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2/15/00	0190-759	Concluding all things to be loss in view of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Phi 3:8a; Luk 18:18-27; Pro 22:1		
2/16/00	0190-760	Paul identifies all of his fantastic successes as "skubala, dung or excrement". Phi 3:7-8; Pro 22:1		

2/17/00 0190-761 A vulgar word used by the Apostle Paul to stress the evil behind human good.
Phi 3:8; Isa 64:6; 1Co 4:1-2

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2/20/00 0190-762 Doc: Dung, Part 1. The Holy Spirit describes what is useless, rejected & despised by God.
Phi 3:8; Eze 4:1-15; Rom 7:24; 8:5-8; 1Sa 2:6-8; 1Ki 14:10

2/20/00 0190-763 Doc: Dung, Part 2. Dung is used to describe the uselessness of the reversionistic or the backsliding believer.
Phi 3:8; Jer 8:2; 9:22; 16:4; 25:33; Job 20:4-7; Luk 14:34-35

2/22/00 0190-764 Doc: Human Good, Part 1. Human good must never be confused with morality or the legitimate production of the believer.
Phi 3:8; Heb 5:11-14; 1Jo 2:15-17

2/23/00 0190-765 Doc: Human Good, Part 2. The source of human good is the area of strength of the old sin nature.
2Co 11:13-15; Rom 6:6-14; Gen 2:7-9; Heb 6:1; Rom 4:1-3

2/24/00 0190-766 Doc: Human Good, Part 3. Because human good originates inside the cosmic system, it becomes dead to God.
Gen 2:7-9,16-17; 3:7; Mat 9:10-13; Heb 6:1; Rom 4:1-3; Jam 2:14-24

2/25/00 0190-767 Doc: Human Good, Part 4. Human good performed in the cosmic system results in boasting.
Rom 4:1-3; Jam 2:14-24; 1:1,22

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2/27/00 0190-768 Doc: Human Good, Part 5. The difference between human good & justification by works.
Phi 3:8; Rom 3:12-18; Jam 2:14-24; Act 27:31

2/27/00 0190-769 Doc: Human Good, Part 6. The judgment day of human good.
2Ti 1:8-9; 1Co 13:1-3; Rom 13:1-7; Joh 5:28-29; Rev 20:3-15

2/29/00 0190-770 Doc: Human Good, Part 7. The conclusion & the finality of the judgment of human good.
Rev 20:6,11-15; 21:4,8; Rom 2:5-11; Heb 9:27; Act 24:15

3/1/00 0190-771 Paul teaches us that security in the Christian way of life is of the utmost importance.
Phi 3:9; Psa 51:6; Col 2:8-10; Rom 6:6; Tit 2:11-14; 1Jo 3:1-2

3/2/00 0190-772 Learning how to rest in our position in Christ has a remarkable influence upon our experiential condition.
Phi 3:9; Col 2:8-23; Tit 2:11-14; 1Jo 3:1-2; 4:17

3/3/00 0190-773 what the worst sinner who ever lived received from God.
Phi 3:9; 1Ti 1:15-16; Act 9:1-6; Rom 10:3-4

Being conformed into the image of God's Son			3/12/00	42
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3/5/00 0190-774 The results & effects of the perfect righteousness of God within the believer who understands his position in Christ, plus the Lord's supper.
Phi 3:9; 1Jo 3:1-2; 4:17; Isa 32:17-18; Jud 1:24-25; Rom 12:1

3/5/00 0190-775 One of the great manifestations of the holiness of God within is the dedication of the believer's body without.
Rom 6:11,13; 6:6-7,17-18; 10:17; 1Jo 1:8-10; 2:12; 1:7

3/7/00 0190-776 The spiritually minded believer is conscious of sin "in him", but fully assured that there is no sin "on him".
1Jo 1:7-10; 2:1; Heb 9:14; 10:22; Phi 1:6; Rom 8:29; Joh 14:27; 16:33

3/8/00 0190-777 Any experience that makes us more aware of our need for God contributes to our spiritual progress & growth.
1Th 5:24; Joh 14:27; 16:33; Exo 23:29-30; Rom 14:22-23; 1Jo 4:18

3/9/00 0190-778 God's most effective means in the process of changing our condition to become more like our position in Christ.
2Co 3:18; Gal 3:26; 4:7; Luk 7:47; 24:47; Mat 11:28-30

3/10/00 0190-779 The thorough & long preparation of a life being Christ-centered.
Hos 5:15-6:1; Psa 51:17; Luk 24:47; Mat 26:30-35; Joh 21:15-17

Perceiving Who We are in Christ			3/19/00	47
3/12/00	0190-780	It is after we have been subdued, refined & chastened that we learn to abide in Him & live the spiritual life. Mat 11:28-30; 1Th 4:3-4; Gal 5:1,4,16-17; Joh 12:24-26		
3/14/00	0190-781	Progress is advancing in the spiritual knowledge of what we already possess at the outset. Gen 5:1-3; 1Co 15:22,45-49; 1Jo 3:9; Mat 19:24-26; Eph 3:14-41		
3/15/00	0190-782	The supply which is always available, but only appreciated & appropriated when the believer comes to know his need. Rev 3:14-18; Phi 1:19-21; 4:13,19; Luk 16:10		
3/16/00	0190-783	That I may come to know Him & the power of His resurrection. Phi 3:10; 2Co 13:4; 2Pe 1:2-4; Joh 17:3		
3/17/00	0190-784	That I may come to know Him, Part 1. Phi 3:10; 2Pe 3:14-18; 2Ti 4:2-4; Isa 64:4; 1Jo 3:19-24		

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3/19/00	0190-785	That I may come to know Him, Part 2. Phi 3:10; Act 20:28-31; 1Jo 3:19-24; Col 3:1-4		
3/21/00	0190-786	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 1. Phi 3:10; 1Pe 1:3-8; 3:15; 2Co 13:14; Phi 2:1-2,5; Eph 3:19		
3/22/00	0190-787	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 2. Eph 3:29; Heb 4:4-16; 1Co 13:13; 3:1-8; 2Co 5:14-17		
3/23/00	0190-788	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 3. 2Co 5:14-17; Joh 2:23-25; Luk 9:23-24		
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4/2/00	0190-791	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 6. Fellowship with God & occupation with Christ. 1Jo 1:1-14; Joh 15:13-15; 11:21-23; Heb 7:25; Psa 8:3-4		
4/4/00	0190-792	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 7. The mystery of silence in fellowship with God. Eph 3:17; 1Co 4:5-7; Isa 30:18; 40:31; Psa 62:1		
4/5/00	0190-793	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Part 8. His truest friends are those to whom God is often silent with. Gal 6:4-5; Lam 3:27-28; Psa 62:1; Pro 17:17; 10:12; 27:6		
4/6/00	0190-794	That I may come to know Him. Occupation with Christ, Pt 9. The results of occupation with Christ as a foundation/basis in the Christian life Deu 30:15-20; Jos 23:6-11; Psa 31:23-24; 16:8-9; 37:4-5; Heb 11:24-27; 12:2-3		
4/7/00	0190-795	The power of His resurrection, Part 1. Introduction. Phi 3:7-10a; 1Pe 3:18-19; Joh 10:17-18; 2:13-22; Eph 3:20; Gal 3:26-28		

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4/11/00	0190-797	The power of His resurrection, Part 3. The ability to handle the details of life & ultimately spiritual. Rom 12:1-2; 6:4-19; Mat 25:13-45; Eph 6:10		
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4/13/00	0190-799	The power of His resurrection, Part 5. The evil power of Satan in contrast to the divine power of God. Eph 6:10; 1Ti 4:1-2; 2Ti 3:5-9		
4/14/00	0190-800	The power of His resurrection, Part 6. Greater is the power in us than that which is in the world.		

Eph 6:10; 2Ti 3:5-9; 1Co 10:13; 2Ti 2:13-24

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6/9/00	0190-838	Paul desires the mantle of opposition from Satan, reaching the highest form of the spiritual life. Phi 3:12; Num 16:3,13-14,41; Act 9:1-5		
		What Direction Are You Going In?	6/18/00	84
6/11/00	0190-839	Greatness in the spiritual life belongs to people who never allow their failures to hold them back. Phi 3:12; Act 9:1-5; 13:22; Rom 3:10-18; Pro 24:15-18		
6/13/00	0190-840	Do not let an external religion with its rules & forms take place of an inward experience with the Lord Jesus Christ.		

- 6/14/00 0190-841 Phi 3:12; Col 2:13-23; Act 21:1-24
Paul disobeys God & ends up in the Jerusalem disaster.
Phi 3:12; Act 21:1-17; Mat 10:34-38
- 6/15/00 0190-842 Paul's companions follow him even though they know that he is wrong.
Act 21:1-24; Gal 5:18; Jdg 7:2-3; Deu 20:1-9
- 6/16/00 0190-843 Paul refuses the warnings from God, because of
sentimentality & emotional attachment.
Act 21:1-24; 13:44-46; Deu 25:5,11-12

		The Failure of the Apostle Paul	6/25/00	87
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- 6/18/00 0190-844 Paul's mistake, not sin, but not operating in his spiritual gift.
Col 3:25; 1Co 12:4-7,14-18; 1Jo 3:16-18
- 6/20/00 0190-845 The lesson Paul learned about the geographical viewpoint &
operational will of God.
Act 21:18-23; Joh 8:31-32,36; Selected passages from Galatians & Romans
- 6/21/00 0190-846 Paul fails to realize that love must be directed toward
doctrine first & not toward people.
Act 21:18-25; Psa 118:17-18; Num 6:1-5
- 6/22/00 0190-847 The evil influence of religion.
Act 21:17-26; Mat 23:13-16,27; Psa 37:3-5; Gal 2:4-14
- 6/23/00 0190-848 Paul rebukes Peter for doing the very thing he is now doing,
being a hypocrite.
Joh 12:43-44; Act 21:26-27; Gal 2:4-14; Heb 10:5-14

		The Divine Discipline of the Apostle Paul	7/2/00	90
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- 6/25/00 0190-849 Paul is out of fellowship, because he has compromised his religion.
Act 21:18-30; Rom 2:1; 14:4,10; 1Jo 3:11-15
- 6/27/00 0190-850 God allows the evil of legalism & self-righteousness to
discipline the Apostle Paul.
Act 21:27-29; 13:44-45,49-52; 17:2-5; 21:30-33
- 6/28/00 0190-851 The discipline of the Apostle Paul & God's way of deliverance.
Act 21:27-32; 22:21-23; Pro 16:1-6
- 6/29/00 0190-852 The great lesson the Apostle Paul learned about failure.
Act 21:27-36; Rom 9:1-5; 1Jo 2:9-11; 3:15; 4:20
- 6/30/00 0190-853 The valuable lesson Paul learned that he desires for us to learn.
Act 21:31-36; 22:21-22; Joh 10:10-11; Phi 3:12-13

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- 7/2/00 0190-854 Doc: Failure, Part 1 Many times failure can be a back door to success
Phi 3:10-14; 1Ch 21:1-4,7-13; Psa 103
- 7/9/00 0190-855 Doc: Failure, Part 2. The worst thing you can do is to doubt
God's love toward you.
Phi 3:12-14; Psa 103:1-14; 51:1-4
- 7/11/00 0190-856 Doc: Failure, Part 3. God's love is expressed toward His
people after they have failed, not because they have failed.
Psa 103:1-20; Jud 1:16-22; Rev 19:12; 2:17
- 7/12/00 0190-857 Doc: Failure, Part 4. Failure can be an opportunity for
growth or a deterrent to growth.
Psa 103:10-20; Heb 4:10-16; Act 28:4-6
- 7/13/00 0190-858 Doc: Failure, Part 5. Given the right perspective, even a
failure can look great.
- 7/14/00 0190-859 The humility & objectivity to learn from your mistakes &
failures rather than looking for someone to blame.
Phi 3:13b; 2Ti 4:6-8

		Pursuing Vigorously What Lies Ahead	7/23/00	96
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- 7/16/00 0190-860 The two choices: Continue to blame others or take responsibility for
your own decisions & go forward in the Plan of God.
Phi 3:13b; Heb 12:15; 2Jo 8-9
- 7/18/00 0190-861 To find fault and blame others is easy, to do better is
much more difficult & virtuous.

- 7/19/00 0190-862 Phi 3:13b; Act 21; Act 22; Act 23
Constantly forgetting the things that lie behind & reaching forward to what lies ahead.
- 7/20/00 0190-863 Phi 3:13; 1Ti 4:10; 6:12
The three ultimate objective of the spiritual life; supergrace, spiritual maturity, & ultra-supergrace.
- 7/21/00 0190-864 Phi 3:13; 2Pe 3:10-18; Heb 6:1
In the midst of pressing on, there is rest & the struggle is gone.
- Phi 3:13; Job 42:10-12; Rom 7:15-8:1; Heb 4:9-12

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| 7/23/00 | 0190-865 | Ten Principles we learn from the failures & the mistakes of the Apostle Paul.
Phi 3:7-13; 1Jo 2:1-2; 3:19-20; Job 1:21-22; 2:7-10; Mat 12:46-50 | | |
| 8/1/00 | 0190-866 | The Millennial Conference, Part 1. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life.
Jam 1:19-25; 2Co 6:1-2; 1Co 2:14; 1:2,9,24,26 | | |
| 8/1/00 | 0190-867 | The Millennial Conference, Part 2. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life. (No verses on tape) | | |
| 8/2/00 | 0190-868 | The Millennial Conference, Part 3. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life. (No verses on tape) | | |
| 8/2/00 | 0190-869 | The Millennial Conference, Part 4. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life. (No verses on tape) | | |
| 8/3/00 | 0190-870 | The Millennial Conference, Part 5. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life. (No verses on tape) | | |
| 8/3/00 | 0190-871 | The Millennial Conference, Part 6. The Ultimate Challenge of the Spiritual Life. (No verses on tape) | | |

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| 8/6/00 | 0190-872 | Not quitting & the marvelous blessing of perseverance, endurance & encouragement.
Phi 3:12-14; 2Th 1:2-4; 2Ti 2:7-13; 3:10-12; 4:3-5; Rom 3:13 | | |
| 8/8/00 | 0190-873 | Pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
Phi 3:14; Col 3:1-3; 1Pe 2:9,21; 3:9; 5:10; 2Pe 1:5-11 | | |
| 8/9/00 | 0190-874 | The invitation & calling of God upon every believer.
1Pe 2:9,21; 3:9; 5:10; Phi 3:14; Mar 6:1-4; 5:25-34 | | |
| 8/10/00 | 0190-875 | The upward call of God in Christ Jesus, Part 1.
Phi 3:14; 1Pe 2:9,21; 3:9; 5:10; 1Co 1:9; 1Ti 6:12 | | |
| 8/11/00 | 0190-876 | The upward call of God in Christ Jesus, Part 2.
1Pe 2:9,21; 3:9; 5:10; Mat 11:20-26; 1Co 2:4; 4:20 | | |

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| 8/13/00 | 0190-877 | Learning how to press on & handle the so-called mundane aspects of life.
Phi 3:14; Rom 14:4-8; Luk 16:10-12; Psa 90 | | |
| 8/15/00 | 0190-878 | Growing through those boring, tiresome, monotonous areas of life.
Psa 90; 2Pe 3:10-14 | | |
| 8/16/00 | 0190-879 | The futility & vanity of living for the things in this life which will all be destroyed in God's timing.
Psa 90; 2Pe 3:10-14 | | |
| 8/17/00 | 0190-880 | The absence of God is destructive to human life.
Psa 90; Jam 4:13-14; Psa 32:1-2; 86:15 | | |
| 8/18/00 | 0190-881 | Investing our days properly so that we may gain the ability to see life as God sees it.
Psa 90; Rom 9:14-21; Eph 5:14-18 | | |

		The Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins	8/27/00	109
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| 8/20/00 | 0190-882 | Having the right attitude by protecting our soul from attitude sins. The Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins, Part 1.
Phi 3:15; 2Ti 3:17; Selected Pro; Jam 3:14-16 | | |
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- 8/22/00 0190-883 Having the right attitude by protecting our soul from mental attitude sins. The Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins, Part 2. Phi 3:15; 1Jo 4:18; Psa 32:5; 38:18; Selected Pro
- 8/23/00 0190-884 Having the right attitude by protecting our soul from mental attitude sins. The Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins, Part 3. Selected Pro; Mat 7:1-4; Phi 4:8; Tit 1:15-16
- 8/24/00 0190-885 Facing the different tests that will call for all of your doctrine to maintain an objective mental attitude. Phi 3:15; 1Co 2:1-6; 14:20; Jam 1:4,25; 3:2; 1Co 3:1-3
- 8/25/00 0190-886 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 1. The importance of the quantity and quality of what you think. Phi 3:15; 1Ti 1:18-20; 2Ti 4:14-15; Psa 23:3; 19:7; Pro 18:15

		No Tree this Week		
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- 8/27/00 0190-887 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 2. The way you think may defeat you before you ever do anything about it. Phi 3:15; Pro 27:19; 16:2; 15:13-15; Phi 4:8; Tit 1:15-16
- 8/29/00 0190-888 Pennsylvania Conference. One of the most dangerous areas of our life, our attitude toward our self, Part 1. No Verses on Tape
- 8/30/00 0190-889 Pennsylvania Conference. One of the most dangerous areas of our life, our attitude toward our self, Part 2. No Verses on Tape
- 8/31/00 0190-890 Pennsylvania Conference. One of the most dangerous areas of our life, our attitude toward our self, Part 3. No Verses on Tape

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- 9/3/00 0190-891 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 3. One of the most dangerous areas of our life, our attitude towards our self. Mar 7:14-23; 1Jo 1:8-10; Rom 7:14-8:2; Pro 30:11-14
- 9/5/00 0190-892 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 4. The body affects the soul and the mentality, just as the soul affects the body. Phi 3:15; 1Co 10:11-12; 8:1-3; Jer 9:23-24; Eph 1:18-20
- 9/6/00 0190-893 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 5. The body affects the soul and the mentality, just as the soul affects the body. Phi 3:15; 1Co 10:11-12; 8:1-3; Jer 9:23-24; Eph 1:18-20
- 9/7/00 0190-894 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 6. Concentration is not the ends, it is the means of something far greater. Eph 1:18-20; 1Co 1:18,22-24; 2:4-5; Joh 14:22-26; Mar 4:23-27
- 9/8/00 0190-895 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 7. God is working in our life in spite of our ability to recognize it. Psa 138:7-8; Mat 15:7-9; Psa 19:7-11; 1Co 2:9-14

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- 9/10/00 0190-896 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Pt8 Gods ultimate goal for our lives Gal 5:16-17; Rom 7:22-23; Joh 3:3-7; Eph 3:14-20; Psa 19:7-11
- 9/12/00 0190-897 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 9. Understanding the difference the human soul and the human spirit. Heb 4:9-12; Rom 11:25-36; Psa 19:7-11
- 9/13/00 0190-898 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 10. It is the spiritual birth linked up with the soul that allows us to understand God. Gen 2:7,16-17; 3:1-10; 5:3; Psa 19:7-11
- 9/14/00 0190-899 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 11. Realizing all of the fantastic changes taking place in your inner man. Gen 2:25; 3:7; 1Co 14:2,14; Psa 19:7-11
- 9/15/00 0190-900 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 12. The delegation of divine power as it relates to the change in our mental attitude. Luk 21:12-15; 2Co 4:16-18; Joh 6:63; 1Co 2:9-14

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- 9/17/00 0190-901 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 13. The key to having our system of thinking changed. Job 32:1-8; Joh 6:63; Mat 6:19-24; 1Co 2:9-14

- 9/19/00 0190-902 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 14. Scriptural documentation concerning the significance of mental attitude. Rom 8:7-16; 1Jo 2:12-14; 5:18-19; 2Ti 4:9-18; Isa 28:9-13
- 9/20/00 0190-903 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 15. The true mental attitude of love for God. Joh 14:15,21-24; 15:9-10; 16:25-27; 21:15-17
- 9/21/00 0190-904 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 16. The difference Mat 22:37-39; 6:5; 10:37; 1Pe 1:8; Job 21:15-17
- 9/22/00 0190-905 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 17. The most important mental attitude. Gal 5:6,14; Joh 21:15-17; Jam 2:23; 2Ti 2:24-25
- 9/23/00 0190-906 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 18. The proper mental attitude when it comes to worship. Joh 4:6-24; Luk 4:5-8; 1Cor 11:27-31; Rom 11:32-36

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- 9/26/00 0190-907 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 19. True worship must be motivated from the mentality of the soul. Phi 2:9-11; Rom 14:11-12; 15:8-11; 1Ch 21:21-24; 2Co 8:3-5
- 9/27/00 0190-908 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 20. The main difference between living in the cosmic system & advancing to spiritual maturity. Mat 12:22-28; 34:37; 15:7-11; Isa 28:9-14
- 9/28/00 0190-909 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 21. Thought, speech & action are a reflection of your mental attitude & motivation in life. Psa 23:1-3a; Isa 28:9-14; 29:24; Pro 24:10; 23:6-8
- 9/29/00 0190-910 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 22. You'll never be a well-rounded personality with a limited vocabulary. Pro 24:10; 23:6-8; 27:19

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- 10/1/00 0190-911 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 23. Acquiring the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom. Isa 50:4; 2Ti 4:1-5; Pro 8
- 10/3/00 0190-912 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 24. The divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom resident in the soul. Pro 8; 24:1-6; 17:28
- 10/4/00 0190-913 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 25. The production of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom in your life. Pro 8; Psa 103:6-7
- 10/5/00 0190-914 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 26. The battle of the Soul. 2Co 10:3-6; Isa 1:5-6; 11:3
- 10/6/00 0190-915 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 27. Identifying the battle in the soul. 2Co 10:3-6; 2:11; 11:3

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- 10/8/00 0190-916 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 28. The mental warfare based on deception. 2Co 10:4-6; 1Co 3:16-23; 11:3; 1Ti 1:18; 6:12; 4:7
- 10/10/00 0190-917 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude. In relation to humility. Joh 13:13-17; Phi 2:6-8
- 10/11/00 0190-918 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 29. The mental attitude can be a source of bondage or the source of liberation. Psa 119:43-45; 2Co 4:16-18; Eph 4:22-23
- 10/12/00 0190-919 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 30. Rapport in the royal family is based on mental attitude. Phi 2:1-5; 3:15; 4:6-8; 2Co 9:6-12; 4:15-17; 1Ch 29:1-14
- 10/13/00 0190-920 The Doctrine of Mental Attitude, Part 31. The true Biblical mental attitude of giving. 2Co 9:6-12; Phi 4:15-17; 1Ch 29:1-17

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10/17/00	0190-922	If you have a different mental attitude, then God will reveal that also to you. Phi 3:15b; 1Co 1:10-15; 11:18-19		
10/18/00	0190-923	Reaction or response reveals your spiritual growth. Phi 3:15b; 1Co 1:10-15; 11:18-19; Joh 12:42-43		
10/19/00	0190-924	How God reveals what your attitude really is. Phi 3:15b; 1Co 12:22-25; 12:7; 11:18		
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The Doctrine of Walking and Persevering in the Christian Way of Life			10/29/00	139
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10/24/00	0190-927	The doctrine of walking and persevering in the Christian way of life, Prt. 2. Phi 3:16; Gal 5:24-25; Gal 6:15-16; Mat 12:46-50		
10/25/00	0190-928	The doctrine of walking and persevering in the Christian way of life, Prt. 3. Phi 3:16; Gal 5:24-25; Gal 6:15-16; Mat 12:46-50		
10/26/00	0190-929	The doctrine of walking and persevering in the Christian way of life, Prt. 4. 2 Ti 4:10; Eph 2:3; 4:22; Gal 2:14; 1Jo 2:6; Rom 6:4; Rev 3:4-6		
10/27/00	0190-930	Phi 3:17 Brethren[members of the royal family] be co-imitators of me Phi 3:17a; 1Co 9:24-27; 1Co 11:1-2.		
The Doctrine of Pseudo Spirituality.			11/5/00	142
10/29/00	0190-931	The goal of the Christian life is to be more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ. Phi 3:17; 1Co 4:16-17; 11:1-2; 15:9-10		
10/31/00	0190-932	We are to copy or imitate the doctrinal teaching not the personality or lifestyle of the teacher. Phi 3:17a; Heb 13:7; Col 2:13-23		
11/1/00	0190-933	Beware of Pseudo-Spirituality, Prt 1. Phi 3:17a; Rom 16:17-18; 6:13; 1Co 8:4-13; 9:10		
11/2/00	0190-934	Beware of Pseudo-Spirituality, Prt 2. Rom 14:13-15; 2; 2Co 6:1-10; Mat 23:15; Luk 15:25-32		
11/3/00	0190-935	Beware of Pseudo-Spirituality, Prt. 3. Luk 15:25-32; Mat 9:10-13; Luk 18:9-14		
Walking According to His Pattern			11/12/00	146
11/5/00	0190-936	Beware of Pseudo-Spirituality, Prt. 4. Ritual spirituality, such as water baptism and the Lord's Supper. 1Co 1:10-17; 12:12-13; Joh 15:1-7; Luk 22:1-6; 9:49-50		
11/7/00	0190-937	Be having respect for the same ones, who constantly walk according to the pattern you have in us. Phi 3:17; 1Ti 5:17-20; Tit 2:3-5		
11/8/00	0190-938	Learning the difference between walking and marching. Phi 3:17; Eph 4:11-16; Gal 6:1-5; 1Co 7:29-31		
11/9/00	0190-939	There are many times that we just have to walk alone with the Lord and bear our own burdens. Phi 3:17; Lam 3:21-28		
11/10/00	0190-940	The one pattern or one model or one example or one copybook we are to follow. Phi 3:17; 1Ti 4:6-12; Act 19:11-12, 1Co 14:6-25		
Many Walk in the Opposite Direction			11/19/00	149
11/12/00	0190-941	The results of not following the one pattern, the one model,		

the one example, or the one copybook.

Phi 3:17; Gen 6:14-15, 19:22; Exo 25:1-9; 22; 40; 26:30; Heb 8:1-5.

11/13/00 0190-942 After making a decision to go forward with God, beware of the reversionist.

Phi 3:18a; 2Ti 4:1-4; 1Ti 6:3-5; Psa 55:12-14

11/15/00 0190-943 The greatest enemies of Christianity, not unbelievers.

Phi 3:18a; 1Ti 1:19-20; 2Ti 4:10, 14

11/16/00 0190-944 For many keep walking, concerning whom Paul continually warned his church many times to be aware of.

Phi 3:18a; Joh 8:44; Gal 2:11-16

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11/21/00 0190-945 The wonderful memories of the past not only turned against Paul but also turned against the cross.

Phi 3:18b; 2Co 5:14-17; Rev 2:4-5

11/22/00 0190-946 Paul discovered that the more you do for others, the more they expect

Phi 3:18b; 2:1; Rom 9:1-5; Act 6:1-5; 1Ti 3:1-2

11/23/00 0190-947 Doctrine of weeping. Definition. Character and integrity on part of man and woman is sensitivity of soul.

Phi 3:18b; Num 14:32; 14:4

11/24/00 0190-948 Doctrine of weeping. Prt 2. Manliness means that you are sensitive to others not insensitive.

Phi 3:18b; Num 13:32-14:2; Heb 5:5-8; Deu 8:1-14

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11/26/00 0190-949 Doctrine of weeping. Prt 3. Illegitimate weeping related to both the emotional and arrogance complex of sins.

Phi 3:18b; Num 13:32-14:4

11/28/00 0190-950 Doctrine of weeping. Prt 4. Illegitimate weeping is irrational, illogical, and absurd.

Num 14:1-4; Exo 1:11-14,16; 2:11,23; 3:7,9; Deu 1:42-45; Heb 12:15-17

11/29/00 0190-951 Doctrine of weeping. Prt 5. Esau cried because of the hardness of his heart and the scar tissue of the soul.

Deu 1:42-45; Heb 12:15-17; Mat 27:3-5; 1Sa 30:1-4

11/30/00 0190-952 Doctrine of weeping. Prt 6. Scripture related to legitimate weeping.

2Sa 18:31-19:2; Joh 11:33-36; Phi 3:18-19; Psa 30:4-5

12/1/00 0190-953 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 1.

Phi 3:18c; Rom 5:8-12; Eco 5:14-21

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12/3/00 0190-954 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 2.

Phi 3:18; 2Co 5:14-21; Rom 14:4-13; Eze 16:62-63

12/5/00 0190-955 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 3.

Rom 5:8; 1Pe 2:24; 3:18; Gal 3:13; Eph 2:14-16

12/6/00 0190-956 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 4.

1Pe 2:24; 3:18; Gal 3:13; Eph 2:14-16; 1Jo 3:5.

12/7/00 0190-957 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 5.

Rom 8:5-8; Eph 2:8-9; 1Jo 1:6-10; Eph 1:13; Rom 10:9-10.

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12/10/00 0190-958 Meet the true enemies of the cross of Christ. Prt. 6.

Rom 4:12; 10:9-10; Joh 6:49-56; Rom 3:20-28; Heb 1:13;10:12-13.

12/12/00 0190-959 Doctrine of Enemyship, Introduction and Definition.

Rev 12:9; 20:1-10; Mat 10:34-36; Gal 5:1; 13-14; 1Pe 5:6-9

12/13/00 0190-960 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 2. The difference between alienation and hostility.

Psa 21:7-8; 23:5; 35:11-28; Heb 12:15-17.

12/14/00 0190-961 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 3. Personal and historical enemyship, especially against the Jews.

Rom 9:1-16; Gen 27:41; Rev 12:1-6; Gen 15:6; 12:1-3; 13:14-16; 15:81-21

12/15/00 0190-962 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 4. Why Satan wants to destroy the Jews
Rev 12:1-6; Gen 15:6; 12:1-3; 13:14-16; 15:18-21; Jer 31:31-34.

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12/17/00 0190-963 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 5. The importance of understanding angelic enmity.

1Jo 5:19; 1Ti 5:14-15; 1Pe 5:5-10; Jam 4:7-8

12/19/00 0190-964 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 6. Our true enemy desires to hold out bait to entice us.

1Co 3:18; 2Co 11:3; Jam 4:7-8; Pro 11:2, 16:18

12/20/00 0190-965 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 7. To subdue and capture the enemy without fighting is the supreme victory of angelic enemies
Phi 2:1-5; Act 20:27-31; Eph 4:14; Heb 10:13; Col 1:21

12/21/00 0190-966 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 8. The final destiny of the enemies.
Rev 20:10-15; 1Ti 5:21; Mat 25:41; Luk 15:4-10

12/22/00 0190-967 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 9. The justice and righteousness of God dealing with His enemies.

Mat 10:28; Isa 14:9-17; Luk 15:4-19

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12/24/00 0190-968 Christmas Special: God steps out of Heaven and becomes a member of the human race.

Luk 2:1-20; Gal 4:4; Col 1:15-17; Rev 1:7-8; 21:6; 22:12-13

12/26/00 0190-969 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 10. Did the angels have an opportunity to be saved?

Luk 12:4-5; Isa 14:16; Rev 15:4; Rev 16:5; 7:10-12; 5:2-5

12/27/00 0190-970 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 11. The character and nature of God with all His creatures.

Jer 4:23-26; Rev 5:1-5; 7:9-12; 15:1-4; 16:1-5; Gen 3:7,21

12/28/00 0190-971 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 12. The carnal believer becomes an enemy of God.

Rom 8:6-8; 1Co 3:1-3; 1Sa 28:1-2; 1Ch 10:13-14

12/29/00 0190-972 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 13. God is the Enemy of the Reversionistic Believer.

1Sa 28:1-3; 16; Psa 55:12-21

12/31/00 0190-973 Doctrine of Enemyship, Prt. 14. A lesson to learn from a reversionistic believer.

1Sa 28:1-4; Lev 19:31; 20:6; 20:27; 2Ki 21:6; 2Co 6:14-17

Heroes Who Fulfill Their Personal Sense of Destiny

1-09-00

Abraham is the pattern for salvation by faith alone in Christ alone (Rom 4:3-10), he received the imputation of divine righteousness and was justified by that faith in Christ alone as a Gentile long before he became a Jew. The imputation of divine righteousness occurred when Abraham was an uncircumcised Gentile. Abraham did not become a Jew when he was saved in Ur of the Chaldees but at age ninety-nine. There came a point in the life of Abraham when his personal sense of destiny had been attained in the same way we attain it through the use of the revealed word of God. God ordered him to be circumcised; this became the sign of Abraham's personal sense of destiny. The Judaizers who followed the Apostle Paul around confused this ritual of circumcision with the reality of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone. The ritual belongs to Israel only as a post salvation experience of the attainment of a personal sense of destiny (Rom 4:11). Abraham believed in Jesus Christ as He was revealed then, just as we believe in Jesus Christ now and he used the faith-rest drill as a believer when at age ninety-nine he was under the hopeless condition of sexual death. Abraham had a very strong personal sense of destiny. From this sense of destiny he had the confident expectation with regard to his heir through whom the promises of God would be extended. He had to overcome the fact he and Sarah were both sexually dead. If you live in your personal sense of destiny, you will have to overcome a lot of facts and odds that seem to be against you. Through it all, remember MAT 19:26 "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Or LUK 1:37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."

Abraham and Sarah finally realized a personal sense of destiny and the first thing they encountered was a test, sexual-death. But a personal sense of destiny never looks at life from the standpoint of human failure or impossibility, because of the strength in claiming the promises of God. Abraham learned that a personal sense of destiny is that status in which what the Bible says is always right no matter what. Abraham did not waver in unbelief; he no longer looked at the promise of God emotionally. Loser believers do not understand this principle because they fail to recognize that they never have to worry about what God doing what He promises to do. With a personal sense of destiny Abraham knew that God never works through dead things, therefore he submitted willingly to circumcision when God gave the commission to Abraham (GEN 17:10-11). So the moment Abraham complied, God restored the sexual ability of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham's personal sense of destiny looked forward to the future and the grace of God related to living in a resurrection body and in a new earth and a new universe. Heb 11:1-2 "Now faith [what is believed--doctrine] is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by means of it [doctrine circulating in the soul] men of old attained approval."

Heb 11:9 "By faith or by means of doctrine he [Abraham] lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise." What is this promise? The answer is found in the land grant covenant or promise, often called the Palestinian covenant and in the doctrine of resurrection. This promise included an eternal city (Gen 13:14-16, Gen 15:18-21). The eternal city is described in Rev 21:2. Abraham looked forward to this eternal city as part of his eternal estate, so that he continued to live in a tent rather than use his great wealth to build a city. Abraham knew a personal sense of destiny was related to resurrection.

More than anything in life Abraham loved his son. Even though he was mandated to sacrifice his son, He knew that God had some reason for it that was beyond human reason. Human sacrifice was contrary to everything in his life. The test was: are you going to believe what God requires and commands, though you do not understand it, or are you going to refuse to make the final step in spiritual growth? Abraham did not become emotional about the Lord's command to sacrifice Isaac. He concluded that God keeps His word. He came to a conclusion that led to action--to obey God. Only God could solve the problem because only God had the power to resurrect anyone. The believer who recognizes his personal sense of destiny realizes that what the Bible says is always right no matter what. Abraham did not waver in unbelief. He believed that what God had said and promised, He was able to perform and provide.

Sarah,

Heb 11:11 "By means of faith [doctrine] even Sarah herself received the power to conceive or for laying down the seed [to ovulate], even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised."

Sarah believed the same promise that was given to Abraham. She came to admire her husband; she had true fellowship with God, from which she had a personal sense of destiny. From that personal sense of destiny she had capacity to love God based on principle of Bible doctrine in her soul. This gave her capacity to love a man she admired.

Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph all died in doctrine without receiving the promises and were never disappointed because they believed in resurrection. Heb 11:13 "All these died in faith without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, they also acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth."

They realized that God is fair and that they did not have the capacity to enjoy that eternal city without a resurrection body, so they saw these things from a distance. By having a personal sense of destiny, you can see from a distance? If you live by this principle, sooner or later everything falls into place. They were occupied with Christ, and they did what we all need to do: not to look at the incapability of man but at the capability of God. It was not the impotence of Abraham at age 99 that was at issue; it was the omnipotence of God. Abraham and Sarah's personal sense of destiny in spiritual maturity was related to resurrection (Heb 11:17-19).

Joseph.

Heb 11:22 "By faith, Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel and gave orders concerning his bones."

In Gen 50:24-26 Joseph was the prime minister of Egypt. Here we note again a very important principle: Our personal sense of destiny is related to resurrection just as Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Our personal sense of destiny does not end in time; it continues in the eternal state, we have a destiny for time and also for eternity. However, just like many believers never fulfill their destiny in time, many also will not fulfill their destiny for the eternal state. They will not receive all of their escrow blessings, which were designed for them in eternity past and therefore will remain on deposit as a memorial to the justice of God.

Gen 50:24-26 "And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham (Gen 13:14-14), to Isaac (Gen 26:3) and to Jacob (Gen 35:12) Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear or take a solemn oath, saying, God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here (Egypt)."

Joseph's coffin would remain unburied for 400 years as a testimony to God's faithfulness. He believed that God would fulfill His word and bring His people back to the promise land. Now, after Joseph died, there is an elapse of 400 years and in every generation the Jews would take their children to the sarcophagus or the stone tomb of Joseph. They would tell the story of God's timing and how God remains faithful to each generation. How God will fulfill His word and someday take the Jews out of Egypt and into the Promised Land and they would bury Joseph's bones there. Joseph teaches us that if we are going to live in our personal sense of destiny, we will have to trust in the timing of God. 400 years later, when Moses left Egypt he took the bones of Joseph with him (EXO 13:19). Two million people were marching out of Egypt and one of the many millions of things that they carried were the bones of Joseph. For the next forty years, the coffin of Joseph was always ahead of the march as they wandered around in the desert. When Joshua led the second generation of Israel into the Land, they buried the bones of Joseph which is recorded in Jos 24:32. Joseph wanted to be buried there because his father Jacob, his mother Rachel, grandfather Isaac, great-grandfather Abraham were buried there. The resurrection was so real and significant to Joseph that when the resurrection would take place, Joseph wanted to be together as a family as they went up. Joseph also knew that although he had control over his life while living, he had no control over the time, the manner, or the place of his death. The death of Joseph was a matter of the sovereign wisdom and integrity of God.

The importance of the Timing of God.

Joseph was not buried until 475 years after his death as a testimony to the faithfulness of God, God's timing and a memorial to the certainty of resurrection. Just as the believer has no control over the time, the manner, or the place of his death, he has no control over his resurrection. The grace policy of God has provided everything the believer needs for time and everything needed in resurrection and for all eternity. When his brothers threw Joseph into the pit, it was God's timing for Joseph, which, at the time, he failed to recognize (Gen 37:23-24). As he sat in the pit, he rejected or ignored the doctrine contained in the dreams (i.e., that he would rule over his family).

There are certain circumstances under which God's plan for our lives cannot be fulfilled, In His perfect timing, God removes us from those circumstances, and it is always very difficult at first, like Joseph in the pit. Our timing can only make us miserable and terminate in disaster. We not only have a personal sense of destiny but God has perfect timing to reach that destiny one step at a time. Under God's timing, if we stick with Him, He works all things together for good. Joseph was the victim of great injustices but that was a part of God's plan. This is the way that God molded the greatest leader of that day. The point is that God is the one who put him there, God is the one who planned for him to be kidnapped, thrown into a pit, sold into Egypt as a slave, and yet it was all a part of his personal sense of destiny.

Joseph learned two major lessons while fulfilling his personal sense of destiny and the timing of God: He learned how to grow under adversity and undeserved suffering and how to prosper and handle blessing. From age 17 to age 30, Joseph was a slave, but what he learned in slavery made him realize that circumstances do not make or bring happiness. Only God can do that, only God can promote and only God can give you a meaningful and purposeful destiny. Joseph was totally helpless as a slave, and will continue to be a slave until he is promoted to the second highest office in the land, then be put into the pit or a prison for a second time. He is still in the right place at the right time. God's timing requires that Joseph spend more time in a second pit through the lies of Potiphar's wife, and it was still a part God's promotion for Joseph. All along the way God is preparing him to be the greatest man in his era. God's timing in the circumstances of life must precede God's promotion. You have to be on God's timing before you can ever be truly promoted. God promotes one step at a time and some of those steps take you to the pit. And how you handle the pit determines your capacity for promotion.

Joseph has passed the people test of hatred, envy and jealousy from his own family. Joseph has passed the prosperity test in the palace of Potiphar. He has passed the temptation test in the seductive advances of Potiphar's wife. He has passed the injustice test of being imprisoned as an innocent person. In Gen 40:1-8, we see Joseph passing this test, he will do double-duty as a slave, and do it without complaining. In these verses we see God's perfect plan and timing and Joseph's advance in his personal sense of destiny come into the picture. Joseph has been faithful and competent in functioning as a slave; therefore God now honors his faithfulness in the little things by using dreams to teach doctrine and to promote Joseph.

Waiting on the Timing of God to Fulfill Your Personal Sense of Destiny

1-16-00

As we have noted from the Old Testament, there were visible heroes who achieved their personal sense of destiny. We noted Abraham and Sarah and their personal sense of destiny, and Joseph fulfilling his personal sense of destiny. Now we will look at Moses as he fulfills his personal sense of destiny.

A personal sense of destiny in someone who is a genius is a very fragile thing. There are great frustrations that can accompany a genius; they are often the object of hatred, vindictiveness, and vilification because they are so much smarter than others. Moses was the greatest genius recorded in Old Testament times. Moses was a genius in music, military, equitation, archery, a literary genius, and in engineering. He was a beautiful child and later, a handsome man of phenomenal strength. Of all of these qualities and accomplishments that Moses had, the best was a personal sense of destiny.

Historical Background

Moses grew up as the adopted son of the queen of Egypt, in the most beautiful palace in the ancient world, the palace of Egypt. He grew up with two other children in the palace: the bastard son of pharaoh Thutmose II, who would one day be crowned Thutmose III, the greatest ruler in the history of Egypt, and Neferari (neph-fer ru-ri), the daughter of queen Hatshepsut, who loved Moses. Thutmose II married Hatshepsut and lived until 1508 BC, leaving Hatshepsut as the queen regent after his death. Moses was the crown prince and heir apparent to the throne. Thutmose III was extremely jealous of Moses who hated him and Hatshepsut, and would do anything to get rid of him. Moses loved Neferari and was about to be named Pharaoh, but instead he made a dramatic decision because of his personal sense of destiny. Act 7:22 breaks in on a speech by Stephen to the Jews having to do with Moses, things that we do not learn from the Old Testament.

ACT 7:22 "And Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds." Moses was educated in all the academics of the Egyptians, and then the verse says he was dynamic in words and deeds. People like to teach that Moses was not an eloquent speaker, but that is not true. The point is that Moses was the number one man of the Egyptian empire at its' peak. All of this one man had achieved before he had reached age 40 and was the crown prince and heir apparent. That was one reason why Thutmose junior who would later be called Thutmose III despised him. Hatshepsut, the queen had chosen Moses to be the next ruler of Egypt, Thutmose the III hated Hatshepsut as much as he hated Moses.

ACT 7:23 "But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel." Although he was the greatest man in the Egyptian Empire, his personal sense of destiny was about to lead him away. He was about to be crowned the next Pharaoh, which meant that whoever became the next ruler had to marry princess Neferari, whom Moses loved. As a believer it was time for him to identify himself with the Jews, because God had revealed to him that he would be the founder of the Jewish nation in fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. The problem was that Moses was planning how he would deliver them from slavery. ACT 7:24 "And when he saw one {of them} [the Jews] being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian."

Here Moses commits murder to deliver a fellow Jew. This was a taskmaster, who kept the slaves who were the toughest of the Egyptians and Moses stepped in between them and killed him and did it as a born again believer (EXO 2:11-15). Moses had failed to deliver Israel on Moses' timing. His timing was wrong, however there was nothing wrong with his personal sense of destiny. He was trying to fulfill his personal sense of destiny on his own power and own strength, and after all he is a genius.

Now we know he did all of that as a born again believer because of ACT 7:25 "And he supposed (concluded) that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him; but they did not understand." Moses had a personal sense of destiny with a dilemma wrapped around it, but the Jews did not understand he was to deliver them. Obviously, something is wrong here, Moses has this personal sense of destiny and is going to deliver the Jews from slavery. He will be the father of the first client nation in history, but they don't understand it!

Moses had the right personal sense of destiny but the wrong timing. God's timing must always supersede man's timing. Moses has learned a lot of things about Bible doctrine, and God has revealed to him that he would be the means of delivering Israel and starting the first client nation in history. ACT 7:26-29 "And on the following day he appeared to them as they [the two Jews] were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another? But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, who made you a ruler and judge over us? You do not mean to kill me in the same as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you? And at this remark Moses fled, and became an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons." Moses fled because God had revealed to him something that gave him a personal sense of destiny but it was not working out the way he thought it should. So Moses fled into the desert for forty years. In the forty years that Moses was in Midian, the Jews become ready for deliverance. It took his entire life, 120 years, for his personal sense of destiny to be fulfilled. Moses had to learn that human power and human dynamics cannot fulfill the plan of God in any dispensation. So he fled and went to the backside of a place in a desert called Midian, and he married a woman of that tribe and had two sons. For forty years Moses had to go to the college of Bible doctrine and become occupied with Christ before he could be sent back to Egypt. Then before Moses could take his family back into Egypt forty years later, his personal sense of destiny demanded that he circumcise his two sons, as this was the ritual sign of circumcision. Moses could not give the message to Pharaoh to let the Jews go or all the first-born males in Egypt would be slain by God until Moses had first circumcised his own sons. Moses had been put under the sin unto death for failure to obey, EXO 4:24-26. His wife circumcised their son and then left Moses and took the sons with her. Moses had learned the lesson that when God makes a promise, it depends God's timing and power, not man's. Every believer must learn the lesson of dependence on who and what God is. If Moses was to carry out the divine commission with success, he must first of all prove himself to be a faithful servant of Jehovah in his own house. This he was to learn from the occurrence at the inn or the lodging place in EXO 4:24 "Now it came about at the lodging place on the way that the Lord met him and sought to put him to death." Moses was on the way; Jehovah met him at the resting-place and sought to kill him. In what manner, is not stated. This hostile attitude on the part of God was caused by his neglect to circumcise his son; for, as soon as Zipporah circumcised her son with a stone, the Lord let Moses go. From the scriptures it is evident that Zipporah only circumcised one of the two sons of Moses so that the other, no doubt the elder one, had already been circumcised in accordance with the law. In the case of children the punishment fell upon the parents, and first of all upon the father, who had neglected to keep the commandment of God. Now, though Moses had probably omitted circumcision simply from regard to his Midianitish wife, who disliked this operation, he had been guilty of a crime, which God could not pass over in the case of one whom He had chosen to be His messenger, to establish His covenant with Israel. He threatened Moses with death, to bring him to a consciousness of his sin, either by the voice of conscience or by some word, which accompanied His attack upon Moses; and also to show him with what devotion God demanded as one of His representatives. Additionally, Zipporah's dislike to circumcision had been the cause of the omission, is inferred from the fact, that on the Lord's attack upon Moses, she proceeded at once to perform what had been neglected, and, as she did it with inward repugnance and disgust. Here is one of the greatest men in the ancient world who has a personal sense of destiny to lead God's people, the people of Jehovah, to become the greatest nation in the world and he is married to a woman who doesn't respect him. That ought to be comforting to some men.

By the way, she was one of those seven daughters of Midian that Moses had rescued as we saw last evening. But here is the greatest man in the ancient world being despised and disrespected by his wife. So, as a part of his personal sense of destiny, Moses teaches us that every believer must understand the essence of God and the fact that the Lord will provide the power. It took Moses forty years to learn this lesson. He was 80 years old when he came back! By that time he had learned that human power and human dynamics couldn't fulfill your personal sense of destiny. Therefore, what is available for us in the Church-age is the two power options, those three spiritual skills, and those ten problem-solving devices.

Now, this was the dilemma of Moses, and it took forty years to sort it out. And he already made some fantastic decisions. He left Egypt. He turned his back on great promotion and success. So that we read in Heb 11:24 "By means of doctrine, when Moses had grown up or become great, he refused to be

proclaimed the Pharaoh;" For that is why it says.....he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Moses acted upon the confidence of the divine revelation that he received personally from TLJC. When he had attained celebrity status, he said "No" to being designated the son of the daughter of Pharaoh or the new king of Egypt. Why?

HEB 11:25 "choosing rather to endure ill? Treatment or maltreatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing or temporary pleasures of sin;"

He selected the option of undergoing adversity along with the people of God rather than to have the momentary stimulation related to the sin nature choosing against God. He refused human celebrity ship and accepted his personal sense of destiny. And that is because he did not want to fall short of his personal destiny as prescribed by God.

The word sin here has a reference to the self-indulgence in approbation and celebrity ship. Giving into power lust or approbation lust. He refused it. Why? Because it was not promotion from God. That's why Egypt represents a type of the world or the cosmic system and we are to reject the promotions from the cosmos.

HEB 11:26 "considering or concluding the reproach [insults, reviling, disgrace] for the sake of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking ahead to his reward."

When it says considering the reproach, it means he objectively considered as greater wealth the defamation connected with identification with Christ rather than the treasures of Egypt. He kept on looking forward to the things of God and away from all that distracts from being occupied with Christ. And he thought just like Paul, PHI 3:7 "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ."

Prin-A personal sense of destiny establishes true spiritual values in time related to the spiritual life.

A personal sense of destiny remembers how the grace of God supplied every thing needed for time and in eternity, billions and billions of years ago. Moses made his decision to give up the throne of Egypt as a celebrity, not as a failure in life. The decision was not subjective, emotional, acting out of guilt, impulsive, or based on bitterness and disillusion. Moses made his decision at the lowest ebb of Jewish history. So there was nothing to be gained by this decision. Moses made the decision when he was fully aware of the pleasures he would have if he remained in Egypt. Moses also had to choose between God's plan for his life and the woman he loved. Moses reversed what Adam had done in the garden, he chose God over the woman. So, Heb 11:27 "By means of doctrine he left Egypt behind [dramatic aorist, he never looked back], not being afraid of the king's anger; for he endured or persevered, because he kept on seeing the invisible One."

Moses understood the fantastic blessings for eternity. By means of doctrine in his soul he left Egypt behind, not fearing the uncontrolled rage of Thutmose III, the Pharaoh, for he persevered, as seeing or being extremely aware of the invisible reality. So, Moses was a genius in human celebrity ship and he walked out on human celebrity ship. He saw something far greater. He saw the blessings of eternity. He saw the objectives of the spiritual life. And he moved in the direction of these objectives and he walked out on his celebrity ship. And as a result he cracked the maturity barrier and went all the way to ultra-supergrace. And he eventually had one of the greatest deaths in the Old Testament under dying grace. Just like Abraham, Moses in HEB 11:10 was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. The dynamic decision of Moses was made under three legitimate motivations: metabolized doctrine circulating in his soul, cognition of his future blessings in eternity, and occupation with the person of Christ. Now, many people make decisions to leave a place because they lost out there, they failed so they just want to change geographical locations because in a sense they lost there. And usually they'll try to get others to follow their footsteps to justify their actions. Not so with Moses. Moses was at the peak of his greatness and power in the Egyptian empire. Moses was also a believer in Christ with metabolized doctrine circulating in his soul. He kept seeing Him who is invisible. He made the decision as a celebrity not as a loser looking for a change of environment to try again. Or looking for a change of environment because things did not go the way he wanted them to go. Now, as noted last evening, at age 40, Moses overshadowed Thutmose junior who became Thutmose III, the greatest ruler in Egyptian history. Moses made the decision as a believer and did not feel threatened by giving up the throne. He made his decision at the

lowest ebb of Jewish history so that there was nothing to be gained by this decision. As a people in slavery, the Jews offered no opportunity for the advance of Moses and to the contrary Moses tried to do something for the Jews and they rejected him. So, Moses made this decision at a point of time when he was also fully aware of the pleasures and stimulation of a success like in Egypt. He rejected more power, more success, more influence, more approbation and more wealth and possibly even a woman that he loved. Therefore, one of many masterful musical pieces Moses wrote is found in Psa 90:12, "So teach us to not number our days but organize our days, that we may attain a heart of wisdom."

Manah (maw-naw'); means to weigh out; to prioritize, to prepare, to organize. Organize your priorities in life. Then organize your time around those priorities. The point is that a personal sense of destiny must be related always to divine power, never human genius, never human dynamics. And Moses learned that a legitimate personal sense of destiny can be destroyed through arrogance. So, while Moses had a personal sense of destiny, he was not yet ready to be promoted to the leadership of Israel. A personal sense of destiny must be reinforced with all the problem solving devices on the FLOT line of the soul. The arrogance skills have no place in the fulfillment of God's plan, and are, therefore, a distraction to the personal sense of destiny. Moses had made a great decision which required sacrifice on his part. Now, he must learn to use divine power and never look back

Joshua: Being Strong and Courageous as You Fulfill Your Personal Sense of Destiny 1-23-00

We will next look at Joshua, an Old Testament prophet, who was from the tribe of Ephraim. Joshua was a young man at the time of the Exodus and was chosen by Moses to be his assistant and personal attendant, EXO 33:11. Indeed, his name means literally "his own servant" referring to his relationship with Moses. He was present on the mountain when Moses received the Law in EXO 24:13ff. He was guardian of the tent of meeting when Moses met with Jehovah or the Lord Jesus Christ. He was also a military hero and one of the twelve spies sent into the promise land. He trusted in the Lord did not give an evil report like the majority of the spies did. Joshua was a "stand in the gap" individual who went against the majority. This prepared him to fulfill his personal sense of destiny. In fact, because of his faithfulness, Joshua was one of the few survivors of the Exodus generation NUM 26:65, "And not a man was left of them, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun."

Joshua was commissioned by the Lord to become the leader of the Client Nation of Israel when Moses died, (DEU 31:14-23). His personal sense of destiny was to lead the children of Israel into the promise land and to establish them as a nation. Therefore, as a part of his personal sense of destiny, the Lord confirmed Joshua before the people as His new leader. JOS 1:1-9. Three times in this passage the following phrase is used, "Only be strong and very courageous."

Abraham and Sarah taught us that if we live in our personal sense of destiny, we would have to overcome a lot of adverse circumstances that appear to be against us. Joseph taught us that if we were going to live in our personal sense of destiny, we would have to trust in the timing of God. Moses taught us that if we are going to fulfill our personal sense of destiny, we must not rely upon our own human resources but rely upon the power and the strength of God. Joshua will teach us the importance of being strong and courageous in fulfilling our personal sense of destiny.

After the Lord commissioned Joshua as the new leader of the people to courageously and obediently take all of the Land that He had promised under the Palestinian Covenant (God's real estate deal with Israel), Joshua exhorted the people to prepare to possess the land. They responded with wholehearted support and obeyed him. The first major test they encountered was the transfer of authority from leadership of Moses to Joshua. This was a very difficult test for Joshua. This always carries with it challenges and demands. As a part of his personal sense of destiny, Joshua had to deal with the fact that there would be those who would criticize him. In Joshua chapter two, we see the Lord working behind the scenes for His people while they have no idea what's going on (JOS 2:1-16). One of the ways that the Lord prepared Joshua and the people of Israel for the conquest of the promise land was that He sent out a victorious reconnaissance mission which revealed the peoples fear of Israel. This reconnaissance brought back a positive report. "Surely the Lord has given all the land into our hands, and all the inhabitants of the land, moreover, have melted away before us. "It is interesting to see that this reconnaissance was actually commissioned in JOS 2:1 "Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim," Shittiyim means "the acacias" pointing to acacia wood, which is used in the Old Testament representing the humanity of Jesus Christ, EXO 37:1. The interesting analogy here is that this reconnaissance team was a picture of the humanity of Christ going before us and pioneering the spiritual life and coming back to us with a positive report.

