an authority that we have. We're giving it up for the purpose of the Kingdom. We're being weak to the weak, as Paul went on to say: **(20) And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews....** He had outgrown being a Jew, religiously speaking, but he was going back under it for the sake of these people, so that he could be accepted by them, so that they would receive the Gospel. **(20) ... [T]o them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law.** He wasn't under the Law anymore. God had set him free but now he was appearing to be under the Law, as one of God's undercover Christians among the Jews, to gracefully share with them the freedom that he had. **(21) [T]o them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. (22) To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak....** In other words, he didn't use all the authority that he had. He didn't demand his rights – he was bearing his cross. **(22) ... I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some.**

Also, we know that in Daniel 3 the government told everyone that they were to bow down and worship the image of the beast and the Jews did, but Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said no to the king. Why? Because this is higher law. We are told in Revelation 13 that we are to refuse the mark of the Beast and they refused the king here. They weren't going to bow down to the image of the beast and they weren't going to serve it. **(Dan.3:16) ... O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. (17) If it be [so,] our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king.** One way or the other, He's going to do it, right?

(18) But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. He threw them right into the Great Tribulation, into the furnace that was heated seven times hotter. “Times” are used as years, in Revelation 12.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not deny the Lord. They would not obey the king here, though they were commanded to do so, and neither should we. When man’s law contradicts God’s higher law, then we don’t obey. In most instances where we have an authority and we have a right, we don’t even take it. We bend to man’s law, for the sake of the Kingdom and to be known by other people who are weak in their understanding and weak in their faith, as people who are good people, subservient, law-abiding and so forth. We **“abstain from every form of evil” (1Th.5:22)**; that is, the appearance of evil in the eyes of the unknowledgeable world. They don’t know who we are.

A lot of us don’t know who we are. That’s the problem. But we don’t demand all of our rights and we don’t use all of our authority. We submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, until it comes to God’s higher law.

I do pray that what was shared in this book will help to bring you a little further along the way of putting off the old man and putting on the new. The faith of seeing it done, while we cooperate with God through His Word, is the victory that overcomes this world.

God bless you, saints. Love from your servant, David.

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