A positive report such as 1Jo 4:4 "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." Or PHI 4:13 "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." So when the Israeli spies came back from Jericho, and as a result of this intelligence report, the people's faith was strengthened and encouraged. Therefore, Joshua was encouraged that the Lord had given the land to them and had caused the people to be frightened of them because of their God, Jehovah Elohim, The Lord Jesus Christ. As the children of Israel marched towards the promise land into Canaan, the Lord performed some magnificent miracles for them. This is what caused the inhabitants of the land to freak out and to become afraid. For example, not only did the Lord God part the Red Sea but He also parted the Jordan River. And this was well known because we read the response to the

crossing in JOS 5:1. "Now it came about when all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard how the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel until they had crossed, that their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer, because of the sons of Israel." Notice again, the Lord at work behind the scenes as believers fulfill their personal sense of destiny. And He does and will do the same for us. Also notice in JOS 5:13-15, Joshua meets the Captain of Jehovah's army, the Lord Jesus Christ according to JOS 6:2. Through a theophany, the Lord appears before Joshua as a warrior ready to go into battle; this is why His sword is drawn. This resulted in Joshua prostrating himself before Him and worshipping Him. He was told to remove his sandals from his feet because the ground where he was standing was holy, JOS 5:13-15. And then Joshua really begins to fulfill his personal sense of destiny. The Lord utilizes the skill and obedience of Joshua to lead the people in a conquest of the land, JOS 6:1-12:24. As a part of our personal sense of destiny, the Lord waits to develop the use of those spiritual skills and then He guides us and uses us to fulfill His will. Spiritual skills must precede production skills. The effect of the conquest was the fact that the Lord was with Joshua and his reputation spread throughout all of Canaan after the defeat of Jericho, JOS 6:27 "So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land."

In JOS 11:15-20 we read "Just as the Lord had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses. Thus Joshua took all that land: the hill country and all the Negev, all that land of Goshen, the lowland, the Arabah, the hill country of Israel and its lowland from Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir, even as far as Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon. And he captured all their kings and struck them down and put them to death. Joshua waged war a long time with all these kings. There was not a city which made peace with the sons of Israel except the Hivites living in Gibeon; they took them all in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them, that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, just as the Lord had commanded Moses."

The life and book of Joshua, as in the case of all Old Testament studies "was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures might have confidence" (ROM. 15:4). These studies create confidence, perseverance and encouragement in the positive believer. The book of Joshua can also be viewed as analogous to the New Testament epistle of Paul to the Ephesians. For example, in the book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul brings out the fact that God has promised great possessions to us, however, the possessions would be appropriated only after conflict and conquest. Joshua is the inspiration for us in the spiritual realm. The Exodus generation is a photograph of the loser believer in the present age. As such the teachings regarding it constitute a warning to us (1Co 10:6,11). However, the next generation, which we can call the conquest generation is a photograph of the winner believer in the Mystery Dispensation of the Church-age. The conquest generation depicts by analogy the winner believer who after conflict, (Eph 6:10-13), "stands" to receive the great assets and blessings which were placed on deposit for him in the highest heavens in eternity past by God the Father (Eph 1:3; Col 1:5; Heb 10:35-36). Israel, under Joshua's command who in turn was under the command of the Lord Jesus Christ was commanded to go forward and dispose seven nations before possessing the Land. The seven evil nations are analogous to seven assaults against the believer's soul in the present dispensation. These are found in JOS 3:10 "And Joshua said, By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite"

Canaanites. They were known for their excessive wickedness, sexual immorality. They are analogous to EPH 4:22, with the sin nature competing for control of the soul, also see Gal 5:17, 19. The Hittites were a people of the ancient world who flourished in Asia Minor. They were known for their religious and pagan influences that pulled the nation of Israel away from the worship of the one true God. Therefore, they are analogous to cosmic systems competing for influence of the soul, EPH 2:2-3, 1Jo 2:15-17.

Hivites. They descended from Canaan and tricked Joshua and the Israelites into making a covenant with them. In GEN 34:2-31, they appeared warm-hearted and loving, but were very impulsive, and given to the multiplication of materialism. Analogous to Satan's plan of attack against the soul. EPH 4:27.

Perizzites. They lived in Canaan as early as the time of Abraham and Lot, (GEN. 13:7). After the conquest of the land of Canaan under Joshua, they were allowed to live. They entered into marriages with their conquerors and seduced the Israelites into idolatry. Analogous of false doctrine's assault against the soul. EPH 4:14.

Girgashites. They were also descendants of Canaan and one of the nations living east of the Sea of Galilee when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. A Girgashite represents the material state of thought that unregenerate man holds concerning himself, especially concerning his material organism. Analogous to EPH 5:18a, defense mechanisms constituting a life-style of fear.

Amorites. The Amorites were one of the major tribe, living in Canaan. They were uncivilized people. Then Israel invaded Canaan under Joshua, the first Israelite victories came against the Amorite kings. They ruled much of the Promised Land east of the Jordan River. Analogous to EPH 3:13, portraying adverse circumstances attempting to overrun the soul's line of resistance.

This is one of the reasons why the Lord said to Joshua four times in JOS 1, "Be strong and courageous." If we fulfill our personal sense of destiny, we must overcome the external adversities of all kinds attempting to overrun the soul's line of resistance. This is analogous to the winner believer becoming a master of the details of life.

Jebusite. Analogous to EPH 4:25 and the public lie and its union with public opinion leading to strong delusion, also see 2TH 2:9-12.

Overcoming Spiritual Warfare as a Part of Our Personal Sense of Destiny 1-30-00

We continue our study of Joshua and his personal sense of destiny: JOS 3:10 "And Joshua said, By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite."

We noted that the seven evil nations mentioned here are analogous to seven assaults against the believer's soul in the present dispensation of the Church-age and they are correlated for us in the book of Ephesians. The seven nations are analogous to the battles which take place in the soul after we go forward into our own promise land, and receive escrow blessings for both time and eternity. A quick review:

1. The Canaanites, analogous with the sin nature competing for control of the soul, EPH 4:22.
2. The Hittites, analogous to the cosmic systems competing for influence of the soul, EPH 2:2-3.
3. The Hivites, an analogy of Satan or the devil and his plan and demonic attack made upon the soul, EPH 4:27.
4. The Perizzites, analogous to false doctrines assaulting against the soul, EPH 4:14.
5. The Girgashites, analogous to those defense mechanisms that constitutes a life-style of fear, EPH 5:18a.
6. The Amorites, represent external adversities of all kinds which can overwhelm the soul's line of resistance if allowed, EPH 3:13.
7. The Jebusites, represent carnal believers who are suckers for the public lie and its union with public opinion leading to strong delusion, EPH 4:25, 5:14-17.

So a few principles concerning these analogies:

A. Bible doctrine in its "epignosis" form produces the necessary power and resistance against these fronts, (JOS 1:8-9; EPH 1:8; 4:11-16; 6:10-18).

JOS 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

B. The "promise land", (JOS 1:2-3) is analogous to "all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places with Christ Jesus", EPH 1:3.

C. Confidence and courage from doctrine precedes successful conflict, conquest and possession of what was promised, JOS 1:6-18.

D. Demoralization and fear precede dispossession and defeat. This is what happened to the enemies of Israel. Remember what the spies said when they came back from Jericho? Rahab said to the men in JOS 2:9 "I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you."

E. Authority-orientation is imperative for preparation for conquest and is also needed in the Church-age.

One of the things we learn over and over again concerning our personal sense of destiny, is that vulnerability still exists even after we have discovered our personal sense of destiny as a part of the adult spiritual life. This is serious vulnerability because the most dangerous time of the spiritual life is the adult spiritual life because it is then that you are perceived by the kingdom of darkness, the principalities and powers as a threat. As we look at Joshua and see him leading the Jews into the promise land, the further the Israelites, under Joshua's command advanced, the more the kings of Canaan confederated and began to perceive the threat of Israel coming into the promise land. Israel entering into the land is a picture of the New Testament believer entering into the adult spiritual life. But Joshua is another winner believer who, as we will see, fulfilled his personal sense of destiny.

These kings are analogous to the principalities and powers that we face in the Church-age of Ephesians.

King of Jericho-----Named after a moon god

King of Ai-----Heap of ruins (analogous to false religions)

King of Jerusalem-----Peace

King of Hebron-----Association

King of Jarmuth-----Elevation
 King of Lachish-----Invincible
 King of Eglon-----Calf-Like
 King of Gezer-----Portion
 King of Debir-----Sanctuary
 King of Geder-----Wall
 King of Hormah-----Devotion
 King of Arad-----Wild Ass
 King of Libnah-----Rock
 King of Adullam-----Judge
 King of Makkedah-----Place of false shepherds
 King of Bethel-----False Temples and Churches
 King of Tappuah-----City of Produce and Materialism
 King of Hopher-----A deep well
 King of Aphek-----Strong fortress
 King of Lasharon-----A plain or level
 King of Madon-----Strive
 King of Hazor-----Castle
 King of Shimron-meron-----Height
 King of Achshaph-----I shall be bewitched
 King of Taanach-----Sandy soil
 King of Megiddo-----A place of crowds
 King of Kedesh-----Holy one
 King of Jokneam in Carmel-----The people lament
 King of Dor, in the heights of Dor-----Each generation
 King of Gaiim in Gilgal-----The masses
 King of Tirzah-----Delightful one or favorable one.

If you go back to those definitions and assigned the principalities and powers to each one of these kings, you would see the type of battles you will face in the spiritual realm if you discover, execute and continue with your personal sense of destiny. As we have seen, vulnerability still exists even after we have discovered our personal sense of destiny. In Joshua 12:7-24, these kings are analogous to the principalities and powers that we face in the Church-age of EPH 6.

In Joshua 11, we have what was known as the northern campaign, which is analogous to the spiritual maturity phase of the adult spiritual life, and it was a long and hard campaign. JOS 11:18 "Joshua waged war a long time with all these kings." It is a picture of the principalities and powers that are arrayed against the believer in spiritual adulthood. Entering into the adult spiritual life and dealing with spiritual warfare will take a long time. Don't expect the way to be short to spiritual maturity and then to maximum glorification of God. Even in spiritual maturity a believer can be tempted with discouragement. When you're a mature believer the battles are longer and you begin to feel weaker as PSA 102:23 says "He has weakened my strength in the way;" But remember God's power is perfected in our state of weakness. Don't expect it to be easy and don't expect a shortcut because the longer you progress and remain in the promise land, the longer these believers in spiritual adulthood. Entering into the adult spiritual life and dealing with spiritual warfare will take a long time. Joshua 12 actually pictures the demonic activity we will have to face as we go forward into the promise land. And we have the fact that there was a long and hard battle trying to keep Joshua from his personal sense of destiny. That is why Satan and the kingdom of darkness will do whatever they can to stop you from going forward into the promise land and fulfilling your personal sense of destiny. Joshua's personal sense of destiny was not only that of a conqueror but he was also given the job to distribute the land or allocate the inheritance to Israel. He not only allocated the parts already conquered, but he had gotten old and all the land was not yet conquered. And this was analogous to the fact that in spiritual maturity we only receive a partial distribution of the escrow blessings for time. The full distribution of the escrow blessings in time comes after spiritual maturity, after evidence testing and when

we enter into the maximum glorification of God in time. This is very significant because Joshua allocated parts that were already conquered but he also made references to parts that were not yet conquered meaning, "if and when you get to spiritual maturity, it's not over." In fact, at the end of his life as a great leader, he had to deal with the apostasy that hit Israel again even after God had done so much for them and after all these victories (DEU 6:10-13 or DEU 8:6-14). How quickly people forget the source of their prosperity.

As Joshua was about to die, he warned Israel in the beginning of a crisis of Jewish apostasy, in JOS 24:14. "Now, therefore, respect the Lord and serve Him in integrity and doctrine; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River [Nile] and in Egypt, therefore serve the Lord." Then in totally fulfilling his personal sense of destiny, he said in JOS 24:15 "Furthermore if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, then choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River [Nile], or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." Joshua learned from Moses that you couldn't force people into a course of action when it comes to doctrine. Like Moses, Joshua had a personal sense of destiny and a life to match that personal sense of destiny. A personal sense of destiny recognizes in grace that God does the work and we cannot help God. A personal sense of destiny never loses sight of the fact that God does the work. He doesn't need our help, we need His. So the character of Joshua therefore, needs to be stated. It is difficult to form an estimate of Joshua's character, because the man is overshadowed by the greatness of the events in which he was placed. Through it all, his life is recorded with no stain. By the faithful serving of his youth he was taught to command as a man; as a citizen he was patriotic in the highest degree; as a warrior, fearless and blameless; as a judge, calm and impartial. He was quite equal to every emergency and task, which he was called to. He was valiant but not impulsive. He was active without rushing into things. He continually looked to The Lord Jesus Christ and obeyed divine direction with the simplicity of a child and the great power given to him. He did so with calmness, without swerving, to the accomplishment of a high, unselfish purpose, fulfilling his personal sense of destiny. He learned by strength and courage to live a quiet, honored life and retained his faith and loyalty, exclaiming, in almost his dying breath, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Destiny and Slavery

2-06-00

We begin our study of Daniel and his personal sense of destiny with something that appeared to be a clear triumph of evil over God's people and with God's permission. Four youngsters who were followers of the Lord Jesus Christ stand out as hope for the Jewish race in the midst of despair and they were led by Daniel.

Dan 1:1-2; "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god."

It was in accordance with the will of God that Nebuchadnezzar, overtook Jerusalem and took its king and temple vessels back to his land and to his god. God allowed this to happen. In DAN 1:3-7, Nebuchadnezzar had the youngsters of Israel who were excellent in mind and body brought to Babylon in order to be groomed and trained for service in the king's court. Their names were changed from those that honored the true God to those that were to honor the false gods. Daniel (God is judge) became *Beltshazzar*; (may Bel protect his life). Hananiah (JHWH is gracious) to *Shadrach*; (commander of Aku). Mishael (who is what God is) to *Meshach*; (who is what Aku is). Azariah (Whom JHWH helps) to *Abed-nego*; (servant of Nebo).

God enabled these four men especially Daniel to follow Him faithfully and excel into positions of influence, Dan 1:8-21. In Nebuchadnezzar's second year he had dreams, which greatly troubled him. DAN 2:1 "Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, (he) had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him." He called his wise men together and ordered them to tell him the interpretation of his dream whereby they would receive much or lose their life depending upon whether they were right or wrong. Then the wise men dialogue with the king emphasizing how unreasonable he was since only a god could do what he asked Dan 2:7-11. The king becomes enraged and issues a decree to destroy all of the wise men including Daniel and his friends, Dan 2:12-13. Learning of the dream and the deadly decree, Daniel received the interpretation of the king's dream's from God, Dan 2:14-23. When Daniel and his friends were about to be killed, he made a statement that could only come from someone who recognized his personal sense of destiny:

Dan 2:20 Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of the Lord be blessed forever and ever; for wisdom and power belong to Him."

Dan 2:21 "For it is He who changes the times and the epochs or dispensations; He removes rulers and establishes rulers; He gives wisdom to wise men, and knowledge to the men of understanding or knower of doctrine."

Daniel demonstrated that through grace orientation, a personal sense of destiny recognizes that God can handle every crisis in life. He interpreted the king's dream as the Lord had revealed, foretelling the future history of the kingdom. In DAN 2:46-49, the king's response to Daniel's interpretation of his dream was to overwhelmingly receive it and thus to honor Daniel and his God as well as promote Daniel and his friends.

First we have Daniel being honored, treated as though he were a god with worship, an offering and incense, Dan 2:46. Then as Daniel fulfilled his personal sense of destiny, he brought glory to God, Dan 2:47. The king recognized Daniel's God, the God of Heaven, and the Lord Jesus Christ as being a ruling God of gods and kings as well as being able to reveal mysteries. As a reward for fulfilling part of his personal sense of destiny, we have the promotion of Daniel to ruler over the province and chief of the wise men, Dan 2:48. Then in being rewarded by God for fulfilling part of his personal sense of destiny, Daniel allocated part of his escrow blessings to his friends and faithful servants, Dan 2:49. Daniel teaches us that we can fulfill our personal sense of destiny and prosper even in situations of slavery. As time went on, we also have the account of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego being thrown into the fiery furnace because of their refusal to worship an image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dreams. King Nebuchadnezzar had made a golden image in Babylon, Dan 3:1. Under royal proclamation and fear of being cast into a blazing

furnace, all of the international leaders fell and worshiped the image in verses 4-7. However, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego refused the king's decree to serve his gods or worship the image. In an angry rage, Nebuchadnezzar threw them into a furnace so hot that he lost his warriors who threw them in the fire. He looked in and saw them and their God alive. Nebuchadnezzar repented and then honored Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego as servants of the Most High God. While the king was enjoying the privileges of his kingship, he received another dream that greatly disturbed him in chapter 4:4-5. Calling all of the wise men of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was without hope to receive the dream's interpretation until Daniel arrived whom he knew God had spoken through before. The king recounted his dream to Daniel as one of prosperity, destruction and preservation. Daniel was exhorted to interpret the dream, and although hesitant, exclaimed that unless Nebuchadnezzar repented of his pride and arrogance and recognized his position under the Most High God, he would suffer temporary insanity. Dan 4:19-27.

Nebuchadnezzar refused to comply with Daniel's advice to humble himself before the Lord and as a result became insane and lived as an animal, (Dan 4:33), until he finally recognized his position under the Most High God. Nebuchadnezzar was restored and prospered beyond his former state by the God whom he then praised, exalted, and honored over himself. In chapter 5, Nebuchadnezzar dies and his son becomes king. During a party the new king, and his guests were drinking with the vessels from Jerusalem's temple and were praising their gods. However, the king became frightened when he saw a hand write on the wall. DAN 5:1-6. Again, the king's wise men were unable to interpret the writing, and Belshazzar learned of Daniel's ability from the Queen. Since none of the wise men could either read or interpret the writing on the wall, the king became even more concerned. Hearing of the concern at the banquet, the queen mother entered and proclaimed Daniel to the king as the one who could interpret the handwriting just as he had been able to help his father Nebuchadnezzar. Once again we see God working behind the scenes to promote the personal sense of destiny of His servants. Daniel did nothing to promote himself; all he did was to continue worshipping his God on a day-by-day basis.

In Dan 5:17, identifying himself as Daniel and refusing Belshazzar's gifts, Daniel explained that the inscription predicted the fall of Babylon to Medo-Persia due to his arrogance toward Jehovah or the Lord Jesus Christ. DAN 5:17-23. In DAN 5:30-31 "That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two."

Darius was a thoughtless, arrogant pawn of a corrupt government, which persecuted God's people. However, he became an instrument for God. Out of jealousy over a promotion which Daniel was about to receive for his abilities, his peers had a decree issued by Darius which they used to indict Daniel for praying to Jehovah, Dan 6:1-13. Daniel was about to be reappointed as commissioner over all the politicians assigned to protect the king's interests because of his extraordinary ability, which was really reliance upon the Spirit of God. Seeing that the other leaders could not make an accusation against Daniel for his work, they made up a law which secretly indicted Daniel for praying to Jehovah, Dan 6:4-9. The commissioners could not find anything to accuse Daniel of with his work, so they attacked him with regard to his faith. So these governmental leaders encouraged Darius to establish and sign an injunction that forbade anyone to petition any god or man besides the king under penalty of being thrown into the Lions' den for thirty days, Dan 6:6-9. This is a conspiracy, a satanic plot and scheme. Remember that it is when you begin to fulfill your personal sense of destiny that you are perceived by the kingdom of darkness and the principalities and powers as a serious threat.

Daniel, however, following his usual custom, opens the windows of his upper room, and there prays to God three times a day. In fulfilling his personal sense of destiny, Daniel will not allow anyone to take him away from his fellowship with God. The question here is "should I obey a command when it is in direct contraction to the word of God?" The answer is "No, you should not!" ACT 5:29. However, let me warn you that you must also be willing to pay the consequences of your disobedience. Although he was aware of the decree, Daniel continued praying to his God, was observed, and reported to the king. His personal sense of destiny said to continue with his schedule in spite of the pressure being placed upon him. So, he prays in spite of the decree. DAN 6:10. Notice that Daniel stood his ground, knowing that he also had an opportunity of honoring God before men, and showing that he preferred God's favor, and his duty to

God, before life itself. Daniel cheerfully trusted God with the outcome of the event. While fulfilling your personal sense of destiny get use to conspiracies or being conspired against.

DAN 6:11 "Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God."

"By agreement" in Aramaic means to assemble together for the purpose of causing disorder or chaos. These jealous governmental officials looked for and found Daniel petitioning his God. So we now have Daniel reported. DAN 6:12-18. However, this is another Rom 8:28 passage, where God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him. Or, DEU 23:5 "The Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the Lord your God loves you." As a part of fulfilling his personal sense of destiny, Daniel is placed in an unfriendly environment, the lion's den. The result therefore of the believer willing to fulfill his personal sense of destiny no matter what, is found in DAN 6:19-22. In Dan 6:23-24, we have the committing of Daniel's prosecutors to the same prison, or place of execution that they tried to put him under. Another comforting fact for the believer who discovers his personal sense of destiny. Daniel's accusers, now that his innocence is clear and Heaven itself has become his vindication, have the same punishment inflicted upon them that they designed against him, according to the law of retaliation made against false accusers. Those who had accused Daniel and literally wanted to see the bones and flesh of Daniel devoured, now are given over to be torn in pieces. As a result of Daniel's faithfulness in fulfilling his personal sense of destiny, Darius' issues a new decree: a decree of peace to the people of his kingdom, to fear the God of Daniel because He is eternal, living, reigning, and helps His followers as He did Daniel.

Dan 6:25-27. "Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations, and {men of every} language who were living in all the land: May your peace abound! I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion {will be} forever. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has {also} delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

Daniel is another illustration of the fact that no matter what type of environment a believer finds himself in, he can still fulfill his personal sense of destiny and bring glory to God.

Living Your Life in the Light of Eternity

2-13-00

Continuing our study on a personal sense of destiny, we noted that a person who recognizes their personal sense of destiny must look forward and not backward. Therefore, the self-orientation of your personal sense of destiny includes the reality of future prophetic events beyond the rapture of the Church PHI 3:13-15. We are to forget those things that are behind and reach forward to those things that are ahead. Dwelling on past failures can only cause guilt, denial, dissociation and self-absorption. So you keep moving, as in PHI 3:14, "I keep advancing toward the objective for the prize of the upward call from God in Christ Jesus."

Eschatological doctrine, (the doctrine of future things), is a part of the believer's spiritual life and is related to a personal sense of destiny. In 2PE 3:10-14 we see the believer's future challenge: looking forward fulfills the principle of living your life in the light of eternity. In 2PE 3:10, there is very important principle taught; what survives the destruction of the universe establishes the only permanent values related to a personal sense of destiny and the highest priorities for us in time.

2Pe 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up."

A personal sense of destiny has permanent values and all is built around that, you think looking forward. In 2PE 3:11, the future challenge to a personal sense of destiny is based on the destruction of the entire universe at the termination of human history. 2Pe 3:11 "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness." 2PE 3:12, relates a personal sense of destiny to permanent spiritual values. 2Pe 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!" 2PE 3:13, relates our spiritual life to the eternal state. 2Pe 3:13 "But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." 2PE 3:14, relates our spiritual life to the rapture or resurrection of the Church. 2Pe 3:14 "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,"

A personal sense of destiny then is related to God's gracious motivation and the divine initiative of grace for the future. For example, a personal sense of destiny is always related to dying grace, PSA 23:4, "When I walk through a death-shadowed valley, I cannot fear evil; because You [are] with me;" God has provided for each one of us our very own death shadowed valley. This accentuates the futility and vanity of living for the things in this life, which will all be destroyed in God's timing. The Lord said in LUK 9:25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?" Once we realize our destiny, our scale of values becomes quite different. If we understood this, we would see that our problem is not so much what happens, but it is our perspective of it after it happens. When things occur that we don't like, we begin to question things, we wonder: "How could God allow this to happen?" If you do not know about things like the angelic conflict, you'll miss out. If you don't recognize your personal sense of destiny, you'll miss out. What we miss out on is God's timing, the right priorities and values.

When we realize that God is the author of life, EZE 18:4, and that He is the One who has determined our destiny, (1Th 3:3), then we will come a long way in understanding why certain things happen. Understanding why the tiny crib is empty and the baby is gone, why the young widow, why doctrinal homes are broken up, why the cancer patient is dying when God could heal, why the orphan! When we see things through His eyes and recognize divine timing and our personal sense of destiny, we realize that in His time, he makes all things beautiful and meaningful. So easy to teach, and to say, but so hard to apply!

One of the many conclusions that a believer who recognizes their personal sense of destiny comes to is in ECC 3:11: "That God has made everything meaningful in its time."

The second conclusion has to do with your life. ECC 3:11 "He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end."

Think of this word eternity, but not in terms of something that's incomprehensible, inscrutable. Look at from the viewpoint of 2PE 3:12, which says in the original language "looking forward with

confidence.” This reveals the curiosity we all should have about our future. God has not only put things in perspective by having a time table in which events run their course, He also has put within every human being's heart a curiosity about the future, the life beyond. We cannot find out about tomorrow or the beginning from the end without God. You are not ready to handle life until you are ready to handle death and eternity. When you have eternity squared away, it's remarkable what it will do with time. In ECC 3:11 the phrase "He has also set eternity in their heart" describes the tremendous grace of God reaching down to fallen man! God has placed a deep desire in man for that which is future or eternal. There is a deep desire or a yearning for that which is eternal placed in the hearts of all mankind. It is a very delicate and sensitive desire that can be hindered by arrogance or emotionalism and it can be put out by hardness of the heart, scar tissue of the soul or occupation with the details of life. The more this desire or need is fed, the stronger it becomes. But having a desire for that which is eternal is not enough. The desire still lacks the power in and of itself to advance a person spiritually. As the believer grows, his positive volition grows, and as he is grounded in truth, his doctrinal thinking becomes his outlook on life.

The motivation of getting to know God and the real meaning and purpose of life becomes a driving force and a source of great blessing in the person's life. However, this desire is never automatic, any person in any stage of spiritual growth can become dull and destroy the need for that which is eternal within. The person who does not have this desire for a relationship with God fulfilled will end up desiring things from the world. These things can never fill the void or emptiness, and therefore, motivated to choose things to fulfill this desire, he only finds out that nothing can. The idea that mankind can find happiness apart from God is vain and futile. Man needs a relationship with God presently or else he finds himself occupied with the past or the future. In His grace, God gives us passions and desires which can only be fulfilled in the present by Him. God has placed the desire for that which is eternal within every member of the human race. Some follow through, many do not, Rom 1:18-19.

We have several things going for us in fulfilling this destiny: The availability of doctrine every day, God the Holy Spirit as our Mentor or Teacher, a local assembly where you can gather on a continual basis to learn things that most Bible colleges don't even know exists. Living in time as a Christian is all about discovering and fulfilling your personal sense of destiny. However, you will never do that unless you look at life from the standpoint of future things. The Apostle Paul tells us in 2CO 4:16, “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.”

God has given us the two power options (filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible Doctrine), the three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices, with the mentorship of God the Holy Spirit who in 1CO 2:10 searches the deep things of God, “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.” The fact is: many of the things we hold so dear in our lives will one day pass away. What survives the destruction of the universe at the end of human history establishes the highest and permanent values of life at the present time. Thinking like this helps us to identify what is real, true, important, and has permanent value right now. At the end of human history the universe in which we live we be completely destroyed by our Lord Jesus Christ in a moment of time. 2PE 3:10-11. When this happens, five things survive:

1. Eternal salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.
2. The resurrection body survives the destruction of the universe to enter into the eternal state. The resurrection body is impervious to the destruction of the universe.
2. Escrow blessings for the eternal state.
4. The historical records of the invisible hero survive the destruction of the universe. His name, his title, and his deeds are a part of the permanent historical record of the Church Age in the infallible word of God, ISA 40:8, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our Lord stands forever." MAT 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

These five things are of the utmost value and should have priorities in your life. A personal sense of destiny anticipates the fulfillment of better things in the eternal state and lives on the basis of divine promises. It anticipates the fulfillment of the promise of better things in the eternal state. The new universe of the eternal state is prophesied in ISA 65:17, 66:22. REV 21:1.

A personal sense of destiny functioning under both the power options and the spiritual skills lives with focus on the eternal state, and therefore lives in the light of eternity. It is developed from the self-motivation produced through the metabolized doctrine circulating in your soul. When you reach a personal sense of destiny, you have reached the point of the self-motivation necessary to execute the Pre-designed Plan Of God. Once you reach the point of a personal sense of destiny all of your motivation will come from yourself. Spiritual capacity plus a personal sense of destiny understands the highest objective in time and becomes the ultimate objective of the eternal state. History is a very short time compared to all eternity, time on earth is a drop in the bucket compared to eternity. If you place other things in life above doctrine, you are losing all the equal privilege and opportunity God has provided for you in time to advance spiritually. All those "other things" will become so very meaningless to you in eternity. Although, once you are born again you can never lose your salvation, you will be a loser for all of eternity. A part of the agony of the sin unto death is to realize that you had an opportunity to make your life count in a fantastic way, instead, you chose to follow the plan of Satan for human life on this earth.

What a tragedy to come to the reality of dying and to look back and to realize that everything you have attained that mankind calls success has no meaning in the eternal state. A personal sense of destiny cannot lack anything in living grace and cannot fear anything in dying grace. Therefore, a personal sense of destiny anticipates with confidence; PHI 1:21 "For me, living is Christ, likewise dying is profit."

Phil 3:8 I Keep on Concluding All Things to be Piles of Dung in Order that I May Win for Christ
2-20-00

So far in our study of Philippians chapter 3 we have in verses 1-8; “Finally, my brethren, keep on having inner happiness in the Lord. On the one hand, to be writing the same doctrines to you is not troublesome to me, while on the other hand, it is a safeguard or a basis of security for you. Beware of those dogs, beware of those evil workers, beware of the mutilation. For we [adult spiritual believers] and only we keep on being the true circumcision [the true circumcision in the Church-age], who keep on worshipping in the Spirit of God and glory or boast in Christ Jesus and we put no confidence in the flesh. Even though I myself might be having confidence even in the flesh. If anyone of the same category [Judaizers] assumes to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, [born] out from the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews [an outstanding Hebrew]; with reference to the Law, a Pharisee; with reference to zeal, constantly persecuting the church; with reference to the self-righteousness which is in the Law, having become blameless. But whatever quality of things were gains to me, those things [gains] I have concluded as an expert as loss for the sake of Christ. Not only this but more than this, I conclude as an expert all things to be loss because of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have forfeited all things, also, I keep on concluding as an expert them to be piles of dung in order that I may win for Christ.

The first part of Phi 3:8 really draws our attention to what the apostle desires for us to understand *ajllaV menou'nge kaiV, alla menoun ge kai* means "most emphatically", or “not only this but more than this.” It means that something different is coming up and it can be translated “indeed” or “in fact”. So we will translate it; “Not only this but more than this.” The next phrase “I count” means that Paul can conclude on the basis of being an expert in a subject. When he uses this phrase in the power of the Spirit, (not in arrogance), it is a total confidence that comes from authority, study, and spiritual growth. He is concluding something about his old and new destiny. Paul has broken the maturity barrier and has taken a giant step in his spiritual life and he wants to take the Philippians with him.

Paul was an unbeliever celebrity with a false personal sense of destiny. Famous in the field of Judaism, trained in Hellenistic culture and as a citizen of the Roman Empire, he became great as a Pharisee at a young age. However, the pre-salvation celebrityship of Paul was the basis for a false sense of destiny. When he finally understood a true sense of destiny, he went back under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit to explain the things that determine happiness in life: volition, decisions and priorities in life. It is very difficult for individuals who are successful in life to put their success aside and humble themselves before God. LUK 18:18-27.

LUK 18:25-27 "For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And they who heard it said, Then who can be saved? But He said, The things impossible with men are possible with God."

Phi 3:8 “Not only this but more than this, I conclude all things, [a reference to Paul's presalvation celebrityship],” The next phrase literally says “to keep on being loss”. By application it refers to any human celebrityship or achievement, success, talent, approbation, fame or standards of attainments of any kind. When you enter into spiritual maturity, your priorities change, your scale of values change completely. Paul is now free from any form of human achievement making him feel superior. He realized that a personal sense of destiny avoids the arrogant solution to the problems of life, which include the function of the three arrogant skills; self-justification, self-deception, and self-absorption. Losers are always justifying themselves, and then they end up in self-deception.

JAM 1:22 “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.”_ (Also see ISA 44:20, OBA 1:3, 1CO 3:18) Then there is self-absorption, which is the total antithesis of a personal sense of destiny. PHI 2:21 “For they all keep seeking their own interests, not the interest of Christ Jesus.”_ Paul goes on to say in Phi 3:8 “Not only this but more than this, I conclude all things to be loss because of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, because of

whom I have suffered the loss of all things,” Paul has concluded as an expert the vanity of human achievement and human celebrityship. Once you reach the status quo of spiritual maturity, there never will be a time when these things are not anything "but loss" as a part of the viewpoint of those in spiritual maturity. He is not talking about the fact these things were taken away from him, He is talking about the fact that in following his personal sense of destiny, he has given up certain things that the world treasures. Things like reputation and success, etc. However, Paul realized that it is not being popular with your friends or your peers or people that is important. He knew what our Lord said LUK 16:15, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God." It is our reputation before God not before men that is important. What others see and perceive, as truth often is not. Men said in MAT 9:34 that our Lord was of the devil. In MAT 11:19, they said He was a glutton, a drunk and hung out with prostitutes. In MAT 26:65, they said that He blasphemed. In MAT 26:66, they said that He deserved to be dead. In MAR 3:21, our Lord was accused of being insane. In MAR 3:22, they said He was demon possessed. In MAR 3:30, they said our Lord has an unclean spirit. In LUK 23:2, they accused Him of being unpatriotic. In LUK 23:5, they accused Him of always stirring up trouble. In JOH 7:12, they said He was a cult leader. Our Lord's reputation before men was of no value to Him, just as our reputation before men is not important, but our reputation before God is. Finally Paul says in Phi 3:8, also, I keep on concluding them piles of dung in order that I may gain Christ,”

The word dung in the Greek is the word “skubala”, and here it should be translated piles of dung or piles of excrement. This word “skubala” is a hapax legomena, which means that it occurs only once in the New Testament. This one word points out and allows Paul to tell us how his priorities changed. How all of Paul's previous human priorities and accomplishments were viewed when compared to his life and his destiny realized in Christ. This is a one-word metaphor that opens up the whole realm of volition and values in your spiritual life. This word has become an embarrassment to countless preachers and born again believers involved in legalism or asceticism. Many translators try to skirt the issue by calling this word mere garbage, refuse, rubbish, worthless things or even nothing. The King James Bible should be given credit here, for it triumphs when it says "dung". This word needs to be understood. This one word describes a "dramatic change" of priorities in the greatest believer of all time. The basis of this dramatic change is that he could identify all of his fantastic successes as "skubala, dung, and excrement." This word shouldn't be translated rubbish or refuse or nothing, or scraps on the table; it should be translated "dung". All other translations weaken the meaning and the impact that Paul is trying to make. The Word of God in the original language is alive and powerful and doesn't obscure what God desires to say.

Dr. Fredrick Lang, an excellent German scholar, says that; "Skubala means excrement or dung" and then he quotes the Septuagint where “skubala” occurs only once and he said "It is used for lumps of manure remaining in the sieve to illustrate the refuse, impurity, and wickedness in the mind of man".

The choice of this word used by the apostle stresses the force and totality of this change in his life, and tells us what Paul thought of his celebrityship, his education, his genius, his power, plans and his ability. Our plans and the human ability we possess is "skubala" when it comes to the plan of God. Skubala is what human power, celebrityship, ability and talent is, when we try to use it to worship or impress God. Paul never backed off when it came to communicating doctrine. He didn't worry about offending people with his vocabulary! If God the Holy Spirit told the apostle Paul to use a word that describes dung, and Paul used "skubala", then it was the perfect word to use. So, this word “skubala” or dung or human excrement is a great description of human greatness, which represents human power and human dynamics. Human greatness represents a lot of things, but one thing it does not represent is advance or advantage in the predesigned plan of God. Not one step forward in the spiritual life comes from human power. All human success, human ability, human power and human plans, Paul regarded as "skubala." There is no place for human power in God's plan. There is no place for human celebrityship, no place for bragimories on stage from celebrities in the world. Believers are constantly using Madison Ave techniques to try and make the Christian life more appealing. Associating success with bodies, the more bodies you have in your ministry, the greater the ministry, of course that is not true. God has seen fit in His grace to take us who are nothing

and make something out of it in order to resolve the angelic conflict. What is our obligation or responsibility?

1CO 4:1-2 “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful.”

We learn this from the apostle Paul. Bible doctrine is more important than anything in life. You don't need gimmicks, you need to be faithful to the word! You don't need human success stories. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are still living on this earth after salvation as imperfect and helpless persons when it comes to the fulfillment of God's plan. And, if we do not think we are helpless, God will quickly show us just how helpless we really are. Helpless people are the ones who fulfill God's plan. All the limitations in God's plan come from us, not from God. God has designed a solution to every problem in life for every believer. This solution was provided in eternity past and is recorded in the Word of God. However, divine solutions can only become human solutions through cognition and inculcation of Bible doctrine under the teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit. So when Paul says I consider all of my areas of human celebrityship and achievement as piles of excrement, he has arrived at a high point of the spiritual life. The same is true of us, when we reach this same conclusion, reach out and begin to grasp hold of our true destiny, we too will make this giant step in our spiritual life. Stay tuned to the doctrine of dung.

The Doctrine of Human Good

2-27-00

Human good must never be confused with the legitimate production of good by the believer. There is legitimate morality, however there is also the arrogance of morality. This human good is the production of the believer who lives in the cosmic system not relying on the filling of the Spirit, therefore it is not valid in God's eyes. Human good is the production of evil in Satan's kingdom, the cosmos or the world system. To advance in the spiritual life, you must distinguish between human good and divine good. For example, the writer of the book of Hebrews says in HEB 5:11 "Concerning Him [The Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC)] we have much to say and it is hard to explain [difficult to teach] because you have become dull of hearing." In this passage, the writer is addressing those under the influence of human good and legalism, and therefore they are very difficult to teach. They were not always this way, they were positive for a while, then they would peel off, come back, peel off again. Finally, they regressed, to the point that they became dull of hearing. HEB 5:12-14 "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, [teaching other people] but you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God [basic doctrines all over again], and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness because he is immature. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil."

We saw that the word for good in the Greek is "kalou" referring to the believer with positive volition producing divine good, and the word for evil is "kakou" which refers to the believer in carnality, meaning worthless, evil motivation. The use of these two words for good and evil show how easy it is for evil to appear to be good. The background to this passage is legalism and relying upon human good for acceptance with God. Human good and spirituality can appear to be the same thing but they are not eyes of God. PRO 14:12 "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

Solid food or advanced doctrine produces the ability to discern between being involved in grace and truth or being involved in legalism, human good and self-righteousness. Only the believer with positive volition toward doctrine can distinguish between grace and legalism or divine good and human good, the later is the result of functioning inside the cosmic system and is often a reaction under arrogance.

The believer performing human good can be motivated by cosmic one or cosmic two. Cosmic one is Satan's exploitation of believers through their own arrogance. This is his means of controlling the human race. Satan invented arrogance, it was his original sin. Here the emphasis is on arrogance and abnormal preoccupation with self, the target here is you and you destroy yourself. Cosmic two is Satan's propaganda to educate and promote antagonism toward anything related to God, especially the grace of God. Here the emphasis is on intolerance toward the plan, purpose, and will of God, as well as toward all Christians executing it. The target is Bible doctrine and we become antagonistic towards anything to do with doctrine.

We are talking about that satanic system of deception, where even believers think they are living the spiritual life, but they are not 1JO 2:15-17. Human good is a part of Satan's deception because he wants man to think that God is impressed with human goodness. It can be characterized by fanaticism and arrogant concentration without doctrinal inculcation. There are three classifications of human good.

- a. From the believer living in the cosmic system.
- b. Human good of establishment orientation, or establishment good.
- c. Human good of the unbeliever registered in the Book of Works.

Human good, can be very deceitful MAT 6:23 "But if your soul-perception is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness." This same principle is stated in 2Co 11:13-15, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve." Here is a remarkable passage concerning the extent of the satanic counterfeit and the promotion of good. Satan's ministers are teaching people how to be righteous and humanly good to imitate

the real ministers of Christ and to blind people from the true righteousness of God which is a gift from God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved by man.

They are respected in society and their lives will undoubtedly be free from the great scrutiny and temptations that come from the kingdom of darkness toward those who communicate truth. Many times these false ministers do not necessarily know the real mission they have. Their gospel and teaching is based on human viewpoint and appeals to human resources. They are ministers of righteousness, whose message should never be confused with the doctrine of grace. Any counterfeit system of doctrine that would omit the power of God and the grace that accompanies that power is used by the strategy of Satan to force some secondary truth which blinds one from the real truth.

Secondary truth is something that is true, but it is not being taught or referred to properly. For example, 2CO 7:10 says "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation," Now, that's a true statement, however it is not saying that you have to feel sorry for your sins to be saved. It is saying that recognition of your need can lead to repentance toward the person of Christ.

The Source of Human Good is the Area of Strength of the Old Sin Nature. All human good in history will be judged because it comes from the same source as sin, the old sin nature ROM 6:6-14. We were crucified with Christ on the cross through positional truth, as Gal 2:20 teaches, however human good was not judged but rejected on the cross so that it could continue along with evil as an issue in the angelic conflict. Human good will stand before God and be judged and evaluated by the perfect holiness and integrity of God. For the believers of the Church-age we know this from 1Co 3:11-15, 2Co 5:10. For Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs at the end of the Tribulation and the Second Advent we know this from DAN 12:3; JOH 5:29; REV 20:4. Then the millennial saints at the end of the Millennium. All of these passages teach that God will evaluate human good someday in the future. Human good will continue in the Millennium to prove that its source is the old sin nature and not the presence of Satan. Human good is totally divorced from the integrity of God. Therefore, it never accomplishes what it seeks to accomplish. It never fulfills its objectives of improving anything. Man had a relationship with the integrity of God in the garden through creation and divine provisions not through good deeds. Look at GEN 2:9 "And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Notice that there were trees which were for stimulation of the soul and the eyes, provisions for the soul. There were trees that were good for food, provisions for the body. Then the tree that was related to then human spirit and spiritual sustenance which was the tree of live(s), and that tree was capacity to appreciate what God has provided in grace. Man had immediate capacity to appreciate God's grace provision. Then the test, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Good and evil are Satan's policy. This tree was forbidden because good and evil result in spiritual death, man in his creation relationship with God was under grace. There were two things he did not need in that relationship. One was good and the other was evil. Evil is the thinking of Satan whereas good is the application of that thinking. Good and evil are two things man did not need to know or understand in his relationship with God. The original parents had a choice to choose God's plan or Satan's plan and they chose Satan's, therefore the salvation plan of God came into effect.

Because human good originates inside the cosmic system, it becomes dead to God, Heb 6:1. The arrogant believer's Christian service is classified as dead works. A believer can live a very good and moral life and do good things but if he is the cosmic system it is dead works, wood, hay and straw. Therefore, in Heb 6:1 "Therefore, leaving the elementary teachings about the Christ [basic doctrines] let us press on to maturity [execution of PPOG] not laying again a foundation [doctrines of salvation and spirituality] of repentance from dead works [which do not please God], and of faith toward God." Here we meet again the normal New Testament word for repentance "metanoia" which literally means a change of mind or perspective. Repentance from dead works is the reverse side of faith in God and in His Messiah. In order to come to faith in Christ one must first recognize the bankruptcy of his own works. It is impossible to trust in Christ alone and cling to some confidence in one's own deeds.

Human good performed in the cosmic system results in boasting, Eph 2:8-9; Rom 4:2. If you were saved by works, you would have cause for boasting in the cosmic system, but you were not. EPH 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a

result of works, that no one should boast.” Man is stimulated into pseudo-happiness by boasting of his production. ROM 4:1-3 “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about; but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.”

Human good produced from the cosmic system is never acceptable to God ISA 64:6. Human good by the unbeliever is totally unrighteous, as is human good by the believer inside the cosmic system.

Human good will not provide salvation, TITUS 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." The person in the cosmic system contends that faith is not enough for salvation. Whole denominations are built on living one's life inside the cosmic system and performing human good. 2TI 1:8-

Human good has no place in the plan of God 1Co 13:1-3. Human good is the product of the cosmic system, the power of Satan, the production of the arrogance of Satan. Therefore, anything related to the cosmic system is outside the plan of God. A believer who tries to worship the Lord apart from the filling of the Spirit is like a peddler calling attention to himself. When you are carnal and out of fellowship your spiritual status is zero. This is why the apostle Paul says that I can do all those things but when I am out of fellowship, "I am nothing" it is nothing more than human good.

There is a legitimate function of human good. This is open to both the believer and unbeliever. It is based on the function of humility. An unbeliever can produce an acceptable human good reward able only in time by the function in humility under the laws of divine establishment. ECC 9:9 teaches that the unbeliever can be happy in his job and marriage. Unbelieving marriages are often happier than Christian marriages because God blesses anyone who obeys the laws of divine establishment. This establishment human good is based on the principle that organizational humility plus enforced humility equals genuine humility. Genuine humility produces a human good totally apart from the cosmic system, Rom 13:1-7.

Our Position in Christ

3-5-00

PHI 3:8 “Not only this but more than this, I conclude as an expert all things [human celebrityship and achievement] to be loss [singular] because of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have forfeited all things, also, I keep on concluding as an expert them to be piles of dung in order that I may win for Christ,” “That I may win for Christ” is the ultimate goal of the believer referring to becoming a winner in the Pre-designed Plan Of God (PPOG) as you fulfill your personal sense of destiny. In PHI 3:9-11 we actually have three verses, which are a part of grace orientation. No matter how far you advance in the spiritual life, you need to remind yourself of grace orientation on a continuous basis. Therefore, we have these three verses in a parenthesis devoted to the subject of grace orientation.

The first is salvation, Paul writes in PHI 3:9 “and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,”

The second is the believer in time living his life under grace orientation, PHI 3:10 “that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;”

The third is the believer in eternity, PHI 3:11 “in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.” You can see the fantastic genius of Paul inspired by the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. We must constantly remind ourselves of grace orientation in order to stay on balance in the Christian way of life.

We need an introduction to verse 9 before we get into the exegesis of the verse. PHI 3:9 “and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,” The phrase “My own righteousness” refers to a moral self-righteousness as a success standard of Judaism. This morality was a strict system inculcated in Paul since childhood and he kept this moral Law perfectly (PHI 3:6). However, the standards were overt; they were not the inner standards of the soul, which is what God requires, 1Sa 16:7, PSA 51:6. It is easy to build up a facade of morality and have it become totally meaningless and insignificant. The attack from Judaism upon Christianity was based upon the premise that Christianity was wrong and needed fixing. The rationale was that The Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC) criticized “human good” and those who thought they were righteous could not stand this; after all, they had worked so hard at being moral and righteous. Our Lord used divine sarcasm at times toward those who thought they were righteous, as in MAR 2:17 “{It is} not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Morality is a façade and there is no virtue in it, Paul murdered Christians in the name of morality. In PHI 3:9 the comparison is between what Paul had been keeping (the Law as an unbeliever resulting in self-righteousness) and the righteousness imputed to Paul at the point of salvation. The only righteousness that counts is the righteousness from the source of God, which comes at the point of faith in Christ. At this point, God gave us His very own righteousness, which is infinitely greater than any system of morality and in fact is totally exclusive of morality. In verse 9 there are seven principles of introduction concerning the two types of righteousness that are mentioned.

1. Human good or human righteousness is relative and totally unacceptable to God. Only that which is absolute and perfect righteousness can be acceptable to God, ISA 64:6.
There's always someone worse than you and someone better.
2. Human righteousness is totally unacceptable for salvation, only divine righteousness can save, EPH 2:8-9.
3. Human righteousness is totally unacceptable as a part of the spiritual life of the believer, only divine righteousness can live the spiritual life.
4. Human righteousness is unacceptable at all judgments, only the perfect righteousness of God will be rewarded, 1CO 3:11-15, REV 20:12-15. God has opened the door to the greatest possible virtue related to the soul, in your inner being.

5. There is no place for human righteousness where divine righteousness has been provided.
6. There is no place for human power where divine power functions.
7. The imputed righteousness of God does many things for the believer. It justifies us, it is the basis for logistical grace blessings and with it we become objects of God's personal love.

Positional Truth

In PHI 3:9 the phrase "in Him" refers to being in union with Christ and the doctrine of positional truth, our union with TLJC. This is a subject that the kingdom of darkness constantly tries to blind us from. Because of the angelic conflict and the tremendous deception of Satan as the ruler of the world, security in the Christian way of life is of the utmost importance. Each step that you take forward to understand your position "with Christ" prepares you for the next step ISA 28:10 "For He says, 'Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.'" Our faith must rest and rely upon God's scriptural testimony as to what he has already done for us "in Christ." When we perceive that God the Father has made us complete in Christ, then we are able to have the confidence and assurance to trust in Him as He develops that completeness experientially in our life. Even though the work is "complete in Christ" there is nothing automatic about our experience of it COL 2:8-10. The responsibility that we have concerning our union with Christ and our position in Him is simply to believe it. To believe ROM 8:31b "If God is for us, who is against us?" and ROM 8:32 "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

We are saved by faith, live by faith, and we are to walk by faith and grow by faith. Our union with Christ and our position in Him, which we call the doctrine of positional truth, is the "full-provision" for our Christian life and service. You cannot live the adult spiritual life without understanding your union with Christ and your position in Him. Positional truth is the provision for our Christian life whereas; the cross is the only provision we have for the self-life. Security is of the utmost importance in the Christian life and therefore without the proper doctrinal information, there is bound to be a nagging question regarding salvation or spirituality. Millions of born again believers struggle with this question of whether they are unconditionally and forever saved or if they are on probation?" TIT 2:11-14 "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."

The grace of God instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and spiritual in this present age, the Church-age. There is no such word Godliness, the Greek word in verse 12 is "eusebos" from "eusebeia" which is a word describing living the spiritual life and the opposite of the Spiritual life. You will come across those who strongly oppose any thought of unconditional eternal security and grace leading to living the spiritual life. What they fail to understand is that the believer who truly stands in the grace and security of positional truth is the one who truly respects God and realizes that sin hinders their relationship with Him. As one who fears or respects God not as a slave, or in fear of losing his salvation but one who is concerned about grieving God's love. Grace rids one of doubt and gives assurance and confidence, the Law, legalism and religion on the other hand, keeps a person wondering, guessing and hoping. It is the insecure believer who is naturally unstable and goes from one experience to another. Paul puts it this way in 2TI 3:7 "always learning and never able to come to the epignosis knowledge of the truth." Resting in our union with Christ and our position in Him frees us from the endless and sinful self-effort of trying to make our condition the basis for our security. It certainly is not yet manifested in our condition what we already are in our position. But, the believer who understands his union with Christ and his position in Him does not rely upon appearances and is not affected one way or another by his condition. 1JO 4:17 says "By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; BECAUSE AS HE IS, SO ALSO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD." Understanding such passages as causes the believer to rest in the work which God has done and the words that the Lord has said! As he grows spiritually, the adult believer knows he is accepted and secure not on the basis of his condition but on the basis of his position. There is only one man that God accepts, only one that God

elected, only one that God predestined, and we are "in that man", the God-man, TLJC. This does not produce carelessness but confidence, ISA 32:17 "And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever."

JUD 1:24 "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,"

It is a sad commentary to know that passages like MAT 11:28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" exists and yet the majority of born again believers run around with a guilt complex working up a relationship with God. It is a pathetic testimony of the grace of love of God to have Christians quoting MAT 11:29 when our Lord said "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls" and yet the average believer is bored and weary concerning their relationship with God.

As one writer put it, "Our position in Christ is one of sitting, our life in the world is one of walking and our attitude toward Satan is one of standing." Christianity begins not with the word "DO", but with the word DONE. Resting in our union with Christ and our position in Him frees us from the endless and sinful self-effort of trying to make our condition the basis for our security. All of this as a result of possessing and grasping the true meaning of having the gift of divine righteousness and perfect standing with God. COL 1:22 "yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach" How many of God's people experience this type of rest and peace and freedom and tranquility? Again, look at JUD 1:24 "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy," He who is able is the one who has the infinite ability to keep you free from falling and to cause you to stand.

Standing in the presence of His glory means more than just being in the face to face presence of Christ, it means in REV: 5 Jesus Christ introduces you to the Father in His court before His holy angels. He introduces you as a winner believer and as a witness who has fulfilled a prosecutorial testimony against Satan in the Church age, that's the true witness. The true witness is not one who simply witnesses to people. We are witnesses in a higher sense against Satan and for the glory of God. So in JUD 1:25 "to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." Actually, it should sound something like this, "To the unique God the only true God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glorification, majesty, government, an authority before all the ages. "

This all comes from understanding your union with Christ and your position in Him.

Being conformed into the image of God's Son

3-12-00

ROM 12:1 "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship." Understanding our union with Him and the resultant divine righteousness gives us a valid "presentation" to God. The word to present means to dedicate, separate, to present ourselves unto God. This is a response of faith to God who has already placed us "in Christ." It is acknowledging our position "in Christ." It does not mean that we need to do this to be accepted by or with Christ, but that we understand we are accepted "in Christ." The logical conclusion is to present not just our souls or human spirits only but our bodies as well! For the sophomore believer (who has a little knowledge but thinks they have a lot) it is easy to present their souls and even their human spirit. They can stay at home and read or listen to someone's tapes, skipping the series if the interest isn't there. But to present their body takes sacrifice, dedication and devotion. It takes believing passages like 1CO 6:19-20 "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

Presenting ourselves to God means to dedicate oneself to God, to devote your body as holy and dedicated to Him, knowing that you will never enter into sinless perfection or be perfectly holy in this life. Giving your body, soul and spirit, that's a difficult thing to do. Most people can't because it takes tremendous humility and perseverance to do so. You have to learn to handle the old sin nature's tendency to react and judge and you have to learn to handle other people and their old sin nature. So, some give their soul and become very intellectual and even introspective, others give their soul and human spirit and learn spiritual things. But there are some who do all three, or try to their best to do all three. Added to that they use their time, talent and treasure as best as they can. These are the ones who are a privilege to be around, the ones who make the environment for learning doctrine so comfortable. These are the ones who don't just dedicate their soul and spirit but also their body. This is taught in ROM 6:13 "and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Here we have the determinant factor in presenting ourselves to God found in the phrase, "as those alive from the dead." We know that our old nature or old self did not rise from the dead. The sinful Adamic life was crucified on the cross. ROM 6:6-7 "knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died [with Christ] is freed from sin [the sin nature]." The "new man" emerged from the death that He died and the resurrection which took place. This new man, this new life realized from "positional truth" is what God wants you to present yourselves to Him with. This new Christian life we are told to present to God, COL 3:3 "For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." It is the only life He accepts.

Another aspect of positional truth that is very vital to understand is our identification with The Lord Jesus Christ. We need to identify with His death, burial, and resurrection. As in all realms of positional truth, this identification is not experiential but a matter of placing our faith in the facts contained in the Word. God provides the facts before He calls for faith. ROM 10:17 "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." It is not until the facts of our identification with Christ are "understood" that we are told to exercise faith. Once we understand our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection then we are directed to "consider" as ROM 6:11 says "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." The key word in this verse is "consider" which means to conclude or take into account, to determine or to decide. It would be impossible for God to suggest that we "consider ourselves" as having died unto our sin nature and then having become alive unto Him in Christ, if the information to do so was not provided and if it were not already true of us. Nor could He ever call upon us to present ourselves to Him as alive from the dead in ROM 6:13, if He had not already made us new creatures in Christ.

However, true as our identification with TLJC is, if we are not aware of the facts, we derive little benefit from them where we need them most, in our daily life." To consider that something is true is to see it clearly or to believe it. Therefore, it is not until we recognize that we are free from the power of the sin nature and its' lust toward immoral or moral degeneracy that we become a servant of righteousness. ROM 6:17-18 "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of doctrine to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."

There is absolutely no reason why you as a believer should not enjoy the equal privilege and equal opportunity that God has given you to be a winner. You have been given fantastic things including mystery doctrine. Saints of the Old Testament did not know "Church-age mystery doctrine." They did not realize that God would have a royal family or that every believer would be a priest. They did not realize that the royal family would have the privileges of royalty, that they would be "special" and have the greatest opportunities in their relationship with God. When Moses and the other writers of the Old Testament wrote, they prophesied a lot of things. They prophesied about the rejection of the Jews, about the First advent, they prophesied about the Tribulation and the Millennium. But, they always skipped over the Church-age. This was a mystery and positional truth is a part of that mystery. The Old Testament has a great deal of benefit for us but it is not where we find our doctrine regarding "the Church-age." The mystery in EPH 1:9 "God had made known unto us [His saints] the mystery" was not known and you are a part of this mystery, you are the saints and never before has this information been revealed! Moses, Abraham, Isaiah and the others of the Old Testament were curious about it! They were curious, but they did not know about it, amazingly, little curiosity, interest exists among believers today about this mystery. Our relationship with God is based upon being "in Him" and understanding positional truth is also essential in overcoming sin. The mature believer and the spiritually minded believer is conscious of sin "in him" but he is fully assured that there is no sin "on him". 1Jo 1:8-10 "If we say [assert] that we have no sin nature, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth or doctrine is not in us. If we acknowledge [name and cite] our sins, He is faithful and righteous, with the result that He forgives us our sins [known sins] and purifies us from all unrighteousness [unknown sins]. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word [Bible doctrine] does not reside in us."

The believer who understands this enjoys freedom to come boldly unto the throne of grace in order that he may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. When he does sin, his conscience and communion with the Father being disturbed, causes him to confess and receive restoration. He knows 1JO 2:1 "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; He knows his advocate!" On the other hand the "condition centered" Christian is just the opposite. He has no other recourse but to "fight against the indwelling sin nature" and to seek to control self as best as He can. To this intolerable burden is added the frustrating fact that God does not seem to help him in this endeavor. One of the main reasons why so many believers are spiritually ill as well as mentally and physically sick, is a guilty oppressed conscience. They are occupied with and laboring under the burden of their unrighteous condition. There is liberty in our "righteous position" but burden in our "unrighteous condition." Sadly enough, there are many of God's people today who do not know anything about a "pure" and perfect conscience. Instead they are bound by a bad conscience, honestly aware of their sinful condition but only vaguely aware of their perfect position. As 1CO 8:7 says "their conscience being weak is defiled" or TIT 1:15 "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled." or HEB 9:14 "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" or Heb 10:22 "let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled {clean} from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

The basic reason for a guilty conscience is the indwelling "old sin nature". Although redeemed by Christ from the penalty and bondage of sin, many believers are spiritually helpless and useless by an overwhelming burden of guilt because they do not understand positional truth or they do apply what they have learned. Even the Old Testament believers knew the importance of deliverance from

guilt. In PSA 32:5 David said "I acknowledged my sin to Thee, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin." The agony of guilt is found in such passages as PSA 38:4 "For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me." This is why we are told in ISA 43:18 "Do not call to mind the former things, Or ponder things of the past".

Our guilt cannot be relieved through removal of sin within because that principle will be present as long as we reside in our unredeemed body. There cannot be any hope of relief through improvement of self, since in the flesh there dwells "no good thing" to improve. As one writer put it "Faith is dependence upon God. And this God-dependence only begins when self-dependence ends." Self-dependence comes to its end for many believers, when sorrow, suffering, affliction, broken plans and dead hopes bring them to the place of self-helplessness and defeat. Most believers have difficulty in realizing and facing up to the relentless fact that God does not hurry in His development of our Christian life. Many believers get in a rut and feel that they are not making progress unless they are seeing results on a daily basis.

Moses was forty years in the desert, Paul was three years, after his first testimony, the point is that there are no shortcuts to fulfill the spiritual life. True spiritual growth involves pain as well as joy, suffering as well as happiness, failure as well as success, inactivity as well as service, death as well as life. The temptation to shortcut is especially strong unless we see the value of, and submit to, the necessity of the time element. In simple trust we must rest in His hands, as PHI 1:6 states, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who has begun in you an absolute good work will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus." It will take until the day of Christ. The point is that since God is working for eternity, why should we be concerned about the time involved? ROM 8:29 "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;" All growth is progressive, it is from measure to measure, from stage to stage. There are great days, days of decisive battles, days of crises in the spiritual life, days of triumph in the Christian life. But there are also idle days, days that seem to be apparently useless, as far as the spiritual life is concerned. However, in those days God is still not working within us. Any experience that makes us more aware of our need of God contributes to our spiritual progress and growth. Paul writes in 1TH 5:24 "Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass." So often when we go through certain difficulties and trials, we pray for strength, encouragement and victory, for mastery over the forces of evil and our thought is that in some way the Lord is going to come through for us with some overt victory. However, what God wants to do many times is to enlarge us to possess all that He has for us.

To increase our capacity to handle pressure, to become immune to the trials and difficulties that inevitably we all have to face. The Lord said in the upper room discourse, the night before His death in JOH 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." In JOH 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." God will put us through some exercise, through some experience that takes us by surprise for our own spiritual development so that we end up with an increase capacity in our spiritual life.

The problem that we all have at times is to be too self-centered and introspective. We want everything done yesterday. When in reality, when the Holy Spirit reasons with man, He does not reason from what man is for God, but from what God is to man. Most believers are too concerned about what they are to God and whether God can accept or reject them. The Holy Spirit always reasons down from what God is, and this produces a total change in our life. Sadly today, most believers actually reason just the opposite--from themselves to God. When all is going well they feel God loves and accepts them, but when they are stumbling and everything seems to be going wrong, then they feel that He does not love and accept them.

When in reality, there is nothing about us to commend us to God except our position and acceptance in Christ. This is why God loved us from before the foundation of the world, in REV 13:8 and 17:8, our names were written in the book of life before the world was even created. A few principles concerning believer who understands his position in Christ:

1. Realizes that to believe and to consent to be loved while unworthy, is one of the great secrets of the Christian way of life.
2. Refuses to make resolutions and vows; for that is to trust in the flesh.
3. Expects to be blessed, though realizing more and more his lack of worth.
4. Realizes that God's chastening is a mark of His love and grace.
5. Realizes that to hope to be better and therefore acceptable to God is to fail to see yourself in your position in Christ.
6. Realizes that to be disappointed with yourself, is to have believed in yourself.
7. Realizes that to be discouraged is unbelief concerning God's purpose and plan for you.

Paul said in ROM 14:22 "The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves."

ROM 14:23 "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin."

To have confidence in ourselves and in our little system of good deeds is to be blind because we have no standing before God, in ourselves. The lack of divine blessing in our lives therefore, comes from unbelief, and not from failure of devotion. It comes from rejection of who we are in Christ and then failure to execute the spiritual life. To preach devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God's order, and preach law, not grace, for the Law made man's blessing depend on devotion whereas grace confers undeserved, unconditional blessing.

The problem is that so many believers have been afraid to really believe God.

Never forget that God's ways are not always man's ways. To some believers, constant danger is the only motivation for a relationship with God, and that is why many churches use fear to try and keep their disciples in line. Fear, too, has a place in Christianity, but God has higher and more effective motivations than fear, and one of these is love. 1JO 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love." Fear produces the obedience of slaves; love generates the motivation and obedience of sons. ROM 8:28 "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

ROM 8:29 "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;"

The secret of healthy spiritual growth is to know and settle upon this fact as set forth in Romans 8:28-29.

When we see that all things are working together to make us more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ, we will not be frustrated and upset when some of these things are hard and often difficult to understand. We will be able to rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ and say to our Father as Job did in JOB 13:15 "Though He slay me, I will trust in Him." It is one thing to know what God's purpose is for our lives, but it is another to know something of the means He uses for us to enter into that purpose. One of God's most effective means in the process of our spiritual growth and transformation is failure. Many believers are simply frantic over the fact of failure in their lives, and they will go to all lengths in trying to hide it, ignore it, or rationalize about it.

All the time they are resisting the main instrument in the Father's hand for conforming us to the image of His Son. HOS 5:15b "In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me." Or PSA 50:15 "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me." Failure where self is concerned in our Christian life and service is allowed and often engineered by God in order to turn us completely from ourselves to His source for our life, TLJC, who never fails us.

We should be consistently and lovingly learning about our Lord and Savior, who is revealed to us in the Word. The Holy Spirit will quietly and effortlessly change the center and source of our lives from self to Christ. Therefore, we end up with a viewpoint like John the Baptist, JOH 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease. Or, as the apostle Paul said in GAL 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;"

Under the law of volitional responsibility and reaping what we sow, God has a natural law in force to the effect that we are conformed to that on which we center our interest and love. If we are attracted to this present evil world, we become increasingly worldly; if we pamper and live for self, we become more and more self-centered; but when we look to TLJC, we become more and more like Him, 2CO 3:18, 1JO 4:17. If we are to be like Him, then God in His grace must do it. The sooner we come to recognize it the sooner we will be delivered from another form of bondage. The Holy Spirit says, "You cannot do it; just withdraw; come out of it. You have been in the arena, you have been endeavoring, you are a failure, come out and sit down, and as you sit there behold Him, look at Him." Don't try to be like Him, just look at Him, just be occupied with Him, behold Him, look upon Him through the Word. Come to the Word for one purpose and that is to meet the Lord.

PHI 2:13 "for it is God [the Holy Spirit] who is at work in you, both to will [give you motivation] and to work [He gives you the ability to execute] above and beyond His good pleasure. He is working everything together for this one purpose: "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh", This is life.

PHI 1:21 For me, living is Christ, likewise dying is profit.

There will be times when it seems like our needs are not being met and if we are not confident enough and assured of our standing with God, there is a tendency to question our relationship with Him. Our fellowship can and does change, sometimes for the worse, sometimes for the better, but our relationship will never change. Once a son, always a son.

Gal 3:26 "For all of you are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

You will always be an heir of God no matter how you fail or succeed.

Gal 4:7 "Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, a child of God, and if a son, then an heir through God."

Perceiving Who We are in Christ

3-19-00

We are continuing to look at the relationship between our position in Christ and our condition in time, Phi 3:9-10. God uses natural facts in order to teach the deepest spiritual truths. He first teaches us about our natural, Adamic life (the old sin nature) before we can understand and appreciate our new spiritual life in Christ. This principle is found in Gen 5:1-3, where we note that Adam was created in the "likeness of God," but his descendants were "born in his [Adam's] likeness," for we read in verse three that Adam "became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image." Therefore, all men born of Adam and his descendants are the "sons of men," and it is only by being born again that they can become the "sons of God" in union with Christ in the Church Age. This is an important principle, because when it comes to positional truth, we need to differentiate between the first and last Adam (or the old and new man). 1Co 15:22, for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. Every believer needs to learn that he was born in Adam. Rom 5:19a For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, As we go through our failures and struggles, and He teaches us about the natural, we will become ready to learn about the spiritual.

Rom 5:19b Even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. This is how we begin to progress in the spiritual life. Progress is only advancing in the spiritual knowledge of what we already possess at the outset. Our part is not production, but reception of our life in Christ and learning from passages like 1Pe 1:23, "For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God" The key word here is "seed." Embodied in a seed, in full, is the reproduction of the life from which it came. The seed has been implanted within us, and therefore the entire in our Christian walk is one of growth and maturity. This alone will bring forth the fruit that abides within the seed. 1Jo 3:9 addresses this - "No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin], because he is born of God." That seed (the new life of Christ, the new species, the new creature, and the new nature) will live with God forever, and can never sin. All the powers of omnipotence, which have already worked together in the accomplishment of the first part of God's eternal purpose, which was the revealing of His likeness in The Lord Jesus Christ, are equally working to accomplish the second part, conforming His children to His image. Therefore, there are two essentials in living the spiritual life.

1. To see what is already ours in Christ.
2. To be aware of our need for it.

On these two factors rests the ability to appropriate that which belongs to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. You must simply seize for yourself that which has already been given to you freely. In dealing with the first essential, while writing the book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul does not ask a thing of the believers at Ephesus in the first three chapters, except to listen, while he proclaims a wonderful series of great principles concerning their eternal blessings and privileges. Not until he has completed this list, which reveals the true reality about their lives, does he ask them to do anything at all. The privileges of Eph 1-3.

1. Spiritual blessings for time and eternity and escrow blessings.
2. Sanctification, predestination, and election.
3. Adoption
4. The sealing ministry of God the Holy Spirit.
5. The Indwelling of Christ
6. The Portfolio of Invisible Assets.
7. Equal Assets in Christ
8. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
9. Positional Truth.
10. Church-age Problem Solving Devices
11. The doctrine of the New Species.
12. The Unique Assets of the Church Age Believer.

13. The Doctrine of Reconciliation.
14. The Great Power Experiment.
15. Invisible heroes and the Doctrine of the Mystery.
16. The Angelic Conflict.

It is not until Paul has completed this list of fantastic doctrinal realities that he does the following two things.

1. He prays that they would receive these blessings in Eph 3:14-21.
2. He asks them to do one thing in Eph 4:1, "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."

Once we see that which is ours in Christ Jesus, practical need will cause us to appropriate and receive the answer to that need. The need is to discover truths like Joh 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing." If we don't understand positional truth and its details, it is easy to get our eyes upon ourselves and off Christ.

Therefore, the Lord advises us in Rev 3:18c "to get eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see." The eye salve represents the ability derived from doctrine in your soul to understand and discern what is really going in the spiritual realm. Paul said in Eph 1:18, "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened." Bible doctrine gives us the ability to discern properly. This doctrine, or "eye salve," heals the eyes of the soul, so that you are no longer blind to what is happening in the spiritual life. This is another reason the importance of understanding positional truth in all of its details. There is a battle that we face daily that needs to be understood. In Rom 7 Paul was still teaching about and struggling with the indwelling old sin nature twenty-eight years after his salvation, so it should be no surprise to us when we struggle with it. Remember, the first problem solving-device God gave us is rebound.

God has designed life to bring in a series of discoveries of our need of Christ, and with every discovery the way is opened for a new inflow of the supply or provision of the Holy Spirit. Life is designed by God to make this need known. This explains so much that we cannot otherwise understand, when we are plunged into new tests and situations where only the power of the Spirit, the power options, the spiritual skills, and the problem solving devices will meet our need. As our need is met and as we realize the sufficiency of the power of Christ to meet our need, a new showing forth of His life takes place within us. We are being transformed into His image from glory to glory, 2Co 3:18, from faith to faith, Rom 1:17, and because of grace upon grace, Joh 1:16. Therefore, these two realities of seeing who we are in Adam and who we are in Christ and then needing the grace of God bring us from meandering and wandering into a responsible, disciplined walk of faith. Seeing who we are in Adam and then who we are in Christ takes us from the "help me" attitude to that of giving thanks from begging to appropriation. This is why appropriation, or simply believing, is so important. From time to time the Holy Spirit will bring to our attention simplistic principles of the Word of God in a striking manner. Every day God has a plan to reveal to us that we have needs, and when we see them and rest in Him, all that remains to be done is to appropriate what He has taught us. The sad truth is that when God reveals our needs and our weaknesses and faults, we have a tendency to think that there is something wrong with us. Therefore, we miss the lesson because we are too self-centered and introspective, and we want to justify ourselves. Let's face it -- no one likes to be corrected or rebuked. Yet we must be careful not to make excuses for that which God has chosen to reveal to us about ourselves. When we do, we miss the boat and have to go through the whole thing all over again. In most instances of appropriation there is a waiting period between the acceptance and the receiving (or experiencing) of it, often years. Our responsibility is to patiently wait on Him and the time necessary for Him to work into our character and our life that which we have appropriated in Christ, in this instance His rest, steadfastness, assurance, and security, Isa 64:4; Heb 10:35-39, 11:1-6. Phi 3:9 reveals grace orientation in phase one (at salvation), "And that I may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness derived from the source of the Law, but that [righteousness] which is acquired by means of faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from the source of the God at the point of faith." Then Paul continues with phase two (grace orientation after salvation) in Phi 3:10, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." This verse continues with the thought pattern of identifying with the Lord Jesus Christ and God's plan for your life.

This means understanding divine power (the omnipotence that allows us to be changed experientially and to be more like our Lord and Savior and our position in Christ). This means, first of all, knowing the power of God the Father who raised Christ from the dead. The following verses teach that God the Father raised our Lord from the dead by His power: 1Th 1:10, 1Pe 1:2, Eph 1:20, Col 2:12, Rom 6:4, and 1Pe 1:21. Do we know and understand that power? Scripture also says the Holy Spirit raised Him from the dead in Act 2:24, Rom 1:4, Rom 8:11, and 1Pe 3:18. God the Holy Spirit is also the agent of the resurrection. Therefore, it is this power to which Paul is referring in Phi 3:10. It is not the doctrine of resurrection that Paul is teaching here; it is the power behind the resurrection that Paul wants us to focus on. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is now available to us (the omnipotence of the Father, which in eternity past created a portfolio of invisible assets for every Church Age believer). The second power in view is the function of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit who has provided an unprecedented delegation and distribution of divine power inside the predesigned plan of God and your very own personal sense of destiny. It all begins with knowing Him! Once we begin to know Him, we can then begin to know ourselves. We cannot trust anyone further than we know them. We must not only learn the doctrines involved, but, even more importantly, we must come to know Him more intimately as the One who presents and upholds those doctrines, for Bible doctrine is His mind. Knowing Him all begins with one very simplistic word, simplistic but valuable. It is something that is very precious to all of us -- Time! It is something that we cherish, especially if we love life. Time is very interesting when you think about the fact that the future can influence the present just like past. We learn from the past, and we have hopes regarding the future! Time is especially important to us in two realms.

1. Sanctified time, or time set apart to learn about Him.

2. The ability to wait on the timing of God as He works within us.

God is not on a timetable, and He is not in a hurry in His development of our Christian life. So many feel they are not making any spiritual progress unless they are swiftly and constantly forging ahead. The new believer often begins and continues growing for some time at a very fast rate. However, this will not continue if there is to be a healthy spiritual growth and ultimate spiritual maturity. God Himself will modify and control the pace. Always re-member, when seeming stagnation begins to set in, it is not, as so many think, a matter of backsliding, or losing your love, or apostasy or reversion-ism. It is a matter of God at work in us in His timing and His ways

Phil 3:10 "That I May Come to Know Him"

3-26-00

Phi 3:10 is our main verse: "That I may come to know Him and the power of His resurrection." "That I may come to know Him" refers to occupation with Christ. The purpose of a personal sense of destiny is to parlay it into an intimate occupation with Christ. This demands the understanding of the adult spiritual life. As a believer, you will always be disillusioned and disappointed in life unless you attain occupation with Christ. To know Christ is not to be skilled in theological knowledge; it is to know Him with such intimacy that we release that we are more united with him than we are with those whom we love on earth. Occupation with Christ is personal love for our Lord Jesus Christ through metabolized doctrine in the soul by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is the absence of garbage in the subconscious. It results from perception, metabolization, and application of Church-age mystery doctrine as the number one priority in your life. 1Pe 1:8; "And even though you have not seen Him, you love Him [occupation with Christ]; and though you do not see Him now but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with inexpressible happiness and full of glory". Those who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ have made Him a role model. These are the believers who are truly happy, and are spiritually self-sustained. The happiness from occupation with Christ and the utilization of the problem solving devices is something that belongs to the privacy of your own soul. The believer who is occupied with Christ is full of glory, invisible to man, but very visible to God and the angelic creatures. The mystery doctrine of the Church-age is described as the thinking or the mind of Christ. 1Co 2:16; "For who has known the thinking of the Lord that he should instruct Him? But we [Church-age believers] have the thinking of Christ." You cannot love Jesus Christ until you know how He thinks. Having the thinking of Christ results in occupation with Christ in contrast to preoccupation with people. There are two divine commands with regard to occupation with Christ.

The first is Heb 12:2; "Be concentrating on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our doctrine, who because of the exhibited happiness, He endured the Cross and disregarded [by use of the problem solving devices] the shame [imputation of our sins], and He sat down at the right hand of God." The second is 1Pe 3:15; "But sanctify [set apart as more important than anything else] the Lord Christ in your hearts." God makes a direct positive demand on our will and volition to be occupied with Christ, which is a mandate to be consistent in the metabolization of doctrine.

Occupation with Christ is also defined as fellowship with the Son.

1Co 1:9; "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

The call of God occurs between common and efficacious grace when God the Father invites the unbeliever to change his mind about Jesus Christ and believe in Him for salvation. Fellowship with the Holy Spirit is necessary for the execution of these mandates. Another way of describing the filling of the Spirit found in:

2Co 13:14; "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love for God [the Father] and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

Phi 2:1-2; "Since therefore there is encouragement in Christ, since there is comfort from virtue-love, since there is fellowship of the Spirit, since there is tenderesses and compassions, bring to completion my inner happiness by thinking the same things, maintaining the same virtue-love, united in soul, concentrating on the same objective."

Phi 2:5; "Keep on thinking this [doctrine] within yourselves which was also resident in Christ Jesus."

These verses teach that our spiritual life depends upon encouragement in Christ and this is dependent on learning doctrine. As we grow spiritually, our dependence on people shifts to dependence on God. Occupation with Christ does not depend upon emotionalism or any human work. This occupation is actually structured entirely upon your perception of Bible doctrine. When we go through suffering, disaster, shock, and pressure, the problem-solving devices are the only solution. When we see how these problem-solving devices work, we will experience encouragement in Christ. Comfort comes from knowledge of the

personal love that God the Father has for the believer and the believer's personal love for God the Father. This gives us comfort in times of adversity as well as times of prosperity. The "tendernesses and compassions" of Phi 2:1 are based upon the function of impersonal love for all mankind and grace orientation as two of the problem solving devices. The "inner happiness" of Phi 2:2 results when you attain occupation with Christ. It is then that you attain +H or sharing the happiness of God, and that you are prepared to meet and face any circumstance. This is why occupation with Christ is often mentioned with sharing the happiness of God in Scripture.

We are to think the same as God thinks; thought is the basis for happiness, love, and virtue. Having the thinking of Christ is occupation with Christ rather than with people. "United in soul" (Phi 2:2) means we have reached the point of regarding the predesigned plan of God for our life in the same manner that our Lord did. From Phi 2:1-2 we see that Occupation with Christ results in God emphasis taking precedence over people emphasis. We see that fellowship with God is infinitely more important than fellowship with people. We also see that God must come first in our life in order for us to execute God's plan. This can only be done by learning doctrine on a daily basis. You cannot grow spiritually and execute the predesigned plan of God unless you have epignosis knowledge (wisdom, rather than mere knowledge) circulating in the right lobe of the soul, called the "heart" in the Bible. However, the attainment of occupation with Christ is gradual. It starts with the command in Eph 3:19; "And to come to know the love for Christ which goes beyond gnosis that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

We must reach the point where we understand that we need help. Occupation with Christ means getting to the point where the Lord Jesus Christ becomes our best friend. Therefore, occupation with Christ becomes the ultimate problem-solving device of life. Occupation with Christ is one of three problem-solving devices related to virtue-love. The seventh problem-solving device is personal love for God the Father, the motivational virtue in life. The eighth is impersonal love for all mankind, the functional virtue in the Christian life. The tenth is occupation with Christ, the priority solution, and ultimately the answer to any adversity in life, as well as the basis for having capacity for happiness and prosperity. All three of these problem-solving devices function with maximum efficiency in the three stages of spiritual adulthood. They begin in spiritual self-esteem, continue in spiritual autonomy, and reach their peak in spiritual maturity. All three of these concepts of love are the subject of 1Co 13:13; "And now abides faith, hope, and virtue-love, these three; but the greatest of these is virtue-love." Occupation with Christ is the greatest motivator in life. As we begin to grow spiritually, we have a stronger motivation in our relationship with the Lord, and we grow from dependence on people to dependence on the Lord. False motivation leads to false doctrine and wrong priorities, and produces garbage in the subconscious, which results in false experience. Occupation with Christ is structured completely upon metabolized doctrine, 2Co 5:14-15. The key is that we no longer live for ourselves but for Christ, for God does all the work. The only way we can ever have a marvelous life is to no longer live for ourselves. Once we have occupation with Christ, we live for Christ and we are happier than ever. In providing eternal life, God also provided for us a way to have ourselves changed, but not to change others. When we try to change others, we become bitter and hardened. Wrong fellowship with God results in wrong relationship with people. Right fellowship with God results in right relationship with people. God must come first. When you give doctrine number one priority in your life, two things occur.

1. You come to have personal love for God the Father, and therefore fellowship with the Father.
2. You come to have occupation with Christ, and therefore fellowship with God the Son.

Occupation with Christ eliminates the human viewpoint of life. Human viewpoint makes you miserable and makes you argue with others about everything in life. The greater your motivation in life, the greater your capacity for life, love, and happiness, and the greater you are as a person. Occupation with Christ results in God emphasis taking precedence over people emphasis, because fellowship with God is infinitely more important than fellowship with people. As unbelievers, we were ignorant of Jesus Christ for we knew Him only from the human viewpoint. However, with cognitive self-confidence in spiritual self-esteem and cognitive independence in spiritual autonomy, we no longer regard Christ from the human viewpoint of ignorance. Only the new spiritual species is qualified to have fellowship with God. The new spiritual species is capable of using the omnipotence of God for the execution of His plan. The people priority and

lust lose their power once we reach spiritual self-esteem. The power of another individual to hurt us is gone. We must always remember that we can't be motivated by people and advance in the Christian life. Occupation with Christ is revealed by our dedication and devotion to Him and His plan. Only God can mature us, 1Co 3:1-8. In these verses we see the principle that God causes the growth, and each of us will receive his own reward according to his own labor. We are never fully grown until we reach the point of occupation with Christ. It is here that we handle life magnificently and glorify God. However, always remember that true spiritual growth involves pain as well as joy, suffering as well as happiness, failure as well as success, inactivity as well as service, and death as well as life. The temptation to try to take a shortcut is especially strong unless we see the value of the time element and believe that God is at work. We must rest in God's hands, and trust that He is at work within us and that He is responsible for our spiritual growth. We must realize that someone truly does care about us -- the Lord Jesus Christ. As Christians, we need to see the necessity of going beyond the love motive to the life motive.

Phi 1:21; "For to me to live is Christ."

The pre-salvation assumption that if you are right in your relationship with people you are right in your relationship with God is wrong, as was demonstrated in the Garden of Eden. The priority of the new spiritual species is occupied with Christ. Even though the old things have lost their power, we are not impeccable; we continue to possess an old sin nature. The "new things [that] have come" include the following:

1. The precedence for the Church Age, the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union.
2. The baptism of the Spirit, which creates a new spiritual species.
3. The 100% availability of divine power to every believer in the Church-age.
4. A new divine plan for the glorification of God by the unique royal family of God, the pre-designed plan of God, which leads us to our personal sense of destiny.
5. The indwelling of all three persons of the Trinity in the body of every Church-age believer.
6. The two royal commissions (the royal priesthood and the royal ambassadorship).
7. The dispensation of equality (equal privilege and equal opportunity under the principle of election).
8. The unique problem solving devices.
9. The unique portfolio of invisible assets.
10. The dispensation of invisible heroes.

There is only one true and adequate motivating power for living the Christian life, and that is the very life of the Lord Jesus Christ, ministered within by the Spirit of Life Himself. This is not a motivation of love, but the empowerment of life.

Phi 1:21; "For me, living is Christ, likewise dying is profit."

The truth is not "Only what is done for Christ will last," but rather, "Only what is done by Christ will last." This is the turning point, usually years in the making, where the growing Christian begins to be centered in Christ rather than in himself ("not I, but Christ," Gal 2:20)

The Highest Form of Worship: Friendship with God

4-09-00

We have been noting this phrase in Phi 3:10 “that I may come to know Him” which has been the reference to our current study of Occupation with the person of Christ. One of the principles we see is that occupation with Christ is the ultimate motivator in life. The love motive from which to live the Christian life and serve the Lord is good, but it is not adequate because it is not the motivation that is underwritten by God. The sincere believer seeks to struggle forward through the love motive which is “He did for me, so I must do for Him.” As growing Christians, we need to see the necessity of going beyond the love motive and reaching the life motive of Phi 1:21 “For to me to live is Christ.”

A magnificent word, which applies to our subject of occupation with Christ, is the word "fellowship" in 1JO 1:3 “what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

There is one word our Lord uses that truly describe what fellowship with the Father is and what occupation with Christ is all about. Joh 15:15 “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” The word fellowship, as John uses it, is the distinctive and exceptional word of “friendship.” It is an interesting that in the three letters John writes in the last days of his ministry, he never speaks of Jesus as Lord, and never speaks of the disciples of Jesus as His servants. John did not forget the relationship which he and his fellow-disciples had with The Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC) as His bond-servants, nor did John forget the supremacy and sovereignty of Christ, that He was, indeed, the Lord. All three of John's letters, First, Second and Third John, are distinctively the letters of a close, and intimate, and personal friendship with TLJC. Paul also this word in passages like, 1Co 1:9 “God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” The word is very important to note concerning our relationship with God and our subject of occupation with Christ. The word "fellowship" here is translated in many ways in the New Testament and connotes the idea of intimacy, and is often translated “partakers, partners and companions.”

We have an illustration in the early church in the book of Acts concerning the intimacy and the intenseness of this word:: Acts 2:42-44 “And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer and everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;” Here we get even closer to the heart of the true meaning of fellowship with God and occupation with the person of Christ. Having fellowship whether it is with man or with God, is having all things in common. One of the greatest titles that any believer could have is to be called a friend of God. It was said of Abraham in Jam 2:23. Abraham was known for having friends in high places 2Ch 20:7, Isa 41:8. To become a friend of God is the ultimate expression of fellowship with God and occupation with Christ.

There are two words that signify our true fellowship with God. One is the word communion, which we will use in the realm of friendship, the other is the word partnership, which we use in the realm of business. By looking at what friendship is on the human level, we may climb to the higher elevation, and understand what is meant by our fellowship or our friendship, with God. Solomon put it like this in Pro 17:9 “He who covers a transgression seeks love but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.” There are probably very few people in your life with whom you can pour out everything in your heart. We have many acquaintances, and we value some of them, but very few real close friends, and we value all of them. With your friend you can think out loud, no restraint, no need to keep up an appearance. You pour everything out; knowing that your friend will sift between the garbage and the valuables, and with grace will throw the garbage away, and keep the valuables. That is friendship on the human level, and it describes what true friendship with God is as well, that is on our side of the fellowship. With God, it is our privilege to pour out everything that is on our heart, saying anything, saying everything we are thinking. God said this about David in Acts 13:22 “He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also

testified and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.” We see the type of fellowship David had with God: Psa 55:16-17 “As for me, I shall call upon God, And the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, And He will hear my voice.” Too often we think our conversation with God must be that of carefully prepared. Conversing with God reaches its highest level when, alone with Him, you can pour out everything in your heart; that's what a true friend is for. The manner in which we have learned that secret, and live in the power of it, is the measure of the joy and strength of our friendship with God. It is perfectly true and it can be done. That's what the apostle Paul said Rom 8:26 “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;” This is why in Heb 7:25 “Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

So, even though we do not pray properly, he answers our imperfect articulation with the perfect comprehension of our needs. The other aspect of fellowship, which is partnership or mutual interests and devotion. Fellowship with God means mutual interests: “God is interested in me, and I am interested in God.” Many are burdened when fellowship with God and occupation with Christ are mentioned. That I may be interested in God is understandable; however, how can God be interested in me.

Look at Psa 8:3-4. Fellowship with God means that God is interested in my being, in my spiritual life, in my mental ability, in my physical need. He said Mat 6:25 “For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?” There is no part of our life in which God is not interested 1Pe 5:7 “casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”

Now, the other side of the coin is that I am to be interested in the things of God, in His present enterprises; in His ultimate ends and goals. My friendship and fellowship with God and occupation with the person of Christ demands that my eyes are upon that goal, Eph 3:17. Partnership also means mutual devotion. God's resources are all at my disposal and we have a mutual fellowship and friendship. My responsibility in the partnership or friendship is that my resources ought to be at His disposal, for true friendship is not a one-way thing? How often we settle down in our own wisdom and neglect asking for His, all the while He is waiting to give, Jam 1:5 “But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” Why doesn't God accomplish His purpose in the world, and put an end to all the things that agitate and perplex us? The long-suffering of God is His patience, Omnipotence is never in a hurry, Omniscience is right on time, Omnipresence is right there with us. As one preacher said, “it is a marvelous thing that Enoch walked with God, however, it is a more marvelous thing that God walked with Enoch.”

We look back over our own lives and see how many times He slowed down and stayed with us at our pace, waiting, always waiting. We have all kept Him waiting when we ought not, but He has waited even then.

If God accommodates Himself to us in gentleness, He enables us to rise to new activity with Him, in almost overwhelming power.

2Co 2:14 “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”

He leads us everywhere in triumph. Silence is the final proof of friendship, and contentment in silence. A true friend is one you can sit with and say nothing. God doesn't always speak to us when we want Him to. God's truest friends are those to whom God is often silent with. Our fellowship with God and occupation with the person of Christ will have times of silence, so if we are driven to silence, we don't have to be afraid. PSA 62:1 “My soul {waits} in silence for God only; From Him is my salvation.” It is much easier to work for God than to wait for God. It is the waiting that tells and wears the heart. If in our deepest heart, when there is no song, no psalm, no ecstasy; no joy, we are true; His friendship will bear the strain. He wants us to be such friends that we can bear the strain of silence and the great test of quietness. But, we need to practice our fellowship. He wants to talk to us of His own secrets, of the meaning of our life, and the way He would have us go; one of the greatest lacks in the present day is that we do not take time to listen. Has it ever occurred to you that God is often disappointed that we are so busy doing things for Him,

that we have not time to talk to Him? God is not interested in your performance. When it comes to true friendship and fellowship, performance is to be the result of the proper motivation from the heart not because of obligation.

There comes a time in the life of every believer when he must go it alone in silence. You're going to have that experience from time to time to see if the doctrine is there. God never lets you go it alone unless you've been exposed to the doctrine. Sooner or later you are going to have to face the test of the silence of God, and you need to recall that He is your true friend! There are times when all the doors in your life being closed, reveal the silence of God and then you must make your own decisions and go it alone, as it were. It is a part of His plan for your life. Don't blame others when you know that He is in control and if He wanted to He could change things in the twinkling of an eye! Think instead of the fact that you have a friend in high places, who will justify you, acquit you, vindicate you, and defend and support you when one condemns you. He will intercede for you. Occupation with Christ is a foundation or basis in the Christian life.

1. Occupation with Christ is the basis by which the mature believer contributes to national blessing, Deu 30:15-16,20, 30:15-20.
 2. Occupation with Christ produces combat courage and victory in battle, Jos 23:6-10-11.
 3. Occupation with Christ is the basis for preservation in testing, Psa 31:23-24. Occupation with Christ is the only way a believer can handle the problems of marriage, romance, friendship, business, profession, or job.
 4. Occupation with Christ is the basis of stability and great happiness, Psa 16:8-9.
 5. Occupation with Christ results in supergrace escrow blessings, Psa 37:4-5.
 6. Occupation with Christ is the basis for strength under pressure, Heb 11:24-27. Occupation with Christ in maturity becomes the means of great decisions and great dynamics in history. In Heb 11:27, "Moses gave up the crown of Egypt."
 7. Occupation with Christ avoids soul fatigue, Heb 12:2-3. Heb 12:3 "For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart."
- Occupation with Christ is mandated by God; it is not an option. If you are going to execute His plan for your life, you must come to the point of occupation with Christ.
8. Occupation with Christ is both the basis for support and the motivation to pass suffering for blessing tests, and it even intensifies during evidence testing, Phi 1:20-21.

Coming to Know the Power Behind Our Lord's Resurrection

4-16-00

We have looked at the first part of Phi 3:10 which says “that I may come to know Him, (and then the verb to know is still in view, so we would say and come to know) the power of (or behind) His resurrection.” The dynamics of occupation with Christ are given in the next phrase, “and the power of His resurrection.” There were two categories of divine power used in the resurrection of Christ.

1. The omnipotence of the Father which restored our Lord's human spirit in heaven to His body in the grave and thereby became an agent in the resurrection, Act 2:24; Rom 6:4; Eph 1:20; Col 2:12; 1Th 1:10; 1Pe 1:21. Luk 23:46.

2. The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit which restored our Lord's human soul in Hades to His body in the grave and thereby became an agent in the resurrection, Rom 1:4, 8:11 and 1PE 3:18-19 which says “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit or by means of the Holy Spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison,”

The Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC) had a part in the resurrection, as it was a part of the Father's plan for the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. Jesus Christ said He could raise Himself from the dead in Joh 10:17-18 “No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.” (Also see Joh 2:15-22). This same divine power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is available to every Church Age believer to execute the Pre-designed Plan Of God (PPOG). There are three categories of divine power.

1. The omnipotence of God the Father, related to our portfolio of invisible assets, through which, the believer fulfills the PPOG.

2. The omnipotence of God the Son, related to the preservation and perpetuation of human history. This means that Jesus Christ controls history Col 1:16-17, HEB 1:3 “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.” Through His power TLJC controls the universe, PSA 103:19, the physical world, Mat 5:45, the affairs of nations, Psa 66:7, man's birth and destiny, Gal 1:15, man's successes and failures, Luk 1:52, and provides protection for His people, Psa 4:8.

3. The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit is related to residence, function, and momentum inside the PPOG.

The utilization of divine omnipotence during the Church Age is the basis for becoming an invisible hero, and for coming to have occupation with the person of Christ. God's perfect plan runs on God's perfect power for imperfect persons because God is perfect Deu 32:4 “The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.” The power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is the same power available to every believer in the Church Age to execute the plan of God. This is the same power that will resurrect every Church Age believer.

Eph 1:19-20, “And what is the surpassing greatness of His power to us who have believed for the working of His superior power, which He made operational by means of Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in heavenly places.”

That is the power of our Lord's resurrection. This power creates its own solutions in the Christian life, the ten problem solving devices, something infinitely greater than human morality. When Phi 3:10 says, “that I may come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection,” it means that we first begin to know this mighty power of His resurrection and ascension when we see our scriptural position in our risen Lord. Since you cannot be resurrected unless you have something to be resurrected from, the foundation of all resurrection life is death, Rom 6:5, Eph 2:5, Phi 2:6.

We are new creations in Christ Jesus by the power of His resurrection. However, this is something that we have to believe and reckon. Our reckoning is to be based upon our position; we count ourselves alive

unto God in Christ. Through our faith in this fact, the Holy Spirit makes this truth real in our condition resulting in our spiritual growth. We abide in Him above, and He manifests Himself in us below.

We are hopelessly taken up with the struggle for freedom, unless we are aware we have been cut off from the slavery of sin and self through our having died, with Him, on the cross. Until we know we are alive from the dead, we cannot yield to Him. We know the power of His resurrection in our position. We are realizing that power in our spiritual growth; we will forever know His power in our resurrection bodies. Where is this power? 2Co 4:7 "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves;" How is this power perfected in time? 2Co 12:9 "And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me." What does this power have to do with my life? 2Co 13:4 "For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you."

What is the power of our Lord's resurrection? The direct power available to us is found in the filling of the Spirit and the indirect power available to us is in the metabolized doctrine that is circulating in our soul. God has taken you and me, totally depraved individuals, and given us eternal life, 1Jo 5:11-12; perfect righteousness, 2Co 5:21; made us His children, 2Ti 2:1, sanctified us, 1Co 1:2; made us priests, Heb 10:10-14, and Royalty (Kingship), 2Pe 1:11. Once we know that we are alive from the dead, we can present the members of our physical body unto God. Our entire body can be presented unto God. Present yourselves to God, and if you're smart, you mind your own business and let God take care of His family! However, we do not present ourselves to God to become free, but to give meaning, purpose, and definition to our life Rom 6:4. God gives us the ability to understand and utilize the power behind our Lord's resurrection because He demands virtue and integrity on the part of the believer. This results in the ability to handle the details of life and ultimately, to handle spiritual warfare. This is the subject of Eph 6:10. We all need virtue and integrity if we are to be victorious in spiritual warfare. In the spiritual realm, this refers to the spiritual strength to be faithful to the principles of Bible doctrine and living in the PPOG.

Phi 3:10 which says "knowing the power behind His resurrection, goes perfectly with Eph 6:10 which says "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might."

Paul brings out the fact that the details of life are the training ground for future spiritual warfare. The word "finally" in Eph 6:10 should be translated "From now on." This phrase refers to some very important principles beginning in Eph 5:21 where Paul teaches the principles behind the Royal Family honor code. Eph 5:21, says "and be subject to one another in the fear or the respect of Christ." In Eph 5:22, the principles behind marriage, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord." The power of God will give the woman the ability to fulfill this command. Eph 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;" The power of God will give the man the ability to fulfill this command. Eph 6:1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." The power of God will give them the ability to fulfill this command. Eph 6:4 "And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Eph 6:5 "Slaves, [Christian labor] be obedient to those who are your masters [management] according to the flesh, with respect and maximum effort [not trembling but maximum effort], in the integrity of your heart, as to Christ;" Eph 6:9 "And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."

Then in Eph 6:10 the apostle Paul writes, "Finally (from now on), be strong in the Lord, and in the strength or in the power of His might." This doesn't tell you "how" to be strong in the Lord. It is actually a conclusion of the previous paragraphs concerning the Christian way of life. This is "picking up the pieces" and going forward in the spiritual life. There are many convicting principles taught in these verses concerning the Royal family honor code. Eph 6:10 is where all of us can pull ourselves up from the dust we were lying in because of conviction. The implication of Eph 5:21-6:10 is very important, it is that we are too unstable and unprepared to handle spiritual warfare if we can't handle the details of life. It is in the details of life, where Satan and the kingdom of darkness will try to hinder us from entering into spiritual

warfare. If Satan can cause problems in our relationships in life, then he can break down and destroy the unity God demands.

To combat this we operate in virtue-love, which is personal love for God the Father, spiritual self-esteem resulting in love for self, impersonal unconditional love for all mankind, and occupation with the person of Christ. We need divine power because Satan, as the ruler of this world, has maximum power that he utilizes for his policy of evil. This evil power is deceptive because it is often disguised with the facade of good works or religion and is often concealed by sincerity, which is really a manifestation of evil.

The enemy we face desires to wear us out! Satan is an organizational genius with a great organization of demons, Eph 6:10-12. Satan has one goal regarding the life of every believer, to lead all believers astray. Any area that you do not practice sound doctrine in is an area open to his deception, dishonesty and lies. However, Satan's power is not greater than God's and this reminds us of God's grace. God has made available to us His power. The omnipotence of the Father in providing our escrow blessings, the omnipotence of God the Son who preserves the universe and history daily, and the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit who provides the power to execute the PPOG.

One of the functions of the devil as the ruler of this world is to express his antagonism, slander, and enmity, toward God and toward God's people. This is why we should not get our eyes on people because that is not where the true problems, lies Eph 6:12. Satan has a power system that he uses to control others. This is why we need to come to an understanding of the power behind our Lord's resurrection. Satan has a strategy to control nations based on conspiracy and deceit. He is anti-military and pro welfare state, pro-communist and against free enterprise. He is against marriage and the family. Satan's power counterfeits of the plan of God in religion include a counterfeit:

1. Gospel, 2Co 4:3-4.
2. Ministers, 2Co 11:13-15.
3. Doctrine, 1Ti 4:1.
4. Communion table, 1Co 10:19-21.
5. Spirituality, Gal 3:2-3.
6. Righteousness, Mat 19:16-28.
7. He has a counterfeit self-righteousness, Mat 23:13-36.
8. Counterfeit power and dynamics (miracles, healing, tongues), 2Th 2:8-10.
9. System of gods, 2Th 2:3-4.

When you are being deceived by the power of Satan you start to lose your spiritual senses and then your common sense. The devil holds believers captive by legalism, self-righteousness, arrogance, emotionalism, guilt, fear, condemnation, and manipulation. Satan's greatest strategy is the doctrinal attack on the cross and principle of salvation by faith alone, 2Co 4:4. Satan must obscure the fact that salvation is by faith alone. When we recognize the power of Satan, we see the reason we need the power of God and we appreciate that "greater is the power that is us than that which is in the world."

Since He is Risen, I'm Forgiven

4-23-00

We have been studying understanding and utilizing the power behind our Lord's resurrection. Today, there is an over emphasis on success. Everything has to work out right; we have to have a better year this year than last year. Even our ministries seem to be successful by numbers. But as Isa 55:8 says, God's ways are not our ways; His thoughts are not our thoughts. John the Baptist for example, had these characteristics in his ministry:

1. He didn't go where the people were; He made them come to him.
2. He deliberately wore clothing that was non-clergy.
3. He spoke offensively, insulted and assaulted his listeners.
4. He embarrassed top-ranking government officials by revealing their hypocrisy.
5. He told his listeners genuinely not worthy of their respect, that there was another who they should follow.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah, and among other things, these were five characteristics of his ministry. He broke every rule for what we would call a successful ministry. He fulfilled his personal sense of destiny and wound up in prison having his head in MAT 14:11 brought on a platter and given to a girl. He did so by operating in the power of God. Our Lord's opinion of John was not that he was strange, ineffective and inappropriate!

In Mat 11:11 the Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC) says something about John the Baptist that He said of no one else in His entire ministry. "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist;" In our Lord's opinion there was no one who He would compare in character and integrity, in effectiveness, in uniqueness, a man who deliberately refused the glory. This forerunner's message was the strongest you can read in the New Testament concerning repentance. He came to clear the way for the Messiah.

He came to prepare the way. He came to get out of the way. He operated in the power of God in thoughts and ways totally opposite of the world's way of doing things. When some said that he was the promised Messiah, he said unequivocally "I am not, I am a lamp, He is the light, I am a voice, He is the word, I am a man, He is Messiah, follow Him." When some were tempted to follow John, he said, "Behold, He is the lamb, I am only a man". When a few were envious of his authority, John made an incredible statement. Joh 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease." He knew nothing of self-promotion and pushy pride. God used this strange prophet to prepare the way for His Son. John's ministry barely lasted a year and a half. A preacher of the Gospel, he spoke of the Messiah who was yet to come, who was to die for the sins of the world. This is a significant message about John the Baptist, and four lessons stand out that are very important.

1. Those who operate in the power of God and make an impact must not fear being different.
2. Those who wish to change should not ignore being specific. As adult Christians, it takes the Lord a longer period time when we are general with Him, so we must be specific. Declare the specific area in which you wish to change in and ask God's power and strength and forgiveness, ask for help if others can help you, but get specific.
3. Those who risk confronting dare not forget the consequences. John the Baptist confronted, and ended up in jail. There are other men down through the centuries that have done the same and have suffered the consequences.
4. Those who seek the Savior cannot deny the evidence. This is God's beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

The knowledge of the power behind our Lord's resurrection is needed in the Church-age because one of Satan's greatest tools is his strategy regarding the Cross. Satan's strategy is the doctrinal attack on the Cross and principle of Salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, 2Co 4:4. This attack is accomplished by adding various types of works to salvation, such as making Christ Lord of your life, walking an isle or raising your hand, or by inviting Christ into your heart or into your life. Satan must obscure the fact that salvation is by

faith alone. Because of our Lord's victory on the Cross which overflows into the Church-age, which is the body of Christ and ruled by our Lord Jesus Christ, has received the delegated divine power to resist the devil, as per 1Jo 4:4 "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. "

The Church-age is the most intensive time of the angelic conflict; therefore, the greatest delegation of divine power in human history occurs between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the Church. It is the omnipotence of God given to execute the Pre-Designed Plan Of God. Divine omnipotence is related to both God's promises and God's actions on our behalf, both of which we call grace. But you will never use this power unless you learn Bible doctrine and then do what a lot of believers don't do, apply it. Paul's application of understanding and utilizing the power behind our Lord's resurrection is given in 2Co 4:6-7 "For God [the Holy Spirit], Who said [Gen 1:3], Light shall shine out of darkness, is the One who made His light to shine in our right lobes to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ [this is the perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine]. God the Holy Spirit making light shine in our hearts is a reference to divine power in action. We would not even be able to understand the knowledge of the glory of God if it were not for the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. Your human spirit is your treasury and the place where good and precious things are collected and stored up and a place filled with the valuables of divine power. The delegation of the omnipotence of God to the Church-age began with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the dispensation of the hypostatic union. This divine power was not made available until He raised TLJC from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places. The surpassing greatness of His power is the spiritual life or the Christian way of life. Having your priorities straight and being accurate and precise with doctrine is how you put into action the procedures and the mechanics of this power behind our Lord's resurrection. Like everything else, God has a system for utilization of divine power. His system is found in the PPOG for your life. After our Lord's victory on the Cross, Satan and the fallen angels raised their attack on the human race. And this is because of what Col 2:15 tells us "when [at the cross] He [God the Father] had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He [God the Father] made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him [God the Son]."

Never before in all of human history has God delegated and made available so much divine power to the believer as in the Church-age. Every believer has the availability of this power, but it remains potential until you fulfill the principle of perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. However, availability does not imply utilization of that divine power. Between availability and utilization of the mystery doctrine of the Church Age is perception, metabolization, and application. The invisible hero or spiritual champion of the Church-age is manufactured out of divine power. After the Rapture of the Church in the Tribulation and the Millennium, there will not be a PPOG, as we know it, this is only found in the Church-age. We need to study and master this subject of divine power because:

1. This Divine power brings glory to God, while human power brings glory to man.
2. Bible doctrine metabolized is the means of receiving this divine power, Pro 8:14 "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine." Satan's goal is not to get us to sin, but rather to get us to produce human good or creature credit and blind us to the power of God.
3. Satan, as the god of this world, has designed the world system to wear us down. This is to draw any life, motivation or momentum out of any believer who has positive volition toward doctrine. Therefore we recall 2Co 12:9 "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
4. We are to be witnesses or ambassadors for Christ. Willing to give your life for that which you claim to believe.
5. Divine power gives the believer confidence or spiritual self-esteem. Rom 15:13 "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace by means of believing,"

Here is a test which you can take which reveals whether or not you have been using the power of God to grow spiritually: Do you now, right now, have any kind of real confidence in the Lord? Rom 15:13 "that you may abound in confidence by the power of the Holy Spirit."

6. Your faith is not in a man's wisdom but in the wisdom of God. Iconoclastic arrogance is a major reason for believers not continuing in the PPOG.
7. We need to receive nourishment and strength in the new man or the new creature. As new creatures in TLJC we need the appropriate food and nourishment to survive. God's power must be at work within us.
8. We must persevere in life with the happiness of God.
Col 1:11 "Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously."
9. Divine power overcomes fear in life.
10. We must be able to identify religion, legalism and moral degeneracy. Religion, legalism and moral degeneracy all deny the power of God.

On this Easter Sunday we see the importance of this subject of Christ's resurrection. For if there is no resurrection of the dead, everything begins to tumble like dominoes. 1Co 15:13 "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;" If Christ has not been raised, than preaching is a vain and an empty experience, 1Co 15:14. So if there is no resurrection, He did not raise from the dead. In 1Co 15:16-17 "For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins." If Christ has not been raised than your faith is worthless and you are still in your sins! That's a troublesome thought. Do you know what that means? Listen to the word, it has an ugly ring to it. It means we are un-forgiven. What would life would be like is there was no resurrection? A life lived without the hope of the resurrection is a life lived without hope. It's the worst kind of existence. Without resurrection, life is as pointless, and meaningless, and empty, and torturous as you can imagine. Once you got to the grave, that's it, it's all over. You would have no hope whatsoever! However, thank God for 1Pe 1:3 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," Has there ever been a time when you have specifically told the Lord: "I'm a sinner, I'm lost, I can't correct my way, I've tried and I've failed and today I turn over my life to You by faith, I repent, I change my mind toward You, and I change my desire for those other things. I give myself to You dear Lord." If there has never been such a time, do that now.

In this sacred and significant moment, Our Father we place ourselves at that vulnerable and most important place we can, and that is at your mercy. Hear the cries of our prayers of faith. Understand they come from weak lips, with an even weaker heart, many come today having made a royal mess of their lives, but you are full of grace and you turn no one away. Give some the courage to come who might otherwise be thought of as religious people and church men and women well known in the community, break down the pride and bring us, our Father to a place of open admission of wrong, and find our repentance bearing fruit of good works.

Thank You for Your work of grace, and may the penetrating power of the Holy Spirit do a magnificent piece of work, as a result of the truth we have learned. We pray that you would raise up men like unto John the Baptist in this day of wickedness, greed, compromise and lust. May there be models of truth who give us points upon which we can bear our reference in a world that has lost it's way. We pray for Jesus sake and in His dear name, Amen.

Participating in His Sufferings

4-30-00

We are noting Phi 3:10: “that I may come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.” The next phrase we will note is “and the fellowship of His sufferings.” This refers to participation in His sufferings. The mature or supergrace believer wears the mantle of continual satanic opposition. The question is often asked, “When will it get easier?” The answer that must be given is “Not until you die!” As long as you stick with the plan of God for your life, there will be continual pressure and opposition from satanic forces of evil. This participation in His suffering is the highest honor God could give to any believer in time. This undeserved suffering is the highest mantle or award in time for the mature believer.

This is the third phrase in Phi 3:10 that is very rich with meaning. The first one is Phi 3:10 which says “that I may come to know Him.” The second one, “that I may come to know the power of [behind] His resurrection,” and then this is the third one, “and the participation of His sufferings.” This has nothing to do with the law of volitional responsibility or divine discipline but rather has to do with undeserved suffering. Therefore, we begin with the very simple principle; we must understand that God has provided in eternity past everything we will ever need for the subject of suffering. Paul wrote in 2Ti 3:8-10 “And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses [this was the beginning of Moses' mantle of suffering], so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith or the doctrine of the Christian faith. But they will not make further progress; for their folly [or lack of sense] will be obvious to all, as also that of those two [Jannes and Jambres] came to be. But you followed my doctrine, self-discipline, purpose, faithfulness, patience, love, perseverance or endurance.”

This was Paul's power to undergo opposition, criticism, and annoyance without giving up or becoming discouraged and succumbing to self-pity. 2Ti 3:11-12 “persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra [these were three towns where the Judaizers followed Paul and organized a conspiracy against him, and at Lystra, they stoned him to death]; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me! And indeed, all who desire to live godly or the spiritual life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” This applies to Phi 3:10, “the participation of or in His sufferings.” Under equal privilege and equal opportunity in the Pre-Designed Plan of God for your life, there are divine solutions to the problems of undeserved suffering. When we stick with doctrine for a long period of time, we come to the point where we have perfect happiness no matter what. Therefore, whether we are in some form of adversity or some form of prosperity makes no difference, +H or God's Happiness, pulls us through! As a matter of fact, some of the greatest blessings that will ever come to you will come during times of participation in His sufferings. As believers in The Lord Jesus Christ, each one of us is going to spend eternity in Heaven, our real home. So by living our life in the light of eternity your relationship with God will be your number one priority in your life. Our time on this earth is very short, even if you live to be a hundred; it is still like a drop of water in the ocean when compared to eternity. This life cannot compare with the eternal weight of glory which is far beyond all comparison 2Co 4:17-18 “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

You will also realize that participation in His sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us, Rom 8:18 “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” This is why Heb 11:25 says about Moses “choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin;”

Certainly you have problems and things that are painful and difficult in your life. The point is to advance to spiritual adulthood, so that the problems, adversities, tragedies, difficulties of life become a blessing because of participation in His sufferings. Strangely enough, the greatest blessings in life come to the believer who goes through undeserved suffering and reaches spiritual adulthood. All problems before

then are a source of great difficulty and there are only two real problem solving devices functioning; Rebound and the Faith-Rest Drill. You are filled with the Spirit but that is something that automatically happens that you do necessarily have to concentrate on. But once you reach the first stage of spiritual growth, spiritual self-esteem, you now have the beginning of the four great problem solving devices of spiritual adulthood: Grace Orientation, Doctrinal Orientation, A Personal Sense of Destiny, and Personal Love for God the Father. Outside of occasional divine discipline because of failure or sin, all your adversities are going to be designed for even greater blessings. If the believer advances and uses the divine assets made available, in the eternal state he will be rewarded for taking advantage of his equal privilege and equal opportunity. In the spiritual life there is no standing still, if a believer doesn't advance, he goes backwards, but if he is a winner he will persevere. 2Ti 2:11-12 says "Faithful is the word. For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure [in participation in His sufferings or undeserved suffering for blessing], we shall rule with Him [as mature believers]. If we deny Him [in time by rejecting Bible doctrine] He will deny us [rewards, escrow blessings in eternity]. If we are unfaithful [disbelieving, faithless], He remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

The fact that we are unfaithful does not change the faithfulness of God. Every believer is indwelt by God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God cannot deny Himself since He indwells the believer. As you advance in spiritual growth you get a lot of pressure, a lot of undeserved suffering. But this is where you can have maximum glorification of Christ, and Satan hates that. So the sufferings here being such a high honor and decoration have a lot of distractions and obstacles to overcome. God permits Satan to use every device possible under the rules of the angelic conflict.

The Bible explains suffering and reveals powerful divine assets for coping with adversities and difficulties. Because of this, no believer needs to remain ignorant of the causes and solutions to any difficulty in his life. Suffering is not puzzling; every form of suffering in our lives has a reason and an explanation. In the Christian way of life, much of our suffering can be understood in relationship to the believer's spiritual growth. However, in this subject of participation in His sufferings, we will just examine the divine solutions connected with providential preventive suffering, momentum testing, and evidence testing. These are the categories of participation in His sufferings. This type of suffering challenges us as believers to learn and utilize the divine assets God has given us. Suffering depletes our human resources and confronts us with our total dependence upon the grace of God, 2Co 12:9-10 "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

Suffering is not merely a warning and a restraint but a teacher and motivator as well, suffering impresses upon us our need to conform to God's plan. Misfortune does not always come to injure us because the proper application of Bible doctrine under pressure produces spiritual growth. We experience the reality that God is "a very present help in trouble", Psa 46:1. As a result of using His provisions, our love for Him grows stronger, and we accelerate our spiritual advance. So whether as a protector or as an incentive for spiritual growth, all suffering in the Christian life must be understood in relation to the plan of God. Suffering is designed for our good and for His glorification: He is glorified by sustaining and blessing us in any situation, whether prosperity or adversity. It is for His glory, and that's why in the midst of hardships and disasters of life God promises, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Jos 1:5; Heb 13:5).

Rather than eliminating suffering from our lives, He gives us far greater benefits by walking with us. As you grow spiritually, every stage of spiritual growth is accompanied by some form of identification with His sufferings, which were undeserved. This suffering occurs while you're on your way to certain stages of spiritual growth but the ultimate form is and when you arrive at spiritual maturity and you have "come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection and the participation of His sufferings," Under pressure the believer needs truth. If he is coddled and babied, he may be in danger of intensifying his problem by going into self-pity. No one with integrity wants to feel sorry for himself. This was revealed so magnificently by our Lord when He was going to the Cross Luk 23:27.

Problem solving when it comes to suffering begins with the first problem-solving device, Rebound. Remember that the Christian way of life is a supernatural way of life that demands a super-natural means of execution. Rebound brings us to the invisible behind-the-scenes ministry of God the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. It is called Rebound because every believer fails at some time or another and he must quickly learn how to reenter the Pre-Designed Plan of God. He exits by committing sin; he reenters by naming that sin to God, 1Jo 1:9.

The next problem-solving device in the Christian way of life is Faith-Rest, which enables the believer to control his own mental attitude. While emotion is a blessing, it can also be a terrible cursing when it sweeps away reason. The distraught and disturbed believer regains and maintains his self-control by the Faith-Rest Drill. A confusing, complicated situation must first be reduced to utter simplicity by claiming stated promises of God, Heb 4:1:3 "Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it." Promises are designed by God to stabilize us in times of suffering Pro 3:5-6, Psa 37:4-5, and 1Pe 5:7 "casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you." The faith-rest drill is that problem-solving device used by believers in all dispensations for carrying and using the shield of faith. Stabilized by divine promises, the believer can now recall principles he has learned and eventually reach doctrinal conclusions. From the divine viewpoint he can then deal with the complexities of the situation.

The next basic problem-solving device which is vital in handling suffering is a Personal Sense of Destiny. This answers the question "Where am I going in life?" "What is the purpose of this suffering that I'm going through?" As you learn the relevant doctrine about your own future blessings; your eager anticipation, or hope, of receiving those blessings motivates you to keep advancing. This means that to handle suffering, you must develop enforced and genuine humility. Arrogance is the believer's worst enemy.

Obedience to the divine plan means using perfect divine assets rather than trusting inferior human ability. As the believer learns more doctrine, he understands the reasons behind God's commands and sees how His commands reveal His matchless grace and character. With a growing knowledge of Bible doctrine, enforced humility becomes genuine humility, the foundation for personal love for God. Therefore, he must always organize his day to accomplish his first priority, the assimilation of God's Word. It is through the word of God that all suffering is met, challenged and defeated.

The question is, "Will we respond to the situation in a way that is pleasing to God and be willing to participate in His sufferings? Our ambition is to be pleasing to Him, not to people, but to Him. This acceptability to Him is our reward, Many times God works by paradox: Success comes via failure; life springs out of death etc. The only part in the believer's life that crumbles is that which has to go anyway, the new life can never be harmed or affected. So often the means utilized by the Holy Spirit is an unsaved mate, or even a saved one, poor health or even good health, adversity or prosperity. He uses almost everything to bring out the worst in us, ultimately enabling us to see that the Christian life has to be "not I, but Christ," (Gal 2:20). People or circumstances are never the cause of failure. God's method for true spiritual growth involves pain as well as joy, suffering as well as happiness, failure as well as success, inactivity as well as service, death as well as life, the temptation to shortcut is especially strong unless we see the value of, and submit to, the necessity of the time element.

We must go back that very simplistic trust to rest in His hands, Phi 1:6 "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who has begun in you an absolute good work will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus." And it will take that long! But since God is working for eternity, why should we be concerned about the time involved? It will help us to bear in mind that the principle of time underlies all of God's dealings with us. Growth takes time! 1Pe 5:10 "And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you."

The Cup Which the Father has Given Me, Shall I Not Drink It?

5-7-00

Our subject is "participation in our Lord's sufferings," which includes the blood of Christ the Lamb as it relates to our Lord's sufferings and the daily bearing of our own cross. Throughout human history, many believers have wondered, "If God is omnipotent, why couldn't He teach me all these things without subjecting me to so much sorrow and humiliation?" The answer is that we could not be taught effectively in any other way. Paul said in Rom 7:14, "Certainly, we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of [belonging to the realm of] the flesh [sin nature], sold in bondage to sin [sin nature]."

2Co 4:11 "For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

There is a joy in participation in His sufferings and the suffering of the Cross when you are assured of its fruit in your life, and in the lives of others. Notice in 2Co 4:11 that we are constantly being delivered over to "situations of death." That is a major part in our participation in His sufferings.

Joh 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

As with a seed that is buried once, but then, after gradually disintegrating, sets free a new life, God does the same with our old nature by delivering it to death with Christ once and for all on the Cross, and then bringing about its disgrace in detail through the circumstances of life. This is what allows the new life to be released. The point is this -- Identification with our Lord's death and participation in His sufferings is not a one-time process but rather a continual one. Paul tells us in 2Co 4:16 that our inward man (the new creature) is renewed day by day; "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." Now, here's the issue -- When a certain breaking down of the indwelling old nature occurs in our life, it produces a tremendous change in us; however, we still have to learn in detail all that God is working within. There is a tendency for us to become filled with guilt as the Holy Spirit begins to reveal things about us that are not comforting or thrilling to realize. The Holy Spirit's administration of the Cross to the old man is preparing you for the truth -- That same Cross is central in the resurrection life of the new man! Being the focal point of the universe, the Cross not only crucified the old life, but paved the way for the life beyond the Cross. In other words, the marks of the Cross extend into glory. The ascended and glorified Lord Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God, still bears the marks of the Cross and forever will.

Rev 5:6 "And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth."

Rev 5:12 "Saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.""

Paul tells us that teaching these principles will bring persecution in our lives. Rom 8:36 Just as it is written, "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." Gal 6:12,14 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Phi 2:8 In fact, although having been discovered in outward appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of spiritual death, that is the death of the cross. Phi 3:18 "For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, [that they are] enemies of the cross of Christ." Satan hates the Cross, which is the center of the entire universe, and tries to accuse us day and night before our God.

The likeness of the Lamb of God in us will be manifested when we live for others and not for ourselves. Remember the mocking and derision around the Cross recorded in Mat 27:39-44, and our Lord's response in Luk 23:34, "But Jesus was saying, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.'" The Lamb is our Life! The very nature of our life in the new creation is sacrificial! The Holy

Spirit's work cannot be in vain, and He is fashioning our condition from our completed position, Col 2:10, "And in Him you have been made complete." The Holy Spirit does not mature the believer apart from the Cross. None of us could or ever would experience Mat 27:46, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'"

Eph 5:18b says, "Be filled with the Spirit." There are different ideas among Christians as to what constitutes the fullness of the Spirit. One thing of which we can be sure is the fact that if we are filled with the Spirit consistently, we will be taught, guided, and enabled to walk the way of the Cross by participation in His sufferings. The Lord Jesus Christ "through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself," Heb 9:14, and we shall offer ourselves when the same Holy Spirit fills and enables us. This means that we will have to go through all kinds of undeserved suffering. For example, there is providential preventative suffering for learning obedience, self-discipline, and enforced and genuine humility. No human being can ever reach maturity without enforced and genuine humility, and this is even more certain when it comes to the spiritual life. This will include people testing, thought testing, system testing, and disaster testing, on behalf of Christ, 2Co 12:10. We will also face momentum testing as a part of participation in His sufferings. This comes in the following three categories and is designed to accelerate the believer's momentum.

1. The old sin nature test.
2. The "Cosmic #1" Test (Living for self).
3. The "Cosmic #2" Test (Antagonism toward the Word of God).

Ultimately there will come evidence testing, which is Satan's cross-examination of every witness presented by God in the historical trial of the fallen angels. Every believer who attains spiritual maturity is qualified to be a witness for the Prosecution against Satan. Satan's attacks will not make any difference, however, even if our protection seems to be removed, and we find ourselves utterly alone for the sake of participation in His sufferings and sacrificially giving our lives for others. The comforting fact is that the Holy Spirit, whose intention is to conform us to the image of Christ, will finish the work He has begun. We need to have the proper perspective, which means keeping our eyes off ourselves, other people, and circumstances, and focused on the Lamb. You can always trust the Holy Spirit with His ministry on your behalf. He is applying the finished work of the Cross to free you from the power of the "lion" life of the old man ("I'll live my way."), and He is applying the present working of the Cross to mature you in the resurrection power of the "Lamb" life of the new man. Here we see the spiritual paradox of life out of death. This is very vital when it comes to your spiritual life.

Always remember this principle -- God is after the inner change, or that inward reality in all of our lives, before He expects us to serve and honor Him, Psa 51:6, "Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom." Ultimately, those who minister to the Body of Christ are those who communicate the resurrection life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to be "letters" or "epistles of Christ," 2Co 3:3. Life is communicated to others, quite simply and spontaneously, as death operates in us. Therefore, the question to be asked is not, "How much are you doing or saying for God?" but "How much are you going through under the mighty hand of God?"

1Pe 5:6 "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time." Knowing Him is to know the greatest experience we could ever know in life, and we should not settle for anything less. However, we should not only desire to know Him but we should aspire to have His attitude toward life. Joh 18:11 "The cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" This statement was a far greater thing than calming the seas or raising the dead. Prophets and apostles could work remarkable miracles, but they could not always do and suffer the will of God. To do and suffer the Father's will is still the highest form of faith and devotion, the most glorified Christian achievement in time to go through the difficulties and sorrows of life, to bear a daily burden that is never pleasant and where you see no relief; to be confined by some incurable physical disability, to be stripped bare of loved ones, until you stand alone to meet the shocks of life, and still be able to say, "The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This is faith at its highest. This is spiritual achievement at its crowning point.

We all love the fact that we have a Father who sympathizes with our weaknesses. However, we have a sympathizing Father because we had a suffering Savior. If we truly desire fellowship with God, we must enter into participation in His sufferings. This is not payment or judgment for sins (Only the Lord Jesus Christ could suffer that because He was impeccable.); rather, this is identification and participation with the undeserved sufferings He endured before He arrived at the Cross. People were shocked, stunned, and devastated when they saw the abuse our Lord suffered. His face and appearance was completely destroyed and disfigured.

Psa 22:14 All my bones are out of joint.

Isa 50:6 I gave My back to those who strike [Me] and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

Mat 26:67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him.

Mat 27:30-31 And they spat on Him, and took the reed of thorns and began to beat Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

Luk 22:63-64 And the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him, and beating Him, and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, "Prophecy, who is the one who hit You?"

Mar 15:19 And they kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting at Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.

The weight of His body on the cross actually pulled His bones apart; this is truly intense suffering. This physical and mental abuse took place prior to the Cross. He did bear the weight and pressure of our sorrows and our sins, but He also went through undeserved suffering before the Cross. In fact, we are told in Luk 22:44, that as our Lord drew near to Gethsemane that the pressure was so intense He sweat drops of blood through the pores of His body. This is the suffering with which we are called to identify as a part of participation in His sufferings. In heaven there will be only one resurrection body with scars and wounds the "Lamb of God." The wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ are like precious jewels, which should charm our eyes and melt our hearts. That crown of thorns has far more glory about it than any crown of gold. Those hands that were pierced and nailed should be our delight to behold. However, just as His sufferings and humiliations were the greatest ever, so is His glorification is the greatest ever. In resurrection body the entire royal family will identify the Head of the family, Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Father. Therefore, our subject of participation in His sufferings tells us that we cannot live the Christian way of life and live for others unless we are willing to accept the Cross and lose our lives. We cannot fulfill this without losing our lives, and our afflictions are the price we pay for our ability to do so. The one who desires to be a servant must first be a sufferer. We cannot have the highest happiness of life, which is helping others, without tasting the cup that the Lord Jesus Christ drank. The school of suffering graduates very few scholars.

The Ultimate Spiritual Life, Picking Up Your Cross

5-14-00

We are noting the principle of participation in our Lord's sufferings and His attitude found in Joh 18:11 "the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" All of us have a cup that God the Father has designed for us to drink. The "cup" has to do with that which we are willing to receive as a part of the Father's plan for our life and as a part of picking up our Cross and participating in our Lord's sufferings. In Gal 6:2 Paul says, "Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ." The law of Christ is found in Gal 5:14 "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

We must understand that the adversities and afflictions we go through are what make up our life as well as the service we have the privilege of performing. There are times when we will experience the ultimate blessing of being able to go through certain situations alone with the Lord Jesus Christ. Adversity is the state in which we become truly acquainted with ourselves, because it is then that we are usually free of admirers. Lam 3:27-28, "It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and be silent since He has laid it on him." Always being happy in your relationships and situations does not develop courage; rather courage is developed by surviving difficult times and adversity. One often learns more from ten days of agony than from ten years of contentment. The path of least resistance is the path of the loser. We are to have the attitude of Est 4:16c "and if I perish, I perish."

In the Old Testament, people were put in the furnace and they were not burnt or in the lion's den and they were not touched. But in the New Testament, they go into the furnace and they get burnt, the lions may devour them, but they don't give in. For it is not the power for them now that counts, but the power is in them. That power is the Word of God, which is alive and powerful, and the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells them. That power is Phi 4:13 "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." You will never know how much strength you have until you are faced with adversity. Every defeat, every loss, contains its own seed, its own lesson on how to grow and improve. We should be grateful for all our problems, for after each one is overcome; we become stronger and more able to meet the problems that are still to come. We shall never be victorious in this life as believers if we think that life with God and being hidden with Christ in God, means freedom from suffering, sorrow, and trial. As the Holy Spirit applies the Cross-within us, He takes us through difficulties and chastening. When we realize that "always being delivered unto death" means the daily crucifixion of self, then we begin to glory in the resultant freedom. There are times when God chastens us, not because of divine discipline, but as a part of our undeserved suffering and participation in His sufferings. Heb 12:5 "and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him;" Things don't go wrong and break your heart so you can become bitter and give up. They happen to break you down and build you up so you can be all that you were intended to be Heb 12:6-7. You never will be the person you can be if pressure, tension and discipline are taken out of your life. If we are going to receive the benefit of the Cross, we must go through the suffering of the Cross.

We have seen in the main verse of our study Phi 3:10 the four phrases we have been studying:

- 1) "that I may come to know Him"
- 2) "and the power of [behind] His resurrection"
- 3) "and the participation of His sufferings" and the last phrase"
- 4) "being conformed to His death."

This last phrase refers to the oppositional sufferings of Christ connected with His death. It does not refer to His unique sufferings in bearing our sins for there is no way that we could ever go through this type of suffering. It refers instead to the many types of opposition, which came from Satan prior to the three hours of the Cross-when He was bearing our sins. What does it mean to be conformed to His death? Heb 5:7-8 "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered." Affliction comes to make us sound and wise, not

sad and sorry. Trials, temptations, disappointments -- all help, not hinder. Every trial endured and weathered in the right spirit makes us virtuous and stronger than we were before. It is comforting to know that God will not permit any troubles to come upon us, unless He has a specific plan by which great blessing can come out of the difficulty. Triumphs without difficulties are empty; difficulty is only a word indicating the degree of effort required to accomplish something!

It is difficult for us to realize that suffering is one of the major factors in our spiritual growth. You can forget the times of your distress, but never forget what those times taught you. Suffering is the lot of all men, but when undeserved, it is the privilege of all believers. Many think that God is not blessing unless He keeps us from, or relieves us of, suffering. This is not true; there is no fellowship with God, no true spiritual growth, unless we experience the crucified Lord in our own personal suffering. The Apostle Paul is our pattern of living the Christian way of life and being conformed to our Lord's death. The Lord makes an interesting statement about Paul soon after his conversion from Saul of Tarsus to the apostle Paul in ACT 9. Act 9:16 "for I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake." 2Co 11:23-30 describe many of those sufferings Paul would endure for the sake of Christ, take a look at some of them: in far more labors, imprisoned, beaten, in danger of death, five times he received thirty-nine lashes, three times beaten with rods, shipwrecked, frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, robbers, dangers in the city, the wilderness, on the sea, in labor and hardship, in hunger and thirst, in cold and exposure. Apart from these there was the daily pressure of concern for all the churches. Yet notice Paul's attitude, 1Ti 1:16 "And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." Our fellowship in His sufferings bears threefold fruit:

1. In suffering we learn something of the process of growth, Rom 5:3-4.
2. In suffering we also learn more of Him, 2Co 1:5.
3. In suffering we learn to appreciate the needs of others, 2Co 1:3-4.

If you learn from your suffering, and really come to understand the lesson you were taught, you might be able to help someone else who's now in the phase you may have just completed. Look for the learning in suffering. The principle in participation in His sufferings is living for others! Mat 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Joh 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." You can fight with all your might against sin and your sin nature and yet you will still find yourself surrounded by failure and defeat. You can pray fervently and sincerely but it will seem that He does not hear. It is not that He is merciless but rather because of His mercy that He does not help. If He did, you would not be free from your self-confidence; you would not learn to fight the good fight of faith and thus obtain the victory, you would not learn to say Joh 18:11 "the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Denying ourselves of certain things for a time, even for all time, is not the answer because the old sin nature will adjust and thrive under any conditions. Self never changes into anything but more of the same. The Lord said Joh 3:6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Blood of Christ can wash away my sins; the Cross can crucify the "old man." The blood purchased our pardon and forgiveness. The Cross-purchased our deliverance from what we are. It was on the Cross of Calvary that God, in Christ, dealt fully and finally with self. There is no other way for self to be denied, God has done the work in this way: our identification with Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection! It is done; now it is ours to believe.

As we exercise faith, we begin to receive the benefits of that finished work in experience. The same Lord who said in Mat 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine," is the same Lord who holds His most vital and best things in store for those who mean business, for those who hunger and thirst for His very best, and the Cross is the center, the secret of it all. It is what He did there that counts, and what He did becomes a force in the life of a Christian. What we are to experience He purchased, and what He purchased for us we ought to experience, this is a part of being conformed to His death and learning to deny self.

It is a faith, which sees ourselves identified with Christ in His death and resurrection. As our Substitute He went to the Cross alone, to pay the penalty of our sins; as our Representative. What is lacking

among believers is the proper emphasis on spiritual growth. What sort of salvation would we have if God simply saved us from the penalty of our sins and then left us on our own to deal with the power of the sin nature in our Christian life and walk? We must be brought back to two basics: we were freed from the penalty of sin by His finished work and we were freed from the power of the sin nature by His finished work. We are not left to deal with the old life ourselves; it has been dealt with by Christ on the Cross. This is how we are being conformed to our Lord's death. Unless the Cross is made the basis upon which we overcome the old man, we will only drop into another form of morality; seeking by self-effort to overcome self, and that struggle is a hopeless one. What is the essential characteristic of the Lord Jesus that is to be manifested in us? It is the sacrificial quality of being poured out for others. We are not struggling believers who barely exist until we finally are in heaven; we are recipients of resurrection life for ourselves, and sacrificial life unto all! We are assured that nothing, and no one, can touch us apart from His blessed will Rom 8:35-39. Our attitude is that of looking upon all that He takes us through, for we are not under His circumstances, but rather above them all in our victorious Lord. Standing in our position, we learn "to be content" in whatever state we are in. Our confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ develops as we realize that "His grace is sufficient for all these things" and that "His strength is made perfect in our weakness" 2Co 12:9-10.

The Conclusion Phi 3:10 That I May Come to Know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection and the Fellowship of His Sufferings, Being Conformed to His Death

5-21-00

The following is a chapter entitled "The Blessedness of Winter" from a book by Jeanne Guyon: This one chapter, I believe, says what has taken me hours to try and teach.

"I see the season of winter as an excellent example of the transforming work of the Lord in a Christian's life. When winter comes, the vegetable world, it seems to me, reflects the image of the purifying, which God does in order to remove imperfections from the life of one of his children. As cold comes on the wings of a winter storm, the trees gradually begin to lose their leaves. The green is soon changed into a funereal brown; soon the leaves fall away and die. Behold the tree's appearance now! It looks stripped and desolate. Behold the loss of summer's beautiful garment. What happens as you look upon that poor tree? You see a revelation. Under all the beautiful leaves there had been all sorts of irregularities and defects. The defects had been invisible because of the beautiful leaves. Now those defects are startlingly revealed! The tree is no longer beautiful in its surface appearance. But has the tree actually changed? Not at all. Everything is exactly as it was before. Everything is as it has always been! It is just that the leaves are no longer there to hide what is real. The beauty of the outward life of the leaves had only hidden what had always been present. The same is true of you. The same is true of all believers. We can each look so beautiful ... until life disappears! Then, no matter who, the Christian is revealed as full of defects. As the Lord works on you to produce purification, you will appear stripped of all your virtues!

But, in the tree, there is life inside; and, as the tree, you are not actually becoming worse, you are simply seeing yourself for what you really are! Know that somewhere deep within the tree of winter there is still the life that produced last spring's beautiful leaves. No, the believer's inmost being has not been deprived of its essential virtue. He has lost no advantages. He has only lost something human, a sense of his own personal goodness, and he has discovered, instead, his utter wretchedness. He has lost the ease of following the Lord. That ease was born more of ignorance of self than anything else. As with the tree, so with you. The Christian now spoiled and naked, appears in his own eyes to be a denuded thing; and all those around him see his defects for the first time: defects, which were previously veiled, concealed by outward graces. Sometimes such revelation is so devastating to the pride of a Christian he simply never recovers, and decides to be a Christian on some other level; or gives up following the Lord entirely. Throughout the long cold winter, the tree certainly appears as dead as the very deadest of all trees in the forest. The tree knows no reality. Here is total destruction, it seems.

But the truth lies somewhere else. That tree is actually undergoing and submitting to a process which preserves its life and strengthens the tree! After all, what does winter do to a tree? It contracts the tree's exterior. The life deep within is no longer uselessly expended! Its life, rather, is concentrated within the deepest part of the trunk and in the hidden portions of the root. The life is forced deeper and deeper into the inmost part of the tree. Winter preserves the tree, no matter how dead the tree may appear. Yes, its leaves have fallen away and its true, deformed, state has been exposed; yet the tree has never been more alive than at that time! During the winter, the source and principle of life is more firmly established than in any other season. In all the other seasons, the tree employs the whole force of its life in adorning and beautifying itself. But it does so at the expense of expending its life, taking its very vitality from the roots and the deepest part of the trunk. There must be winter. Winter is necessary for the tree, if it is to live, survive and flourish. Virtue has a way of sinking deep within the Christian, while totally disappearing from the surface, leaving the outward and natural defects in very conspicuous view! If we have eyes to see, then we see that this is beautiful. Grace operates in your life in exactly the same way. God will take away the leaves. Something will cause them to fall. The outward virtue will collapse. He does this that He may strengthen the principle of the virtue. The source of virtue must be built up. Something deep within the soul is still functioning.

Somewhere within the spirit the functions that are the highest (in God's estimation) have never rested. What is going on is exceedingly hidden. It is humble. What is happening is pure love. What is going on in the inmost part is absolute abandonment and contempt of self. The inward man is making progress. The soul is venturing forth into the interior. True, it seems that the operations of God are concentrated on the external parts of the believer, and even a moment's glance reveals that the exterior things are not pleasant to look upon. Yet, in truth, no new defects in the soul have developed! Only the uncovering of old faults has come about! And, as they are exposed, they are better healed. If you dare the spiritual pilgrimage, you need to remember in times of calamity, and in times of what appear to be dry spells, and in that time which men will call a spiritual winter: Life is there, if winter comes."

In our study of being conformed to our Lord's death, we must understand the importance of the dual aspect of our Lord's work on the Cross. That is, that we have been forgiven because He died in our stead; but we may be delivered when we accept the reality that we died with Him. It is God the Holy Spirit who will make these facts real and true in our experience as we cooperate with Him and become transformed into the likeness of Christ. After all what sort of salvation would we have if God simply saved us from the penalty of our sins and then left us on our own to deal with the power of the sin nature in our Christian life and walk? We must be brought back to these two basic results of His finished work on the Cross: first that we are freed from the penalty of sin and secondly that we are freed from the power of the sin nature. Therefore, we are "Justified by faith", Gal 3:24; and "We walk by faith", 2Co 5:7; "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col 2:6. We are not left to deal with the old life ourselves; it has been dealt with by Christ on the Cross. This is how we are being conformed to our Lord's death. The Cross is as much the foundation for our Sanctification as it is for our Justification. Both gifts spring from the same Work.

Justification is an official judicial act, which occurs every time anyone believes in Christ. The justice of God acts on our behalf pronouncing us justified, which means, we have a relationship with God forever, having the perfect righteousness of God imputed to us. We also have sanctification, an experiential sanctification, which is the function of the spiritual life after salvation 1Th 4:1-8. Believers who are unaware of this dual aspect are bound to handle sins through rebound, (1Jo 1:9), but that is not the true victory. This does take care of the penalty of the product but not the source. When believers get tired of wasting their time in a religious circle, they will be ready for God's answer to the source of sin, which is death to self, brought forth from the completed work of the Cross. We all appreciate God's forgiveness for what we have done, but we should also aspire to deliverance from who and what we are. The finished work of Christ on the Cross includes death to our sin nature which is God's way of deliverance. We do not add to the finished work regarding Justification and we cannot add to the finished work of deliverance from the entire sin nature. We will only be free when we enter His prepared freedom for us, there is no other freedom. This is why the command to lose our life is given so many times by our Lord in such passages as Mat 16:23-27 "But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's. Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds."

Unless the Cross is made the basis upon which we overcome the old man, we will only drop into another form of morality; seeking by self-effort to overcome self, and that struggle is a hopeless one. We are not to blame others, instead we must recognize that the enemy is really the flesh, the old nature, the self life. Our reckoning on the old man as crucified results in the Holy Spirit's leading us daily in the path of the Cross. God wants us to be conformed to the image of His Son, He allows us, through our own mistakes and willfulness, to become entangled in situations and circumstances where we experience the self-life being crucified, which breaks its power. There is nothing easy about the Cross, but we learn to glory in it because its crucifying power frees us from the "law of sin and death" Rom 8:2-8. As we exercise this attitude of having died unto our sin nature, and being conformed to our Lord's death, we take up our Cross daily.

Therefore, in our standing, we find ourselves "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake" (2Co 4:11). The continuity of the Cross in our lives produces continual freedom from the reign of not just sins but from the entire sin nature Jam 1:21-27.

The very things that crucify provide the daily death from which our new life in Christ is revealed. In fact, the more death, the more life.

The sacrificial quality of being poured out for others is the essential characteristic of the Lord Jesus that is to be manifested in us. It is our willingness not to play religion but to accept God's calling in our life. We are not struggling believers who barely exist until we finally go to heaven; we are recipients of resurrection life for ourselves, and sacrificial life unto all. The Lord said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" Joh 10:10. We know that the anchor and source of our life is safely and eternally hid with Christ in God. We are assured that nothing, and no one, can touch us apart from His will, Rom 8:35-39.

Our attitude is that of looking down upon all that He takes us through, we are not under His circumstances, but above them all in our victorious Lord. Standing in our position, we learn in whatever state we are in, "to be content" we learn how to be abased, and we learn how to abound, Phi 4:11-12. We enter each day and each situation, from that blessed vantage point. We abide in Him, accepting everything from His nail-pierced hands. This is why we are told that in everything we should give thanks: "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" 1Th 5:18.

What is lacking among believers today is the proper emphasis on spiritual growth. Our confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ develops as we realize that His grace is sufficient for all these things, and that His strength is made perfect in our weakness, 2Co 12:9-10. We are compelled to prove His faithfulness at every point of need.

Remember, although we are living in our risen Lord, we are still dwelling in this body of humiliation, and serving in this world of death. Therefore, God keeps us in the place of need and helplessness in ourselves. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" 2Co 4:7.

We have the attitude that "I come to do Thy will, O God" Heb 10:9.

What are the limits of obedience, the ends of abandonment, the ultimate willingness of the will? If a person has surrendered his life to his Lord, it would be inconsistent for the one who places his whole happiness, his whole state, in the hands of God alone, that they could continue to have a list of desires for their own happiness and wants. Love alone should cause us to surrender up our will to the Lord. Because if it is not love that produces submission, eventually that wrong motive will be revealed. That's why the first commandment is Mat 22:37 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

The issue is "His will or yours?"

Receiving a Glimpse of the Resurrection Life Before We Die

5-28-00

In the first ten verses of Phi Chapter 3: Paul writes to the Philippians about having inner happiness through the doctrines being repeated, “Finally, my brethren, keep on having inner happiness in the Lord. On the one hand, to be writing the same doctrines to you is not troublesome to me, while on the other hand, it is a safeguard or a basis of security for you.” Verse 2 warns about legalism “Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;” Then in verses 3-8, he talks about the vanity of human achievement and grace orientation as it relates to salvation, living the adult spiritual life “for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,” In Phi 3:10, we have the doctrines of getting to know Him, knowing the power of His resurrection and participating in His sufferings and then being conformed to His death. “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” Now in Phi 3:11 Paul talks about what he wanted to attain from this, the result “in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.” This verse does not refer to something we have to do in order to be raised from the dead. Rather there is a dual meaning: first to experience that resurrection life now, in time and then secondly to have all that God has in store for us in the eternal state. The first phrase of verse 11 from the original language should be translated “if, in some way,” The next part of the verse “I may attain” means to attain or to arrive at a location, to achieve an objective or goal. Then we have the final phrase in the verse which should be translated “the resurrection away from the dead ones” This last phrase refers to two categories of dead ones, the loser believers who live in temporal death and the unbeliever who will live in spiritual death both in time and in the eternal state if they do not become born again before they die. The entire verse then says, “if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection away from the dead ones.” Resurrection means a person returns from the dead in a body that is incorruptible and never again dies. Anyone who dies during the Church Age has an interim body in heaven until the resurrection of the Church at the Rapture, 2Co 5:1-8. This resurrection life or newness in life that Paul desires to attain is found in Rom 6:4 “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”

Resurrection life refers to an extraordinary peace that God desires for us to experience right here on earth. This sense of peace will ebb and flow because this new life is given little by little. However, in the eternal state, this peace will fill you entirely. The point is that God has a plan for our lives. This plan enables us to embrace an inward death to self, despite all of the natural opposition. As a part of that plan He also gives us the experience of resurrection life or newness of life. If you stay with the plan of God, you will have times when you will experience death to the self-life and then the experience of the newness of life, resurrection life. The dangerous trap that many fall into is to get discouraged when things are not going right. This is why we are to have that peace that goes beyond understanding. Joh 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

As God strips our human strength, loss of the things of the earthly life will be deep. But once going through getting to know the Lord, knowing the power behind His resurrection, and as we participate in His sufferings and are conformed to His death by experiencing death to self, we then experience resurrection in time and it is then we can realize Phi 4:7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” We do not always understand the will of God, but to trust His sovereignty completely is what leads us to the experience of this resurrection life within. As we deepen in this relationship with Christ, outward things (caused by persecution, injustice, and even what is perceived to be the unfairness of God and the displeasure of God) are things no longer perceived nor reacted to.

The issue is “His will or yours?”

There comes a point in our relationship with the Lord where He desires to give us some spiritual blessing, some experience, or perhaps even some material thing. Here is where the understanding of prayer is so important. The Lord prepares the heart of the believer to receive the blessing, then He puts this desire upon the believers heart, Psa 37:4. The Spirit of God, who dwells in you, begins to make intercession in you; and that intercession is for you and it is according to the will of God. He intercedes and He requests (from within you) the very thing which is His Will! Rom 8:26-27 “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.” Now it is no longer only the desire of God and the Spirit, it also has become the desire within the heart of the believer. The request actually comes from the Holy Spirit, the desire actually comes from the Father. In our relationship with the Lord there will come a time when the question that must be answered will be “What is our motivation?” For us to experience resurrection life our ultimate motivation must be Him and Him alone. If we have this attitude then we will not be in bondage to the things of this world. In chapter 4 we will see that this resurrection life will allow us to ultimately go through this life be totally content in any and every circumstance, Phi 4:11-13. This is truly escrow blessings in time, perhaps not wealth and overt prosperity but an incredible superb inner peace with God. We will experience deliverance from the bondage of the world and the stronghold of the cosmic system. This does not mean we cannot enjoy this life and the things of the world, but it means we are not in bondage to those things. This is why the apostle John put it like this, 1Jo 2:15-17 “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

This is why it is so important, when the Christian begins to encounter sufferings in this life, that they do not run from those sufferings, but accept them. The believer must come to a point when he is no longer blown away or about by these winds. Eph 4:14 “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” To leave God, after coming to this state, would be the most miserable thing in the universe for there is no real pleasure from exterior sources. All else will appear pointless in comparison to a relationship with almighty God and this experience of the resurrection life. Little by little, the believer is brought to this secure state. Death to self, then resurrection, little by little. This is what the apostle Paul is stating that the Spirit of Christ ministers resurrection life out of the death that we experience in verse Phi 3:10. This principle is also taught in Mat 10:39 when our Lord said “He who has found his soul-life shall lose it, and he who has lost his soul-life for My sake shall find it.”

It is comforting to know that when you are faced with any problems or difficulties, remember that there is a resurrection side of the Cross where we leave behind the old self-life for the new Christ-life, the resurrection life. This is the life that is filled with the fruit that God produces in our life Gal 5:22-23. To live in Him who is our Life, is to be in the power of God and is to have these characteristics and manifestations that money can't buy. We are not in union with the life of Christ as He lived on earth in His perfect humanity; we are in union with the life of the resurrected Christ in Heaven. We have the privilege to partake of that spiritual life that He took possession of for us at His resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of it. Resurrection life is a peace in the mind and spirit, and it means that we are free from worrying, free from anxiety and frustration. We can experience Joh 10:10 “I came that they might have life, and might have {it} abundantly.”

Paul is bringing forth a principle in our main passage in Phi 3:11 when he says “if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection away from the dead ones.” that there is a difference between living the spiritual life and experiencing resurrection life. God not only rewards those in the eternal state who diligently seek Him but he also rewards them in time. The lack of overt prosperity is not a lack of spirituality. There have been millions of born again believers who have made an impact in Christianity who would be classified as poor by the average individual today. We can think like The Lord Jesus Christ and reach a state of total reward in our mental attitude from the fulfillment of the plan of God. We will still sin and fail in our thought pattern but if we continue with the plan of God, we will experience times when the peace of God is such a reality in our lives that the problems and difficulties we are facing have no control over us whatsoever. This is the experience of the life within that we receive because of our union with the resurrected Christ. Gal 6:8 “For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.” If we keep on living the spiritual life we will keep on reaping more and more of the experience of our eternal life in time, the ultimate being... what Paul was after, resurrection life.

It all really begins at spiritual self-esteem with certain characteristics.

1. Tranquility of soul. You begin to relax in your soul.
2. Stability of mental attitude, including never feeling threatened by others and avoiding inordinate ambition and competition.
3. Composure marked by self-assurance, which is the correct and accurate application of doctrine to life.
4. Grace-orientation to life which includes giving others the benefit of the doubt.
5. Doctrinal-orientation to reality, which is based upon genuine humility, objectivity, teachability, spiritual common sense, and the avoidance of inordinate ambition and competition or inordinate self-esteem.
6. Good decisions from a position of strength, which includes motivation from personal, love for God the Father plus divine viewpoint thinking.
7. Personal control of your life.
8. A personal sense of destiny, which includes solving the problems related to God, self, others, and things.
9. Self-confidence from wisdom, which means the function of doctrinal purity or the application of metabolized doctrine to experience.
10. Poise. This is the believer under spiritual self-command.

All of these characteristics improve and become stronger at the next two stages of spiritual growth, spiritual autonomy and spiritual maturity. When a believer reaches spiritual maturity and goes on to supergrace and ultra-supergrace, which is what the apostle Paul was after, then he will have the privilege of experiencing the ultimate spiritual life, resurrection life.

Our Lord did not teach that if we believe in Him that when we die then we will have eternal life. He prophesied that we could have this life now! Joh 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." Joh 7:38-39 "He who believes in me, as the Scripture said, 'from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet {given,} because Jesus was not yet glorified." This takes time; the Holy Spirit seems to be so slow, and at times outright inactive. But that is never the case, even when He is grieved, or quenched. If we only realized the magnitude of the desires of God for your life, you would relax and enjoy every day, living one day at a time. If we lived like this we would not have any doubts about the thoroughness of the work of God the Holy Spirit in our life. You would not be puzzled at the extent of His preparation and transformation as He brings you from glory to glory, in time.

Only a few believers will, quietly and calmly, continue to seek after God in this manner. Only a few will want to say with the apostle Paul that “if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection life away from the dead ones.” These will be hidden, humble, unnoticed, the ones expecting nothing, except that God be blessed! Not the creature, But God the creator. There will come a sense that whatever the Lord

does in our lives, it is just! The believer realizes that, whether it is an attack from the kingdom of darkness or simply his own natural weakness exposed, or from unjust treatment from others, whatever is about to take place, it is justified. He will realize he is being prepared for something. Before Paul died he made a great statement about this principle, 1TI 6:12 “Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” It is not difficult to identify the power of His resurrection life: it is the almighty power of love, the power of gentleness, the power of goodness, the power of faithfulness the power of meekness, and the power of self-control, Gal 5:22-23.

Phil 3:11 "In Order That I May Attain to the Resurrection From the Dead"

6-4-00

In our study of Philippians chapter three, we saw in verse 10 the tremendous opportunity we have to know the Lord Jesus Christ and the power behind His resurrection. We saw the tremendous privilege we have to come to know Him and to participate in His sufferings and being conformed to His death.

Phi 3:10 "That I may come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection and the participation of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;"

We are now ready for Philippians 3:11 "if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection away from the dead ones." The Bible must be taught based upon three principles; we use the acronym ICE which stands for: Isagogics or the historical setting of the passage. Categorical or the systematic theology developed from combining and comparing Scripture with Scripture. Exegesis or the grammatical and syntactical analysis of the passage from the original languages. We will use this process in looking at Phi 3:11. We begin with the historical setting of the passage, Paul is in jail at the time that he was writing this and he desired to continue to live so that he could have the opportunity to experience resurrection life before he died. Under the principle of categorical doctrine, which is developed from combining Scripture with Scripture, our resurrection does not depend in any way on our merit. Under the principle of exegesis we have the apostle Paul saying "that I may attain to the resurrection", and he used the Greek verb "katantao". The word means to attain, to arrive at a location, to achieve an objective or a goal. The Greek tense that is used refers to a point of time or a goal that Paul is desiring to reach before he dies and goes home to be face to face with the Lord. He wants to experience the ultimate in the spiritual life, resurrection life in time and blessings and decorations in the resurrection body for the eternal state. The verb is used in the subjunctive mood and means that maybe he will, maybe he will not, that all depends upon whether or not Mar 12:30 is a reality in our life. Mar 12:30 "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." Paul wanted to arrive at a location; he had an objective or goal. Paul wanted to experience the resurrected life of Jesus Christ before he died. Resurrection life refers to an extraordinary peace that God desires for us to experience. Even in time, we have the ability to begin to experience resurrection life within us. This experience and sense of peace will ebb and flow because this new life is released by God the Holy Spirit little by little as we experience the two sides of the Cross. The first side is death to the old sin nature; the second side is having the privilege to experience a glimpse of resurrection life now in time. God has a plan for our lives which enables us to embrace an inward death to self, despite all of the opposition, as a part of that plan He also gives us the opportunity to experience resurrection life which is the other side of the Cross. If we stay with the plan of God, we will have times when we will experience not just death to the self-life but also the experience of the newness of life, resurrection life. There is a difference between living the spiritual life and experiencing the resurrection life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was living in the new creature under the filling of the Spirit, but he still wanted to attain or to experience the resurrection life in time (compare Gal 6:14-16 with Phi 3:11). There is also a difference between believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and believing upon Him to experience eternal life in this life. Joh 20:31 "But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing you may have life in His name." Anyone who believes in Christ alone by faith alone is saved and will go to heaven and will experience eternal life for all of eternity, Acts 16:31. However, if anyone keeps on believing on Him, in the sense of following His word and applying it to their personal lives, living inside the plan for their lives, they will have the privilege of experiencing eternal life right now in time. It is important to note that in the Greek, which is the original language of the New Testament, that the most popular tense of the verb is the aorist tense. The basic significance of this tense is to denote an action as simply occurring once without reference to its progress. Simply, it means an action is performed at one point of time. There is also the present tense. The basic concept of the present tense is of progress, or progression. It refers to something that is a continual action. The verb in view here is "pisteuo" which means to believe, to have faith in, to be convinced of, to trust, to rely on, or to have confidence in. We are just going to look at the

word in the sense of believing. Act 16:30-31 "And after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household." Notice the word "believe" and also the word "saved." Salvation is in view in this passage by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Greek word "pisteuo" or faith alone in Christ alone. The words eternal life are not in this passage. This does mean that anyone who believes in Christ does not have eternal life, they do. You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ but never experience your eternal life until you die. In this verse, the word believe or pisteuo is in the aorist tense, a one shot decision to believe and we are saved. Making this one shot decision doesn't guarantee that we will experience the spiritual or eternal life in this life.

John 1:6-7 "There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him." Again "pisteuo" or believe is in the aorist tense so that a one shot decision is made to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and we are saved, born again.

Joh 3:14-15 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life."

Now in this verse we have the word "believe" but we also have the words eternal life. The tense of the word believe or pisteuo this time is in the present which means that if we continually keep on believing and continue with His word then we will have the privilege of experiencing a part of eternal life now on this earth, we don't have to wait until we die. If that were not true, then this verse would be saying we have to keep on believing in Him or else we would lose our salvation and that would contradict the other verses that teach that salvation is a one shot decision, faith alone, in Christ alone. The Bible does not contradict itself. The experience of resurrection life in time is a reward for living the ultimate spiritual life in time by habitually and continually following His word. Sometimes believing in Him has a reference to following Him after salvation.

1Pe 1:8 "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory," The word believe is in the present tense meaning that if we continually keep on believing in Him and continue with His word then we will have the privilege of greatly rejoicing with a joy inexpressible and full of glory. One of the most frequently quoted verses in the Bible is Joh 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." In this verse we have the word believe again and we also have the words eternal life. The tense of the word believe or pisteuo is a present tense, meaning that if I continually keep on believing and continue with His word then I will have the privilege of experiencing part of eternal life now on this earth and I don't have to wait until I die. This is not just living the spiritual life but going forward to having the privilege of experiencing the life within that we receive because of our union with the resurrected Christ. Joh 4:39 "And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I {have} done." There's our word believe again, and no mention of eternal life, the tense here is aorist tense. They made a one shot decision to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and they were saved. However, there's no present tense here for them continuing to believe. This does not mean some of them did not continue in the present tense, but in this verse salvation is the issue and not living in eternal life and therefore the aorist tense is used and not the present. Remember someone can be saved by making a one shot decision.

Believing in Christ alone by faith alone will save us and we will go to heaven and will experience eternal life for all of eternity, Act 16:31. However, if anyone keeps on believing on Him in the sense following His word and applying to their personal lives, they will have the privilege of experiencing eternal life right now in time. In Joh 6:40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." The present tense of the verb here means that it is the will of God the Father that if anyone continually keeps on believing and continues with His word, they will have the privilege of experiencing some of eternal life now on this earth. Also see Joh 7:39, Joh 12:46, Joh 14:1, Joh 14:12, as examples of the present tense. To be a Christian and be saved because you recognize that you're a sinner and you need to be saved. Believe is in the aorist tense, make that one shot decision at one point of time. But to experience the life of Christ and live the spiritual life ultimately reaching the goal of resurrected life, then a present tense is used, keep on going forward in the

plan of God. So Philippians 3:11 has a dual connotation; it has to do with experiencing resurrection life now in time and it also has to do with all that God has for you in your resurrection body in the eternal state. The eternal state is not a place of equality but rather inequality. Paul said in Phi 3:14 "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." This should be the goal that all born again believers have, not to prove their love, but rather as a result of their love for the Lord Jesus Christ. God has His highest and best in mind for each and every one of us. God has blessed us with fantastic blessings in eternity past. Eph 1:4 "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him." He did all of this in eternity past and as a part of attaining to the resurrection, we should all aspire to receiving all the blessings that He has designed us to have for all of the eternal state.

There is coming a time when all members of the Royal family of God will stand before God in their resurrection bodies to either lose or receive rewards for the deeds done in the body. Attaining to the resurrection also has to do with receiving all of these rewards God prepared for us in eternity past. You will never lose your fantastic happiness at the Judgment Seat of Christ even if you receive no reward, due to your failure in life. However, attaining all that God has for you in the resurrection has to do with receiving all of those rewards for the eternal state. Again this is why the apostle Paul said, "that I may attain to the resurrection." He not only wanted to experience a part of the resurrection life in time, his ultimate goal was to reach the objective which was to glorify God in time and receive blessings and rewards that stagger the imagination covering the resurrection body for all of eternity. Paul's motivation was correct, it was not because he wanted to be rewarded, and it was because he loved God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Joh 20:31 "but these have been written so that you may believe (aorist tense) that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing (present tense) you may have life in His name."

The Secret of Waiting Upon God.

6-11-00

As we continue our study of the book of Philippians we are now on Phi 3:12, but let's look ahead to verses Phil 13-17 as well. "Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life] or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead [a reference to his failure when he compromised with the legalists at Jerusalem]. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us." In this passage we begin with the principle that the apostle Paul has learned the secret of waiting upon God. This is a great lesson that unfortunately most of us learn the hard way. The easy way of course would be to perceive, metabolize and apply Bible doctrine. The hard way is making the wrong choices in life and not being patient.

It was the will of God that during Paul's fourth missionary journey he should go to Spain, Rom 15:24,25,28. However, Paul's desire was to go to Jerusalem. He was warned three times by God the Holy Spirit not to go, Acts 21:4-9, 10-13, but he disobeyed, Acts 21:14-17. Once there, he failed by taking bad advice from the local pastors and compromising his doctrine, Acts 21:20-24. Because of this decision he spent the next four years in prison where he rebounded and wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon while under house arrest. Phi 3:4-8 describes his perspective as a spiritually adult believer having recovered from his failures and mistakes. Phi 3:12-19 tells us that he continued his spiritual advance. He is through with human celebrityship, with the false perspective of Judaism, and now has a new set of priorities. He learned a magnificent lesson, that when waiting upon God we have the comfort of shifting the load, from us to Him. That's what happens when we wait, we experience a shift in the load, from our shoulders, to His shoulders. When we learn to wait upon God, as Paul did, there is a shift in perspective, we begin to see things from the divine viewpoint and timing rather than our own, and we begin to focus in on the eternal instead of the temporal and we experience the unseen power of God instead of the seen weakness of man.

The Word of God provides many examples of those who learned that great lesson of waiting upon God.

There was of course, Noah: He who was told by God to build an ark and to keep the faith knowing that rain was coming, though there had never been any such thing as rain or ships ever before. He waited 120 years, and then it came. HEB 11:7 "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen [such as rain, a flood, a ship that could float on water], in reverence prepared an ark for the deliverance of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." Noah lived at a time when the whole earth was filled with violence and corruption, yet Noah did not allow the evil standards of his day to rob him of fellowship with God. Sadly, to many born again believers allow the evil and the corruption of the world to cause them not to wait upon God. Noah waited on God and he stood out as the only one who "walked with God", Gen 6:9.

Another prophet who reveals to us the importance of waiting upon God to open the doors of our lives is Job: After experiencing soars from his head to his feet, the loss of family, and all the things that he called dear. He waited for an undetermined period of time, each day bringing only another day of pain.

Then there is Abraham: He left his hometown of Ur at the age of 75. He died according to the scriptures at the age of 175 and still didn't find the city that he left to find, whose builder and maker was God. Heb 11:8-10 "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien

in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God."

Then there was Joseph: His life was marked by waiting for a decade and a half in prison, unjustly treated, unjustly accused. In fact, he was released from slavery only to be put back into prison, for another 13 years before he was released and promoted to prime minister.

Then there was Moses: He was, who at the age of 40, the prime of manhood, he was the brightest star of Egypt, he was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. He was certainly heir apparent, and at that time he made a crucial blunder. He tried to do God's will Moses' way. Moses went into the desert and there he stayed for forty years. In the prime of his manhood, highly qualified, he lost all of his investment in his education. He lost his prestige, his reputation as a military leader, and he was, according to Josephus. He lead the sheep in that Midian desert for forty years. He waited.

There was Samson, Samuel, there is Gideon, Jephath, the prophets, most of whom lived, never to realize their dream or their personal desires and wants. They waited upon God to change the hearts of the people and their hearts didn't change, and there was the demise of the kingdom. But God said, "Your my servants, who are committed to waiting." "You wait for me!"

The ministry of Jesus Christ was one of waiting. He took one step at a time, and when the Father said take the next step, He did. In fact, don't you find it interesting that in Luk 2:42, we find our Lord mentioned as being twelve years old and then we don't have anything written about Him again until Luk 3:23, where He was about thirty years of age.

It is important to remember that in a period of waiting, when the door is closed, that doesn't mean you're out of the will of God, it means you are right in the will of God. The open door is the exception; however when you get an open door, go through it. There are bursts of green lights that happen in life, and the rest is filled with red lights that flash, wait! As Psa 62 says "My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him." In verse 5 the Psalmist writes "My soul finds rest in God alone; my hope comes from Him." Our problem often is not our weakness, but rather our competence. Our professional expertise, our brains, we are highly capable, we don't really need Him, so we say. We also wait in stability and confidence, Psa 62:2 "He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken." That's how we wait, we wait silently and we wait with that sense of confidence.

Isa 40:31 "Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up {with} wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary."

This is called the exchanged life, where we exchange our weakness for God's strength. We wait on God because He is our only deliverer, He is our salvation. He is our only security, He is our strong hold. He is our only hope. Without Him, we don't have deliverance, no security, no hope, we don't have any glory, and we don't have any refuge. Waiting involves, trusting, praying, and waiting implies resting.

Our next section of the book of Philippians is found beginning in Phi 3:12 where Paul says Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life, or have already become perfect or reached the ultimate goal of the resurrection life or ultra-supergrace, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. I have come to a couple of initial observations, having done that study, first of all, waiting is the rule, rather than the exception. Isn't that a beautiful reminder? The exception is an open door! When you have an open door, go! In fact, go like mad! They don't happen very often.

The second thing I'm noting from this study is that waiting on God is resting, instead of worrying. Some of the very best lessons that God has to teach us, are often missed because they come in the back door of our lives. They are sprung on us and we are not ready to take them, in the particular package in which God delivers them, and it's easy to miss them. However, when we learn to wait upon the Lord and for His timing then we will begin to see things from the divine perspective rather than human viewpoint. Let's take for example failure, that's one of the back door experiences of life, because we are so success oriented. It is our interpretation that every failure represents a waste of time, or a set back. When in reality failure might very well be the avenue to teach us that special lesson which could never be learned without it, waiting upon God.

Remember that Paul experienced this when he prayed three times and he failed in his request. He prayed Lord take this thorn away from me, and the scriptures tell us that he asked three times, and all three

times, the answer was no! He was wise enough to realize that failure was success in reverse, as it were, because he realized a whole new measure of grace, and God taught him that when he was weak, God could show Himself strong. I think that is easy for us, who are healthy this evening to nod in agreement.

He's, that's great that's wonderful, true we believe it, but let a little sickness come, which creates failure or the inability to produce, and it's awfully hard to except that. Isn't it beautiful how when you do your part, God does the part that only He can do. And the beautiful reminder when we wait is, the follow-up. I wait and God comes through and does the part that men can't do. As you learn how to wait upon God and rest in Him, you will look at things that have taken place in your life, things that you I haven't been able to turn them or change them or alter them, and suddenly they will just begin to fall aside. Things you haven't needed. Things you couldn't get rid of. Even things you wanted to get rid of. You will realize God's taking them, in quietness and waiting, God's taking that away. Sort of like flushing out the nervous system. So David says, "My soul waits in silence for God only."

What Direction Are You Going In?

6/18/00

In our study of Phi 3:12 we are about to see the principle of living grace. Living grace is what keeps us alive on earth and gives us the opportunity to move forward to the objectives of the spiritual life. These objectives include advancing from salvation to supergrace, and then to ultra-supergrace, the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time, and then finally to dying grace (with the exception of the Rapture generation). These great objectives glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in time. Once they have been achieved (by retaining supergrace, maintaining perception, metabolization, and application of doctrine, and advancing spiritually) God then can give you the highest decoration that a believer in the royal family can ever receive in time – receiving that mantle of opposition from Satan, maximum opposition from the kingdom of darkness on a continual basis.

In Phi 3:12, Paul writes “Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life, or the ultra-supergrace status], or have already reached the objective, but I press on.” This word “but” sets up a mild contrast between Paul’s setback in Jerusalem and his determination to reach ultra-supergrace. It reveals Paul’s determination to keep “pressing on” and to not allow himself to become discouraged because of his bad decisions. This should remind all of us that there is no such thing as spiritual greatness, or even human greatness, when we allow our failures to discourage us.

Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. The concept that Paul will teach us is that no matter how discouraging life becomes, no matter how many people look down their nose at you because you have failed, you can and must get up and move on.

Great believers are those who will not allow their failures to hold them back. This is the main point of Phi 3:12. The phrase “I press on” is a military term. The Greek word use here (dioko) means to hotly pursue, press on, drive on, move in, close in, and run swiftly in order to catch something. It is used of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal. It also has a negative connotation; it can also mean to persecute, put to flight, drive away, pursue in a hostile manner, harass, and trouble, depending on the context.

This is the same word God the Holy Spirit used in Act 9:4-5, “And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting [dioko] Me?’ and he said, ‘Who are Thou, Lord?’ and He [said], ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting [dioko].’” Paul once pursued (“diokoed”) the Lord in a negative way; now he will be pursuing (“diokoing”) Him in a positive way. In this passage of the Word of God, the apostle Paul teaches us how to handle failure. You are going to fail that’s part of being human – so we should see failure as growth or an opportunity, rather than a time of guilt and condemnation.

After recognizing his failures in Jerusalem, the man who wrote Rom 8:28, “All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose,” really began to experience this principle. He learned, like so many of us have learned, not to let an external religion, with its rules and forms, take the place of an inward experience with the Lord Jesus Christ. He learned that for Christ to truly reign within you, everything must be submitted to Him without reservation. While Paul’s circumstances varied throughout his Christian lifetime, his position in Christ never changed, just like ours never changes! Paul disobeyed God, went to Jerusalem, and ended up in disaster, but all things were still working together for good, in spite of the fact that he was out of the will of God. Therefore, even though he was under divine discipline for his compromise with legalism, God was still working in Paul’s life, and he would use Paul’s own mistakes to teach him and us a valuable lesson. The Lord may allow you, like Paul, to fall into a situation where all you can do is sit back and think about where you have been, where you are, and where you are going. It is a very humbling experience. In Act 21:4 we see how Paul wound up in prison.

Act 21:4 And after looking up the disciples, we stayed there seven days; and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.

Notice that they warned him “through the Spirit.” In the original Greek, it actually says they warned him many times (“They kept telling him.”). This was not a one-time warning; for seven days Paul was being told by God the Holy Spirit not to go into Jerusalem. God the Holy Spirit explicitly said, “Don’t go there!”

Paul is both emotionally and traditionally bound to Jerusalem. He is making a sentimental decision rather than a doctrinal decision, and when Paul walks through the gates of Jerusalem, he’ll be out of the geographical will of God.

In verse 11, a second warning is given to Paul. Act 21:11 And coming to us, he (Agabus) took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, “This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”

A third warning is given in Act 21:12, “And when we had heard this, we [Paul’s traveling companions] as well as the local residents [the local congregation] began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.” Paul very stubborn at this point; everyone is trying to get him to stop his course to Jerusalem, but Paul has already made up his mind. Act 21:13 Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” His answer sounds so good, but it is based only on emotion. Paul was emotionally attached to Jerusalem. It was the place where as a young man he was very popular and successful. He has all kinds of friends there, saved and unsaved...so he things. Paul’s companions were right. Philip’s four virgin daughters were right (Act 21:8-9). Agabus was right. Paul was wrong. Because they saw this great man moving in the wrong direction, it caused them to weep. The point is that, like Paul, we can have a good attitude and good intentions and be very sincere, but if we are going in the wrong direction, it doesn’t matter.

Act 21:14 And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, “The will of the Lord be done!”

Even though Paul is the most renowned believer alive at this time and he is prepared and ready, he is going in the wrong direction. Even though he’s traveling to the wrong geographical location and making the wrong decision, and others know it, Paul still has the freedom and the right to make his own mistakes without interference from others. True companions and friends will function under the royal family honor code. They will give him his privacy and not forsake or abandon him. Paul’s decision is a bad decision, but it is Paul’s’ decisions. Paul is wrong, and his followers know it, so they put him in the Lord’s hands and allow the Lord to deal with the situation. They do not get in the way of the Lord; they allow Paul privacy and freedom of choice, regardless of whether he is right or wrong. Paul is not an apostate; he is a doctrinal believer making a bad decision, and that’s not grounds for separation.

Act 21:15 And after these days we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem at this time was saturated with believers under legalism and reversionism. The believers at Jerusalem were in poverty because they were under divine discipline for rejecting the grace of God. When Paul arrives, it is not the words of grace from God that these legalistic pastors want from him (It’s the money he’s bringing).

Act 21:20 And when they heard it [the success of Paul’s ministry] they [began] glorifying God [Unfortunately they don’t stop there; instead they begin to push the Law on Paul, while ignoring his message of grace]; and they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believer, and they are all zealous for the Law.”

The Jews at Jerusalem were being taught that living morally and following certain ascetic taboos was the Christian way of life. Paul greets them and tells them in verse 19 about the grace of God among the Gentiles, but they have something else in mind. They are disturbed by the presence of Paul, but they are delighted to have his money. So what do they want Paul to do?

Act 21:24 “Take them [the four religious Jewish men] and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.”

How can a man with so much doctrine and so much grace fall for this? Everything that Paul said in the book of Galatians is contrary to Paul's behavior here in Jerusalem. Paul is about to make the greatest mistake of his life because of emotionalism and sentimentality.

In Act 21:20 the leaders and pastor of Jerusalem had a problem. While they received the report from Paul about how God has now accepted the Gentiles, they knew that they were entertaining a very controversial figure. After all, he had a reputation for devastating and ruining the early church as Saul of Tarsus, Act 8:3. He also had a reputation for teaching grace and the fact that believers are no longer under the Mosaic Law, Gal 5:18. They knew about the apostle Paul; he had been the object of their scorn and contempt in their sermons. They were anti-grace, and he was the apostle of grace; therefore they were anti-Paul. Notice what they try to do. They now concentrate and focus their attention on getting Paul into legalism. They're going to entrap him with a legalistic gimmick. They're going to attempt to persuade him to do something that will make them look right and Paul look wrong in front of "thousands among the Jews of those who have believed." This is a danger to all of us, so we should pay close attention to what these legalists are saying to Paul.

Act 21:20 You see, brother, [This is their hypocritical introduction]...

What the elders of Jerusalem are saying is that these thousands of Jews are to remain under the Law after salvation, like so many believers do today. They are going to convince Paul to offer a vow. God never authorizes believers to compromise doctrine by making vows in the Church-age. Vows made today are an act of legalism, generally committed by believers ignorant of doctrine. Vows are a system of penance or works without grace and proper motivation. For Paul to take a vow is to renounce everything that he has been teaching about the grace of God. When a believer allows his emotions and his feelings to rule, he refuses good advice and will be deceived. Paul has left the geographical will of God, and therefore the viewpoint will and operational will of God. Consequently, Paul is going to spend a period of his life in prison. God, however, will turn the curse into a blessing, and Paul will respond and write the four books of the New Testament known as the Prison Epistles. Like Paul, we too, from time to time, must evaluate the direction in which we are going!

The Failure of the Apostle Paul

6-25-00

The Apostle Paul's mistake was refusing to operate in God's plan for his life and exercise his spiritual gift. From a spiritual standpoint, the Apostle Paul was one of the greatest men in history. So much so that for many it is impossible to think of the writer of the Pauline epistles as out of fellowship. But like all of us, he had a sin nature. Paul's wrongdoing was not sin as such, that was included, but it was far greater than that. It really had to do with the last phrase in 1Jo 1:9 He "purifies us from all unrighteousness." Of all the men in history as believers in Jesus Christ, we have over 300 verses on the subject of Paul's wrong doing. Paul had just finished writing two Epistles. These two great messages, the book of Romans, and the book of Galatians. The year was 58 AD and he had written these two great Epistles to the Jews and Gentiles about how keeping the Law is not a part of the spiritual life of the Church-age and other things related to legalism. Then he went out and violated the very principles that he taught. This is why he wrote Col 3:25 "for he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality." He learned the lesson of Luk 12:48 "And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more." The nature of Paul's wrongdoing was rejecting the call of God upon his life for the purpose of building up and edifying the body of Christ. However, God the Holy Spirit gave him a doctrinal message and experiential message in the prison Epistles that changed his life. It was absolutely phenomenal and it was different than any other part of the word of God.

We are going to note that the biggest mistake that Paul made was not committing a sin, but refusing to operate in God's plan for his life and exercising his spiritual gift. Paul like all believers was given a spiritual gift from God. We are commanded to function under it and it is designed to build up and edify the body of Christ. Believers are to use their gift to maintain the local assembly that God has called them to. Spiritual gifts function only in the Pre-Designed Plan of God. Therefore, the importance of understanding 1Jo 1:9 and the filling of the Spirit is essential.

Now, what happened to the apostle Paul and how did he wind up in prison writing the book of Philippians? Act 21:18-20 "And now the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present [these are pastors of the local assemblies in Jerusalem]. And after he had greeted them, he {began} to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry [namely the grace of God]. And when they heard it they {began} glorifying God; [it would have been good if they had stopped there, but notice what they said]." What did they glorify the Lord for, the gift or Paul's message of grace? Well from the second half of verse 20, we know it wasn't the grace of God, "and they said to him, You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law;" The Jews at Jerusalem were being taught that living morally and following certain ascetic taboos was the Christian way of life. Don't drink this, don't eat that, and don't go there. So, while Paul greets them and tells them in verse 19 about the grace of God among the Gentiles, they have something else in mind. They are disturbed by the presence of Paul but they are delighted to have the money Paul brought. Act 21:21-22 "and they have been told about you [or they have been indoctrinated against you], that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses," What, then, is {to be done}? They [the thousands of Jews who are zealous for the Law] will certainly hear that you have come." What should be done about this problem? What should be done to convince the Jews that you do keep the Law? Paul should have entered into a dissertation on the doctrine of grace. However, Paul is out of the geographical will of God being at Jerusalem. Once you're out of the geographical will of God, more than likely, it will be just a matter of time before you're out of the viewpoint will of God which is what God wants you to think. Then you will get out of the operational will of God, which is what God wants you to do, Paul is going to do something shocking.

When a believer is out of the geographical will of God, it is shocking to observe his volitional decisions. As long as Paul stayed in the geographical will of God he was fine. But out of it is where trouble begins. Notice what they say to Paul, Act 21:23 "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who

are under a vow;" Paul should have evaded these pastors and avoided the Temple in Jerusalem. Just like we all need to learn that there comes a time when we should not be around certain types of people. Paul is going to do some things that are totally opposite of what he believed. Remember Paul was warned on the three different occasions to stay away from the city. He refused the warnings because of sentimentality and emotional attachments. When a believer allows his emotions and his feelings to rule, he refuses good advice and he takes bad advice. Paul refused the good advice to stay out of Jerusalem and he took the bad advice to go into the Temple and offer the vow. Paul came to Jerusalem out of the geographical will of God. When he enters into the Temple to make a vow, he will be out of the operational will of God as well. One leads to the other.

Paul is going to offer a vow. God never authorizes any believers to compromise doctrine by offering vows. Vows today are an act of legalism. They are an act of legalism generally committed by believers minus doctrine. Vows are a system of penance or a system of works minus grace and proper motivation. For Paul to take a vow is to renounce everything that he has been teaching about the grace of God. Act 21:24 tells us what they suggest in some detail. "Take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law." The vow starts by going into the Temple. When they went into the Temple they would declare their intention to take a vow. When they declared their intention they had to do certain things.

First of all, they had to let their hair grow. They could not cut their hair until their vow was over.

Secondly, they had to go on a certain type of diet.

Thirdly, they had to come up with a large financial offering within 30 days.

This is why they made their vow publicly; hopefully some rich man with a guilty complex would pay for the vow. Today instead of vows like this we have dedication services, pledge cards, etc. Paul has already brought all this money and the pastors at Jerusalem figure that Paul could stand the expense and pay for four of these men. So here are four young Christian men, and they're broke, in the Temple making vows. So they say, Act 21:24 "take them and receive purification yourself along with them," Every blessing Paul ever had, he received from doctrine and grace. Now they want him to earn and deserve his blessings. They want him to make a vow. So, Paul must let his hair grow, he must abstain from all wine, good foods, and become an ascetic. Then at the termination of the 30 days, Paul was to present himself in the Temple with his money and then the shaving of the hair and the burning of it on the altar. In other words, they are saying that we want you to join our fraternity of legalism Paul. Join the brotherhood! And this is not the law of expediency, this is a compromise of Bible doctrine.

Now, they also remind Paul in verse 25 of the decisions of the first council noted in Act 15:20-27. Act 21:25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication." Why are the Gentiles warned to keep themselves from things offered to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication? Everything mentioned here occurs in a Gentile Temple. The Jews were actually saying to the Gentiles "Get out of your Temples." Inside of a Gentile Temple they offered things to idols, drank blood, strangle animals, and they would consummate the service with fornication. All of these things occurred inside the Gentile Temples. Now, the Gentile believers were told to stay out of their Temples. They told the Gentiles to stay out of their Temples but the Jews remained in their own. In Jerusalem, we have a legalistic and ascetic Temple. And the operation in each Temple was different. In Jerusalem you have morality and self-righteousness whereas in the Gentile Temples you had immorality and lasciviousness. Both are against the grace of God. They are two types of degeneracy, immoral and moral. The operation in each Temple was different. The practice in each Temple was different. There's a great deal of difference between a Gentile Temple and a Jewish Temple but the concept is the same. One compromises with lasciviousness and the other with asceticism, but both deviate from God's grace. Paul's problem in all this is threefold:

First, his emotional attachment to Judaism. It's often been said that a person never gets entirely away from his background. Paul's background was Phariseism. We are all to some extent drawn to our background.

Secondly, Paul failed to apply doctrine to the situation. He knew the doctrine but he failed to apply it, Jam 4:17 "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin." When people become too emotionally involved with their problems, they fail to apply doctrine at the right time.

Thirdly, Paul failed to realize that love must be directed toward doctrine first and not toward people first. Paul loved those at Jerusalem but they didn't love him. Paul got loyalty and love mixed up. His love for doctrine should not have been compromised for his love for people. Paul should have followed his own advice of Gal 5:1 "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."

Paul took these four born-again believers who were legalistic and who were against the grace of God, and he not only associated and identified himself with them, but he paid their way. The pastors of Jerusalem were actually encouraging believers to go into the Temple and become religious. Religion is the worst thing in the world. Religion shuts up the kingdom of heaven from men, Mat 23:13, and keeps individuals out of heaven. It devours the money of the innocent and extorts from its victims, Mat 23:14, produces children for hell, Mat 23:15, is a business and a very profitable one, Mat 23:16. Religion appears moral and outwardly righteous but it is depraved within, Mat 23:27. Religion is man seeking to gain the approval of God by human works, either for salvation or spirituality, whereas, Christianity is God doing something for man through grace and therefore God receiving all the glory. Religion is the greatest opposition to the truth, it is ritual without reality.

The Discipline and Recovery of Paul

7-02-00

In Acts 21:27-28 begins the discipline from God to the apostle Paul for compromising his doctrine and going into the temple to make a vow. This is after one week of obedience and allegiance to his vow. On the seventh day when Paul stood up to announce and promote his religious vow, that is when his discipline began. He has had six days to repent or to change his thinking. However, he is out of fellowship mentally and therefore disoriented to the grace of God. That started by being out of the geographic will and therefore out of the operational will of God.

Act 21:27 "And when the seven days were almost over, the Jews from Asia, upon seeing him in the temple, began to stir up all the multitude and laid hands on him,"

The phrase "stir up" is from the Greek "sugcheo" which means to throw an assembly into disorder or confusion. Here is how a riot gets started, and therefore the confusion starts. The Jews spotted the very one who had preached grace now in a Temple which promoted works and he is promoting works himself. Paul is standing there starting to give his goofy legalistic testimony and here comes the enemy! Actually, here comes the providence of God and divine discipline for the apostle Paul. Remember these are religious self-righteous people and they are evil and viscous. In ACT 21:28 "crying out, Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people, and the Law, and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." Verse 28 is merely a summary of everything that they shouted while attacking him. Some people were yelling, "He is against the people!" Others were yelling, "He is against the law." Some were yelling, "He has brought Gentiles in the Temple." "He has polluted this holy place." Mental attitude sins are the domineering characteristics of the religious self-righteous people, especially jealousy. There is one mental attitude sin that always characterizes religion, jealousy. The Jews from the Roman province of Asia are jealous. They started a riot back in Ephesus against Paul and now they see Paul in Jerusalem. They are about to do something which is a characteristic of jealous people: condemn you without a trial. When they say in verse 28 that Paul has brought Greeks also into the Temple, it is a lie. They are referring to Trophimus, but Trophimus is not in the Temple. They merely said this because they are jealous and jealous people are not interested in the facts. As one of the oldest sins in the human race, existing in eternity past when Lucifer, the son of the morning, became jealous of God. The first case of jealousy in the human race occurred when Cain became jealous of his brother Abel and murdered him. These Jews are jealous of Paul and they want an excuse to kill him or hurt him. There are two important points here:

1. These Jews are religious and they are wrong.
2. Paul is out of fellowship because he has compromised with religion and is in the Temple, and he is wrong.

God is going to use religion to discipline Paul under the principle of Gal 6:7 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." Paul's sin of going into the Temple is religious in nature! Paul, who is the apostle of grace, has suddenly turned religious again. As Peter said in 2Pe 2:22 "It has happened to them according to the true proverb, a dog returns to its own vomit, and, a sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire." Paul has gone back to that which God has delivered him from. The true side of religion is jealousy, hostility, antagonism, lying, gossiping, hatred, and overt revenge. Act 21:30 "And all the city was aroused, and the people rushed together; and taking hold of Paul, they dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut." The word aroused means to stir up in violent emotion, to disturb, to be caused to riot. Here it has to do with the emotion of the soul, the worst place to be moved or manipulated. In Act 21:31 "And while they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the {Roman} cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion." This is the result of religious people who have become emotional, arrogant, vindictive and jealous. Suppose they could have destroyed Paul, what would they have done? They would have done absolutely nothing but promote the word of God.

2Co 13:8 "For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth."

They are fighting against Bible doctrine and grace. Even if they killed the one who teaches it, they cannot eliminate it because the word of God lives and abides forever, 1Pe 1:23. Religion, Legalism and Emotionalism will always persecute, because all three have no concept of freedom! The most precious thing that man has is his free-will and Religion, Legalism, and Emotionalism take it away. Notice who delivers Paul. Act 21:31 "And while they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the {Roman} cohort" The Roman cohort is the commander of the Roman Empire and here is what was reported. "that all Jerusalem was in confusion." There was a riot in Jerusalem.

Act 21:32 "And at once he took along {some} soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them; and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul."

This was the beginning of Paul's divine discipline for going into the Temple, compromising his doctrine and making stupid vows. The Jews attacking Paul were being used by the omniscience of God but they could only attack and not kill the apostle Paul, because the wicked are restrained by God. Paul could have very easily been killed, however, he is under divine discipline and he will be under the effects of this discipline for five years. Even though he recovers, the repercussions of this thing are going to continue, for almost five years he will be under Roman custody and under Roman protection. Rome represents law and order. The Jews had failed to maintain law and order and because they were an unstable population, the Romans could not permit the Jews to have the freedom they desired. The Jews were too religious and religion takes away the people's freedom. Rome would not permit the Jews self-rule because the Jews had demonstrated that they were not capable of self-rule.

A principle we need to note here is that as long as Paul is alive God has a purpose for his life. There was at least three times in the book of Acts when Paul could have died. But God had a purpose for his life and that purpose was to write half of the New Testament and to teach the mystery to the Gentiles. At this point, Paul is out of fellowship and no believer can fulfill God's plan unless he is in fellowship with God; therefore Paul must rebound and recover.

So in Act 21:33 "Then the commander came up and took hold of him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; and he {began} asking who he was and what he had done."

He is trying to discover the reason why Paul has been beaten by the Jews. This Roman soldier finds Paul with the majority against him, being beaten, stoned and he still tries to find out all the facts and the proper information. Remember that in Jerusalem we have thousands of believers. We were told that in verse 20. Notice that while the Jerusalem church gives no help or support to the apostle Paul, he has now fallen into the hands of the Roman Empire who's emphasis is on law and order and they will support and protect the apostle Paul. The Jerusalem church is filled with carnal, legalistic and judgmental believers. They are believers who are carnal whereas in Rome we have unbelievers who are moral. Where law and order does exist, it is better to fall into the hands of a moral unbeliever than a carnal Christian. There is nothing worst than a carnal Christian except a group of carnal, self-righteous legalistic ones. We have noted many times that God has established the divine institutions to protect human freedom. You will find that you can trust fair-minded law abiding unbelievers more than carnal Christians, that's because a carnal Christian is called the enemy of God, Jam 4:4; The enemy of the cross, Phi 3:18; A hater of God, Joh 15:23; Spiritually double-minded, Jam 4:8; Anti or against Christ, 1Jo 2:18,22; Disciple of the devil, 1Jo 3:8,10; Tortured souls, 2Pe 2:7-8; Unstable souls, 2Pe 2:14; Lukewarm believers, Rev 3:15-16; Jealous and carnal, 1Co 3:3; Cause divisions, 1Co 3:3.

Ignorance of doctrine and compromise has ruined the Jerusalem church. On the other hand, cognizance of doctrine and compromise has ruined the apostle's Paul's ministry temporarily. Think of the hypocrisy of the Jerusalem church. They were hungry and starving and Paul brought them a large financial gift because he cared for them. Paul tried to help them, but Legalism, Emotionalism and Religion are implacable. This shows you how terrible believers can be. In verse 34-36 we see the problem and the total confusion. "But among the crowd some were shouting one thing {and} some another, and when he could not find out the facts on account of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. And when he got to the stairs, it so happened that he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob; for the multitude of the people kept following behind, crying out, Away with him!" These should familiar words.

In Luk 23:18 "But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man," concerning The Lord Jesus Christ."

Religion hated The Lord Jesus Christ, Religion hated Paul. Carnal believers betrayed The Lord Jesus Christ, Carnal believers betrayed Paul.

There's no record that the Jerusalem church offered any prayer for Paul as they did when Peter was in prison. When Peter was in jail, the church prayed him right out of jail but there's no record for any prayer for Paul. It would take Paul about two years to recover from the influence of religion and legalism. In Phi 3:13-14 we have the estimate of the situation. "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

The Doctrine of Failure

7-16-00

Failure can be a backdoor to success Phi 3:12-14 "Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life or the ultra-supergrace status], or have already reached the objective, but I continue pressing on that I may attain that [or overtake that, or gain that, arrive at the objective] on account of which I was overtaken by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

We are going to learn from the apostle Paul that failure can be a door to success. Many believers wonder not only why they have failed, but why they continue to fail? In Psalm 103 we find information about growing through our failures and mistakes. There are some encouraging details to help prepare us for something that is very vital to understand in your relationship with God; how to handle failure. In Psa 103, we see that you need to look at your failures as an opportunity for growth rather than a time to backslide or fall away from God and His plan for your life. The background to this Psalm is that it was written at a low time in David's life. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits;" Remember again, this was written at a time when David had personally failed in a huge way...but he still did not quit nor blame others for his predicament. Is it any wonder why Act 13:22 says "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will."

The first principle to remember when it comes to our failures is that our response to our failures is our personal responsibility. It's not the responsibility nor is it the business of anyone else. In the Psalm David is saying to himself "listen up, and get your eyes on the Lord and don't forget His benefits." That's grace orientation toward self and applying spiritual self-esteem. After failure we are to get our eyes on the Lord, if you reach out for anyone else, you're on your way down, it's only a matter of time. If you blame others and do not take responsibility for your actions, you'll never experience victory. Look how David dealt with this principle of failure in PSA 51:2-4 after Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba, after he had totally failed: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, And done what is evil in Thy sight, So that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, And blameless when Thou dost judge." After failure we need to do as David did and speak to our self and say; "Soul you have a choice of being bitter, moody, unhappy, or blaming somebody or you can say Lord, I'm counting your benefits." This is another way of being occupied with Christ. This is why when you fail, as Psa 37:23 and 24 says you will, you do not dwell on negative thoughts because that only makes your life worse. That's why Occupation with the Person of Christ and having the proper focus is so important. Psa 103:3-12. Understanding these verses stops you from blaming others and looking unto the grace of God. Replacing blaming others with claiming God's grace. Look at some of the benefits David says for us to remember, in times of failure, he said in Psa 103:2 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits;" What are some of the benefits that David has noticed? In verse 3, "Who pardons all your iniquities; Who heals all your diseases;" Even the iniquities that led to your failure! He pardons them. Also, He heals all your diseases, all of them, David says so. Maybe not in your timing but in His! God wipes away your faults as easily as an earthly father wipes mud off a child's face. This is why the worst thing you can do is to doubt God's love toward you. God knows your heart and sees that most of the time you wished you hadn't done it. Now, it's all right to see how weak and helpless you are, but that is no place to stop or stay. Look at your God! When you see how strong and how able God is, then seeing how weak and unable you are, is not difficult to accept. Do not torment yourself because you do not always feel that you have trusted Him or feel His presence with you. Walk by faith and not by sight or by your own expectations.

In Psa 103:4, "He redeems your life from the pit;" We go to the pit but He says, "I am faithful, I will redeem your life from the pit!" Psa 103:4 "He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion;" This is His attitude toward you in spite of how often you have failed, whether it's overtly, or the sins of the tongue, or the worse sins, mental attitude sins. He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion; True, we are

full of weakness and sin, but it pleases God to transform us into the image of His Son, and make us one with Himself, and He will change us into the likeness of Christ. Therefore, He loves us in our weakness and failures and sins.

Psa 103:5 "Who satisfies your years with good things, {So that} your youth is renewed like the eagle."

Focus on those good things, that the Lord provides. This is what to focus in on in times of failure or when you're dealing with past failures, the faithfulness of God. Many times failure doesn't seem like progress, but it can be. And by progress I mean not going further up but further down. As when a ship is loaded, the more cargo put into it, the lower it goes into the waters; so the more of the nature and love of God you have within you, the lower your old sin nature sinks. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, doesn't want that to happen. Even in your personal failures, allow yourself to sink down under the weight of the Cross and be ready to bear the humiliation and suffering which are necessary to purify you. By allowing yourself to be pressed down, you will find that this truly raises you up.

Psa 103:6 "The Lord performs righteous deeds, And judgments for all who are oppressed."

This even means revealing our helplessness even in our personal times of personal failure.

Psa 103:7 "He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel."

Psa 103:8 "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness."

Psa 103:9 "He will not always strive {with us}; Nor will He keep {His anger} forever."

Psa 103:10 "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

Doubting the fact that God loves us is the worst thing we can allow to happen! When we understanding this principle God's love can truly be revealed, the very heart of God is expressed toward His own people after they have failed not because they have not failed. Remember the One who humbled Himself for us did so on account of His love for us.

Rom 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

This type of love is missing so much in the church today.

1Jo 3:16-18 "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

Think of what a heavy weight God's love is, it fell so far: from heaven to earth, from God to man. This is why Jude says in Jude 1: 21 "keep yourselves in the love of God," And when you experience God's love like this, you understand the mutual secrets that exists between God and you, the Lover and the one being loved. Who can question it? Psa 25:14 "The secret of the Lord is for those who respect Him, And He will make them know His covenant." Just like in life there are mutual secrets that true lovers share and only they share in those secrets.....the same thing is true in the spiritual life. This is one of the reasons why Rev 19:12 says concerning our Lord and Savior, "And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself." The new name reveals the intimacy that the humanity of Christ has with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Then back in Rev 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

The new name reveals the intimacy that the winner believer experienced in time with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. When you experience God's love like this, you understand the mutual secrets that exists between God and man. Just like in life there are mutual secrets that true lovers share and only they share in those secrets...the same thing is true in the spiritual life. In Psa 103:10 "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." That tells us that God does not treat us the way as most people do and He does not love us as most people do, conditionally. It's not, "If you do this, then I will do that." "If you produce here then I'll love you, I'll support you!" That's

man's ways. It says, "He doesn't deal with us according to our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities." I wonder how many of you can say that you have people in your life that you are confident with the fact that if you truly fail and are truly guilty, they would not deal with you according to your sins, nor reward you according to your iniquities." Psa 103:11-12 "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness [grace and mercy] toward those who respect Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us." God is the ultimate One to whom you can turn to when everyone else turns against you... if that ever happens. How often you can come to Him, anytime of the day, without ever interrupting Him, and say to Him; "Here I am again, with the same stupid decisions and the same wounds" And you will hear Him say, Here is My compassion again, here is My love again. Look at what verse 12 says about our sins "As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us." What a load to move, and yet it is removed so far that the distance is measureless. Fly as far as east as your imagination can bear and If sin be removed so far, then we may be sure that the scent, the trace, the very memory of it must be entirely gone. The distance of this removal ensures its never being brought back again; even Satan himself could not achieve such a task. So far were our sins carried by away by the work on the Cross that now if they were sought for, they shall not be found. Therefore, how often you can come to Him, anytime of the day, without ever interrupting Him, and say to Him; "Here I am again, with the same stupid decisions and the same wounds." And you will hear Him say, Here is My compassion again, here is My love again. He is ready to hear you because He is filled with compassion. He has a lovingkindness that never fails, and if you haven't learned it yet, you'll appreciate the experience of it when it does come. You see, when we fail, there are some areas of our life that usually are affected. First of all, failure affects our security, it affects our focus, this is why most people when they fail look for somebody else to blame. This is why we need to accept the responsibility for our own failures and stop blaming others. In Psa 103:13-14 we see what our focus should be. "Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the Lord has compassion on those who respect Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust." During times of failure we count on the Lord's constant acceptance and understanding. You'll never get that from people. You'll always get that from the Lord. People will look for achievement and then base their acceptance of you on the basis of that achievement, or accomplishment, or attainment, the Lord doesn't look for that achievement. The Lord knows our frame, He remembers that we are but dust! People look at the externals all the time, and they gauge your life on the basis of the externals, but God has the ultimate x-ray machine. He even sees more than our frame; He sees what you cannot x-ray, He sees your motive. He sees deep down inside as to why you do what you do. Heb 4:13, "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

If you really believe that there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, then why try to hide things from God? Why not just admit what needs to be admitted? Remember Psa 103? He pardons all your iniquities. He redeems your life from the pit; He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion; He is compassionate and gracious. He does not deal with us according to our sins nor reward us according to our iniquities. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. If you really believe all of those verses from Psa 103, then why and try to hide your failures from God? Why not just admit what needs to be admitted? Heb 4:14 "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession for we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need."

Much of our problem with failure comes from the fact that we focus on people, we look for security then from there we look acceptance and all the while we don't gain it. You cannot afford to focus in on people and look for security from their acceptance of you. Man is too unstable and precarious. Those who do are under a curse from God: Jer 17:5 "Thus says the Lord, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord." When we can look up to Him and our focus is right, we will find security by the tons, because He sees us as dust and He accepts us as we are.

Pursuing Vigorously What Lies Ahead

7-23-00

"But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

So far in our study of Phi chapter 3, our corrected translation of verses 10 - 14 from the original language looks like this: "that I may come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection and the participation of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection away from the dead ones. Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life or the ultra supergrace status], or have already reached the objective, but I continue pressing on that I may attain that [or overtake that, or gain that, arrive at the objective] on account of which I was overtaken by Christ Jesus. And then so far we have in Brethren, I evaluate myself as not yet having attained the objective [the ultimate objective in time is living in resurrection life]; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

We continue with verse 13 and the phrase but one thing I do, in the Greek this phrase denotes something very vital, intense and important, and the translation should read "but one thing I concentrate upon. Paul is going to point out the importance of the ultimate spiritual objective in time which is living in resurrection life by using a verb, showing that he will not be handicapped by his past failures. Whatever failures we have in the past, they should never handicap us. The only thing that should ever handicap us from going forward and moving on is death. As long as you're alive, God has a purpose for your life. Therefore, the principle is to advance and keep advancing, not getting involved with all the nonsense around Christianity today. Continuing in verse 13 Paul writes, "forgetting what lies behind" This means to forget something that has already happened that can be regarded as a failure. What is Paul and by application we to forget? It is not to forget something we have done that's wrong? Rather to neglect or forget the guilt and the condemnation that would come from the fact of some form of backsliding. Therefore living in failures and mistakes for a period of time. Paul is not going to forget his failure as such, because he obviously writes about it from time to time, but he is going to forget and not allow it to be a handicap to spiritual growth. Paul is not going sulk or pout or feel sorry for himself, he's not going to blame people.

We have two choices when we fail: continue to blame the world for our stress and present situation or take responsibility for own decisions and reactions and go forward in the plan of God. The apostle Paul has the humility and objectivity to learn from mistakes and failures rather than looking for someone to blame. Paul has forgotten his failures and mistakes in Jerusalem and he continues to do so as he goes from supergrace to ultra-supergrace or to the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time. We will never forget certain decisions that we have made in life, this is important because "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead" does not mean that we are going to have all of our bad memories wiped away. Our traumatic experiences will only be totally wiped in the eternal state.

Rev 7:17 "For the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes."

This all begins with the principle of rebound. As a part of the Pre-Designed Plan of God. Rebound demands that you operate in the precise correct procedure documented for us. A right thing must be done in a right way to be right. There are several areas of precisely correct procedure related to rebound.

1. Name it, 1Jo 1:9.

2. Isolate it, Heb 12:15.

You will face injustice, but you must not react and remain in the status of victimization. The seed of bitterness is planted by unjust treatment or refusal to take responsibility for your own decisions and therefore blaming others and becoming bitter against them. To carry a grudge is like being stung to death by one bee. Once you are forgiven, the danger is not over because you can get right back out of fellowship by becoming bitter toward others. Whatever reaction you have to injustice reverses

your capacity for life, so that you have no capacity at all. Whenever you get into the blame game that reverses your capacity for life, so that you have no capacity at all. A person can fail many times, but he isn't a failure until he begins to blame somebody else. Pro 24:16 "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity."

3. Forget it, Phi 3:13. "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead," Recalling past failures can only cause guilt reaction, denial, projection, dissociation, and a multiple personality disorder.

The greatest problem is self-absorption related to guilt. Feeling like your a victim or victimization always sets it off.

The easiest thing to do is to find is fault. Jud 1:16 "These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage."

4. Get back to advancing Phi 3:14 "I keep advancing toward the objective for the prize of the upward call from God in Christ Jesus."

5. Stay on the playing field, 2Jo 8-9. "Look out for yourselves that you may not lose your momentum which you have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. No one has fellowship with God who keeps advancing out of bounds and does not remain on the playing field through the doctrine of Christ."

We can draw several principles from Phi 3:13:

1. It refers to Paul's withdrawal from the grace and plan of God for his life as well as any past sin that might cause him to have a guilt complex.

2. Our past failures are never to be a deterrent or a hindrance in our spiritual advance.

3. These failures and mistakes are handled by the rebound technique and the doctrine of recovery. You don't walk around with a guilt complex.

4. Reversionism or backsliding is handled by persistent positive volition related to the daily function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine.

5. The recovery is completed when the believer has reached the maturity barrier and breaks through into supergrace. Paul has followed this pattern, recovery, reentry into the supergrace status, and therefore, the prison epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, represent doctrine of the advance. But Paul doesn't stop there, for a while he has not yet reached that objective, he states very clearly that there is an ultra super-grace objective. That ultra-supergrace objective is living in the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time. In ultra supergrace Paul eventually wrote three books. The Pastoral Epistles, First and Second Timothy and Titus. These are the ultra super grace epistles. When Paul wrote these, he was in the highest status that any believer can enjoy in time because he had the right attitude toward his failures and mistakes. It all began with not blaming others, and Paul had plenty of people he could have blamed. He could have blamed the other believers in Jerusalem, Act 21:17, or James, Act 21:18, or he could have blamed the legalistic pastors in Jerusalem, Act 21:18. He could have blamed the four men who were under a vow; Act 21:23, or the Jews from Asia, Act 21:27, or the people of Jerusalem for mistreating him, Act 21:30. He could have blamed the high priest Ananias who commanded those standing beside him to strike him on the mouth, Act 23:2. He could have blamed the Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Act 23:6, or the forty Jews who formed a conspiracy against and vowed to kill him, Act 3:12. He could have blamed the chief priests and the elders who conspired against him, Act 23:14, or Felix the governor, who held him in prison for a long time expecting some money from Paul as a bribe, Act 23:24. He could have blamed Festus who was a man-pleaser and wanted to the Jews a favor by persecuting Paul, Act 25:9. Paul had a lot of people who could have pointed the finger at but he did not. He took responsibility for his own decisions. He had the right attitude. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past or the fact that people will act in a certain way. We are in charge of our attitudes. As believers we certainly adhere to the principle of not quitting, but there are times that we should quit. We should quit blaming the past for our present! We should quit complaining and making excuses, procrastinating, blaming others if things don't turn out right! Quit doubting yourself and your relationship with God. Quit basing your life on what other people say or think! Quit refusing to get up after a fall! Paul could have written in the book of Philippians

how everyone mistreated him but he doesn't mention a thing. Paul has learned a great lesson: nothing happens unless the Lord allows it. Our Lord has supreme authority and HE is the supreme administrator of the universe. Nothing happens unless He allows it. What a comfort to know that despite all appearances the sovereign control of history is still in the hands which bear the nail prints from the Cross, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If we truly believe that, then why blame others. So we must understand that we can never blame others for our misery, unhappiness, or suffering. You take full responsibility yourself, based on your own wrong decisions related to your associations, your activities, your motives, your functions in life. To find faults and blame others is easy, to do better is much more difficult and virtuous. No one even grows up as a human being until they take the responsibility for their own decisions, especially the bad ones. It's not someone else's fault. Adam blamed the woman. The woman blamed the serpent. Adam even blamed God. Two perfect people blaming someone else for their failures, and that is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you.

The final phrase in Phi 3:13, "and reaching forward to what lies ahead," Here is the contrast intended in the fact that not only is Paul going to constantly forget the things that lie behind, he is also going to reach forward to what lies ahead. This means to stretch out after something, to stretch out farther, to reach out toward something, to strain for something. That's exactly what we have here, "pressing, pursuing vigorously." This is not works. This is a part of your love for God, if you truly do love Him. It is a part of our love for God. This word is used for becoming a winner in the Christian life after you're saved in 1Co 9:25. The Christian way of life is striving to be the best that you can be not only as a reflection of your love and gratitude and thankfulness to The Lord Jesus Christ but because of your true desire to know Him. And whether you like it or not, that takes work. The Christian way of life can be summed up in one verse, Mar 12:30 "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." So in verse 13 of Phi 3 we see what lies behind is Paul's past, his failures, his mistakes, his decisions to willfully disobey God the Holy Spirit. What lies ahead is ultra supergrace, living in the resurrection life that God has designed for every believer to experience in time. No greater goal in the Christian life can exist then in performing all the functions of this passage, which is ultra-supergrace or the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time. This is even greater than passing evidence testing. Evidence testing is not the ultimate experience of the spiritual life. Evidence testing is Satan's cross-examination of every witness presented by God in the historical trial of all fallen angels. In human history, man's thoughts, motives, decisions, and actions are entered as evidence, exhibits, precedents, and arguments in Satan's appeal trial. Every believer who attains spiritual maturity is an argument or witness for the Prosecution against Satan. Evidence testing, then, is Satan's cross-examination of every witness presented by God. This is not the ultimate experience of the spiritual life, it is a great honor and privilege. The ultimate experience of the spiritual life takes place after evidence testing, Job 42:10, Mat 4:1-11. The constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine not only causes recovery, but is the means of achieving all of the objectives of maturity. The comforting point is that whether we are reaping what we sow or going through undeserved suffering we can rest assure that it is the same God who brings both feast and famine, fair weather and rainy. It will help perfect you if you receive it with love and submission.

There are three objectives brought out in this passage, supergrace, spiritual maturity, and ultra supergrace, which is the highest honor in maturity manifested by the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time followed by dying grace, the greatest possible blessing in time, the perfect transfer from time to the eternal state. This brings out the importance of advancing in the spiritual life. As hungry and growing believers, we need to see the value of pressing on and constantly forgetting the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously to what lies ahead, This is not pressing on to "produce." The Holy Spirit instills within our very being a determination that will not be denied, a hunger that must be satisfied. Our pressing on to His very best is fostered by the fact that we will never be satisfied in ourselves, but we will always be satisfied in Him. God the Holy Spirit is always drawing us forward as we realize our need for God and our love and desire for freedom and growth. Thank God for our needs! They are the primary motivations toward His abundant life. We have a hope and a fantastic life that goes beyond human

understanding. We were overwhelmed by problems, and not yet aware of His answer to them. But we continued on in hope and sometimes even in desperation, for deep within our spirit there was the constant yearning for freedom from struggle, and rest in His life. When our dependence is turned from self and every other false trust that mankind offers, the Holy Spirit begins to prepare us to rest upon the written Word and in the Living Word.

Heb 4:10 "For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His."

We have entered into His rest because we know the facts; we know our position of freedom through the cross, and life abundant in our risen Lord. Now we have the assurance that, as we reckon upon these truths, the Holy Spirit will cause us to grow in them daily. There is rest in the midst of growth. It is certain that there is no rest of faith as long as we struggle to "produce." And the believer with positive volition and a hungry heart will not cease striving until the truth of the finished work is seen and counted upon. This is the principle of rest, by which we were born in Him, and by which we grow in Him. Peter taught this same principle of the constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine not only causing reversion recovery but as the means of achieving all of the objectives of maturity in 2Pe 3:10-18. Here Peter says to "be diligent." This correlates with straining, pressing hard toward the goal, pressing toward the objective or pursuing vigorously the objective. And then the importance of the constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine is given. This is when we will ultimately realize with Solomon. ECC 1:2 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." Then he went on to say that ECC 1:14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind. Without living life with God as the center as our very existence, life is nothing more but a lie! We have a JOH 14:27 type peace, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." We "press on" with more determination than ever, and with an even greater hunger for His best. We constantly forget the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously the objective to what lies ahead,

The Doctrine of Encouragement

7-30-00

God the Father has provided from eternity past everything that we as believers need to execute His perfect protocol plan for the Church-age. This includes encouragement in times of adversity and failure as we advance to spiritual maturity. As believers we can derive encouragement from the following sources, the mentorship of God the Holy Spirit, as well as the baptism of the Spirit. Other believer who are filled with the Spirit and possess divine viewpoint. Gathering together with other believers to hear the Word of God. Occupation with Christ (one of the 10 problem solving devices). Understanding the immanency of the Rapture. Understanding who and what God is and what He has provided under the three categories of the grace provisions:

Antecedent grace: in eternity past.

Living grace: in time.

Eschatological grace: in eternity future.

The Greek verb “paraklesis” is generally used for “encouragement” or “friendly exhortation.” It can also mean to promise and to testify to the comfort of God give to His people when under divine judgment, or to the individual in time of testing, Rom 15:4-5. God the Holy Spirit is called the believer’s “Parakletos,” meaning helper, energizer, or comforter. He is the believer’s true mentor or true teacher, Joh 14:26, “Now, the mentor, the Holy Spirit Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach all of you doctrines and will bring to your remembrance doctrines which I have communicated to all of you.” God the Holy Spirit provides the believer with guidance and comfort in times of adversity and makes the doctrine communicated to the congregation understandable for those believers who are in fellowship. He is the enabling power for the execution of the predesigned plan of God for the Church. The believer can be encouraged because the Word of God holds the universe together, Heb 1:3, and the Word will live forever, 1Pe 1:24, Isa 40:6-8. Bible doctrine is the most powerful weapon the believer possesses, Heb 4:2, 2Co 6:7. To know the Living Word, the believer must know the written Word. Because the Word of God is the thinking of Jesus Christ, the believer who perceives, metabolizes, and applies Bible doctrine is occupied with Christ.

As believers we derive encouragement from assembling with other believers to hear the Word of God as it is taught by the pastor-teacher, Heb 10:23-25. The local church has been divinely authorized in the Church-age as the classroom of learning doctrine. In the Church-age, Bible doctrine is the believer’s only protection from the attacks of the kingdom of darkness, Eph 6:10-17. Because the Church-age is the intensified stage of the angelic conflict, never before in human history has God provided believers with so much power and invisible assets to fight this spiritual warfare. The Scriptures also teach that the believer can receive encouragement from other believers, 2Co 7:4-6, “Great is my confidence in you, great is my boasting on your behalf; I am filled with comfort. I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction. For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. But God, Who encourages the depressed, encouraged us by the coming of Titus.” The Scriptures teach that the believer receives encouragement from the communication of doctrine by the pastor-teacher, 2Ti 4:1-2, Col 4:7-8. God’s purpose in giving the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is to rain and prepare believers through face-to-face teaching to equip them to execute the predesigned plan of God, Eph 4:12. The spiritual gift of pastor-teacher provides the necessary training needed to perform effective Christian service. Spiritual growth in the believer is based upon the information that the pastor-teacher supplies in his daily communication of Bible doctrine. The responsibility of the man with this gift is to feed the flock the Word of God, Joh 21:15-17. The Scriptures teach that the believer can derive encouragement from his knowledge of the baptism of the Spirit and his application of this doctrine, Phi 2:1. This includes the two resultant categories of positional truth.

Retroactive positional truth.

Current positional truth.

This encouragement pertains to the following practical applications of the baptism of the Spirit.

Applying the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union to the dispensation of the Church-age.
Union with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Our position, which is higher than angels (Heb 1-2).

The knowledge that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Son of God (Rom 8:16-17a).

Eternal security (Rom8:1).

Unity in the royal family of God (Eph 4:5, Rom 6:5).

The new spiritual species (2Co 5:17a).

The Royal Family of God (1Pe 2:9).

Positional sanctification (1Co 15:22, Eph 5:25-27).

Equal privilege and equal opportunity (Gal 3:26-28, Col 3:11).

Eternal life (1Jo 5:11-12).

Imputed righteousness (2Co 5:21).

Election (Eph 1:3-4).

Predestination (Eph 1:5-6).

Sonship (Gal 3:26).

An eternal inheritance (1Pe 1:4).

Adoption (Eph 1:5).

Our portfolio of invisible assets (Eph 1:3).

The intercessory prayer of other believers can also be a source of encouragement for us. It functions as “artillery support” for the Christian soldier engaged in spiritual combat with the kingdom of darkness, Col 2:1-2. God the Father receives prayer from three different sources in the Church-age – God the Son, Rom 8:34, Heb 7:25; God the Holy Spirit, Rom 8:15, 26-27, Gal 4:6; and the believer-priest, Heb 4:16.

Believers can also be encouraged through occupation with Christ, which is the ultimate problem-solving device, Heb 12:3, “For consider Him Who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.” Occupation with Christ involves focusing or engaging one’s mind on the doctrines pertaining to the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union. Occupation with Christ involves understanding the deity of Christ, Joh 1:1-2, 8:58; the humanity of Christ, Joh 1:14, Heb 10:5, the virgin birth, Isa 9:6-7, Mic 5:2, Luk 1:30-35; the impeccability of Christ, Joh 8:46a, 2Co 5:21, Heb 7:26, 1Pe 2:22, 1Jo 3:5; and the doctrine of kenosis, 2co 8:9, Phi 2:5-8. Occupation with Christ also involves understanding the doctrines included in His finished work on the Cross:

Redemption (Eph 1:7, 1Pe 1:18-19).

Unlimited atonement, (2Co 5:14-15, 1Ti 4:10).

Expiation (Col 2:14).

Regeneration (Joh 3:1-18).

Imputation (1co 1:30, 2Co 5:21).

Justification (Rom 4:105, Gal 2;16).

Propitiation (Rom 3:22-26, 1Jo 2:2).

Position in Christ (1Co 15:22b, 2Co 5:17).

The strategic victory over Satan (Col 2:15, Heb 2:14, 1Jo 3:8).

Reconciliation (2co 5:18, Eph 2:14p16, Col 1:20-21).

Awareness of the immanency of the Rapture can be a great source of encouragement for believers. The Rapture is technical theological term for the resurrection of the Royal Family of God, which terminates the church-age dispensation and takes place in the earth’s atmosphere. The church will not go through the Tribulation, 1Th 5:9, and Paul tells the Thessalonians to comfort one another with this doctrine. The Church will be delivered from the wrath to come upon the earth in the Tribulation, 1Th 1:10. The church is said to be the “bride” of Christ. Christ will be returning with His bride in Rev 19. The Lord will not allow His bride to be subjected to the wrath and judgment that will come upon a Christ-rejecting world. The Rapture of the Church precedes the revealing of the “man of lawlessness,” the Anti-Christ, 2Th 2:9. It would not be a comfort and a hope for the Church if it would have to endure the Tribulation period under the rulership of Anti-Christ, who is possessed by Satan, 1Th 4:18.

These two immutable things can also encourage the believer:

Who and what God is.

What God has provided.

Heb 6:17-18 Because God, desiring to demonstrate more abundantly towards the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel [in eternity past], interposed through an oath that by two immutable things through which it is impossible for God to lie so that we might have strong encouragement, those who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the confidence set before us.

The believer can find encouragement in the essence of God rationale, who and what God is, or the attributes of God – Sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability, and veracity.

Finally, the advancing believer gains encouragement from knowing that he will receive rewards for his faithfulness. The Scriptures clearly teach this in Mat 25:21-23, Luk 16:10-12. The execution of the spiritual life by the believer and the function of his spiritual gift produce divine good and result in rewards at the Bema Seat Evaluation of Christ. The believer's faithfulness to the Lord and the body of Christ will produce divine good resulting in rewards at the Bema Seat Evaluation of Christ. The believer who is faithful in executing the operational spiritual life for the Father's protocol plan for the Church-age will also be rewarded for his faithfulness at the Bema Seat. Rewards will be distributed immediately after the Rapture, or "exit-resurrection," of the Church at the Bema Seat. The believer who executes the protocol plan of God through the application of metabolized doctrine under the energizing power of God the Holy Spirit will be presented with the following rewards by the Lord Jesus Christ:

The "crown of righteousness."

The "crown of life (Rev 2:10.)"

The "incorruptible crown of glory," given to the pastor-teacher who was faithful in communicating the mystery doctrine of the Church-age (1Pe 5:4, 1Th 2:19-20, 1Co 9:24-27, Phi 4:1).

The "order of the morning star (Rev 3:4)."

The "crown of life" given to the believer who passes evidence testing as a witness for the Prosecution in the rebuttal phase of Satan's appeal trial (Jam 1:12, Rev 2:10).

The "crown of rejoicing," the soul winner's crown (1Th 2:19-20, 1Co 9:24-27, Phi 4:1).

Membership to the "Paradise Club" and access to the Gazebo in the Garden (Rev 2:7,14).

The record of one's name in the historical record section of heaven (Rev 3:12).

The acknowledgement ("homologeo") before God the Father in heaven by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Great Genuflex (Rev 3:5).

The rule of the winner believer with Christ during the Millennium (Rom 5:17, 8:14; 2Ti 2:12; Rev 2:16, 3:21).

One of the worst mistakes that Christians can ever make is to cut themselves off from their source of encouragement, especially the Royal Family. Let us take care that we never "forsake the assembling of ourselves together!"

The Calling Of God

8-13-00

"I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." As we continue in our study of Phi chapter 3, we recently completed verses 12-13 "Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life or the ultra supergrace status], or have already reached the objective, but I continue pressing on that I may attain that [or overtake that, or gain that, arrive at the objective] on account of which I was overtaken by Christ Jesus. Brethren [members of the Royal Family of God], I evaluate myself as not yet having attained the objective [ultra-supergrace or the ultimate objective in time, living in resurrection life]; but one thing I concentrate upon: constantly forgetting the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously to what lies ahead," Here we see the advance of the believer who doesn't quit but with positive volition toward doctrine continues and becomes a winner in time and in the eternal state. Being a winner in time is measured not by the world's standards but by God's standards. Speaking of our Lord in Isa 53:3 "He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him." Men gage from the externals, they looked at the Messiah and they said, that couldn't be the Son of God. After all He came from a manger in Bethlehem, from a teenage Jewish girl that wasn't even married. He came to the fulfillment of His ministry and He wound up on a cross, and even the disciples thought they have believed in a hoax, Mar 16:11. So, after learning to reject the things and the ways of the world and after seeing the vanity of living for the things of the world, as Solomon saw, and then the hypocrisy of human accomplishments and compromise, as Paul saw, what should be our attitude?

Phi 3:14 "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

The advance is stated in terms of a military verb, "dioko" which means to advance to the objective, to pursue or to press on. It means to close in on the objective, it also has the connotation of being persecuted as you're pressing on and In the present tense it means to keep on pressing on. There's a difference in just keeping on or existing and pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul has learned the lesson that even what appears to tear down, in the end will be built up. Paul, as we have noted is not just waiting for the eternal state but something we can taste of in time. It has to do with a spiritual relationship that we can begin to enjoy now in this life. This brings out the importance of not quitting and going forward in the plan of God. Endurance is revealed not only in the ability to persist but the ability to start over. Always remember we are never losers until we quit trying. History has demonstrated that the most notable winners encountered heartbreaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to become discouraged by their failures or their defeats. They won because they refused to blame others for their present situation. There's only one way you ultimately fail in the Christian life, and that is to quit or not to endure. We have been called to endure and to persist, that's how we find out who we are. Paul said this to church of the Thessalonians in 2Th 1:2-4 "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is {only} fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure."

James said in Jam 1:2 "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance." We must however be careful, for this endurance can cause us to lose our first love. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1Co 13:1-3 regarding this 1 Cor 13:1-3 "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophesy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." In Rev 2:1-4, The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of this same thing when He said, "To the church in Ephesus I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and you have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown

wearily, but I have this against you, that you have left your first love." As we have seen many times the right thing must be done in the right way. God the Father has provided from eternity past everything that the believer would need to execute His perfect Plan for the church age. Including encouragement in times of adversity and failure that the believer will inevitably face as he advances in the spiritual life. Our most important encouragement is derived the mentorship of God the Holy Spirit, Who is our true teacher, Joh 14:26; Heb 10:25 which says "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging {one another;}." Believer's can receive encouragement simply by gathering together with other believers to hear the Word of God communicated by their divinely appointed pastor-teacher, 1Pe 5:3, Act 20:28, 1Th 5:12.

So far our corrected translation of Phi 3:14 says "I keep on pressing on toward the objective." By pressing on, do not think that you will be purified through extreme events or by great trials. What God is after is that day-by-day love for Him and relationship with Him. Many people allow themselves to be led astray by the enemy, looking for the chills and the thrills or the sensational. Yet the Lord has warned us against these false teachings and the "false prophets and lying wonders of the last days?" 2Th 2:9 "the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders," Satan and his kingdom of darkness gains great advantage because people love extraordinary manifestations, signs and wonders. This inordinate love for external signs is used of the enemy to draw people away from the Word of God and from the inward way of faith. The signs that come from God encourage you to die to yourself. Manifestations that come from God will humble, quiet, and edify you.

The only true and safe revelation is an inward revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the quietness of your spirit based upon the guidance and direction of God's word resident in your soul. Experience must line up with Bible doctrine, not Bible doctrine lining up with experience. As our Lord said in Joh 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice," A wonderful harmony between you and God is the result. We must, therefore, become as a child with regard to our will. Continuing with Phi 3:14 "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the prize." Here we have Greek noun "brabeion." It means a reward, prize, prize of victory, it means to receive a decoration in time as well as eternity. The interesting thing is that the decoration in time is something that ultimately takes place in the mental attitude of the soul whereas the decoration in eternity will be something that is overt and noticed as well. This is analogous to the uniform of honor, which being invisible and worn in the soul in time and is exchanged at the Judgment Seat of Christ for the translucent uniform of glory worn over the resurrection body, Rev 3:4-5.

We need to understand that ultimately the reward includes a visible decoration on the resurrection body plus great blessings in the eternal state. It also refers to the intimacy of having a relationship with God in time and therefore reaching ultra-supergrace or the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time. Most people give up just when they're about to achieve success or victory. This is why the Bible teaches that a man is not finished when he's defeated; he's finished when he quits. Remember that verse we have been quoting for months, Pro 24:16 "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again," Job 5:19 "From six troubles He will deliver you, Even in seven evil will not touch you." Psa 37:24 "When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong; Because the Lord is the One who holds his hand." This is why nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. So Paul says Phi 3:14 "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." "of the upward call" is correctly translated calling, but it means an invitation or a vocation. The grace aspect of God not only is inviting us as a part of the call, but calling us to a vocation. "I keep on pressing on" refers to going through those so-called mundane times in life but really the time when God is silently at work in your life behind the scenes without you even knowing about it. There is a great blessing from silence. Then instead of talking to yourself, there is the privilege of talking to the Lord in silence and thanking Him for all He has done for you. Remember that Elijah learned the lesson that the Lord was not in the wind, the Lord was not in the earthquake, the Lord was not in the fire but then after the fire, Elijah heard that still small or literally silent voice. Do not despise the silence of the Lord. Many believers do not understand how the grace of God and the life of God and the touch of God can take place in silence. Grace can be passed silently from spirit to spirit without words. We see an example of this in Mar Chapter 5 where the woman touched the Lord and He said, "I perceive that virtue or power has gone out of me." You see, in a similar way, without

words, you may communicate grace to others as God imparts grace to you. Such communication is experienced in silence, and silence is often more effective than much conversation. Phi 3:14 correctly translated says "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

All members of the human race enter the plan of God by means of Jesus Christ, who is the only Savior. Act 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." That upward call or station in life refers to our vocation as a member of the Royal family of God. All of us are in full time Christian service. This is why we have the challenge of Eph 4:1 "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called," We have been called and you are now a member of the royal family of God and it requires learning a lot of things.

1. We are called to have personal fellowship with The Lord Jesus Christ, 1Co 1:9 "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

There is no true fellowship with the superficial, for in life superficial relationships weaken the spirit. They can hold back one's relationship with God according to 2Co 6:14-17, 1Pe 4:3-4.

2. We are called to participate in His kingdom, 1Th 2:12 "Walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." Luk 17:21 "For behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

This kingdom is found in your spirit and your relationship with God.

3. We are called to experience eternal life, hopefully in time, absolutely in eternity, 1Ti 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

4. We have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light; 1Pe 2:9 "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

Living in the calling is so precise and penetrating that it reveals your slightest faults. Those who are living in the natural life have faults, but nothing is being done to enlighten them and change them. Those who are being transformed by God have faults, faults that are like writing in the sand during a windstorm, here today, but gone tomorrow!

5. We called to participate in His sufferings, 1Pe 2:21 "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps," This means that you are always ready to relinquish your will to His in a childlike way. By nature, we are proud of our ability to reason, but God will often lead us in a way that is opposite to human philosophy and human viewpoint.

6. We are called to inherit blessing, 1Pe 3:9 "not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."

7. We are called to share in His eternal glory, 1Pe 5:10 "And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you." Because of our failures, all glory must be imparted solely to the mercy and goodness of God. We can do nothing without Him. The world will not see this glory however. The Tabernacle, which housed the glory of God, was covered with unattractive and offensive animal skins while the temple of the evil Herod was decorated with gold. God allows certain human shortcomings to remain so that you might be humble in your own eyes.

8. We are called into liberty and freedom, Gal 15:13. Will such a liberty confine you and put you in slavery?

Of course not! Joh 8:36 "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

As you truly seek the kingdom of God within you, this kingdom is expanded in you a little at a time. Concerning God's call upon our life, Paul prayed in Eph 1:18 "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,"

Pressing On in the Mundane Things in Life

8-20-00

We have completed our study of Phi 3:14 from the original language which says "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God [The Father], by means of Christ Jesus." A major principle concerning this entire verse is the principle of pressing on. When we talk about pressing on, do not think that we will be purified through extreme vents or by great trials. What God is after is that day-by-day love, that relationship with Him, that one-day at a time dedication. We have noted many different forms of experiencing growth in the Christian way of life. There is losing, waiting, suffering, failing and making mistakes, all are very normal. However, there is another experience that is very subtle, one that sort of grips you without you even realizing it. In fact, it takes a heavy toll on you especially if you live in what you think is a rather regular, mundane kind of life. It has to do with monotony, boredom and routine, and it is here where we need to understand the principle of pressing on. When we talk of monotony, we don't necessarily talk of inactivity but of meaninglessness, or seeming meaninglessness! Remember Ecc 9:10 "Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do it with all your might;" Col 3:17 "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." This isn't so much regarding people who don't have anything to do but rather the people who don't have any real direction, purpose or goal in all that they're doing. We find ourselves in monotony not because of what we are not doing, but, because there seems to be no meaning to it all. Many a mother that hardly has time to look up in her day-to-day assignments of the home is dying of monotony. Because she doesn't sense any meaning in her activity, aside from just the essentials of getting it done, therefore, she thinks it's meaningless. In reality, it may be a part of the plan of God for her life and a manifestation of her pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus.

Mat 25:21 "Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master."

We may think that what we are doing on a continual and faithful basis is a small thing, God doesn't! Many are busy through the day, but they are bored! The monotonous schedule of work can create boredom. Psalm 90 addresses the subject of monotony and pressing on. To start with, notice in the title that it mentions it is a prayer of Moses the man of God. Ps 90:1 (A Prayer of Moses the man of God.) This is the only Psalm in the entire Bible that is attributed to Moses. Think of Moses' life for a minute, from age 40 to the age 80 in his life where he was; he was leading the sheep in the desert, having been disillusioned in his activity in Egypt. From age 80 to age 120 when he died, Moses was in a wilderness wandering with the people of God. The same terrain, scene, people, same complaints, the same meaninglessness of wandering, but a part of the plan of God. Perhaps the Psalm was written in the middle of the wanderings. The point is it was written by Moses, a man who knew monotony. He begins by calling on the Lord and simply addressing himself to the Lord and His majesty. PSA 90:1-2 "(A Prayer of Moses the man of God.) Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born, Or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou dost turn man back into dust." The first verses of this Psalm reveal the majesty of God and the last will point out the meaninglessness of life, or that battle that many of God's people face many times, the monotony of life. Psalm 90:4-5 "For a thousand years in Thy sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Thou hast swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew." With verse 7, there's a change, "For we have been consumed by Thine anger, And by Thy wrath we have been dismayed." When we find ourselves in a monotonous routine feeling that our activities are meaningless, the first place we must look is up. Maybe it is at the end of the day, perhaps in the heat of the day, the monotony begins to come in and we must look up. We occasionally find ourselves having to do a task or a job that seems menial, subservient, having no important purpose. Just getting the job done includes monotonous details that seem insignificant. In those details, if we can see the Lord as our dwelling place, it will put meaning into it.

If we go back as far as we can in our imagination to the end of what we would call, or perhaps the beginning of what we call, the past and you step off, we are at the vanishing point called infinity or eternity past, Gen 1:1. Here, God was thinking about us and our problems, Rev 13:8. We can't fathom such a journey, we can only imagine. If we could take ourselves to the farthest point of the future and go as far as our imagination can take us and then step further into the vanishing point of the future, we would realize, there is God, Rev 21:1. Pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus means that you have permanent values and all other values are built around that. This is how you "think" as you are looking forward. Once we attain this, our scale of values becomes quite different. If we don't recognize the value of our day-by-day decisions, we will miss out on God's timing and priorities. Character is being built by God in our life through the routine daily functions of our life, without us even knowing about it. If we look at life as it is laid out before us and dealt out to us and do not see it through the eyes of faith, we will not understand why certain things happen. When we realize that God is the author of life, Eze 18:4, and that He is the one who has determined our destiny, 1Th 3:3, then we see the importance of pressing on and we will understand why certain things are allowed to happen in our lives. When we see things through His eyes and recognize divine timing and the calling of God upon our life, we will realize the fact that in His time, He makes all things beautiful and meaningful, and then we will truly give Him praise, Ecc 3:11.

What Moses is saying in Psalm 90 is that as I go from the vanishing point of yesterday to the vanishing point of tomorrow, there is not a place in the entire scope of my imagination where, "You are not there Lord." There is purpose, meaning, and the presence of God even in the things that we consider to be pointless and insignificant. The man who wrote the creation story had a good grasp of what it was all about. This Psalm reveals that Moses learned that very important and vital lesson: God was in it all. Even in the leading of sheep in that backside of the desert. At times in our life when there seems to be no purpose, when the routine seems meaningless, it is good to remember this is not our world. The earth is the Lord's, and we cannot even pick a flower without God knowing all about it Mat 10:29-30.

The sooner we learn to walk closely with God who is in charge and who does not change, the happier we will be. We get the impression on those tough days that we deserve better, almost as though we own our own lives. Yet in the menial assignments of life, God is reminding us, I own your life, you have been bought with a price, and I have purpose in this. In Psa 90:6 "In the morning it flourishes, and sprouts anew; toward evening it fades, and withers away." This is a picture of the brevity of life, toward evening it fades and withers away like grass, like a flood, like yesterday, and it's all over. Now, that haunts a person who really wants to count or to accomplish something for his life. Someone who wants his life to be more than just a period on the page called "time." He wants at least to have a sentence or two to be remembered by. Remember Jam 4:14 "Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." The perspective in all of this is God's sovereign and superb control where He lets nothing out of His grip Psa 103:19. Psa 90:7-8 "For we have been consumed by Thine anger, And by Thy wrath we have been dismayed. Thou hast placed our iniquities before Thee, Our secret {sins} in the light of Thy presence." Verse 10 "As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is {but} labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away." That is a description of a bored man. Few address this issue in Christianity today, but if the truth were known, that's the way many feel. At the end of a week, or if many were honest enough, even at the beginning of the week. Just another week to be reminded of how obvious our failures and sins and weaknesses are. However, if we are believers who have Positive volition toward doctrine, what should we do? Phi 3:14 "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God [Father], by means of Christ Jesus." Psa 90:11 "Who understands the power of Thine anger, And Thy fury, according to the fear that is due Thee?" This phrase the wrath of God is greatly misunderstood. Many think that this is some sort of anger God has toward every individual when they sin. A God who explodes in violent uncontrolled displays of temper when we do not do what we ought to. But such a concept only reveals the limitations of our understanding. The Bible never deals with the wrath of God that way. According to the scriptures the wrath of God is God's moral integrity. This means that when man refuses to yield himself to God, he produces certain conditions, not only for himself but for others as

well, which God has ordained for harm as a part of the divine decrees. This is the principle of cause and effect, not to hurt us but to warn us that we are going in the wrong direction and that the consequences of our actions are going to hurt us or destroy our lives. The Bible teaches that it is God who allows evil to result in sorrow, heartache, injustice, and despair, 1Sa 2:6-7; Deu 32:39; Job 5:18. It is God's way of saying to man, Now look, you must face the truth, you were made for Me, and if you decide that you don't want Me, then you will have to bare the consequences. You see, the absence of God is destructive to human life, and that absence is God's wrath. In His moral integrity, God insists that these things, the negative consequences of our decisions, should occur as a result of our disobedience. His wrath is not judging you for your sin, but by the fact that He is absent from your life and therefore your life is meaningless, worthless, useless, empty, and vain. The wrath of God is not judgment for sin but divine discipline because of love. Rev 3:19 "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent." Moses is saying that God is not a God in heaven who stands with a club, waiting to crack us. In effect, the Lord is saying, you make a decision not to walk with Me, then I have also set up consequential things that will happen and you will live with those consequences. Those consequences, Moses is calling God's wrath and anger. Everything you think, why you think it, and the environment in which you think it, was all known to God in eternity past. And everything in life is a chain of cause and effect under the law of volitional responsibility. Now, what do you do when you realize how short life really is and is how obvious your weaknesses and sins are and you can't deny it? What do we do with that feeling that comes upon us that produces some secret form of insecurity, guilt, fear, worry or concern? When we feel, "Our days are so empty!"

Verse 12 is the answer. Moses comes to a conclusion. Psa 90:12 "So cause me to know to number our days, That we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom." Meaning that in all the difficulties of life, including those mundane and routine times, we may gain. So we could interpret this verse like this. "Cause us to assign or invest our days that we may gain before Thee, the ability to see life as You see it" That's wisdom! "Cause me to see, Lord, that when I do the routines of life, that there is a meaning far beyond what I am able to do and see in it." Help us to get the dimension that you have in our lives. Cause me to learn how to make these days investment days. When you get the right object and the right perspective from it, and you see life though it is short and seems empty, from God's point of view then He brings a song. Psa 90:13 "Do return, O Lord; how long {will it be}? And be sorry for Thy servants." When we get in trouble that's the favorite question. How long will it be, Lord come now, come now, be sorry for thy servants." Psa 90:14 "O satisfy us in the morning with Thy lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days." There is something about the morning that brings something fresh. Psa 30:5 "For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy {comes} in the morning." Weeping may last for the night but a shout of joy comes in the morning. The Lord's compassion never fails, it is new each morning, Lam 3:23.

The Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins

8-27-00

We continue in our study of Philippians chapter 3 with verse 15. Phi 3:15 "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;" We know that there is not a perfect one among us, (experientially that is). However, a lot of believers actually begin to "think" that they are perfect in some areas. They think they're going forward but they're not. They think that they have made good positive decisions, but they haven't. It all begins because they have the wrong mental attitude and this is carrying them backwards not forwards. As long as this type of individual remains arrogant and refuses to admit their negative decisions they will live using the arrogant skills: Self-justification, Self-deception, and Self-absorption.

Paul warned us about this in the last days when he said in 2Ti 3:1-7 "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men [believers] will be lovers of self [the three arrogant skills], lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful [lack of capacity], unholy, unloving, implacable, malicious gossips, without self-control [no virtue in control of the soul], brutal, not lovers of intrinsic good, treacherous, thoughtless, pumped up with arrogance, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; who adhere to a superficial form of the spiritual life, but they have denied its power; consequently avoid such persons as these. For among them are those who creep into homes and seduce silly women overwhelmed by their sins, led on by multifarious lusts, always learning but never able to come to a epignosis knowledge of the truth." Phi 3:15 is really going to focus in on the importance of our mental attitude. Our mental attitude is where we develop proper motivation and it also where we do most of our sinning. These mental attitude sins include arrogance, pride, jealousy, implacability, bitterness, vindictiveness, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition, all motivational sins, and sinful thoughts such as fear, guilt, worry, anger, judging, hatred, even murder. These sins can destroy character, and our lives. Since character is the result of our mental attitude and how we spend our time, these sins are very important to understand

Arrogance is the antithesis of grace, it is total blindness to the grace of God. Arrogance is synonymous with vanity, that empty pride in regard to one's person, attainments, or possessions coupled with an excessive desire to be noticed. A lust for attention, approval or praise from others. Arrogance deceives its victims, Jer 49:16, and will bring dishonor in your life, Pro 11:2. Arrogance causes self-destruction, Pro 16:18, all of that takes place in the mental attitude. Pride is defined by inordinate self-esteem, by conceit and a pre-occupation with self. Along with arrogance, it is what motivated Satan and the fallen angels to rebel. It is also what motivated the woman in the garden to sin. It is a rejection of authority.

Jealousy is older than the human race and existed in eternity past when Lucifer, the son of the morning or Satan, became jealous of God. The first case of jealousy in the human race surfaced when Cain became jealous and was motivated to kill his brother Abel. Scripture describes jealousy as cruel; SOS 8:6; filled with anger and revenge; Pro 6:34; and frustrating in Pro 27:4. Jealousy is a self-destructive mental attitude and a system of thinking from the "kosmos" or the world system. Jealousy always creates instability and disorder in the life of the believer. Jealousy is the worst of all the mental attitude sins because it is the strongest, Pro 27:3-4.

So great was the sin of jealousy in Israel that a special offering was made for it, Num 5:11-31. It is very difficult to get over jealousy, but we allow people to make us jealous.

Implacability takes root in the mental attitude of the soul where the person has no appreciation for life. An implacable person is one who is impossible to please or satisfy. Pro 27:20 "Death are hell are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of an implacable person ever satisfied." The aim of life is appreciation, especially for all that God has done for you. There is no sense of not appreciating things and there is no sense in having more of them if you don't appreciate what you have right now. It is better to appreciate things that we cannot have than to have things that we are not able to appreciate. Many people are so caught up in their destination that they forget to appreciate their journey, especially the graciousness and the love of people that they meet along the way.

Bitterness manifests itself in severity of temper, biting sarcasm, a painful inward affliction, and a deep distress of mind. It defiles others as well as self. Every believer who does not have a personal relationship with God eventually will become a walking time bomb ready to explode. When we allow bitterness to cause us to explode, either inwardly or overtly, we hurt our own life. We call this self-induced misery. Harboring bitterness is a very serious spiritual problem. A problem which is not correctable apart from personal love for God and impersonal unconditional love for all mankind. Heb 12:15 "See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;" Being rejected is a strong reason for bitterness in the lives of most believers especially in marriage according to Col 3:19 "Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them." Bitterness produces a complaining attitude, and no one likes to be around a complainer. People who habitually complain are bitter people and is simply an outward effect of an inward sin. Bitterness makes a person miserable.

Vindictiveness is where revenge sets in. Getting even, vindictive people are obsessed with seeking revenge. Vindictiveness is marked by or resulting from a desire to hurt and be spiteful. Vindictive people have a disposition to retaliate for wrongs, real or imagined. Their impulse is to try and inflict suffering or punishment as retribution for evil or an injury, real or imagined. They are ugly people to be around because even their countenance testifies against them. This sin is also accompanied by jealousy, Pro 6:34.

Inordinate ambition and inordinate competition are also mental attitude sins. There's nothing wrong with ambition or competition but when a person is obsessed with them, there's everything wrong. They're always competing and comparing with others. It is a lust that drives people crazy. 2Co 10:12 "For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding."

Fear is a whole system of sins which include worry, anxiety, insecurity, incapability of doctrinal application, and therefore inability to use the problem solving devices. Fear is an emotional sin and it torments the lives of others. 1Jo 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love." When we have fear, we can be punished three ways, by ourself (self-induced misery), by our peers, and then by God. Mature believers are not afraid.

For the believer who lives in a state of fear, the fear increases like a disease. As the cancer of fear grows, that individual becomes intimidated by life.

Guilt can be a devastating thing if it's not handled properly. Satan accuses God's people to try to make them feel guilty in Rev 12:10, so that they hide from God and separate themselves from Him, Gen 3:7-10. When we fail in some facet of our life, sooner or later we have to move on. We cannot be distracted by past failures, except to learn from them, but not to blame others for them. Our spiritual life instructs us to forget the past and move toward the high ground of spiritual maturity. Past failures must never become present handicaps. As believers, we need to learn how to handle the past including how to handle that great villain called guilt. The essential element for living in freedom from guilt is understanding grace. If we do not realize that God's justice and righteousness are completely satisfied and that our relationship with Him is based upon the accomplishments of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, guilt will torment us until it drives us from the presence of the Lord.

Worry is a mental attitude sin in which there is soulish torment or anxiety regarding anything in life. It is a disquieting and painful state of mind involving undue concern over something in life. Worried people anticipate the worst, and so worry becomes apprehension or anticipation of danger, misfortune, trouble, or uncertainty. Worry is a state of restlessness and agitation, producing mental disturbance, uneasiness, foreboding, anxiety, and painful uncertainty. Worry is a destroyer of the soul and if unchecked, it results in mental illness. Worry in the mind causes shock to the body, Pro 12:25 "Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad." We are commanded to stop worrying, Luk 12:29 "And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying."

Anger is a mental attitude sin which expresses antagonism, hatred, exasperation, resentment, and irrationality. It can be mental or emotional or both. Anger motivates jealousy and cruelty, Pro 27:4. A

person can't be angry without being cruel and unfair. As with all mental attitude sins, anger results in self-induced misery, Pro 22:8.

Judging is a mental attitude sin as well. You don't have to verbalize judging for it be a sin. Mat 7:1-3 is the practical application to your life, "Judge not, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others you will be judged. And with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you again." Even God doesn't plan to judge a man till the end of his days, why should we?

Hatred is also a mental attitude sin, 1Jo 4:20 "If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar;" Humble people haven't time to hate anyone, true humility avoids hatred. In fact, life is too short to hate anyone and if you hate anyone, this verse says you do not love God. Hatred is self-punishment. Hatred paralyzes life while virtue-love releases it. Hatred confuses life while virtue-love clarifies it. Hatred darkens life while virtue-love illuminates it. Hatred is a boomerang which is sure to hit you harder than the one at whom you throw it.

Murder can also be a mental attitude sin, 1Jo 3:15 "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." Our mental attitudes control our lives. Once we believe that all things work together for good for those who love God, then we accept each experience that we face as something that ultimately leads to our own good. This is a correct attitude to adopt and we must be able to see it in that light. Whenever we are in conflict with someone or facing a situation, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging our relationship or deepening it, our mental attitude. Mental attitudes are a secret power working twenty-four hours a day, either for good or for bad. One of the greatest discoveries of Bible doctrine is that we can alter our lives by altering our mental attitudes. Success or failure depends more upon mental attitude than upon anything else in life. Our life is determined not so much by what life brings to us but by the mental attitude we bring to life. There is little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference, and that difference is mental attitude. Mental attitude can keep us going or hinder our progress. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the mental attitude we will embrace for that day; we are in charge of our mental attitudes.

The Doctrine of the Mental Attitude

9-10-00

The goal is a personal relationship with God. We have been noting that our mental attitude is one of the most dangerous areas of our life, especially toward ourselves. The danger is that some think more highly of themselves than what they ought to, Rom 12:3 "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think;" Others think more lowly of themselves in the sense of not understanding passages like 1Co 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am," This is the old sin nature influencing thought so that sin, human good and evil are launched from your thinking. This battle is described for us in a phenomenal way by the apostle Paul in Rom 7:14-25, which should set us straight as far as our relationship with God is concerned and our attitude toward ourselves. Our mental attitude is where we develop proper motivation, it also where we do the most sinning. We were born into the slave market of sin, born slaves to the Old Sin Nature and the only time that we will ever be free from this slavery is not at salvation but when we are consistently functioning under perception, metabolization and application of doctrine. We know this because of passages like 1Jo 1:8-9 "If we say [assert] that we have no sin nature, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth or doctrine is not in us."

1Jo 1:9 "If we acknowledge [name and cite] our sins, He is faithful and righteous, with the result that He forgives us our sins [known sins] and purifies us from all unrighteousness [unknown sins]." Joh 8:32 applies only to life in the Pre-Designed Plan of God "You shall know the doctrine and the doctrine shall make you free."

Rom 7:14 "For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of [or belonging to the realm of] the flesh [sin nature], sold in bondage to sin [sin nature]."Why?

Rom 7:15-16 "For that which I am doing, I do not understand, but I am doing the very things that I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not wish or desire to do, I agree with the Law or the doctrine that it is good." This is the confusion caused when you have an old sin nature which tries to control you.

Rom 7:17 "So now no longer am I the one doing it, but the sin nature which is indwelling me."

This is the right mental attitude we should have toward ourselves. This is not self-justification or an excuse for carnality but this is the beginning of a tremendous truth that can set us free from bondage to the old sin nature or the old self. The new racial species has been replaced in the Church Age by the new spiritual species. If we have the wrong mental attitude toward ourselves, we will get involved in the defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are designed to hide or to relieve the conflicts and stresses in the soul that cause anxiety, hysteria, fear, worry, or other categories of the emotional complex of sins. These are designed to bury any reaction, any lack of self-esteem, any explanation for impulsive behavior or failure on our part. There are many other defense mechanisms that people use. Denial is when a person fails to acknowledge some aspect of external reality that is obvious and apparent to others, it is a false perception of reality. This false perception of reality is necessary for some people because they must be good, they must be self-righteous, they can never be wrong...they must always be right, Pro 30:11-14. The Problem Solving Devices (PSD) were created by God to handle these problems or defense mechanisms. Denial can be dealt with by PSD #1, the Rebound technique, along with PSD #4, Grace orientation. Dissociation or withdrawal is utilized when a person doesn't want to deal with a situation. They run away and withdraw from those in the situation. A change in the environment, friends, social life, schedule, anything but dealing with the problem. This can be handled by PSD #1, Rebound technique, PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind.

Isolation is used if we have the wrong mental attitude toward ourselves in which a person is unable to experience what is really happening around them or in their life. Feeling isolated from their problems because they cannot deal inwardly with their problems, they must dump part of it into the garbage can of the subconscious to isolate it from the rest of their soul. Isaiah talked about this in Isa 44:20 when he said "He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, Is there

not a lie in my right hand?" PSD #3, The faith-rest drill and PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, would handle this problem.

Projection will be used if we have the wrong mental attitude toward ourselves by which we take our own flaws, sins and failures, and assign or project them to others. In doing so they rid themselves of our own guilt and failures and we elevate ourselves because of the wrong mental attitude. This creates a problem in the soul which keeps out metabolized doctrine on the one hand and destroys metabolized doctrine on the other. We saw Joseph's brothers doing this in Gen 50:15 "When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph should bear a grudge against us and pay us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him" PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind, would solve this problem.

Rationalization is defending an action we know is not biblical but we feel we have the right to do. In this defense mechanism, we become offended easily because we do not really love the Word of God more than we love ourselves, as Psa 119:165 says "Great peace have they which love Your doctrine: nothing shall offend them." PSD #1, Rebound technique, PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD # 5, Doctrinal orientation, would solve this problem. A positive believer who sees that doctrine has provided him with standards that teach him how to be delivered from the bondage of the sin nature. They realize Rom 7:23-25 "But I see a different law [principle] in the members of my body [the law of the sin nature], making war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner to the law of the sin nature which is in the members of my body. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from the body of this death [the old sin nature]? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, on the one hand, with my mind I am myself serving the law of GOD; but on the other hand, with my flesh [old sin nature in control of the soul], I am serving the law of the sin nature." And then remember, in the original language of scripture there is no chapter break, so Rom 8:1-2 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."

Repression is a defense mechanism in which the believer is unable to remember or to be aware of disturbing lusts, wishes, or feelings, or thoughts, or experiences related to sin. PSD #2, The filling of the Spirit, PSD #3, The faith-rest drill, PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, would solve this problem.

Suppression is a defense mechanism in which we intentionally avoid thinking about disturbing thoughts, problems, experiences, or feelings. PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father and PSD #10, Occupation with Christ as the priority solution to life would solve this problem for the believer.

Devaluation is where we attribute exaggerated negative qualities to ourselves and others, always putting everyone down. PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind would solve this problem.

Displacement is a mechanism which attaches to a neutral object mental contents which were originally attached to someone or something else. This is when we start falling in love with our boat, car or animals because they were hurt by someone else! PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny, would solve this problem. Consequently, thinking is the battlefield of our soul. The greatest battles in history are not overt battlefields where men die, the greatest battlefield is what takes place in our soul. Our mental attitude also affects our physical body and appearance. The body affects the soul and the mentality, just as the soul affects the body (psychosomatics).

Pro 3:8 "It [chokmah or metabolized doctrine] will be healing to your [shor-navel] nervous system, and refreshment to your bones."

Notice that the way you think or your mental attitude influences your nervous system and your bones or your physical appearance and your inner being.

Pro 16:24 "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."

The point is, if you don't like something change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain. This means loving to face new challenges, seizing new opportunities, testing our resources against the unknown, and in the process, discovering our own unique potential with the power of the Spirit and the power of the Word of God. This is why the only difference between a good day and a bad day is your attitude, especially protecting yourself from arrogance and thinking evil. Spiritually adult believers

can be in danger when they have a mental attitude test because it may knock them out of living the spiritual life if they are not humble enough to receive correction and recognize it. If we do not become alert when the mental attitude test comes, we can fall back into the cosmic system without even knowing about it. When we are advancing toward any objective in life, especially in the Pre-Designed Plan of God and the ultimate objective, we must be alert. This alertness comes from objective, not subjective thinking. However, if we are arrogant,

Gal 6:3 "For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself."

Pro 26:12 "Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

1Co 8:1 "Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge.

Knowledge [or gnosis] makes one arrogant, but virtue-love edifies [builds up, it doesn't destroy]."

Why? Because virtue-love thinks no evil! The mental attitude of someone with virtue-love is patient, kind, and is not jealous, does not brag and is not arrogant, it does not act unbecomingly, does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, 1Co 13:4-7. When it comes to the mental attitude, our life is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the mental attitude you bring to life. Our life is determined not so much by what happens to us as by the way our mental attitude responds or reacts to what has happened. Divine viewpoint and the resulting mental attitude is part of the greatest delegation of divine power in human history. That is why what you think is more important than anything else in life. People evaluate others based upon how they look, what kind of impression they make, personality, superficial evaluations, whatever one's concept of success may be, admiration, approbation, and actually these things are not what are important. So many believers are struggling through life as mindless losers full of emotion. Whether it's the lusts of the have-nots or the dissatisfaction of those who have, there's a general unrest today which merely reflects one very important fact: that believers in The Lord Jesus Christ have failed in the dynamics of the divine viewpoint of life. Sadly enough it can be said of most believers today what Mic 4:12 says "But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, and they do not understand His purpose;" What counts is the power of divine viewpoint in the right lobe of the soul and the application of that divine viewpoint to life. Our life comes to be what we think, not what we feel. We should be exposed to Bible doctrine daily so that our thinking comes to divine viewpoint and then consistently enter into perception, metabolization and application of doctrine. Satan has so many distractions today designed to deaden the thinking of born again believers so that they will become mindless imbeciles, struggling through life looking for some emotional experience to pull them through. Yet God has delegated to every Church-age believer all of the power to handle any problems or difficulties in this life through "thinking." This is why we have such challenges such as 1Co 10:13 "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it." The average believer does not even know anything about God's superior power or how God has delegated it to us through thought. That's why we have a lot of mindless emotional activity rather than doctrinal thinking. That is why we have a lot of religion, legalism and gimmicks found in the church today. There is very little doctrine being thought today. The delegation of superior power comes in the form of thinking metabolized doctrine circulating in the right lobe of the heart called the "kardia" in the Greek. This system of thought called Bible doctrine produces mental attitude divine viewpoint and is from the content of the infallible word of God. What you really are as a person is what you really think, not what you appear to be on the surface, not the way you are dressed or groomed. We are not always what we appear to be on the surface. Some people can hide their thoughts and some cannot. People can hide their thoughts and become masterful at the practice of duplicity and hypocrisy.

Psa 55:21 "His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords."

Pro 23:7 "For as a person thinks within himself [himself is nephesh which means soul], so he is."

We think by means of Concentration. Concentration is matter of your priorities in life. Concentration is the ability to think about absolutely nothing while you are being taught the word of God. Nothing can add more power to your life than concentration. However, concentration is not the ends, it is the means of something

far greater. We will be able to seek God by means of faith as never before, not through intellectual reasoning or difficult effort, but by His love that draws us to Him. Because we concentrate upon His word on a consistent basis, then He is able to use that information to communicate with us in language of accommodation. Joh 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

The Holy Spirit will bring to your remembrance not your concentration or memorization of scripture. The goal is not knowledge of the Bible, but to have a personal relationship with God that goes beyond our capacity to understand.

Phi 4:7 "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Eph 3:18-20 "that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

Eph 3:20 "Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,"

The average believer knows nothing about God's "superior power" and how God has delegated it to us through thought. This delegation of divine power depends on your very own perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine.

Psa 119:78 "May the arrogant be ashamed, for they undermine me with a lie; but I shall concentrate on Your doctrines."

Pro 10:17 "He is on the path of life who concentrates on instruction, but he who forsakes reproof goes astray."

Concentration and mental toughness are the margins of victory. It is something that God wants us to develop in our lives to take us far beyond what we could ever imagine concerning our spiritual walk with Him. It is something that even foes beyond our ability to comprehend at times. God does not draw us to Himself through intellect. He reveals Himself through our intellect partially but He reveals Himself in a spiritual way that we normally don't recognize until after we've been through it through passages such as Rom 2:4 "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"

JOH 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

Notice, the Holy Spirit will bring to your remembrance not your concentration or memorization of scripture. Not your ability through human I.Q. and impressive intellect or aptitude but through the ministry of the power of the Holy Spirit. So that even a person with a low I.Q. who has the humility to concentrate and learn the word of God can have those things brought to remembrance when needed by God the Holy Spirit. What do we really know about the inward life, the deeper life, the spiritual life? Remember the Lord said in Mat 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God." And yet Luk 17:21 says "For behold, the kingdom of God is within you." God the Father is in you, Joh 17:26, God the Son is in you, Joh 14:20, the Holy Spirit is in you, Joh 14:27. This kingdom is found in your spirit and your relationship with God that is being developed through your concentration upon His word and the appropriate mental attitude viewpoint. Eph 3:19 "that you may be able to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God." Our human mind or heart cannot be filled up to all the fullness of God, however, our human spirit can. The human spirit is the immaterial part of man designed by God to convert, to store, and to utilize spiritual phenomena. There are things taking place in your human spirit that your soul and mentality has no idea of. This is why Heb 4:12 says "The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder between the soul and the spirit." As you truly seek the kingdom of God within you, this kingdom is expanded in you a little at a time. Your prayer life becomes easier, and God's presence becomes more of a reality and noticed and welcomed as never before.

Mar 4:26-27 "And He was saying, The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; and goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts up and grows-- how, he himself does not know."

We cannot see all of what is really going on nor understand the changes that are taking place, but we know that there is change.

Phi 1:6 "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who has begun in you an absolute good work will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus."

Phi 2:13 "for it is God [the Holy Spirit] who is at work in you, both to will [give you motivation] and to work above and beyond His good pleasure."

We have to conclude that these changes are not just taking place in our mental attitude but in the depths of our spirit in ways that incomprehensible and unexplainable to the human mind and therefore the mentality of the soul.

Perceiving the Human Spirit and The Human Soul 9-17-00

We continue in our study of The Doctrine of Mental Attitude. Our first point was our definition. Our mental attitude is where we develop proper motivation and it also where we do most of our sinning. These mental attitude sins include arrogance, pride, jealousy, implacability, bitterness, vindictiveness, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition, all motivational sins, and sinful thoughts such as fear, guilt, worry, anger, judging, hatred, even murder. These sins can destroy character, and our lives and we deploy the Ten Problem Solving Devices provided by God to overcome these. Next, we must understand the difference between the human soul and the human spirit. Heb 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active [it's alive and powerful] and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit," There is a Biblical distinction made between the soul, where the mental attitude resides, and the spirit, where the ability to have fellowship with God resides. God wants our mental attitude not for the sake of cramming it with information but to open our eyes in spiritual realms that we have never dreamed of and which are even beyond human comprehension.

Eph 3:18 "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,"

The inner man or the human spirit that is given at the moment of salvation, it is not the soul. It is true that God is after our heart and He wants us to think "His thoughts," divine viewpoint, but that is not His ultimate goal for our lives. We have seen that His ultimate goal is to have a personal relationship with Him that even goes beyond our capacity to understand even in our mental attitude. The goal is to have a personal relationship with God that goes beyond our capacity to understand. The mental attitude is not that which triggers or stimulates a response from God, it is that part of our human nature that allows us to comprehend and perceive the fact that He has been working in our lives, without us understanding and perceiving the fact that He has been. Our mental attitude is not the inner man of Rom 7:22, it is our human spirit "For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man," It is the human spirit not the mental I.Q. of the "soul life" of man Eph 3:16 "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;" In the original creation of man, the human spirit was received along with the human soul when man received the "breath of lives," Gen 2:7. Original man was created trichotomous, Gen 2:7, that is he had a body, soul, and spirit. In Gen 2:7, "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. " The Hebrew word here is in the plural and means the breath of lives, which refers to soul and spirit. It cannot refer to the body because there is no life in the body. In the womb of the woman, the body has life but that is biological life which is an extension of the mother's life. There is no self-life or soul-life in the body which is the reason why once the soul and spirit leave the body, the body remains in the ground dead. For the unbeliever, his soul goes to Hades, but his body remains in the grave. For the believer, the soul and spirit go to Heaven, but the body remains in the grave. When the fetus emerges from the womb, God creates soul life and imputes it to biological life. After God created the man and the woman, He gave them a command. Gen 2:16-17 "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." "shall surely die" is the Hebrew phrase "muth tamuth." First "muth" translated "dying" a reference to spiritual death, and then God repeats the same verb, this time "tamuth." In Hebrew, the repetition of the verb gives great strength to the verb, so it is usually translated "you will surely die." In fact, "surely" is added by the translators to translate the doubling of the verb. However, there are two deaths that are involved here, and the correct translation is "dying thou shalt die" or really "dying spiritually you shall die physically." The wages of sin is spiritual death not physical death, as a result of being a sinner and having a sin nature eventually we die, and that's the second death, physical death. To say the wages of sin is physical death is a denial of the salvation work of the Cross. God would not allow His Son to go through the excruciating pain of the Cross if the wages of sin was physical death because we all die physically. The Lord Jesus Christ was still alive physically when he said,

"tetelestai"...it is finished. The payment for sin was complete, and The Lord Jesus Christ was still alive mentally, which is a part of his soul life, and still alive physically. At that moment on the Cross it was His Spirit life which died. Therefore, in the garden, the deception from Satan and the loss of their spiritual relationship with God is found in Gen 3:1-4 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Indeed, has God said, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden"? And the woman said to the serpent, From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, You surely shall not die!" Actually he said lo-muth te-muthon, dying, you will not die.

Gen 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened [the mentality of your human soul will take over rather than your human spirit], and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

This is why even in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union before the Church-age, the Lord told Nicodemus that he must be born again, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit.

Gen 3:6 "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate."

In the next verses the eyes of their soul without the guidance from their human spirit were opened and they knew that they were naked, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden because they were afraid. He wasn't afraid of the voice of God before, but he is now. Something died in Adam and the woman when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that caused them to be filled with fear. It was their human spirit and therefore their ability to have fellowship with God. There are two categories of spiritual death.

Real spiritual death, which is separation from God in a state of sin. This applies to man and happens at the moment of physical birth.

Substitutionary spiritual death, which is separation from God in a state of perfection and impeccability. This applies to saving work on the Cross by the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are seven results of Adam's original sin in the garden.

1. At the point of his original sin, spiritual death resulted and Adam lost his rulership of planet earth to Satan.
2. When Adam died spiritually, he entered into a state of total separation from God. There was nothing he could do to regain his relationship with God. God did all the work, He came to Adam in the garden, He provided the solution for spiritual death.
3. In spiritual death, Adam became dichotomous, having only a body and soul.
4. Adam's original sin originated the old sin nature, which is genetically perpetuated to the entire human race. 5. It was the beginning of personal sins in the human race, perpetuated from generation to generation by the billions. Spiritual death was perpetuated in the human race, Rom 5:12-21. This is why the unbeliever is dichotomous, 1Co 2:14, Jude 19; and why the believer is trichotomous; 1Th 5:23; Job 32:8; Phil 25; 2Co 7:13; Heb 4:12.
6. The status of total helplessness to enter into a relationship with God on the basis of any human good, any human merit, or anything we can do, all of which is classified as dead works.
7. The incarnation and Hypostatic Union is a direct result of Adam's original sin, whereby our Lord Jesus Christ entered the world at the First Advent to provide the solution to spiritual death through His efficacious substitutionary spiritual death, His saving work on the cross Rom 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world [Adam's original sin], and death [real spiritual death] through that sin, so [real spiritual] death spread to all men because all sinned [when Adam sinned]."

The human spirit was lost and the old sin nature resulted from their separation from God. As a result, their offspring, the human race, are always physically born dichotomous, having no human spirit. Gen 5:3 "When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image." This means having a body and soul only but then also having an opportunity as

Adam did to exercise volition to believe in saving work on the Cross by The Lord Jesus Christ and become born again. When anyone believes in Christ, the omnipotence of the Spirit restores the status quo of trichotomy which was Adam before the fall. In regeneration, the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit for the imputation of eternal life, Titus 3:5, and for understanding the things of God, 1Co 2:9-14.

We all possess a mentality at the moment of physical birth, therefore the opportunity to increase our mental attitude, however, it is the spiritual birth when the human spirit is imputed to us which is now linked up with the soul that is the location of the inner man that the Bible talks about. This brings us back to the Garden of Eden having the same opportunity that Adam and the woman had to have fellowship with God before the fall except, our opportunity is even greater, we can never die spiritually. The human spirit is the immaterial part of man designed by God to convert, to store, and to utilize spiritual phenomena. Things are taking place in our human spirit that our soul, our mentality have no idea of, not as of yet, that is. But, as we grow in God's grace and knowledge, we begin to realize all of the fantastic changes that are taking place in our inner man, where our true spiritual life is, and where in Rom 8:29, we are being conformed to the image of God's Son. Learning the doctrine of the mental attitude is to realize the work that is going on in the depths of our spirit. Rom 8:26 "And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;" Too deep for words because it takes words with which to think and therefore this is even "too deep" for our thinking or our mental attitude. Rom 8:27 "and He [God the Father] who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the [Holy] Spirit is, because He [God the Holy Spirit] intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." This is why Psa 37:4 says "Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart." It is true that God may plant desires within you. He does plant motives within the heart of a believer without violating your free will. Paul had such a thing happen to him when he cried out, in our corrected translation of Phi 1:23 "In fact I am hard-pressed from the two alternatives [a reference to living and dying in verse 21], because I have the desire to depart and to keep on being together with Christ, for that is better by far;" Remember, this is the same Paul who also cried out under the influence of his love in Christ for his Jewish brothers,

Rom 9:3 "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,"

Paul expresses contradictory feelings, and yet they are perfectly reconciled in the depths of the human spirit. There is something going on there in the depths of our spirit which never changes and that many times we cannot even comprehend.

2CO 4:16 "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day."

There is deposited within you a desire which originates in God, a desire which is for God and for the best for His Kingdom. A believer who has been victimized and becomes bitter, a believer who has known disappointment because of the behavior of another believer, or even someone in the world, and is resentful, a believer who has been disappointed with God because of what He has done or has allowed to happen, and is unhappy with God and thinks that God is unfair, is not in a state where his will is in conformity to God's. Rather he is in a state where self is originating and controlling the desires of the heart. We do not always understand the will of God, but to trust His sovereignty completely is another matter. When the believer relies on just his mental attitude or his mind on what God should be, and then when God does not act according to his expectation, he will suffer disappointment and operates in those mental attitude sins noted earlier. As the believer deepens in his devotion and dedication to Christ, outward things caused by persecution, injustice, and even what is perceived to be the unfairness of God and the displeasure of God are things no longer perceived nor reacted to. The delegation of divine power to every Church-age believer is manifested and experienced when Bible doctrine is metabolized and deployed on the Forward Line of Troops (FLOT) of your soul. It is here that the greatest battles take place. The Church Age believer must know when to use offensive action and when to use defensive action in the Christian way of life. God has delegated this divine power through thought, through mental attitude understanding the thoughts of God.

The Proper Mental Attitude of Love

9-24-00

We have completed our first point in the doctrine of the mental attitude in which we noted distinctions between the human spirit and the human soul. Point 2 in our doctrine is the Delegation of Divine Power as it relates to the Change in Our Mental Attitude. There is no substitute for perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine. The delegation of divine power to every Church-age believer is manifested and experienced when Bible doctrine is metabolized and deployed on the FLOT line of your soul. As we have seen this is a military acronym for the forward line of troops which protect the soul. These problem-solving devices are important because they give us the power and the ability to handle any problem in life. God has provided for us in grace everything it takes to transfer what is written in the Bible to the human spirit and then to the soul. All forms of worship are a concentration test and whether you like it or not, all life demands struggle. Those who have everything given to them become lazy, selfish, and insensitive to the real values of life. That which cost little is less valued. We should try to become a person of values rather than a person of success and that begins with mental attitude. Whether it's concentration on doctrine, the communion service or in prayer, it's all a part of the same thing, thinking. As you develop these spiritual habits of thought and concentration, there is a spiritual life that awaits you that goes beyond your understanding. God has chosen to reveal his thoughts to us by means of the Spirit of God.

Co 2:12-14 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world [the I.Q. of the world, the cosmic system] but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things [invisible assets] freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words or interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual persons. But a natural man [the soulish person, unbeliever or believer minus doctrine] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised [discerned in a manner caused by the filling of the Spirit]."

Now, this cannot just refer to an unbeliever or to a believer who is just minus the filling of the Spirit because you can learn doctrine even if you're not filled with the Spirit. You can understand and comprehend doctrinal thoughts even though it is not converted from gnosis to epignosis or to spiritual phenomenon. The ultimate goal is not learning doctrine, nor is it works or even applying doctrine. The ultimate goal is to have a personal relationship and fellowship with God. The goal of changing our mental attitude is to draw us closer to God. As we are kept dependent upon God, we will grow in His grace and knowledge which will lead us to a submissive, yielded life to him. We will have the attitude that our Lord had in Heb 10:9, "I come to do Thy will, O God," not, "What's in this for me?" How far are we willing to go in submitting our life to God? Far too many so-called normal Christians today are being deceived when it comes to salvation, the filling of the Spirit, living the spiritual life. 1Jo 5:18-19 "We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." What are our limitations of obedience to God and His plan for our life, what could make us quit and lose our dedication and devotion for Christ? What are the ends of abandonment that you would be willing to go to, the ultimate willingness of surrendering your plans and goals and dreams, for God's will for your life? If a person has given his life to his Lord, it would be conflicting for the one who places his whole happiness, his whole being, in the hands of God alone, that they could continue to have a list of desires for their own happiness and wants. If we live for God because of true love for God, just because we love Him, we place all our happiness in God alone. Love alone should cause us to surrender up our will to the Lord. If it is not love that produces submission, eventually that wrong motive will be revealed.

When the believer relinquishes his soul, his will, his all to his Lord, and desires nothing of himself and desires only God for the sake of God, that is the beginning of experiencing the life of God in the soul. Here is a state where there is no satisfaction for self as the final goal, the glory of heaven is not the motive, the blessings and rewards are not the motive. If I love God alone, I will desire God alone. We must love

Him without any end in view and even without expecting any emotional feeling present to strengthen us. We must love Him with total disregard to dry-spells and to times of abundance. In Joh 14:15, our Lord said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commands." This is not the Ten Commandments because there are over 400 in the New Testament. However, we need to focus in on the word love which in the Greek here is agapao not phileo, agapao refers to a mental attitude love. The point is that when it comes to our mental attitude, love for God, this alone should cause us to surrender our will to Him. There is a love for God that is also very personal, it is called phileo love.

Joh 16:27 "for the Father Himself loves you [phileo's you, loves you personally], because you have [phileo'd] loved Me personally, and have believed that I came forth from the Father."

The goal of agapao love, this mental attitude love, is to lead us to a phileo love or personal love for God and for The Lord Jesus Christ. This is why 1Co 16:22 says, "If anyone does not [phileo] love the Lord, let him be accursed. Maranatha." Phileo love is actually a greater love in the sense that when it is directed toward God it is a more personal love developed from the mental attitude of agapao love. This is why Peter became grieved when our Lord gave him that test in Joh 21. Here we see the contrast between agapao love or the mental attitude love and Phileo the personal love. This is very vital if you are going to live the Christian way of life and enjoy the truth that sets you free. The average believer doesn't rightly divide the word of truth, they become confused concerning the way that they should love according to the Bible. The problem is there is no knowledge of the original language and why God the Holy Spirit chose to use two different words for love when He inspired men to write the Bible, Let's look at this passage in the original language: Joh 21:15-17 "So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me more than these? He [Peter] said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Tend My lambs. He said to him again a second time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Do you love [phileo] Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You. Jesus said to him, Tend My sheep." The question is this: If God the Holy Spirit supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture to put His complete message to mankind recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, then why use two different words? There are two different meanings that He originally intended, if that's true, then why did the translators translate two totally different words, phileo and agapao, the same? Actually, in the Greek language there are four basic words for love. The most popular one is the word agape or agapao which refers to an impersonal love or a love from the mental attitude. Then there is phileo love or a personal love which connoted personal attraction. This love can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed. Then there is stergo love which means to feel affection for someone, especially parents or children and even for animals, it means to be lovingly devoted. Rom 12:10 "Be devoted [philostorgos] to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;" This too can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed. The final type of love is eros love, that state which we call "being in love" or "the kind of love that lovers are in". We need to see the importance of understanding the mental attitude that we are commanded to have toward God which is the mental attitude of agapao love. Agapao love is not a feeling or an emotion, it is a system of thinking that produces the greatest virtue of all, 1Co 13:13, proceeding from the mind, Phi 2:2. When it is directed toward God, agapao love serves as motivation, 2Co 5:14. This is the love commanded of husbands in Eph 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;"

A mental attitude of respect not personal love. This is why as a part of the first commandment we are commanded not to love God personally but to have a fear or respect or love for Him. In fact, even when the Ten Commandments were given in Exo 20:3-17, there's no command to love God in there. To have given a commandment to love God personally would have been a violation of both the unbeliever's and believer's free will. Agapao love is a mental attitude love of appreciation that may result in phileo love, personal love for God. Agapao love is the ability to love and respect someone you do not see, 1Pe 1:8 "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory," When you start to love someone you have not

seen, it is because you have lined up with their thinking. In Gal 5:22, agape love or this mental attitude love is the production fruit of the Spirit, In Rom 5:5 agape love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. So in the passage we have been noting Joh 21:15-17 The Lord was asking Peter if he had that impersonal unconditional virtuous love, which emphasizes the virtue of the subject and not the object. And Peter knew and understood what the Lord was saying. The Lord was saying you cannot serve Me without this virtue or this impersonal unconditional virtuous "agape love." However, when virtue love is directed toward God ultimately it should lead to phileo, a deep personal love for God. This is why Peter became upset when the Lord kept asking this question. In verse 15, the Lord used agapao, He didn't use phileo. The Lord said, "do you agape-love Me more than these"? He [Peter] said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." Peter is a little disturbed. Peter used phileo which means I keep on loving you personally because of who You are. Our Lord said do you have impersonal unconditional love for Me, and Peter said, "Lord you know I love you personally." As a result of his answer Peter receives a command! He [the Lord] said to him, "Tend My lambs." This is a command for all pastors to produce the action of the verb which is to feed new believers. "lambs" refers to baby sheep, analogous to the new believers. The Lord is saying to Peter, "if you really love me personally you're qualified to feed new believers" Peter is commanded to feed the Lord's lambs if he really loves the Lord. When the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him more than these, there is a very important principle here. No man can function as a pastor-teacher with his eyes on people. The motivational virtue for the gift of pastor teacher must come from personal love for The Lord Jesus Christ. He said to him again a second time, "Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." In verse 16, the Lord gives him a second command. "Shepherd My sheep." The word "shepherd" means to rule or clobber which is how the pastor-shepherd must function with some. He word sheep means the sophomores in the Christian life. These are the ones that have a little knowledge of doctrine and think that they have a lot. Here authority of the pastor now becomes a major issue in the believer's life.

In verse 17, we have a final question and command. He said to him the third time, "Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me?" This time our Lord switched from agape to phileo. Peter was distressed because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep." The Lord was making a point not only for Peter but also for the benefit of all future pastors in the Church-age. The word for "tend" is bosko which is the command to moderately and prudently feed His humble sheep which is a reference to the seniors or the mature believers. All you have to do for mature believers is teach them doctrine. In the sophomore stage as in verse 16, you have to use that stick a shepherd carries to guide them. The shepherd has to whack the sheep at times to keep them from running off the cliffs. The pastor doesn't do that literally, he does that with his communication of doctrine. Once a person becomes a senior, he has developed enough humility to be teachable. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Thoughts, Speech, and Action: A Reflection of Your Mental Attitude

10-01-00

The Main Difference Between Living in the Cosmic System and Advancing to Spiritual Maturity. This difference depends on the thought content in our soul. We ought to have this purpose: to become the most outstanding worshipper of God we could possibly be since that is what we will be throughout all eternity. As we apply that correct mental attitude to our lives, it leads and motivates us to spiritual maturity. We begin to accustom ourselves, little by little, to worshipping Him. A worship, love and appreciation that is revealed by how we think, live our life, and spend our time, and results in how we use our time, talent, treasure, and spiritual gift for the cause of Christ. It all begins with thinking and having the proper mental attitude and avoiding sloppy thinking, for sloppy thinking gets worse over time, not better! When we just think but don't follow through we will not prosper. Eventually we will be in the cosmic system. Once we get into the cosmic system and enter into reversionism, the arrogance skills hinder the function of divine viewpoint. Divine viewpoint of life requires three thinking functions:

1. Cognition which is both the act and the process of inculcation of Bible doctrine. The mental process or faculty of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment.
2. Thinking which is the application of metabolized doctrine. Once understood and inculcated then there is thought and the ability to conclude and assume the proper thoughts needed, Rom 12:3 "think so as to have sound judgment, as God has assigned to each one of us a standard of thinking from doctrine."
3. Solving which is understanding and using the problem solving devices by which we make accurate and correct application to experience.

The thinking of the mature believer is different from the generally accepted thought patterns of the world. Therefore, the believer is set apart as unique when he cracks the maturity barrier. Mental attitude includes the principles of life with which we operate. What we say and do is basically what we think, Notice what our Lord said about the Pharisees in Mat 12:34 "You generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart [or the mental attitude]. Look at Mat 15:7-8, "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. You can say the right thing without thinking the right thing, we call that hypocrisy.

Psa 55:21 "His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords."

Thought, speech, and action are a reflection of our mental attitude and motivation in life, and the greatest battle we have in life is the battle in the soul.

There are three basic divine mandates related to our mental attitude and system of thinking.

1. The filling of the Spirit. We must be filled with the Spirit before we can make any real positive decisions in the realm of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine.
2. Perception of Bible doctrine. Gnosis must be transferred to the right lobe as epignosis in order for you to grow in the spiritual life.
3. The ten problem solving devices. Once filled with the Spirit, we perceive and metabolize doctrine, now we are ready to solve our problems with the ten problem solving devices.

This is why we need to learn to think right, to think His thoughts which are beyond our thoughts. Receive the thoughts of God and realize that this is our place of rest and refreshment. In Isa 28:9 "To whom would He teach knowledge? And to whom would He interpret the message? Those {just} weaned from milk? Those {just} taken from the breast?" This was actually a complaint from the people about the simplicity of the message. They were not humble and receptive but arrogant and critical. Their sin was contempt for the manner in which God instructed them by the prophets, complaining that the messages were suited to children and not to adults, complaining that the simplicity and repetition of line upon line and precept upon precept being immature and silly. The rest that is spoken of in verse 12 was to be found in Isa 28:10

"Precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, A little here, a little there." Isa 28:12 "He who said to them, Here is rest, give rest to the weary, And, Here is repose, but they would not listen." In effect, in verse 9, they are saying, God treats us as children and deals with us as we deal with infants just weaned, repeating and inculcating the same elementary lessons, and teaching the mere rudiments of knowledge. But as we have seen time and time again, that is how the word of God is inculcated. That's what this passage is all about. God's method of teaching offends by its simplicity man's pride, (2Ki 5:11-12; 1Co 1:23). Because they had rejected doctrinal teaching and line upon line, precept upon precept, and because they had refused to change their mental attitude, God was about to discipline them. To them who will not understand the basic simplistic doctrines, God will speak still more unintelligibly, and by a sterner messenger.

Point 5. Thought, Speech, and Action are a Reflection of Your Mental Attitude and Motivation in Life.

This principle is brought out in the testimony of the shepherd and the sheep in Psa 23. "(A Psalm of David.) The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." The Basic English translation says "The Lord takes care of me as His sheep; I will not be without any good thing." David is saying because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need. It is impossible for anyone with perfect righteousness to lack anything. The justice of God sends forth life support and blessing to both winner and loser believers. It just so happens that the one who wrote this Psalm under the ministry of the Holy Spirit was a winner. So David says, "I cannot lack." For the Lord is the one shepherding me. Remember sheep do not just take care of themselves as other animals do. Sheep require endless attention and personal care. And it is no coincidence that God has chosen to call us "sheep." The Lord Jesus Christ as our good Shepherd laid down His life for us. He is ever interceding for us in Heb 7:25 "He is able to deliver forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." He guides us by the Holy Spirit and He is constantly caring for us. This is why David said in Psa 23:2 "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters." This is life support for the sheep. Many things about sheep correlate with humans magnificently. The strange thing about sheep is that it's almost impossible for them to lie down and rest unless certain conditions are present, there must be a definite sense of security and safety and freedom from fear, tension, aggravations and hunger. Therefore, God provides everything that His sheep need to give them rest.

Psa 23:2 "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters or waters of refreshment and comfort."

Sheep require a consistent amount of water. However, unlike other animals they are totally dependent on their shepherd to find this water. God provides the quiet waters which we need to survive. The verse that correlates with our doctrine of mental attitude, Psa 23:3 "He restores my soul;" This is the principle of being renewed and refreshed through recovering from sin and it's effects. Having the soul restored means that even though we are in the care of the good shepherd, we have times when we need restoration. Here the Hebrew word means to bring back home again, recover, refresh, relieve, retrieve, and return. David said this because our soul needs to be restored, including our mental attitude. The mental attitude relates to your true personality and character. Character is developed through experiences of trial and suffering. Trials, temptations, disappointments -- all these help instead of hinder, if one uses them rightly by having the proper mental attitude when you go through them. However, the whole key is how you respond in your mental attitude, not how you react. Every trial endured and weathered in the right mental attitude makes a soul virtuous and stronger than it was before. Character is revealed by your mental attitude in times of adversity, hardship, disaster, and even tragedy. Winners do not become winners when they win an event, but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it. The victorious performance itself is merely the demonstration of their championship character. What we by studying God's word, filled with the Spirit, is preparing the mentality of our soul to handle anything that comes our way. We do that by repetition, by line upon line, precept upon precept, and a little here a little there. What a person thinks in his soul is what he really is. This is why courage and genuine humility are straightforward virtues, for they are virtues that hypocrisy cannot imitate. It's interesting that the one group of individuals that our Lord was so angry against, He called hypocrites. He taught that the scribes and the Pharisees were hypocrites who gave alms, prayed, fasted, tithed, they were overtly moral and righteous, they studied and taught the Bible, but

their mental attitude was evil, Mat 6:2; 6:5; 6:16; 23:23; 23:25; We can assume that hypocrisy is the ultimate form of wickedness because integrity can exist under the cover of all other failures and sins except hypocrisy. The hypocrite is really rotten to the core. A hypocrite despises those whom he deceives, but he also has no respect for himself.

Another concept of mental attitude is that every member of the human race has two personalities, a real personality and a pseudo-personality. When the two merge and become one, and you get rid of all the pettiness, mendacity and hypocrisy, you have advanced to the maturity barrier or you are through it. That's when you stop being a phony and you live in the reality of 1CO 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am," Many people are held up in spiritual advance by the constant use of their pseudo-personality, either to impress people, to trick people up, or to satisfy their own arrogance. You are never totally oriented to life until you have one personality, not two. Another reason why our mental attitude is so important is we'll never be a well-rounded personality with a limited vocabulary. It takes words with which to think. The more limited your vocabulary the less developed your personality. Therefore, any spiritual system which demands technical thought improves your mind, personality, character, and if you are humble, it eventuates in honor, integrity, and occupation with Christ. Doctrine is important because words are stored up in the right lobe of the soul. No person's mental attitude or thinking ever exceeds his vocabulary. Vocabulary is divided into two categories, technical and non-technical. Non-technical is vocabulary you need to get along in life. Technical vocabulary is what is required to succeed in particular areas or fields of life, these require studying and technical vocabulary. Studying is one of the most important functions in life. Those who have taken physics know that there is a technical vocabulary. Or those who have taken archeology and anthropology know there is a technical vocabulary. There is a technical vocabulary in every professional field. The point is that there is a technical vocabulary in Theology, in the study of God and the Bible, and once you are born again, you cannot get along on your non-technical "survival in life" vocabulary. That's why you have to come to Bible class and get technical vocabulary. For example here is list of technical terms or vocabulary: Hypostatic union, Dispensations, A fortiori, Angelic conflict, Anthropopathisms Anthropomorphisms, Cosmic one, Cosmic two, Dichotomous, Trichotomous, FLOT, Heart, Kenosis, Lapsarianism, PPOG, Rebound, Volition. These are words that should be a common part of our vocabulary storage in our right lobe. Words that should be understood when used in the technical language of theology: "During the Dispensation of the Hypostatic union, the Angelic conflict took its greatest blow when The Lord Jesus Christ operated in Kenosis so that we could live in the PPOG, Rebound, and stay out of Cosmic one and Cosmic two, by using the Problem Solving Devices on Forward Line of Troops of our soul. And this was all a part of the correct order of Lapsarianism when God ordained mankind to go from a Dichotomous being to a Trichotomous being and to glorify God from the Volition of his soul by loving God with all their heart. Therefore, God uses Anthropopathisms and Anthropomorphisms to reveal His love toward us.

The point is we are to continue to develop words because we have to develop technical words for things that exist. You have to keep up with advance in technical vocabulary. And it's true with anything in the world, everything in life that you want to enjoy, you have to know technical vocabulary.

The Wisdom of Proverbs 8

10-08-00

We have noted how mental attitude relates to your personality and character why your mental attitude is so important. A part of that is your vocabulary for it takes words with which to think. The more limited your vocabulary the less developed your personality. You must think to have character and personality. Any spiritual system which demands technical thought improves your mind, personality, character, and if you are humble, it eventuates in honor, integrity, and occupation with Christ. Doctrine is so important because words are stored up in the right lobe of the soul.

Isa 50:4, "The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens {Me} morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple."

Vocabulary is a reflection of your mental attitude, and is divided into two categories generally. Non-technical which you need to get along in life and technical which is required to participate in the profession areas of life. To acquire a technical vocabulary in any field requires studying. Studying is one of the most important functions in life, not just Bible study or the function of perception and metabolization of doctrine. People who go to college take many, many technical courses and they acquire nothing more or less than a technical vocabulary. When you mention different technical things in different areas, those who have taken the course and have learned the terms know that there is a technical vocabulary.

The point is that there is a technical vocabulary in Theology, in the study of God and the Bible, and once you are born again, you cannot get along with non-technical vocabulary. For example, at first we may not know words like the Hypostatic union, dispensations, A fortiori, Angelic conflict, anthropopathisms anthropomorphisms, Cosmic one, Cosmic two, dichotomous, trichotomous, FLOT, Heart, Kenosis, Lapsarianism, PPOG, rebound, Volition. After studying doctrine for a period of time these words become a common part of your vocabulary storage in your right lobe. We know these words and can use them as a part of our technical vocabulary as follows: "During the dispensation of the Hypostatic union, the angelic conflict took its greatest blow when The Lord Jesus Christ operated in kenosis so that we could live in the Pre-Designed Plan of God, rebound, and stay out of Cosmic one and Cosmic two, by using the Problem Solving Devices on Forward Line of Troops of our soul. This was all a part of the correct order of lapsarianism when God ordained mankind to go from a dichotomous being to a trichotomous being and to glorify God from the volition of his soul by loving God with all their heart. Therefore, God uses anthropopathisms and anthropomorphisms to reveal His love toward us. The point is that we are to continue to develop words because we have to develop technical words for things that exist. How important is your mental attitude or your system of thinking?

Psa 138:2 "I myself will worship toward the temple of Your holiness [heaven], and I will be motivated to praise Your person because of your grace and your doctrine, because you have magnified Your doctrinal teaching over Your reputation."

Simply put, doctrinal teaching should be the highest priority in your life. Remember what God is after, Joh 4:23 "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

The book of Proverbs constitutes the philosophic writings of our Bible. We must make a distinction when we speak of philosophy in general, and the philosophy of the Bible. Proverbs 8 answers the very question which Pilate asked Jesus: Joh 18:38 "Pilate said to Him, What is truth?" Hebrew philosophy did not begin with a question. It began rather with an affirmation. It affirmed God, and as a result of that affirmation, it further assumed that all wisdom is to be found in Him. From these positions it drew a deduction, namely, that for man, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Pro 8:1 "Does not wisdom call, And understanding lift up her voice?" Without the teaching of the word of God, there can be no real wisdom. Without perception, metabolization and application of doctrine there can be no real wisdom. Throughout our lifetime, there will be certain periods of time when wisdom is calling out to us. Receiving knowledge or understanding doctrine gives you a voice, it gives you a vocabulary and gives you

an impact. In this passage wisdom is being personified, it does not refer to The Lord Jesus Christ but to that which He thinks, although in reality the two are inseparable. However, the Holy Spirit has chosen in this chapter to make a distinction between the two.

Pro 8:2-3 "On top of the heights beside the way, Where the paths meet, she takes her stand; Beside the gates, at the opening to the city, At the entrance of the doors, she [wisdom] cries out:

In Pro 8:22 "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.

In Pro 8:24-36 "When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills I was brought forth; While He [TLJC] had not yet made the earth and the fields, Nor the first dust of the world. When He established the heavens, I was there, When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, When He made firm the skies above, When the springs of the deep became fixed, When He set for the sea its boundary, So that the water should not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I was beside Him, {as} a master workman; And I was daily {His} delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And {having} my delight in the sons of men. Now therefore, {O} sons, listen to me, For blessed are they who keep my ways. Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts. For he who finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the Lord. But he who sins against me injures himself; All those who hate me love death." In all of these verses, wisdom is a noun "chokmah" referring to Bible doctrine which has been metabolized in an individual's life. This is wisdom which calls on us to change our Thoughts, Speech, and Actions which are a Reflection of our Mental Attitude and Motivation in Life. No matter what type of attack is made against it, wisdom will keep on proclaiming truth and calling the sons of men. Only a change in your mental attitude from Bible doctrine resident in your soul will ever give you the experience of true freedom and liberty. But we have to know that doctrine or that wisdom. "Know" the truth and the truth will set you free. However, truth doesn't set every believer free because although truth is calling out, very few believers "know it."

Chapter 8 of Proverbs brings out the importance of mental attitude as it relates to thought, speech, and action. The first 11 verses show the principle of the importance of the communication of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom. The longsuffering and the compassion of God will see to it that every member of the human race has the opportunity to have faith alone in Christ alone as well as the opportunity to have the mind of Christ or the wisdom of God, Only the believer with the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom resident in the soul will ever have the ability to discern a situation properly. Believers don't need counseling, they need the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom or doctrine resident in their soul. Where is doctrine taught? Where is it available? Back in Pro 8:2 "On top of the heights beside the way, where the paths meet, she [wisdom, the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom] takes her stand;" The divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom is in easy to find places, accessible places. Look at how easy technology has made truth to be accessible. It is not found in the ministry of one man or one denomination or one style of teaching, it is found all over the world. The availability of divine wisdom isn't hidden. Wisdom or doctrine always causes us to take a doctrinal stand, though many believers refuse to do so. Our divine viewpoint mental attitude will station itself and post itself over you for guidance and protection. PRO 8:3 Beside the gates, at the opening to the city, At the entrance of the doors, she [wisdom] cries out: Now, always in the gateway in the ancient world there was an auditorium that served as the media, or as a newsroom to let people know what was going on. Our divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom will let you know what is really going on in your life. You will not be confused. You will have questions from time to time concerning why certain things are happening in your life, but ultimately if you are faithful with your intake of doctrine, those questions will be answered. 1CO 14:33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. The conception here in Pro 8:3 is that wisdom is available even though the majority rejects it.

Pro 8:4-5 "To you, O men, I [the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom] call, And my voice is to the sons of men or, all members of the human race. O naive ones or ignorant ones discern prudence learn wisdom; And, O fools, discern wisdom."

Notice to whom this is addressed, those who are naive and fools. A fool is someone who thinks that they know so much and they know so little. PRO 8:6 "Listen, for I shall speak noble things; And the opening of my lips {will produce} right things. Note that it is divine wisdom which speaks noble things or virtuous things. Wisdom will speak "noble things." When Wisdom speaks to a man, she always tells him the truth about himself. The voice of wisdom invades the realm of human nature, and interprets the actual facts.

In PRO 8:7 "For my mouth will utter truth; And wickedness or evil is an abomination to my lips." Wickedness is the Hebrew noun *resha*, and it doesn't mean sin but it means anything that is opposite of the character and nature of God. Wickedness can be legalism, self-righteousness, moral or immoral degeneracy.

Wisdom is the voice of God to the soul of man, declaring the facts. Wisdom introduces herself in verse 7. "For my mouth personification of wisdom or the divine viewpoint mental attitude will utter truth; And wickedness or evil is an abomination to my lips. Abomination is the noun *tow`ebah* meaning detestable, disgusting, loathsome, horrible.

PRO 8:8 "All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing crooked or perverted in them."

Bible doctrine is right to the point. It pulls no punches. Many times verses are taken out of context to back up false doctrine, but Bible doctrine taught categorically protects from crookedness and perversion.

PRO 8:9 "They [the utterances of my mouth] are all straightforward to him who understands", the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom gets right to the point. And right to those who find knowledge. The divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom is very understandable to those who have spent enough time learning it. The principle is that wisdom is built upon wisdom, knowledge is built upon knowledge. Now, notice that the next part of this address of Wisdom is that in which she puts herself into comparison with things that men hold valuable, and declares that there is nothing that has any value at all by comparison with Wisdom. The things named are silver, gold, rubies, all things held to be valuable by men. Concerning these, she, wisdom, says

Pro 8:10 "Take my instruction, and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold."

The word take is the Qal imperative of *laqach* which means to seize with power and enthusiasm, or with interest and strong motivation. It means that doctrine is the number one priority in your life. It means that nothing is more important to you than learning God's word and that the reality of your life is found there. It means that you are willing to lose your life for the cause of Christ rather than constantly coming up with excuses as to why you will not do it.

PRO 8:11 "For wisdom technical understanding of doctrine or metabolized doctrine is better than jewels; And all desirable things can not compare with her."

Whatever things of this world are pleasing to your eyes cannot compare to the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom. The divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom is more important to the soul than any form of materialism. Money, success, prosperity, pleasure, friends, loved ones, social life, sex, status symbols etc. The first eleven verses, we have the principle of the communication of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom, that's the first paragraph.

In the second paragraph, verses 12-21, we have the production of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom in your life. What will the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom produce in your life?

Pro 8:12 "I, wisdom, that is divine viewpoint dwell with prudence, or I have a lifestyle of caution, sensibility."

The word for prudence is the Hebrew noun *armah* which means that you have your priorities right. The divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom will do two things in your life. It will give you a purpose in life, such as a personal sense of destiny. It will serve as a red-alert system to protect you from the influence of evil.

PRO 8:13 "The fear or respect for the Lord is to hate evil;"

And by evil remember that it could mean moral degeneracy or immoral degeneracy. The greatest sin among believers and the worst sin in the universe is pride and arrogance. Pride and arrogance turns self-righteous prissy Christians into evil people. The perverted mouth here is perverted speech. Perverted speech always

puts people down. Trying to be a little smarter and slyer than others is perverted speech. The perverted mouth is the Hebrew word tahpukah which means a perverted mind, which means that you listen to perverted things. It also means a perverted heart which means that you believe perverted things.

PRO 8:14 "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom;"

Counsel is simply God's answers to man's problems. Notice also that the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom gives you power.

PRO 8:15-17 "By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice."

RO 8:16 "By me princes rule, and nobles, All who judge rightly. I [the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom] love those who love me;"

And doctrine will always respond and love you back.

Pro 8:17 "I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me will find me."

Notice the word diligently. It takes effort to search for truth once you find it. Bible doctrine is not going to force itself upon you, it requires some aggression on your part.

PRO 8:18 "Riches and honor are with me,"

Notice that it says riches and honor are "with me" not in other places. Riches speaks of materialistic success, honor speaks of fame and prominence through achievement. This means that you have the capacity for it first. Success doesn't ruin you. Having capacity you can handle it.

PRO 8:18-19 "Riches and honor are with me, Enduring wealth and righteousness. by fruit or my production, what I produce is better than gold, even pure gold, and my yield or my profit than choicest silver."

The profit of the escrow blessings stagger the imagination.

PRO 8:20 "I walk in the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice,"

However, the word walk is the Hebrew word halak and it is a walk against intensive opposition. What is the opposition of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom?

1. Legalism
2. Works
3. Details of life
4. Hardness of the heart
5. Passivity
6. Laziness.

RO 8:20-21 "I [wisdom, the divine viewpoint mental attitude] walk in the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, To endow those who love me with wealth, That I may fill their treasuries." Endow is the Hebrew verb nachal which means to get or take as a possession. In other words, the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom causes escrow blessings to be released in time little by little. It is through knowledge of doctrine that the believer receives his inheritance. Then in the third and final paragraph in verses 22-36, we have the dynamics of metabolize doctrine. Beginning with a reference to Bible doctrine possessed by the Lord in eternity past. Pro 8:22 "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old." Notice that a distinction is made between "way" and "works." Pro 8:23 "From everlasting or from eternity past I wisdom was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth." As we think of these things, our minds travel from Genesis 1:1 to John 1:1. JOH 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In each of these passages we have the phrase "In the beginning." John the declaration is made that "The word was God." Proverbs says that Wisdom was with God. And of course this is a reference to TLJC who created the Heavens and the earth in COL 1:16. Pro 8:23-24 From everlasting or from eternity past I wisdom was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths or no oceans I wisdom was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Long before the creation of the universe, this divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom was in existence. It preexisted every form of creation. It was around before the creation of the angels.

Pro 8:25 "Before the mountains were settled into place, before the hills I wisdom was brought forth;"

When you look out and see the magnificence of the mountains, just remember before those hills were settled in place, the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom existed. Pro 8:26-27 While He TLJC had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world." Pro 8:27 "When he TLJC established the heavens, I wisdom was there, when He Jesus Christ inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, TLJC is the one who created all things, and in this passage wisdom is saying When He established the heavens I wisdom was there!

Pro 8:28-30 When He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed, When He set for the sea its boundary, so that the water should not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I wisdom was beside Him, {as} a master workman; Pro 8:31 Rejoicing in the world, His earth, and {having} my delight in the sons of men. Pro 8:32 "Now therefore, {O} sons, listen to me, Pro 8:33 "heed or listen to my instruction and be wise, and do not neglect {it.} Instruction is musar which means correction and discipline which results from and to education. It speaks of oral correction. Pro 8:34 Blessed or blessings to the man who listens to me, doctrine watching daily at my gates, waiting at my doorposts. Pro 8:35 For he who finds me doctrine finds life, or capacity for life and obtains favor or grace from the Lord. Pro 8:36 But he who sins against me or misses me, that's the loser.... injures himself; and that's the law of volitional responsibility. That's the story of people in life, they injure themselves by rejection of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom. "All those who hate me NVTD Love death." Death here means no life and enjoyment in time and then ultimately, the sin unto death. Now that's should bring out to you the importance of the divine viewpoint mental attitude of wisdom.

The Inner Beauty of the Mental Attitude

10-15-00

Point 6 in our doctrine of mental attitude: The importance of understanding the Battle in the Soul. The apostle Paul dealt with this principle in 2CO 10:3-6. We are involved in a warfare and that warfare takes place in the soul where we do our thinking. The most fundamental of Sun Tzu's principles for the conduct of war is that "All warfare is based on deception". That's why the Bible prepares us for deception in many passages. Our real warfare in the spiritual life is neither physical nor fleshly; it is mental and spiritual and therefore found in the mentality of our soul. As our enemy and the god of this world, Satan's goal is to keep us off guard and deceived. Only the mind or the mental attitude of Christ can protect us from this deception. And that's why we are told in 2CO 2:11 "in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes." This is why in 2Co 11:3, the apostle Paul said "But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray [deceived] from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ." No one understands the advantage of sowing discord and causing confusion and disorder more than Satan and the kingdom of darkness.

Jam 3:16 "For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder [confusion] and every evil thing or every form of evil."

When your soul is united with doctrine, Satan and the kingdom of darkness will do what it can to divide your thoughts and confuse your mental attitude. When a local assembly is united and preaching the Gospel and teaching doctrine, Satan and the kingdom of darkness will try to cause divisions and attack and divide. The quote from Sun Tzu's "The art of war: "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting," has a perfect analogy with the principles found in the word of God such as; Eph 6:11 "hold your ground against the strategies of the devil." Or Eph 6:13 "hold your ground in the day that evil attacks you" Don't always look for the easy way out, realize if you are going to live for God, there will be a battle and a fight. Paul said to Timothy in 1TI 1:18, 1TI 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. So that you can say in 2TI 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; A major victory can only be obtained by positive measures aimed at a decision, never by simply waiting on events. It is a common habit to blame life upon the environment. Environment modifies life but does not govern life. The soul is stronger than its surroundings. Thinking clearly and effectively is the greatest asset of any human being. So one of the great factors in the believer who is advancing spiritually is a phenomenal mental attitude.

This mental attitude is reflected by using the problem-solving devices of the PPOG. It is a system of thought you carry regardless of circumstances. It is the same consistency of thinking that provides true capacity for life, so that you face undeserved suffering, you are just as happy as when you are in fantastic prosperity. Doctrinal thoughts have been thought thousands of times but to make them truly ours, we must think them over and again until they take root in our personal experience. This leads us to Point 7 in our doctrine: The Mental Attitude can be a Source of Bondage or the Source of Liberation. Thinking is simply the talking of the soul with itself. Our mind can be a source of bondage and also the source of liberation. In Psa 119:43, the psalmist says And do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, For I wait for Thine ordinances. PSA 119:44 So I will keep Thy law continually, Forever and ever. PSA 119:45 And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Thy precepts. GAL 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Freedom is the right to be wrong, not the right to do wrong. The outward freedom that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward liberation to which we may have grown at a given moment. If this is a correct view of freedom, our chief energy must be concentrated on achieving liberation from within. And this means how you think about yourself. To be bound to the things of this world is bondage, to be free of them is true liberation and your mental attitude can be a friend of the soul or an enemy of the soul. If a believer's mind is on that which is eternal, his mental attitude and his intellect will grow. Spiritual winners are those who see that the spiritual is stronger than the material and that thoughts

rule the world. Thoughts lead on to purposes; Purposes go forth in action; Actions form habits; Habits decide character; And character fixes our destiny. Character is the result of two things, mental attitude and the way we spend our time. Remember that our life is what our thoughts make it. Most people think of their lives in terms of the pleasure or the fun they can have, or something they associate with happiness. However, the happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts. And that's you should make sure that you entertain no notions unsuitable to virtue and integrity. If you allow negative thoughts to get into your soul, they will produce strange results. Strange thoughts bring about strange deeds. HEB 13:9 "Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace," thought is a tremendous living force. And thought gains strength only by repetition. Thought molds your character and shapes your destiny. In MAT 22:42 thought determines your eternal destiny, "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" For example, from our thinking comes our motivation. From our motivation come our decisions. From our decisions comes our lifestyle. What we think depends upon our attitude toward Bible doctrine.

A. Priority number one in the Christian way of life must be Bible doctrine with emphasis on the mystery doctrine for the Church-age.

B. You concentrate on your number one priority, which means effective, Spirit-filled, perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine.

Because JOH 8:32 and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

C. You organize your life around your number one priority, your relationship with God through the study of His word.

D. Once you begin to organize your life around priority number one, then you come to organize your thinking around priority number one. "As a man thinks in his right lobe, so he is."

E. When you begin to organize your thinking around Bible doctrine, then not only do you have cognition, but you begin to advance on the broad front using the ten problem-solving devices of the PPOG, and you finally reach the objective of spiritual maturity.

Metabolized doctrine circulating in the soul through the filling of the Spirit is the basis for divine viewpoint thinking. You can have doctrine in your soul and be out of fellowship and be incapable of utilization of divine viewpoint. That is how you get back in fellowship as well. So, you have to learn doctrine before you can think doctrine. You have to think doctrine before you can apply doctrine. You live with your thoughts so be careful what they are.

Point 8. Rapport in the Royal Family Is Based on Divine Viewpoint in Thought and the Honor Code in Practice.

Rapport in the royal family of God is based on divine viewpoint. This is the greatest rapport that can exist, especially in light of the fact that no two of us are alike, no two of us will ever have the same personality or anything else, no two of us are equal, but there is a bona fide rapport. PHI 2:1-2 Since therefore there is encouragement in Christ, since there is comfort from virtue-love, since there is fellowship of the Spirit, since there is tenderesses and compassions, Bring to completion my happiness by thinking the same things, Happiness is a series of thoughts, not function or emotions. Perfect happiness is a thought, not an emotion. Emotion comes from thought, but thought is never derived from emotion. We can't love all believers with a personal love, so this refers to our impersonal love toward all, our relaxed mental attitude toward all as part of the royal family honor code. All true friendship is based upon thinking. And thinking is the source of honor and integrity.

PHI 2:3-5 "Do nothing motivated by contentiousness or ambitious pride, but with humility of mind [by means of grace orientation] let each of you keep on considering one another as more important than himself; do not merely be regarding your own personal interests, but also for the personal interests of others. Keep on thinking this [doctrine] within yourselves which was also resident in Christ Jesus,"

Since doctrine is the mind of Christ as per 1Co 2:16, our attitude towards doctrine determines our attitude toward TLJC and our viewpoint in life. Now, to have a mental attitude that Jesus Christ had while on earth sounds impossible because Christ was perfect and because He was unique.

So, Phi 2:5 "Keep on thinking this [keep on having this mental attitude] in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The mental attitude of our Lord Jesus Christ can be our mental attitude. Now, our Lord's development of power in His humanity came from mental attitude, not personality functioning. He was full of grace, grace orientation and doctrinal orientation, Joh 1:14. And so magnificent was the power of His mental attitude that when He was on the cross receiving the judgment for every sin, past, present and future, of every member of the human race..... He still had the happiness of God. PHI 3:15 says Therefore, as many as are spiritually mature, let us have this attitude or think objectively; and if in anything you have a different mental attitude, God will reveal that also to you; Col 3:2 "Keep thinking objectively about the things above. What your mental attitude is under normal circumstances should continue under great pressure or great emotional circumstances. If it's not, then as PHI 3:15 says.... if in anything you have a different mental attitude, God will reveal that also to you; God reveals your wrong mental attitude to you through the teaching of the pastor. And the problem is easy to solve. The problem solving devices are application skills of the spiritual life. This application goes in three directions: toward God, toward people, and toward self.

(1) Toward God, Fellowship with the Holy Spirit, Personal love toward God the Father, and occupation with Christ are the problem solving devices directed toward God.

(2) The problem solving devices directed toward people include: grace orientation, doctrinal orientation, and impersonal love for all mankind.

(3) The problem solving devices directed toward self include: rebound, a personal sense of destiny, doctrinal orientation, the faith-rest drill, sharing the happiness of God.

PHI 4:6-7 says Stop worrying about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the prosperity from God which transcends human comprehension shall garrison your right lobes and thinking by Christ Jesus."

PHI 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

Point 9, Giving is a mental attitude, 2Co 9:7-8. 2CO 9:6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Now, why does Paul say this? Because we are back to the importance of attitude. Giving graciously or sacrificially produces an attitude in the individual which allows God to pour more blessing to the one who gives. Giving produces capacity for receiving.

2CO 9:7 "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful or grace-oriented giver."

With this attitude, God will provide you with the money you need to give. You may not have a lot now, but if that's your attitude the Bible says God provides the money for you to do what is right.

2CO 9:8 "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;" God graciously provides extra finances for grace givers to give. 2CO 9:10 "Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food," We are the sower, God gives us the financial seed. 2CO 9:10 "Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness;" God supplies extra money to grace givers. Result, 2CO 9:11-12 "you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God." When we give, we're to fully supply the needs of God's people, but it is also overflowing in many expressions to God. Don't give from mental pressure or compulsion of emotions, for God loves a grace-oriented giver. You are not to give because someone embarrasses you, or because you make a pledge or tithe. Everything you give always comes from God. The person who gives with the proper mental attitude will always have more to give; his resources never dry up. In giving, the believer supplies the mental attitude, and God provides the rest. The person who has the right mental attitude is well kept in funds to express his attitude in worship. It is not what you give, but what you are thinking when you give that counts. A confident mental attitude is the divine viewpoint from the perception of Bible doctrine. However, giving is also for

your benefit. The correct attitude is that of David's in 1CH 29:14 "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee." Paul's attitude, 1CO 4:7 For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? Haggai's attitude, Hag 2:8 The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' declares the Lord of hosts. Our Lord's attitude LUK 6:38 "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." These doctrinal principles and having this mental attitude in the realm of giving will lead you to immense blessing in your life. Giving this mental attitude in the realm of giving is a vital principle for our benefit, our prosperity and our blessing. Paul said in PHI 4:17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. Look at 1CH 29:1-14 But I want you to notice David's attitude in 1CH 29:1... for the temple is not for man, but for the Lord God. Or again look at David's attitude in 1CH 29:2 "Now with all my ability I have provided for the house of my God. Then David's attitude again in 1CH 29:12 "Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone. Then there's the mental attitude test when it comes to giving, 1CH 29:17 "Since I know, O my God, that Thou triest the heart and delightest in uprightness [notice the test in the mental attitude concerning giving], I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Thy people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to Thee. So, David said 1CH 29:14 "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee. If all things come from God, then why does God want us to even give to Him? Why does He desire for us to give graciously, and not only to Him, but even to others who are in need? Even the Apostle Paul brought out the fact that all things come from God in the New Testament, when he reminded us in 1Co 4:7 that everything that we have been given has been given to us in some way by God. A lot of times we think we are something and that we have received it or earned it, that's not what the Bible says. David also said in Psa 24:1 "The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it." What about the money and the riches on Earth? Hag 2:8, the Lord says it all belongs to Him. Objectively in the mental attitude of your soul, if all this is true, and it is, if everything belongs to the Lord, even all the silver and all the gold belongs to the Lord, if everything that's in the Earth belongs to the Lord and the cattle on the thousand hills and every beast of the field, then why does God even call us to give graciously and sacrificially? We know that He does because passage after passage in the Word of God tells us that God wants you to have a gracious attitude, not when it just comes to giving in a local assembly, but giving to people in your life that God brings in your path who have legitimate needs and who need help. Giving to those who provide doctrinal information, such as the pastor, or those who work behind the scenes to make the word of God available, Gal 6:6. Giving to those who are of the household of faith and are in need, Gal 6:10. You see this is an attitude. It may be a sacrifice on your part to give them that help or fulfill that need, but if you don't, you'll be shocked at what the Word of God actually says. In fact, you can improve your finances and your financial blessing, which even helps you to improve your own personal life as well as your spiritual walk. Now, if you believe the Word of God, the Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." (Act 16:31).

The Bible also says that if you sin, and you name and cite your sin and confess your sin to God that God will forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. The Bible teaches that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" in Romans 8:1. The Bible says that in Heb 8:12 and 10:17 "God doesn't remember our sins anymore." The Bible says that He'll never leave us or forsake us in Hebrews 13:5. If those passages are true, and they are, and you believe that they are true, then it follows common sense and follows spiritual thinking that you would believe what the Word of God has to say concerning anything else in life. If you are going to trust God for the greater, which is your eternal destiny and where you're going to spend eternity, then you should ask yourself, "Do I trust God concerning such an important subject as my finances or my financial blessing?" When we don't give graciously and sacrificially, that produces an attitude that stops the blessing of God from coming into our lives. How many of God's people offer things to God that cost them nothing, those things being leftover. This is a reason that

many people have a lack of blessing in their lives in many realms. Giving reflects our attitude of thankfulness and gratitude, as Paul says in 2CO 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! What is this gift? God so loved the World that He gave His uniquely born Son. What did this cost God? His Son and His life. Therefore, giving is to reflect our attitude and gratitude towards all that God has done for us.

Do You Have A Positive Or Negative Mental Attitude

10-22-00

Our corrected translation of Phi 3:15 says "Therefore, as many as are spiritually mature, let us have this attitude," With that first phrase we spent 32 hours on the doctrine of mental attitude. The next part of the verse Should read "In fact, if in anything you have a different attitude God will reveal that also to you;" Even in a church like Philippi there were those who sat under the teachings of the Apostle Paul and Epaproditus who were not like-minded and who had a different attitude then those who were excited, dedicated and devoted to the plan of God. There will always be those who in like in Luk 14:18-20, have bought a piece of land and need to go out and look at it; or have bought five yoke of oxen, and are going to try them out; or have married, and for that reason they cannot come or cannot carry through or persevere.

Phi 3:15 "Therefore, as many as are spiritually mature, let us have this attitude or think objectively; In fact, if you have a different mental attitude,"

This means to hold different opinions because of mental attitude, to have a different attitude in something. When we advance through different stages of spiritual growth, we cannot go forward unless we have the proper mental attitude. Having this proper mental attitude we learn how to handle thought testing, people testing, system testing and disaster testing. People testing can come in two categories.

1. In personal love or admiration, where the one we love can control our life and provide unhappiness, unless we have attained at least spiritual self-esteem, and function with the ten problem solving devices. Many times, in wanting to please the one we love personally, we find we are being a different person and not following our ordinary function.
2. In personal hatred or resentment, when the object of our antagonism or irritation has control of our life or happiness, unless we have advanced to spiritual adulthood. Under the Pre-designed Plan of God, God designed His plan so that our happiness will always reside in us, and we do not need to depend on people or things for our happiness.

In system testing the authority may give unfair and unjust treatment. This can come from management, a senior officer, a coach, a professor, government bureaucracy, the husband, the parents, the pastor, the deacons, etc. The policy may be unreasonable, or may conflict with normal living or with our own personal norms and standards, or it may be an ignorant, though still enforceable policy. There may be a conflict between our personal life and the objectives.

This proper mental attitude also means learning how to handle disaster testing. Before the believer reaches maturity, there will be at least one or two major disasters in the life. How the believer handles these determines whether he accelerates his spiritual growth or retreats and goes backward. There are two categories of disaster testing.

1. Personal disaster testing is designed as suffering for blessing for acceleration of momentum, or warning of cosmic involvement, in which case divine discipline becomes involved.
2. Historical disaster, collective disaster, or national disaster testing is related to the bad decisions of others in which we are involved by association.

The point is that we must learn to handle these problems or else the second half of verse 15 will be true about our own lives "and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;" The word "different" is the key here, it means different then what is mentioned in the first part of the verse. Really it means "to have a different attitude in something other than the plan of God." Paul addressed this verse to the Philippians, many of whom had reached different stages of spiritual adulthood and are now being challenged to move to the next objective which is ultra supergrace. Paul knew the situation in Philippi and had a complete report on the situation in the local church there. Paul had discovered a rather tragic thing. In the absence of their pastor Epaproditus, there had been sort of a power grab and there had been some bad feelings and people were beginning to think, not in terms of divine viewpoint, but in their reaction to each other. There are those who are striving for power, fighting with each other. Sects and cliques were becoming formed, people were taking sides. We will see that in Phi 4:2 with two women who were causing problems, one who had a trend toward lasciviousness or loose living, the other who had a

trend toward legalism. Unfortunately, because the believers at Philippi were not taking a doctrinal stand, they were in danger of becoming like the church at Corinth. 1Co 1:10-15 "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, that no man should say you were baptized in my name." God even uses this in 1Co 11:18-19 "For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part, I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you." Back in Phi 3:15, some had a different mental attitude. They were not thinking on the basis of what the Bible says, objective thinking. They were thinking according the flesh, subjective thinking. They were looking at people and the weakness of their flesh and 2Co 5:16 forbids that they were thinking in terms of their reactions in life. They were allowing Satan and the kingdom of darkness to cause division and stop their work. There is no one who knows the value of causing divisions more than Satan. Our Lord even warned us about this in Mar 3:24-25, "And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." The issue is how we observe things, it is our reaction or response. Reaction is a negative attitude toward someone. While response is a positive attitude. We will never wear that mantle of supergrace or ultra supergrace and have the intensification of happiness and experience that resurrection life as long as there is any malfunction in the mental attitude.

All of us, at some time in our life have had an opinion based upon reacting to someone. But, we break out of it through the intake of doctrine and spiritual growth. So, there comes a time when you break through that maturity barrier and this becomes a test again...what is your attitude? Because that is what the Lord is looking at, Attitude!

1Ch 28:9 "For the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts."

Pro 16:2 "All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the motives."

Many at Philippi were thinking in terms of their reactions in life. By doing so they were allowing Satan and the kingdom of darkness to cause division and to try and stop the work at Philippi. Emphasis on people rather than on Bible doctrine had destroyed unity among members of the royal family of God, the body of Christ. Paul dealt with this in 1Co 12:22-25 and in Rom 16:17-18 which reads "Now I urge you brethren, be alert for those believers who are causing divisions and apostasies contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; in fact, separate yourself from them. For such believers are slaves to their own emotions, and by smooth and flattering speech, they deceive the right lobes of the ignorant." Back in Phi 3:15 when it says "the God will reveal that also", it means God is the ultimate source but the revelation comes through the Bible, the immediate source, the canon of Scripture. That is the means by which He has chosen to reveal everything. He does this through the joints of the body who are the pastor-teachers, Eph 4:16, Col 2:19. This falls back again on the function of the local church, the academic discipline which we have studied so extensively, by which it is communicated to you. Remember God is in charge of His church. Look at 1Co 12:7 "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." 1Co 12:11-18 "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." Under the conditions of positive volition toward doctrine, God reveals through that doctrine, through the daily function of

perception, metabolization and application of doctrine, if you have an attitude that needs to be dealt with for your own benefit.

The daily function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine forms the basis for your thinking by which you avoid building mental attitudes on reaction to people in life, situations in life. When the believer's thinking does not line up with divine viewpoint as revealed in the word of God, there are two ways his mental attitude can be corrected to agree with divine viewpoint.

1. The easy way: The daily function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine.
2. The hard way: The administration of divine discipline to the negative believer.

Some stage of discipline often awakens the reversionistic believer to his true condition, at which time he has an option. He can opt for reversion recovery or divine discipline eventuating in the sin unto death, one or the other. We never win with a bad mental attitude toward anyone, life is too short. So the entire verse Phi 3:15 "Therefore, as many as are spiritually mature, let us have this attitude or think objectively; In fact, if you have a different mental attitude, the God will reveal that also to you;" Now that puts us right back in the saddle for the command to advance to ultra supergrace which we see in verse 16.

The Doctrine of Walking and Persevering in the Christian Way of Life

10-29-00

In the New Testament there are different Greek words that are used for "walk." "Peripateo" means to walk, progress, to regulate one's life, conduct oneself, to be occupied with. It is used for literal walking in Mat 4:18 but it is used primarily for the function of the believer living in the Pre-Designed Plan of God. It is used for both the spiritual and carnal believer. "Stoicheo" means to march in step, in rank, walk in agreement, function in a system. It is used in the New Testament primarily for functioning in a system and advancing in that system to spiritual maturity. "Poreuomai" means to walk, pursue on a journey, to follow one so that you become his disciple, proceed, travel, to conduct oneself in a certain manner or to depart. 2Ti 4:10 "for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted [poreuomai] me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia." "Anastrepho" originally meant to upset, overrun, or to associate. Its figurative meaning was to behave or to function in terms of human conduct, the practice of principles, to turn back, to turn oneself about. It is used for the conduct and the modus operandi of the unbeliever in Eph 2:3 "Among them we too all formerly walked or lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

It is used for motivation for Christian integrity in Heb 13:18 "Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things." It is used for life and conduct in the PPOG in 2Pe 3:11 "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness," "Orthopedeo" means to walk straight, used for a legalistic manner of living and resultant hypocrisy. The Pattern for the Spiritual Walk: the Great Power Experiment of the Hypostatic Union. The pattern for the spiritual walk is given in the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union of our Lord. This is important to understand because of passages like 1Jo 2:6 "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." The humanity of Christ was impeccable during His thirty-three years of the First Advent. He remained absolutely perfect because He resided inside the PPOG for His life, functioning under the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit and God's perfect happiness. Through the virgin pregnancy and virgin birth, our Lord's humanity was born without the genetically formed old sin nature, thus excluding any imputation of Adam's original sin at our Lord's birth. This means He was born, as Adam was created, perfect in a state of impeccability. Because of the availability and utilization of divine omnipotence, our Lord's humanity continued in the state of impeccability under maximum temptation and pressure. The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit inside the PPOG empowered our Lord's humanity to resist every temptation which was far beyond anything we could imagine. His state of impeccability was absolutely necessary for our Lord to go to the Cross. The justice of God the Father poured out on our Lord Jesus Christ every sin that was and ever will be committed in the human race and judged them.

The First Advent is called an "experiment" in the sense of a demonstration of the power of God the Holy Spirit and a demonstration that any believer who advances to maturity, acquiring God's Happiness (+H), can endure anything in life. With the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit and +H, our Lord was able to endure the Cross. The problem for us is that the Church Age believer continues to possess the old sin nature after salvation and so continues to sin. However, the pattern of the believer's sinfulness or carnality depends upon the amount of time he spends in the cosmic system instead of in the PPOG, or more simply where he does most of his walking or marching. Believers can walk without being under discipline, but you cannot "march" without being under discipline. Being in fellowship is the only way we can execute God's plan. Walking describes the purpose of living in the PPOG to glorify God in the great power experiment of the Church Age. Therefore, we are command walk in a worthy way in ITh 2:12 "So that you may walk in a manner worthy of God who elected you into His kingdom and glory." This is a general reference to the fulfillment of the PPOG. If we are going to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord after we believe in Christ, then we must be inside the PPOG, operate in integrity, filled with the Spirit, and expose ourselves to the teaching of the Word of God. The faith-rest drill is also a state of walking, 2Co 5:7. This is the poise of the Christian life. It is the control of your own life under God's plan for your life. 3Jo 4 "I was very pleased

discovered that some of you children keep walking by means of doctrine even as we have received a mandate from the Father." This is a mandate to keep walking, to keep learning doctrine, to keep advancing spiritually in the Christian way of life. There are also negative walking passages. Psychotic living in Satan's is called walking in Phi 3:18-19 "For many [believers] keep walking, concerning whom I have often told you, even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ. Whose termination is destruction [the sin unto death], whose God is their emotions, whose fame comes by means of dishonor, who keep on thinking about earthly things." The same concept is also in IJo 1: 6 "If we contend that we have fellowship with Him p walking in darkness, we lie and do not live the truth." Walking is also used as a warning against the cosmic system.

Joh 8:12 "Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Life in the cosmic system is called walking in darkness, Joh 11:9-10 "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." We are to walk by means of the things prepared by God for us in eternity past, such as the problem solving devices.

The Importance of understanding Spiritual Walking. Walking has a double connotation in the spiritual realm in the New Testament.

First, the utilization of divine power to advance in the Christian life.

Second, the utilization of human energy linked to the old sin nature which results in retrogression or reversion.

Hence, these two categories of walking are related to Church- age believers in advance or in retreat. To advance in the spiritual walk and be a winner, there must be residence, function, and momentum inside the PPOG. To retreat in the spiritual life and be a loser, there must be residence, function, and retrogression in Satan's cosmic system. Therefore, walking denotes numerous functions, both pro and con, regarding the spiritual life. If we are not marching or living (stoicheo), we are in danger of walking in the opposite direction. Many believers stop marching and withdraw from doctrine when the doctrine gets difficult, as noted in Joh 6:66. These believers are not marching but have entered into a state of being Absent Without Leave or AWOL. There are nine principals regarding being AWOL:

1. Going AWOL is reversing or turning in the opposite way, or a state of being turned. As believers we were designed to live in God's plan for our life or the PPOG.
2. Going AWOL is regressing to a former state, habit, belief, or practice.
3. Going AWOL is a reversal of your priorities, attitudes and affections which is why it can also change your lifestyle and personality.
4. Going AWOL is failing to execute the PPOG.
5. Going AWOL is maxim control of the old sin nature over the life of the believer.
6. Going AWOL is failure to attain the three stages of spiritual growth.
7. Going AWOL is retrogression because of negative volition toward the mystery doctrine of the Church-age, which both defines and reveals God's plan, will, and purpose for the believer's life.
8. Going AWOL is characterized by negative volition to doctrine, being influenced by evil, being in perpetual carnality causing a life of perpetual discipline.
9. Going AWOL is a term used for rejecting absolute truth, and drawing into or accepting relative truth.

Our Lord walked in the prototype PPOG; we are to walk in the operational type PPOG. In Gal 6:16 we are told "And those who will walk [stoicheo, march] by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God." Notice that there are rules to walk by, we cannot just walk any way that we want to and sincerity is not an issue. There are "not" all kinds of ways to walk, Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal, Baptist, there is only one way to walk the "stoicheo" way, which is marching according to the Word of God. This means to march in step, march in rank, walk in agreement with, function in a system, and follow a leader from the ranks. This actually connotes the unity that should exist in the body of Christ. There is no union stronger or purer than spiritual fellowship in Christ Gal 5:25 "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk [stoicheo] by the Spirit." So this word for "walk" tells us that we are to march in step with the Spirit. To

march in rank with the Spirit, in agreement with the Spirit, to function in a system with the Spirit and to follow our leader by the Spirit. Stoicheo is also used for salvation by faith in Christ, (referring to walking by faith in Rom 4:12. This points to the fact that there is only one accurate way to salvation. Stoicheo is also used for the rules of the new spiritual species in Gal 6:16 and Phi 3. By way of analogy, in literal walking, you are moving forward. In spiritual walking, you are advancing in the PPOG. In literal walking, you are using physical energy. In spiritual walking, you are using divine energy, i.e., the Omnipotence of God. Believers who walk this way are not quitting or going AWOL and walking in the opposite direction. The word "stoicheo" means to march under a command with other people marching with you. To perform maneuvers under command. The emphasis here is on discipline and persevering. No one ever advances apart from the discipline of Bible teaching.

The Doctrine of Pseudo Spirituality

11-05-00

Phi 3:17 say, "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us." The passage begins with the word "brethren" which is addressed to the Royal Family of God or to every Church-age Believer. This verse introduces the principle that there is someone for us to follow. Someone to lead us and to communicate the Word of God. With this we see the importance of a pastor who understands the original languages, which is the only way that he, as a pastor, can be under the authority of the Word of God. No pastor is free from the authority of the Word, just as no congregation is free from the authority of the pastor. There is a chain of command and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince Ruler of the Church, has ordained the Canon of scripture to be the source and the content of His thinking, by which there is authority transmitted to the communicator or the pastor-teacher. When the Canon, in its original languages is not understood, there is a bypass there. A pastor must go daily into the Word, for his instructions, growth, for his authority, and no pastor should ever pick up the word of God without realization of the fact that here are his orders from the highest headquarters, 2Ti 2:15.

In Phi 3:17 we next have the phrase for the Royal Family to "join in." and it denotes what habitually occurs when the believer is perpetually under the teaching of a pastor who is communicating truth. That is the pastor who is perpetually studying and teaching the Word of God. Next in Phi 3:17 we have be following my example. This is the Greek word "Summimetai" and it literally means co-imitators or fellow-imitators, and therefore we are right back to our main verb in verse 16, and the subject of "marching together." Paul was encouraging the Philippians, (members of the Royal Family) to be imitators together of his example. Paul gives a further explanation in verse 18, when he says "For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ," So, we will translate the first part of Phi 3:17 "Brethren (members of the royal family) be co-imitators." Being a co-imitator or fellow-imitator does not mean to be a clone or the stereotype Christian, this is a challenge to fulfill our calling of going on to supergrace and ultra-supergrace. This passage continues the theme of Phi 3:14 "I keep on pressing on toward the objective for the purpose of the reward belonging to the upward call of God [Father], by means of Christ Jesus." Paul is saying, all of you, be fellow-imitators of himself follow the doctrine that he is teaching so that you too can reach the objective of living the spiritual life. There isn't any better historical example for us concerning this than Paul. That is one of the reasons why the Holy Spirit filled the New Testament with that one man. He dominates everything after the gospels. He dominates the book of Acts from chapter 13 on. At least thirteen of the epistles came out of his pen and out of his heart and out of his mind and out of his life. We have an invitation in Phi 3:17 to pattern ourselves after him, in so many ways, he shows us how living the spiritual life can be lived by fallen man. That's why he said to the Corinthians twice, "Be followers of me." That's why he wrote to the Thessalonians, 1Th 1:6 "You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,"

The Christian life is a process of pursuing Christ's likeness. That in simple terms is the direction of the whole matter of experiential sanctification. We are to become more and more like Jesus Christ. We cannot become like Christ until we give Him more time. To His disciples our Lord Jesus Christ said Come with me, walk with me, eat and sleep with me, that was their college course for three years. He chose them, the Bible says, Mar 3:14 "And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him," He said, "Follow Me." that particular command has not been replaced or improved upon. To Peter and Andrew in Mat 4:19 "He said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." The next verse says they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. He says to all of us Mat 16:24 "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." He said in Joh 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;" The whole matter of the Christian life and Christianity is this matter of following Christ to become more and more like Him. The most significant passage to us is the Word of God the Father in Romans 8:29, which records for us that God the Father's purpose in saving us was that we might be conformed to the image of His Son. Christ called us to be like Him. This should be the goal of

every Christian, to become more and more like Jesus Christ. With one simple statement, Paul reduced the Christian life to its lowest common denominator, Phi 3:13 "constantly forgetting the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously to what lies ahead," If we're going to become like Christ, we have to know what Christ was like. If we want to know what Christ is like we go to the Bible because this is the revelation of Christ.

The Old Testament sets the scene for Him, creates the need for Him, announces that He is coming. The gospels record His arrival, the book of Acts records the immediate impact, and the epistles delineate the significance of His life and ministry, the Revelation talks about the consummation. But Christ is the focus of it all. As we study the Word of God, we study it in order that we might know what Christ is like. We are also dependent on the spiritual work of changing us into the image of Christ which is the work of the Holy Spirit. A Spirit-filled believer who lets the Word about Christ dwell in him richly is one who progresses toward the goal. In our passage Phi 3:17 we must be careful however, the idea that we are suppose to imitate those who seem to be spiritual is absolutely incorrect. We must beware of pseudo-spirituality and personality imitation. This imitation does not imply loss of individuality or personality. This is where many Christians get into trouble, they become involved with personality imitation, they mimic they lose their individuality. Character transformation is justified but not personality imitation. When Christians suppress their own individuality and personality they are no longer normal. We cannot imitate someone else and use their individuality and personality and call it spirituality.

The book of Hebrews say the same thing as Paul said in Philippians, Heb 13:7 "Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith [not their personality, or mannerisms, or life-style, but their pistis, their doctrine]." We are not to copy the lifestyle of Paul or of a pastor or of any Christian leader or anyone we deem to be spiritual. Rom 3:23 tells us why "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," Every apostle had an Old Sin Nature just as every pastor does. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses, we are to imitate Paul's message not his personal life. As Church-age believers, we are to copy or imitate the doctrinal teaching of Paul, Peter, John, and not the personality or the lifestyle of these great men. Imitation then is used in the sense of learning. Imitation of someone else's personality is loss of personality. To the extent you imitate someone else, you lose your individuality. So we are to imitate the doctrine not the one who gives the doctrine. Paul's skill in the mystery doctrine of the Church-age is definitely something we need imitate. Many believers are distracted from the plan of God through imitation or concentration on personality, lifestyle, prohibitions, emotions, and ascetics. There are all sorts of imitations that Christians get themselves involved in which serves to become a distraction in the Christian way of life. The Sabbath observance, tithing, morality apart from virtue, or ritual without reality. All of these are examples of Pseudo-spirituality and most arise out of legalism. Legalism is defined as the strictness in conforming to a code of deeds, observances, and dead works as a means of self-justification or self-promotion. Legalism is spirituality by works and taboos and originates from a combination of self-righteous arrogance and subjective self-justification. Some of the systems of pseudo-spirituality include the following. Spirituality by personality imitation begins by creating a role model out of another person--getting your eyes on people instead of getting your eyes on Christ. It involves imitating someone whom you admire. It involves associating with the superficial mannerisms of that believer rather than having the filling of the Spirit. Speaking in a certain way with stereotype clichés, holy language. God uses all different types of personality, and you do not have to create a "spiritual" personality. Peter was known for being impulsive. Andrew-open-minded. James-fanatical. John-passionate. Philip-inquisitive. Bartholomew - composed. Matthew - humble. Thomas - pessimism. James {the son} of Alphabets-quietness. Simon the Zealot - strong-willed. Judas (son of James)-intense. Judas-traitor.

Then of course, the apostle Paul was a genius and a prepared man, the greatest intellect and eloquence of his day, but he was not arrogant about anything. Spirituality by yielding which is a false interpretation of the verb "paristemi" in Rom 6:13-19 and 12:1. The Greek word paristemi means to place yourself at someone's disposal. We place ourselves under orders to God by the filling of the Spirit through rebound when necessary and the cognition of doctrine on a daily basis. Yielding is the day-by-day function of the spiritual skills in your life. Pseudo-spirituality through yielding assumes that the believer is spiritual

because of some overt act of dedication like coming forward at the end of a church service. Rededication and reaffirmation of faith can be blasphemy when performed by a Christian. True spirituality is the filling of the Holy Spirit, placing the believer at the disposal of the Lord every day through the function of the spiritual skills. Spirituality by taboos is something that is prescribed by society as improper and unacceptable; hence, a practice excluded from social intercourse. While a taboo is something forbidden by culture, tradition, or social usage, it becomes a false system of spirituality when such prohibitions are established by legalistic Christians. In this false system of spirituality, a taboo is a problem established by legalism and not really a true issue in the Christian life. Popular taboos of legalism include: do not drink, dance, do not go to movies, smoke or gamble. These things can cause health or social problems but they do not indicate a lack of the filling of the Spirit. Taboos must be regarded in terms of a certain amount of self-restraint under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the four laws of Christian behavior apply.

1. The law of liberty. You have the right to do certain things which will not cause you to sin or enter into carnality, 1Co 8:4, 9. This is the law all believers operate in when they are filled with the Spirit. The law of freedom and liberty is freedom to serve the Lord and freedom to produce divine good. With this law of freedom we have to be careful when we are around people who might be corrupted by something that is meaningless to us.

1Co 8:9 "But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."

2. The law of love. This is the function of impersonal love to avoid offending weaker believers and becoming a distraction to their spiritual growth. 1Co 8:13. There comes a time when the law of love will take precedence over the law of freedom or liberty. The law of freedom is directed toward self whereas the law of love is directed toward others.

This means that there are times when we will impose upon ourselves certain things that we don't normally observe. We may refrain from certain things that are legitimate in order to be of help to other believers in their spiritual growth. 1Th 5:22 "abstain from all appearance of evil."

2Co 6:3 "Give no cause for offense in anything, in order that the ministry be not discredited,"

3. The law of expediency is directed toward the unbeliever, 1Co 9:18ff. The believer avoids doing certain things so that the unbeliever is not prevented from seeing the true issue of Christ.

In the interest of witnessing for Christ, the believer refrains from doing certain things because they prevent the unbeliever from seeing the true issue in salvation--to believe in Christ for salvation. 1Co 9:18ff. The law of expediency says make an issue out of the Gospel and nothing else.

4. The law of supreme sacrifice is the highest law of Christian behavior. It sometimes requires the believer to forsake even normal living and legitimate function in life, in order to serve our Lord in a special capacity, 1Co 9:1-15. This is a law where the believer sets aside normal and legitimate functions of life to progress the plan of God.

These laws are not taboos which reject the enabling power of the Holy Spirit inside the Pre-designed Plan of God. Taboos reject the doctrine that the Christian way of life is a supernatural way of life, and therefore, demands a supernatural means of execution. Taboos ignore the principle that spiritual skills must precede production skills for the performance of divine good. Taboos ignore the fact that no two believers have attained the same status of spiritual growth; therefore, there are differences of modus operandi among believers. Another system of false spirituality is spirituality by respectability which is the false contention that a believer is spiritual because his sins are more respectable than the sins of someone else. This is arrogant self-righteousness involved in arrogant self-vindication or self-justification of one's own sins while condemning the sins of others. This is the story of, not the prodigal son, but his elder brother. After the prodigal son came back and rebounded and was restored by his father we see in Luk 15:28 "But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his Father came out and {began} entreating him." The believer who is arrogant hates to see other believers prosper. The believer who is humble and has true humility is delighted to see other people successful and make it. When you cannot stand to see other people prosper and become successful then you're in trouble. The older brother was jealous and he became angry because his Father had treated his younger brother in grace and therefore he sulked and would not go into the house. In fact, his Father came out and begged him to come in. God's attitude when believers have rebounded is to

forgive them. God the Father entreats us to have compassion on other believers, that's grace orientation. Compassion is a gracious system of thinking. God will never fail to be compassionate toward us.

Lam 3:22-23, "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness."

Even if a person is under divine discipline, the divine attitude is one of restoration and compassion. We can become a legalist and become involved with all of the subtle legalistic teachings that are being peddled today or we can learn the value of grace orientation and compassion. The Lord has not called you to give up things and sacrifice for Him, He has called you to grow in his grace and knowledge and be gracious and compassionate toward others.

Mat 9:13 "But go and learn what {this} means, 'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

We should have the same mental attitude of grace which was manifested by The Lord Jesus Christ. The older brother failed to see that he was a sinner, and he also failed to understand that God has provided salvation for all sinners who truly repent. What the older brother did not think he needed (repentance and salvation) he resisted and resented in others, and thus he could not, he would not share in the celebration. His self-righteousness is such that he expects, and even demands God's approval and blessings. He was living in the false system of spirituality by respectability which is the false contention that a believer is spiritual because his sins are more respectable than the sins of someone else. The sad thing is we never know what happened to the older brother. This is a story of the grace of God. The gates of death will never shut on a person until the gates of grace have opened for him over and over again. Today your Father views you from His throne in heaven and runs to you with the message of forgiveness and compassion. And says as our Lord did in LUK 7:47 "Your sins which are many, have been forgiven,"

Walking According to His Pattern

11-12-00

So far our corrected translation of Phi 3:17 says, "Brethren [members of the royal family], be co-imitators of me," From this we saw that there was a danger of entering into pseudo-spirituality as it relates to becoming co-imitators. We are not to take away our individuality, but are to imitate by way of the doctrine which is being taught. The next phrase in verse 17 says "and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us." This phrase introduces the principle that we must select our Pastor on the content of his message, his spiritual progress and not on the basis of his personality, attractiveness or his personal friendship with us. A Pastor who happens to be in our vicinity may not necessarily be our right-pastor. In this phrase we have the Greek verb "skopeite" which means to regard in the sense of looking for, to mark, select, observe and have respect for, to concentrate on. It means to select very carefully and respect whoever is our right-pastor in the Church-age. It has the connotation of choosing your right pastor-teacher and then respecting him and willingly being under his authority. This is the same principle that we have studied in 1Ti 5:17, which in the corrected translation says "Those pastor-teachers who have ruled well with the result that they keep ruling honorably, they must be considered worthy of double honor, most of all those who work hard to the point of exhaustion in the study of the word and the teaching of doctrine." Then it goes on to say 1Ti 5:18-20 "For the Scripture says [Deu 25:4], "You shall not muzzle the bull while he is threshing," also [Deu 24:15] The laborer is worthy of his wages. Against a pastor-teacher do not receive an accusation against a pastor-teaches except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in the sin of receiving or making accusations, reprimand in the presence of all, in order that the rest of the congregation also may have respect, not fear but respect."

We are to concentrate, not on the person who teaches, but on their content of what they teach. This falls under the principle it's not the man, it's the message that we are to observe. This can also apply to any mature believer who also becomes an example to the younger believers as we see in Tit 2:3-5 "Older women [that is mature women] likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored." Many individuals ask how to choose a church or a local assembly? The answer is to observe the message from the pastor. In fact, one of the most important decisions in the Christian way of life is the selection of the right pastor. This is because when God gave the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, there was no fixed personality that He looked for. When you select a pastor, you do not look for someone with whom you are compatible with or someone with whom you are friendly with, or who is sweet, lovable, etc. You look for someone who can teach the word of God and who has followed the apostle's mystery doctrine. You look for their dedication and devotion to doctrine, one who teaches as the early church did on a continual basis. As we have noted The Lord Jesus Christ taught doctrine every day, Luk 19:47 "And He was teaching daily in the temple; and the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him," The early church met daily and they were becoming strong in doctrine and increasing in number, Act 16:5. The apostle Paul said in Acts 20:31 "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears." It's very sad in our day an age that there is such an attack upon the daily teaching, perception, metabolization and application of doctrine.

It may be difficult to accept a pastor because it may be someone whose personality is entirely different from yours, but it is his doctrinal content that matters not his personality. Too many believers are under the influence of wrong pastors and wrong friends mainly because of sentimentality and that great enemy called emotion. So Paul says Phi 3:17..."and observe or honor or respect those who walk according to the pattern you have in us." This is not just a warning, but a command to Church-age believers to select a pastor on the basis of the number one priority, Bible doctrine or the teaching of the Word of God. You never advance because you have rapport for a pastor, or, because he says nice things to you and about you. If you are ever going to grow up spiritually, you have to find as your right pastor, someone who takes his

orders from the Word. Whoever is our right pastor, we must find him, get under their authority as quickly as possible. Never forget the principle behind Eph 4:11-12 "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastor-teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service or the work of the ministry, to the building up of the body of Christ;" So Paul says in Phi 3:17 and observe or honor or respect those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. The verb to walk is "peripateo" which means to walk, to live, to progress, and to conduct oneself. It is not like the word "stoicheo" which means to march in ranks, or to advance in ranks. It's one thing to walk, it's another thing to march. We are privileged when we are able to march with others who think the same things, maintain the same virtue-love, are united in soul, and our concentrating on the same objective, Phi 2:2. There are times that we must walk and not march because we must bare our own burdens, Gal 6:5 For each one shall bear his own load. There are times when we face sorrows and hardships, grief and burdens, but we learn from the Bible that life must go on, we have to continue walking. God has a purpose for us being alive which includes growing in grace, spiritual momentum, utilizing the ten problem solving devices, executing the PPOG, In short.... glorifying God. Inevitably, our comfort in time of sorrow must come from the Lord, from the inventory of Bible doctrine in our soul and the application of the word of God, we cannot be people dependent. Ecc 3:4 is a very important verse in relationship to this problem, "There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. There is a time to mourn, and a time to dance." Our problem often times is that our timing is off. When our heart is broken and we are around others who are laughing and enjoying life, there are three things we must remember.

1. Do not resent them.
2. Do not hate them.
3. Do not impose the heavy burden of your sorrow and grief on them.

Our sorrow is a private matter between us and the Lord. There are times that we just have to peripateo, walk alone with the Lord, and bear our own burdens. As we continue in Phi 3:17 Brethren [members of the royal family], be co-imitators of me, and be having respect for the same ones, who walk according to the pattern you have in us. At some point the believer becomes aware that there is such a thing as his right pastor and a pattern to follow. He becomes aware of what his right pastor should have in essence, a constant, self disciplined, dedicated student of the word of God. The pastor will make mistakes like everyone else, but he will consistently grow. In his consistent growth, he will lead the congregation to his stage of growth as he moves along. Paul is the pattern of advance to supergrace by breaking the maturity barrier, and Paul is the example of going from supergrace to ultra-supergrace. Paul and Timothy had their times of extreme failure but they followed the same pattern. Paul and Timothy recovered, broke the maturity barrier and went into supergrace, and went from supergrace to ultra supergrace. That's what is meant by "us". The word pattern is the noun "tupon" it means an example, a pattern a model. Just as you have us, (Paul and Timothy) for a pattern or a model. The entire verse says Phi 3:17 "Brethren [members of the royal family], be co-imitators of me, and be having respect for the same ones, who constantly walk according to the pattern you have in us. (Paul and Timothy)." The Psalmist said on one occasion Psa 119:67 "Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Thy word." Even as amazing as it may seem, even the Son of God learned obedience through the things He suffered, Heb 5:8. There are certain lessons that are learned in obedience, and they are taught severely. Not all lessons that lead us to obedience are easy to come by. In the Christian life, there are certain things that are learned through the hardship and the disappointment and the disablements of life that no other ordeal can teach us. We find ourselves constantly running from them, rather than saying, "Thank the Lord for them", I'm ready to walk it alone with you Father! Psa 23:4 "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." The Psalmist says, "It is good for me that I was afflicted." We must admit, the best lessons and the most permanent lessons learned in life are learned when it is the end of the road, no place to turn, crushing and brutal. Then we learn. It is at that point that we can really enter into the sufferings of Christ and learn to walk with Him. The epistles of the New Testament are a copybook which teaches us how to execute God's purpose, will and plan for our lives. As a right Pastor he studies and teaches and should as 2Ti 4:2 says, "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."

1Ti 4:10-12 "For this reason, we [pastors] work hard to the point of exhaustion, and we hang in there tough [keep on contending], because we have confidence in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Many Walk in the Opposite Direction

11-19-00

Philippians 3:18 teaches the principle that no matter how far we go in the spiritual life, there will always be people in our lives who will be used by the kingdom of darkness to try and hinder our spiritual growth. As we have seen in Phi 3:19 "Brethren [members of the royal family], be co-imitators of me, and be having respect for the same ones, who constantly walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things." Here in this context we have opposition from reversionists. A reversionist is someone who turns in the opposite way from the Pre-Designed Plan of God by some system of false belief. We see this also in 2Ti 4:1-4 "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths." Their negative volition toward doctrine causes them to be under the control of the kingdom of darkness and what 1Ti 6:4 teaches, "he has received blind arrogance and understands nothing [of doctrine]; but he has a morbid obsession about controversies and verbal conflicts out of which arise or originate jealousy discord speaking evil [SOT] evil speculations or presumptuous sins."

As believers we were designed to execute the PPOG but in reversionism we turn the other way and cannot be distinguished from our pre-salvation status. We are believers thinking human viewpoint. A reversionist is someone who reverts to a former state, habit, belief, or a practice they use to live in before salvation, Eph 2:2, 2Pe 2:22. When we get involved in reversionism, it is a reversal of our priorities, attitudes, affections, the object of our personal love accompanied by the destruction of our impersonal love, and the change of our lifestyle and personality. The process of reverting begins with implosion or exploding within by yielding to the temptations of the sin nature. Then implosion leads to explosion or fragmentation, and fragmentation unchecked leads to reversionism. The reversionistic believer is classified as a loser in the Christian life, they do not lose their salvation; that's impossible. But by failing to execute the PPOG, the loser loses his escrow blessings for time and eternity. They have lost their first love and have become lukewarm, Rev 2:4; 3:16. Reversionism is recession from any stage of spiritual growth through negative volition to doctrine. A reversionist therefore ends up in one of those eight stages of reversionism:

- Reaction and distraction.
- Frantic search for happiness.
- Operation boomerang.
- Emotional revolt of the soul.
- Permanent negative volition.
- Blackout of the soul.
- Scar tissue of the soul.
- Reverse process reversionism.

While the carnal believer can still be positive toward doctrine and faithful in using the rebound technique, the reversionistic believer does not. It takes only a moment to recover from carnality by the use of rebound, but it takes months to recover from reversionism. A believer in reversionism is under a form of demon influence, they cannot be demon possessed, but can come under demon influence, 1Ti 4:1. Reversionism is a simple means of explaining that there are degrees of failure in the Christian life, just as there are degrees of success. Philippians 3:18-19 teaches the principle that no matter how far you go in the spiritual life, there will always be some people who will be used by the kingdom of darkness to try and hinder your spiritual growth. Phi 3:18-19 "For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things." "For many walk" refers to the large number of

believers who, for whatever reason, react to something in life or to those who were communicating truth and they entered into the first stage of reversionism, the reaction stage, and then eventually fell under the influence of evil. In that first century, as in our day and age, reversionistic believers were the greatest enemies of Christianity, not the unbeliever...but believers fighting with believers.

Satan uses believers in a very special way. So much so that this verse is going to be very harsh on those believers who were the greatest enemies that Paul ever had and who did more to hinder his ministry than anyone else. For example, one born again believer named Alexander the metal smith, 1Ti 1:20; 2Ti 4:14. He was a believer who spent his whole life following around the apostle Paul and trying to destroy his ministry. God kept this reversionist alive under heavy discipline and frustration, in order that he might be a part of Paul's ultra- supergrace mantle. No one ever hated Paul more than this reversionistic believer. The point is that Alexander was used by God to test the mental attitude of the apostle Paul. Paul passed the test which is why he said in 2Ti 4:14, "The Lord will repay him according to his deeds." Alexander the metal smith is going to be in heaven, and yet during his life time his reversionism and influence of evil was so strong that he was the enemy of the greatest believer who ever lived, and tried to destroy his ministry. In fact, Alexander the metal smith, 2Ti 4:14; Phygelus and Hermogenes, 1Ti 1:20; Demas, 2Ti 4:10; all of these individuals were responsible for attacking the ministry of the apostle Paul. And the interesting thing is that Paul mentioned all these individuals by name. In reality, they put him in that beautiful decoration, that wonderful mantle of ultra supergrace. You know sometimes people think names should not be mentioned concerning those who cause divisions but that is not what the Bible teaches. Paul mentioned Peter needing to be rebuked in GAL 2:11-14. He mentioned Euodia and Syntyche, two women who were fighting in the church at Philippi in Phi 4:2. He mentioned Archippus who wasn't doing his job as a pastor in Col 4:17. In 1Ti 1:19-20, he said "keeping doctrine and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their doctrine. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme." In 2Ti 4:10, Paul said, "for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica;" In 2Ti 4:14, Paul said "Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds." In 3JO 1:9, John wrote, "I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say."

So, there are times when it is biblical to mention the names of those who have caused divisions. Communication does not mean defense, rather it means to rest our case by stating the truth through facts and appealing to the Supreme Court of heaven. Be very careful that you do not become so naive that you will not listen to doctrinal teaching, which is designed to protect you from deception. So, there are times that the pastor must reprimand and discipline before the congregation or else loses his authority over the congregation. Principle -No pastor can fulfill his ministry of study and teach without the double honor principle and the first attack upon the first phase of double honor is to attack respect for the communicator. Second principle-No pastor can teach without authority just as no pastor can devote his time to study without remuneration. So back in Phi 3:18, the apostle Paul is about to warn those who have PVTD what to be aware of. In reality, Paul realized the principle of 2CO 13:8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth. Alexander the metal smith, Phygelus, Hermogenes, Demas, and many other believers who despised Paul wound up as a part of his decoration in ultra supergrace. And they only intensified his happiness. The more they intensified their efforts to destroy Paul, the more they intensified his happiness. And some believers don't think God has a sense of humor. Well there's a perfect illustration of it. It's the same principle of EXO 1:12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, Now, there were others and they are called in Phi 3:18, "Many." They are believers. They are reversionists. They are under the influence of evil and they were the greatest and most vigorous enemies of Christianity in the first century. The same thing is true today. You are going to discover that "many" of your enemies are Christians. And that these people who go on piously talking about "loving the brethren"...if they find out that you're into doctrine or maybe even a member of this church, you will be shocked how they will despise you. They will be antagonistic! Get use to the fact that some of the people who are going to do you more harm and oppose you and who will try to hurt you more than anyone else in

the world, are going to be born again saved believers in reversionism. Mat 10:36 "and a man's enemies will be the members of his household."

Psa 55:12-14 "For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, Then I could bear {it}; Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, Then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend. We who had sweet fellowship together, Walked in the house of God in the throng."

One secret enemy in a local assembly may do more harm than fifty men who are known open adversaries. It is not by infidels, and scoffers, and blasphemers, so much, that injury is done to the cause of Christ, it is by the deceitfulness of professed friends and the carnality of worldliness, and the inconsistency, among those who are in the church. Nearly all the objections that are made against Christianity are from this viewpoint. So, some of the people who are going to do you more harm and oppose you and who will try to hurt you more than anyone else in the world, are going to be believers in reversionism...and here they are met them under the word "many!" PHI 3:18 For many walk, Here's the verb again that talks about lifestyle, the present active indicative of peripateo which is peripatousin, which means to walk, to live, to progress, to conduct oneself. Here walking has to do with the way of life of the reversionistic believer. This is used for believers in one of those eight stages of reversionism. The present tense is the retroactive progressive present indicating reversionism begun in the past and continuing into the present time. The active voice, believers in various stages of reversionism produce the action of the verb. The indicative mood declares that this is a reality in every generation. Widespread reversionism and the influence of evil in the first century was the enemy of the truth. Widespread reversionism and the influence of evil in this past century was the enemy of the truth. And we are not surprised around here, because at least some of us know of people who have been under this ministry at one time or another and who are now its vigorous opponents. And instead of going on thanking God for the good times, they are jealous, bitter, vindictive, etc. I know that you have heard this many times before but I always like repeating PHI 1:15 "Certain ones, on the one hand, are proclaiming the Christ even from jealousy and strife or discord, but, certain ones, on the other hand, because of good motivation" PHI 1:16-18 "the latter category out of the motivation of love, fully convinced that I am appointed for the defense of the good news; the former category from the motivation of divisive self-promotion proclaim Christ, not from pure motives, since they presume to arouse mental distress with regard to my imprisonment. What is my conclusion? Only that in every way, whether in false motivation or in true, Christ is being proclaimed; and in this I am happy, not only at this time, but I will continue being happy."

So far we have covered the first three words in Philippians 3:18 which says PHI 3:18 For many [a reference to reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, Last evening we noted the word "for," just a little conjunctive particle but really a warning to beware that we do not follow the majority in Christianity. For example, in Phi 3:17 when it says Brethren [members of the royal family], be co-imitators of me, and be having respect for the same ones, who constantly walk according to the pattern you have in us. And then we have the conjunctive particle gar which could be translated "For" or "Because" or "The reason being." Then the reason why we should co-imitators of Paul and be having respect for the same ones, who constantly walk according to the pattern is given in Phi 3:18 that many [the majority of Christians who are under the influence of evil] and then the verb peripateo] keep walking, And the "many who keep walking" in the opposite direction refers to some of those individuals we noted last evening who were Paul's enemies such as Alexander the metal smith, Phygelus and Hermogenes, and Demas, all of these individuals and many more were responsible for attacking and trying to hinder the ministry of the apostle Paul. Some of the people who are going to try and hurt you the most and do you more harm and oppose you and who will try to hurt you more than anyone else in the world, are going to be believers in reversionism...and here they are met under the word "many!" It's interesting that the only spiritual growth and the only doctrine a lot of people have ever learned, they learned from the very pulpit and local assembly that they attack. And why do they attack it? Well, because you would be shocked at the things which believers think, say and do, once they compromise with doctrine. You will be shocked by what they do. You will be shocked by how they think. You will be shocked by what they say. You will even be shocked by where they go. And that's because Satan is the greatest personality changer in history. Satan

changes personalities. Satan doesn't change the soul, he doesn't have that power to change the soul, doctrine changes the soul, and doctrine changes people. But Satan is a personality changer, and Satan knows how to put on a nice beautiful facade. The father of public relations is Satan. He is the "cream of the crop" when it comes to public relations. He is the top PR creature of all time. In Joh 8:44, our Lord said to the religious leaders, the so-called holy men in His day, "You are of {your} father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own {nature;} for he is a liar, and the father of lies." The greatest liar in history is Satan. The greatest phony in history is Satan. The father of all hypocrites is Satan. And therefore Satan uses these facades of religiosity, of sweetness and light and brotherly love, in order to set up some of the greatest systems of opposition to Christianity the world has ever known. You're going to find out, if you live long enough, that a friend who is honest is worth fifty thousand flattering sycophants or brownnoses. And if you ever find someone who will level with you occasionally and still love you, you've got something. And they may even rub you the wrong way, but yet they are willing to risk even friendship to try to be helpful in that way, to warn you, or to help you, to protect you, and to tell you what an imbecile you are at the moment and how easy it is to walk out of being such a stupid person, such an idiot. So just remember, all of those who tell you how great you are, aren't your friends, and all of those who occasionally tell you what an idiot you are, are not always your enemies. So, let's move on. PHI 3:18 For many [a reference to reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, of whom I often told you, "of whom" is the accusative plural from the relative pronoun hos which is hous and this adverbial accusative of reference can be translated "concerning whom" or "with reference to whom." PHI 3:18 For many [a reference to reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, concerning whom I often told you, Now, here's everyone's friend. The best friend that anyone will ever have is the apostle Paul. He always levels with you, he was always straight with people. He was always straight to his own friends always, and he is always straight to every generation thereafter. Perhaps this is why he said in 2TI 4:11, 13 to Timothy, Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. When you come bring the cape which I left at Troas with Carpus. Sometimes when you're straight with people, they don't like it. They'd rather have you balderdash them. So, the greatest writer of scripture, the man who wrote the deepest and most important doctrines, the one who talks the most about advance in the Christian life, the one who is always straight down the middle and levels with everyone in his generation, and every generation thereafter, is the apostle Paul. He's the one who penned GAL 4:16 Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth? Paul can make any of us feel uncomfortable under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, as he wrote down many of the things that he learned and his prison epistles take you to supergrace and the pastoral epistles take you to ultra supergrace, and both sets of epistles also show you what an idiot you are in reversionism. So, it is the most fantastic development that has ever occurred. No one has ever written doctrine like that. I like the frankness and the honesty of Paul as he dealt with people in his own day. For example, you will never see a more classical illustration of honesty and love than in the second chapter of Galatians, where Paul takes Peter and chews him out, like no one you had before. One general telling another general what a hypocrite he was for eating with the Gentiles but when the Jews came, he began to withdraw and stay from the Gentiles because he was so concerned about what the Jews might say. And then in Gal 2:13, the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. What did Paul do? Well, look at GAL 2:11-17 "But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

GAL 2:12 "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? We are Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that

we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."

If there ever was any doubt in anyone's mind as to who ran the apostles, Galatians chapter two clears it up. Peter was not the leading apostle, at the end of Galatians chapter two he is low on the totem pole, he could probably just whisper to Andrew. Perhaps that is why Peter showed his fantastic humility right before his death Peter said in 2PE 3:15-16 "and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction." So, the fantastic integrity and honesty of this great spiritual man of genius, this ultra supergrace believer is without parallel in history, except Moses in the Old Testament, and Jeremiah. So when he says, "I have told you so," you listen to Paul. When he says, "I told you so," it's not the whining of someone who is trying to play one-upmanship, it is the honesty and integrity of his magnificent love for the sheep of his own generation and the congregations of every generation to follow. So back in PHI 3:18 For many [reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, concerning whom I told "I told" is the imperfect active indicative of lego which is elegon meaning to talk, to speak, to tell, to describe, to affirm over, to teach, to advise, to point out with words, to speak out, to mention. Here it has to do with communication of warning and so we will translate it, "I have warned." PHI 3:18 For many [reversionists] keep walking, concerning whom I have warned. This is what is known as a customary imperfect tense indicating what has regularly occurred in the past. Paul not only taught new doctrine, but he taught the old ones over and over and over again, so there was no excuse for not knowing them. Remember the corrected translation of Phi 3:1b On the one hand, to be writing the same doctrines to you is not troublesome to me, while on the other hand, it is a safeguard or a basis of security for you. If you had been in Paul's classes for any length of time, he would teach you the same things until you couldn't forget them. You couldn't forget if you tried to forget it. The reason being is that he repeated, repeated, repeated, and repeated. And occasionally I bump into someone who wants to yawn, because they have been through this before or they heard that doctrine before. And then once again, as we noted last evening the humor of God, it's only a matter of time before these same individuals are challenged with that very same doctrine they "heard" before. And you find out that it was gnosis not epignosis. It was just knowledge not metabolized into wisdom. Oba 1:3 "The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, 1Co 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. Peter said 2PE 1:12-13 "I shall always be prepared to repeat these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. And I consider my solemn duty, as long as I am in this earthly body, to motivate you up by means of repetition of doctrine." How much clearer can you get than that? If you ever get to a point where you don't like when I repeat some doctrine, which I guarantee you I'm going to do, but if you don't like repetition, than you are not in the right congregation. It's amazing how the "I heard that before" attitude reveals the arrogance of the individual and how they obviously fail in the same doctrine they thought they knew. I haven't had anyone in a long time complain about repetition but I'm always waiting for some. The active voice of the verb lego, Paul constantly warned his congregation about reversionistic believers under the influence of evil. The indicative mood is a historical reality for Paul's constant teaching on the subject. He hammered away constantly. People got mad and left. People came and listened. People listened, listened, listened. People got mad and even stayed. All the categories you can think of, but he just kept right on plugging and hammering away, and hammering away, and hammering away, and I like this because it tells us something about Paul that we never learn anywhere else. Because every time you get into the Pauline epistles you're going to get something new, something new, something wonderful, something stimulating, something marvelous, but it is going to come through repetition. So he just kept plugging along, persevering.

The Doctrine of Weeping

11-26-00

We are continuing our study of Phi 3:18: "For many [a reference to reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, concerning whom I have continually warned you many times, and now tell you even weeping... "You" refers to those who listened to the teaching of Bible doctrine. Paul always communicated to a group, according to the words of our Lord, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." The next phrase, translated "concerning whom I have continually warned you often," describes how frequently and faithfully Paul warned the Royal Family of God about reversionism. The motto of every pastor-teacher should be "I have told you (the congregation) many times before, and even now, I will tell you again." Paul constantly warned his listeners how far reversionism can carry someone from the doctrines they once considered wonderful, such as the Cross, the Grace of God, the Royal Family Honor Code, and true Fellowship. In the next phrase of Phi 3:18 Paul continues teaching and warning, not only the Philippians, but also all Church-age believers. The thrust of his teaching is a permanent monument to the importance of persistence in studying and teaching, by which all believers grow spiritually. The verb "tell" can be translated "continue to affirm." Phi 3:18 For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm Every true man has true emotion, and there is something wrong with the man who never weeps. Legitimate weeping is an expression of emotion in the soul. The soul's essence is composed of five parts: Self-consciousness (Luk 1:46), man's awareness of his own existence. Mentality (Rom 12:2), which is what one thinks. Self-consciousness is of no use without mentality. Volition (Luk 12:19). The volition is man's free will function in all decision-making; man has the ability to be negative or positive toward anything in life. Human volition was created to resolve the angelic conflict. Emotion (Luk 12:19). Emotion is the "appreciator" of the soul; it responds or reacts to whatever thoughts are in the soul. In normal function, the right lobe of the soul, where the mentality is located, dominates the emotion. Abnormally, the emotion rules the mentality, allowing neurosis and psychosis to set in. Conscience (Act 24:16). This is the "evaluator" of the soul and contains the norms and standards. There are different kinds of weeping, and in Phi 3:18 the Greek verb "klaion" is used for a very manly weeping, from one of the most strong, masculine men who ever lived. Paul was thinking of all the great friends he had known in the past, and at the time that he wrote this epistle, these very same people have not only turned against him, but worse, they have turned against the Cross. They began to ignore what was accomplished on the Cross and to make an issue out of people's sins rather than the Cross and the grace of God. We, as grace believers, cannot help but shed a tear for someone with whom we were once close, but now, for some reason, no longer are. We can not help feeling an emotion of sadness for someone who did not finish the journey, someone who has not and may never break through the maturity barrier in time, and in some cases has even tried to stop others from doing so. They are those who were once excited and devoted to the plan of God, but have lost their fervency. As our Lord said in Rev 2:4, they have "left their first love." The very same believers who once claimed to believe in impersonal love no longer love impersonally and unconditionally. Those who once claimed to believe in honoring authority, and letting God handle those who misuse and abuse authority, now attack those in authority. Those who once claimed to realize the danger of mental attitude sins are now filled with arrogance, pride, jealousy, anger, hatred, implacability, guilt, bitterness, and vindictiveness. Those who once claimed to know the sins of the tongue now enter into gossip, maligning, slander, judging, lying, and verbal deception. The same believers, who once claimed to understand the danger of overt sins, and reaping what one sows, now flaunt their so-called "new-found freedom." What a danger it is to be forgiven but not to forgive, and to try to injure another member of the body of Christ.

Mat 25:40 "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me."

Paul would do whatever he could for people whom he loved. He was an exceptional breed of person and friend that is very rare. Paul was the friend of Pro 17:17, "A true friend loves at all times and as a brother is born for adversity." If there is anything priceless in life, it is true friends. They are there to fight for you

when someone is trying to take advantage of you, and defend you even when you are not present. They are the kinds of friends who make prosperity marvelous, because they share in your joy, and who lighten adversity by dividing and sharing it with you. Paul was willing to "give it his all," but he discovered an unfortunate fact in life: The more you do for others, the more they expect you to do, and the greater the chance that they will reject you. Under the first mention principle in this subject, God did all that He could for Satan, but Satan rejected everything God had done for him, Eze 28:11-18. The Lord also did everything He could for Adam and the woman, but they too rejected Him, Gen 3:6-19. He said to Israel in Isa 5:4, "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it?" The Holy Spirit said through the apostle Paul in Rom 8:32, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

Phi 3:18 For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm, even weeping;

Remember, there is a legitimate biblical form of emotion, manifested at times by weeping. Under the principle of inspiration, God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture that, without waiving their human intelligence, vocabulary, individuality, literary style, personality, personal feelings, or any other human factor, His complete and coherent message to mankind was recorded, with perfect accuracy, in the original languages of Scripture, the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship. Here, God the Holy Spirit used the human characteristics, especially the personal feelings, of the apostle Paul. There was no need for Him to change Paul's personality. Paul was a true man; he was mentally tough in the soul. Manliness in the soul means sensitivity to others. It means sensitivity with regard to others, the memory of others, the recollection and love of others, and those inevitable tears when you realize they did not "finish the course." All of us have friends and loved ones that we have lost along the way. We all have those memories, which often come to us when we are alone. We remember the ones we would like to see restored. Paul, as a man, understood that there is nothing wrong with this type of emotion in weeping. Joh 11:35 Jesus wept. Luk 19:41 And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it. Since "weeping" is a major part of our study in Phi 3:18, we will note some of the legitimate and illegitimate forms of weeping.

The Doctrine of Weeping

Point 1: Weeping is the shedding of tears as an expression of emotion. It is an expression of grief, sorrow, frustration, lamentation, emotional stimulation, happiness, pain, or any overpowering emotion. Weeping therefore can express either weakness or strength.

Ecc 3:4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

According to the word of God, there is weeping that is good for the soul and weeping that is detrimental. Legitimate weeping is related to genuine expressions of emotion, which are not related to the arrogance or emotion complexes of sins. Illegitimate weeping is related to both the arrogance and emotion complexes of sins, as well as the law of volitional responsibility. This illegitimate weeping is a manifestation of withdrawal, disorientation to the grace of God, frustration, and scar tissue of the soul.

Point 2: Biblical Passages that Deal with Illegitimate Weeping. A good example of unjustified weeping is found Num 14: 1-4. In the background to this passage, Moses had sent twelve men, one from each tribe, to spy out the promised land. When they returned at the end of 40 days, they came to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of Israel with an "evil report," for fear of the giants in the land, Num 13:31-33. The weeping of the people of Israel in Num 14:1-4 resulted from scar tissue in their souls, which was caused by three factors: Negative Volition through refusal to hear Bible doctrine as taught by their teacher Moses. This is the most basic and common form of negative volition toward God's plan. Negative Volition through refusal to metabolize doctrine after hearing it. Negative Volition through withdrawal and refusal to apply doctrine. This withdrawal was caused by their fear, hysteria, and depression, and even their hatred of their Bible teacher, Moses. Remember that this entire assembly is the one that saw the omnipotence and grace of God perform ten miracles back in Egypt, and then saw the deliverance of God ten times in the desert. The problem was that they were so dominated by emotion, and so susceptible to the emotion complex of sins, that they could not appreciate these miraculous manifestations of God's faithfulness. They had no doctrine in the soul and no integrity, or the spiritual strength to apply the doctrine while under pressure. At least

2,000,000 people had a nervous breakdown all at one time! Just think about 2,000,000 people "lifting up their voices" and crying and weeping all night! This is a very emotional group of people. A few weeks prior to this, they were singing songs, dancing, banging on tambourines, and singing choruses like Exo 15:2, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my deliverance; this is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him." Now, in Num 14:1-2, however, "Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron." Notice that in between all their weeping, they still had something to say to Moses and Aaron. Always remember to be very careful what you say when you are emotional. It may leave a scar that will haunt you for the rest of your life, in you or in the other person. Num 14:3 "And why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" Notice how irrational illegitimate weeping is. Thinking that the Lord had rescued them from Egypt to be killed in the desert was ridiculous. Unfortunately, this is what happens when we operate on emotion rather than thought. This is what happens when we make an emotional decision and start weeping, rather than remaining rational and thinking. Their conclusion was totally erroneous. At this point, they actually preferred to return to the slavery of Egypt, which represented "security," rather than following the freedom of the truth. They forgot all of the injustices they had suffered in slavery. They forgot that they had seen extraordinary miracles in the ten plagues that God performed through Moses, to release them from slavery. This reaction of illegitimate weeping was very different from the emotional response of the apostle Paul in Phi 3:18. This was not legitimate emotion, nor was it legitimate weeping. This experience of the Exodus generation was very shocking and was a major test. So quickly, they wanted to go back to Egypt and back into slavery. They blamed Moses, blamed the Lord, and wanted a new leader. The Lord had shown them His perfection, He had been perfectly faithful to them, yet they rebelled completely. As we will see in our study, while illegitimate weeping is irrational, illogical, and absurd, legitimate weeping is a normal and even manly response to many circumstances in life, whether extreme sorrow or extreme happiness. God is the one who invented tears, and at times, we can and should weep.

The Doctrine of Weeping: Illegitimate Weeping, Legitimate Weeping

12/03/00

Our corrected translation of Phi 3:18 “For many [a reference to reversionists under the influence of evil] keep walking, concerning whom I have continually warned you many times, and now tell you even weeping,” As Paul wrote this passage he thought of all of those wonderful people he had known in the past. Yet as he writes this, these very same people have not only turned against Paul, but they have turned against against the Cross. They have ignored that which was accomplished on the Cross. Weeping is a part of Phi 3:18, and there are legitimate and illegitimate form under the Doctrine of Weeping. Weeping can be an expression of grief, sorrow, frustration, lamentation, emotional stimulation, happiness, pain, or any overpowering emotion. Therefore, weeping can express weakness or strength. Legitimate weeping then is related to genuine expressions of emotion which are not related to the sins of arrogance or the emotional complex of sins. Illegitimate weeping is related to both the emotional and arrogance complex of sins, and is related to the law of volitional responsibility.

Once a person begins to reap what they sow in the negative realm, there's a tendency to become emotional and filled with regrets, and enter into illegitimate weeping. This was the case in Num 14:1-4. Here is an entire assembly that saw the omnipotence of God and the grace of God perform ten miracles, and they also saw the deliverance of God ten times in the desert. They had no doctrine in the soul and therefore no spiritual strength and they could never appreciate the miracles or the work of God. The power is in the doctrine in your soul, not what you see. In Num 14 this congregation thought the Lord had brought them out of the land of Egypt to be killed by the sword. They preferred to return to the slavery of Egypt, which represented security, rather than the freedom of following the truth that would set them free. In Egypt, these Jews saw ten of the most extraordinary miracles in the 10 plagues that God performed through Moses in the release of the Jews from slavery.

- They saw the Nile river turn to blood, Exo 7:20; (which symbolized death).
- They saw the land of Egypt covered with frogs, Exo 8:6. Under the principle of typology frogs symbolized pride and arrogance
- They saw all the dust and sand in Egypt turn into gnats on man and beast, Exo 8:17. This symbolized the uncleanness and filth of the lust of the flesh.
- Then they saw swarms of insects upon the entire land of Egypt, Exo 8:24. This symbolized Beelzebub, lord of the flies).
- They saw all the livestock of Egypt die while all the livestock of Israel lived, Exo 9:6. (This symbolized rejection of the natural man).
- They saw the plague of boils which hit both man and beast in Exo 9:10. (This symbolized the mental wounds of man).
- They saw thunder and hail and fire raining down from heaven upon the Egyptians, Exo 9:23. (This symbolized the wrath of God upon disobedience).
- They saw the plague of the locust all over the land of Egypt, Exo 10:13. (This symbolized the spiritual barrenness of the cosmic system).
- They saw complete darkness come over the land of Egypt for three days, in Exo 10:22. (This symbolized alienation of the world from the light of the world, TLJC, Joh 8:12).
- They saw all the first born children in the land of Egypt including Pharaoh's firstborn die, in Exo 12:29. (This symbolized the second death of Rev 20:14).

Actually what took place was 10 miracles in Egypt. 10 miracles in the desert. 10 rebellions from the congregation of Israel. The number 10 in the Bible is used for the principle of completion and signifies the perfection of divine order. For example, the 10 commandments, the Tithe, the 10 plagues, the parable of the 10 virgins, the 10 I am's of Christ. The number 30 represents in a higher degree the perfection of the divine order, as marking the right moment. Christ was 30 years of age in the beginning of His ministry. Joseph, His type, was the same age, Gen 41:46. David also, when he began to reign, 2Sa 5:4. The Lord gave this assembly one of the two best Bible teachers in history, Moses. So these Jews in Num had been in

slavery and bondage and they forgot all about it. Many people don't even know that they are in slavery and in bondage because they don't even know what true freedom is all about. They forgot all the brutality of slavery, forgot all of the injustices, all of the terrible things that happened to them. They wanted to go back to affliction and hard labor, Exo 1:11-14. Go back to being bitter in slavery under the abuse of the Egyptians in Exo 1:14. They forgot about the decree in Egypt to kill all the new born Jewish males in Exo 1:16. They forgot the fact that they were beaten physically by the Egyptians in Exo 2:11. They forgot that they cried out for help to the Lord because of their extreme bondage in Exo 2:23.

The solution of the people ignored divine viewpoint and demonstrated ignorance of God's problem solving devices. To them problem solving was assassination of Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua, and then electing a new leader, turning to Egypt and to slavery. This same irrationality and emotional revolt of the soul motivated the Jews to invade the land contrary to God's command which lead to military disaster and more weeping Deu 1:42-45. This is illegitimate weeping and therefore the Lord would not listen to them. This generation was too far-gone. Mental illness was so predominant, they were emotional wrecks. In Heb 12:16 there is another illustration of illegitimate weeping as found in Esau. Esau constantly rejected the Gospel and then when he wanted to believe, he could not. Esau cried because of the hardness of the heart and the scar tissue of the soul Heb 12:15-17. In that passage we see when people say "No" to the Gospel long enough, they build scar tissue in the soul while withdrawing from the truth of the Gospel and develop hardness of heart. Esau's weeping expresses the frustration of making bad decisions inside the cosmic system and then ultimately reaping what you sow. He said "No," so often that he could not bring himself to believe in Christ. All he could do was cry. Feeling sorry for what we have done will not save you. Judas felt sorry after he betrayed the Lord in MAT 27:3 yet Judas was not saved according to Mat 26:24; Mar 14:21. Illegitimate weeping can be caused by the soul not being able to cope with historical disaster, Joel 1:5-6. Here weeping is a negative expression of the soul to utilize resident Bible doctrine. Illegitimate or bad weeping occurs in national disaster. Joe 1:5 "Awake, drunkards, and weep; And wail, all you wine drinkers, On account of the sweet wine That is cut off from your mouth. For a nation has invaded my land, Mighty and without number; Its teeth are the teeth of a lion, And it has the fangs of a lioness." This was weeping caused by national disaster manifested with alcoholism. This is the weeping of drunks in national disaster. There is no good wine during the fifth cycle of discipline. Drunks cannot handle national disaster. There is the weeping of bitterness in 1Sa 1:10 "And she [Hannah], was bitter of soul, prayed to the Lord and kept on weeping bitterly." Hannah was barren and was bitter about it. Her bitterness caused withdrawal and scar tissue of the soul. This was weeping from arrogance. Weeping can express sinfulness of the soul under emotional revolt. Hannah was bitter because of the unjust attacks against her. When you weep, it is either because of bitterness in the soul or nobility in the soul from positive volition to doctrine. The same thing happened to Peter, he wept because of bitterness, Luk 22:62. He had just denied the Lord three times and he was bitter. Illegitimate weeping can be the weeping of lust found in Num 11:1-20. This weeping was from the rejection of the Lord and His plan for their life. Another reason for illegitimate or bad weeping is the weeping of disorientation or sour grapes, Ezr 3:12-13. The old men wept at the rebuilding of the Temple because it wasn't as big as the original temple. Then there is the weeping of lost opportunity, in Mat 8:12, Luk 13:28. There is also weeping from emotional takeover of the soul, Rev 5:4 "And I began to weep greatly, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look into it;" This was a momentary failure by John. Legitimate weeping can be an expression of sorrow. David was deeply moved when he heard the death of his son Absalom. 2Sa 18:31-33, 2Sa 19:1-2. It is alright to weep over the lost of loved ones but never to be grieved. 1Th 4:13 "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope." When a loved one dies, weeping shows great capacity for love. Those who are noble weep, for example, our Lord. When you weep at the death of a loved one and have no regrets, then that is a sign of nobility in the soul. Capacity for love also weeps from knowing that the person who has died is face to face with the Lord. Legitimate weeping can also occur as an expression of sadness regarding those who are negative toward Bible doctrine, Phi 3:18-19. When we have had a friend or friends who were once positive toward doctrine but slowly and surely they are drifting away, this could cause weeping as an expression of sadness. There is also the legitimate weeping of appreciation for being restored back into fellowship with God, Psa 30:5.

Legitimate weeping and tears is also a memorial to God, Psa 56:8. All the tears related to our fellowship with the Lord, all of the tears that represent the good part of weeping, all of the things related to those tears, God puts them, as it were, into a bottle as a memory. In that memory, He provides comfort in time, and a far greater comfort in the eternal state. There is also the legitimate weeping of the humanity of Christ which is unique. Our Lord wept at the tomb of Lazarus, Joh 11:35. This was weeping of bereavement, indicating our Lord's great capacity for love. Our Lord also wept out of patriotism in Luk 19:41-45, because of the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Our Lord also wept at the cross, Psa 22, and Heb 5:7 "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety." This expressed the manliness and maturity of Christ. He could cry and scream under the horribleness of spiritual death and still orient to the grace of God and pray. There is the cessation of weeping, Isa 30:18-20 and Rev 21:4 "and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." The resurrection body will have the capacity to emote without overflowing with tears. All weeping ends for the believer at the point of death. He is forever face to face with the Lord where there is no more pain, no more sorrow, and no more death.

Enemies of the Cross of Jesus Christ

12-10-00

We have nearly completed Phi 3:18 which reads "For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm, even weeping," [now the final phrase] "that they are enemies of the cross of Christ," The Greek word "tous" [the] and then the word "echthros" used here to describe reversionistic believers under the influence of evil. These are enemies, not just Paul's enemies, but they are enemies of the Cross. "Echthros" means that they are enemies and hateful toward others, passively, disgustingly, or actively hostile. It can refer to an adversary (especially Satan) opposing others, opposing (God) in their thinking. In Phi 3:18 they have made themselves enemies of or towards "staurou" referring to the Cross or crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which epitomizes the principle of grace. So the corrected translation Phi 3:18 "For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm, even weeping, that they have made themselves the enemies of the cross of that same Christ." To fully understand what it means to be an enemy of the cross, we have to understand that the cross represents the Substitutionary spiritual death of The Lord Jesus Christ. There are two categories of spiritual death.

1. Real spiritual death which is separation from God in a state of sin which applies to man.
2. Substitutionary spiritual death which is separation from God in a state of perfection and impeccability which applies to Jesus Christ.

Real spiritual death applies to Adam's original sin and the status quo of the human race at the point of physical birth. Substitutionary spiritual death applies to the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

At the time when man sinned in the Garden of Eden, mankind entered into real spiritual death, Rom 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned" At the point of the original sin, Adam lost his rulership of planet earth to Satan. When Adam died spiritually, he entered into a state of total separation from God. He was separated from God in a state of total helplessness, there was nothing he could do to regain his relationship with God. God had to do all the work. God came to Adam in the garden. He did the judging and then provided the solution for Adam and all humans who would follow regarding our spiritual death. Adam's original sin brought on the resultant old sin nature, which is genetically perpetuated to the entire human race. From this old sin nature comes our total depravity, which includes moral and immoral degeneration. To become an enemy of the cross is to deny, reject or ignore the principles that God dealt with on man's behalf through the work of The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. Only the perfect, impeccable humanity of Christ could become our substitute when He received the imputation and judgment for all sins in the history of the human race down to the last sin of the Millennium. When anyone makes an issue out of other people's sins, we are forgetting about the fact that God the Father has already dealt with those sins on the cross, 2CO 5:14-21.

Our Lord's sacrificial or substitutionary spiritual death on the cross brings eternal life to everyone in the human race that will believe in Him. This is why Paul also said in Rom 14:4 "Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand." We have no right to judge others for their sins or failures for is a family affair that God the Father is in control of. The enemies of the cross deny, reject or ignore the following principles. God the Father says in:

Heb 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

Heb 10:17 "And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Mic 7:18-19 "He pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession and cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Psa 103:12 "He has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west,"

Isa 38:17c "For You have cast all their sins behind their back."

Psa 103:10 "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." The enemies of the cross deal with others according to their sins or pay them back for their iniquities toward them.

Psa 65:3b "As far our transgressions Thou dost forgive them." The enemies of the cross do not forgive others.

Col 2:13 "He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us ALL our transgressions," The enemies of the cross deny, reject or ignore this principle.

Isa 43:25 "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake [because of my honor and integrity]. Furthermore, I will not remember your sin."

Psa 85:2 "You did forgive the iniquity of Your people; you did cover All their sin." The Lord has not covered some of our sin, but all of our sin.

Eze 16:63 the Lord said to people who were involved with the grossest sins you could imagine "I will forgive you for ALL that you have done."

Rom 11:27 "He will take away our sins"

We should never grow so familiar with these verses and these principles of doctrine that it no longer has an effect on our life. 1Jo 2:12 says that "Your sins are forgiven for His names sake." An enemy of the cross makes an issue out of sin. In Rom 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The last phrase of Rom 5:8 is translated "Christ died for us." The Greek word "apothenesko" is translated death and is especially used for the saving work of our Lord on the cross. This word takes the three hours of our Lord's substitutionary spiritual death on the cross and gathers it up into one entirety with the result that mankind is reconciled to God. During those last three hours, billions and billions of sins were imputed to Christ on the cross by God the Father, and every one of those sins were judged by God the Father. The humanity of Christ in Hypostatic Union died the substitutionary spiritual death for all, resulting in unlimited atonement. Christ died this substitutionary spiritual death "on behalf of us," "instead of us," "in place of us," or "as a substitute for us." Anyone is an enemy of the cross if they deny, reject or ignore this principle. They are an enemy of the cross if their desire is not for all men to be saved as our Lord's desire is in 1Ti 2:4, 2Pe 3:9. Jesus Christ was the substitute on the cross for all members of the human race, and He received the imputation and judgment of all of their sins as well. The cross demonstrates the divine impersonal love for the entire human race as sinners. Joh 3:16 "For God loved the world so much that He gave His Son, the unique One, that whoever believes in Him shall never perish but have eternal life." The focus of the Hypostatic Union is the cross, when the omnipotence of God the Father imputed all the sins in the history of the human race to Christ on the cross. Then the justice of God the Father judged every one of them. This resulted in our so-great salvation, which is open to the entire human race, not just to the "elect." The central purpose of the cross is stated briefly in 1Jo 3:5 "Indeed, He [Jesus Christ] was revealed in order that He might carry our sins." The fulfillment of that purpose of the cross is mentioned in

1Pe 2:24 "He Himself carried our sins in His own body on the cross."

1Pe 3:18 "Because Christ also died once for our sins, the righteous one as a substitute for the unrighteous ones, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by means of the Spirit."

These unrighteous ones describes the human race as sinners, in terms of being unrighteous. Although we consider ourselves in terms of relative righteousness, as being better or worse than others, in reality we are completely unrighteous.

Isa 64:6 "Our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight."

An enemy of the cross forgets that Jesus Christ, as our substitute, took our place. All the time that Jesus Christ was being judged for our sins on the cross, He personally remained righteous or impeccable. Therefore, the righteous One, our Lord Jesus Christ, died as a substitute for us. The fact that Christ remained righteous while bearing our sins is what made the suffering so intense. He is the only person in history who remained absolutely perfect in spiritual death. Therefore His spiritual death was unique. Just as the lamb being slaughtered was without spot and without blemish, even while bleeding to death, so the humanity of Christ remained impeccable and trichotomous in His unique spiritual death. Jesus Christ

"brought us to God" through His saving work on the cross, by becoming a substitute for us, by taking our place in suffering substitutionary spiritual death. We have the privilege and opportunity of bringing others to God by fulfilling our calling as Royal ambassadors, unless we are enemies of the cross. On the cross,

Gal 3:13 tells us, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by means of becoming a curse as a substitute for us; for it stands written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a cross.'"

Our Lord's sacrificial or substitutionary spiritual death on the cross brings eternal life to everyone in the human race that will believe in Him. Therefore, our job is to communicate this Gospel and this message of grace not to try and destroy it. Our entire sin nature, including the so-called "good part," was crucified with Christ. The fulfillment of that purpose of the cross is mentioned in 1Pe 2:24, "And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to [not sins but sin singular, the entire sin nature] and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." Remember that the Bible teaches in Rom 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam], sin [the sin nature] entered into the world, and [spiritual] death through [the] sin [nature], so [spiritual] death spread to the entire human race because all sinned [when Adam sinned]." Rom 7:14 "For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to [ten hamartian] the entire sin nature." The singular of the Greek word hamartia generally refers to the old sin nature, as in Rom 5:12, 7:14. 1Pe 3:18 says "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous one as a substitute for the unrighteous ones, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by means of the Spirit." This refers to perfect righteousness, and describes our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect "lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." But, by the sin of the world, this means the entire sin nature, not just our sins. Jesus Christ was perfect in His humanity because He remained inside the Pre-Designed Plan of God for His life while being judged for our sins. As our substitute, Jesus Christ had to be perfect to be qualified to be judged for the sins of the world. Therefore, the trichotomous, body, soul and spirit, or the perfect humanity of Christ remained impeccable during the entire time He was being judged for our sins. Heb 9:14 "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" As the "lamb without spot and without blemish," our Lord's humanity persevered even though He was greatly tempted to sin as never before as He bore our sins. There are two reasons why our Lord remained perfect as "the righteous one."

1. He was sustained by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit in the Pre-Designed Plan of God (PPOG), Heb 9:15.

2. He utilized the problem-solving device of +H (Happiness of God), Heb 12:3. Therefore, He demonstrated that anyone who resides in the PPOG could endure anything in life.

An enemy of the cross also "thinks more highly of himself than what he ought to think" Rom 12:3. He cannot accept advice, reproof, rebuke, exhortation, as 2Ti 4:2 teaches. Some principles regarding the substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- Salvation was provided through the substitutionary spiritual death on the cross which removed the barrier between man and God, Eph 2:14-16. Not between God and man, because it was man that caused the barrier between God and man.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided the unlimited atonement which removed the barrier of personal sin. All sins of the human race have been forgiven.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided redemption through which the barrier of the curse of the Law has been removed.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided regeneration which removes the barrier of physical birth.

As eternal God, Jesus Christ can have nothing to do with sin. He cannot sponsor sin and He will have nothing to do with human good or evil except to reject and condemn it. This is another part of the cross that people do not understand. He not only paid the price for sin at the cross but He rejected anything our human nature can produce, and therefore both human good and evil. This means that you can be an enemy of the cross by being a church-goer, religious and becoming legalistic and self-righteous. In fact, there were a lot of Judaizers who influenced many of the Philippians to get involved with Judaism and religion and producing human good. They were truly enemies of the cross. Enemies of the cross promote salvation

plus works, which is a false doctrine that rejects God's grace policy in the provision of eternal salvation for the human race. Enemies of the cross reject the total helplessness of mankind under real spiritual death. Enemies of the cross promote salvation by works, which makes the distinction between Christianity and religion. In Christianity, mankind is eternally saved through the work of God. God the Father planned it, God the Son executed it on the cross, and God the Holy Spirit reveals it. In Religion, man seeks to gain the approbation of God through some category of human works, self-sacrifice, personality, or energy of the flesh. Remember that Christianity is not a religion. In Christianity, God does the work and man is the beneficiary apart from any merit or any works. We have these categories of salvation by works which are rejected by the Word of God, as in Eph 2:9, "It is not by works that you are saved."

A. Verbal Works.

1. Repent and believe. Repent means to change your mind about Christ, as occurs under the Holy Spirit's ministry of common grace. This word has been misinterpreted. No one is saved by feeling sorry for his sins.
2. Confession of sins. This is only for the believer in rebound.
3. Begging God to save you. This is ridiculous, coming from one who is spiritually dead.
4. Inviting Christ into your heart. This is total nonsense and blasphemy. A spiritually dead person cannot invite eternal God, the Lord Jesus Christ anywhere! Not into his heart, his home or his life.
5. Acknowledge Christ publicly. This is not effectual for salvation. This is a distortion of Rom 10:9-10 which is about cause and effect. The cause is faith; the result, as the believer matures, is to witness, to acknowledge Christ. But you're saved only by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Ritual Works.

1. Circumcision was the favorite of the Jews. Galatians was written to correct this. The Galatians were very excited about Paul's ministry and responded and became believers. But after Paul left, the Judaizers counteracted, telling these new believers they could not be saved until they were also circumcised. These Gentile believers swallowed this. So Paul wrote Galatians, a letter telling them they'd gone astray from the Gospel.
2. Salvation by baptism, which is prominent today. This was started by the Lutherans in the Reformation, copied from the Catholics, a heresy that has always existed in the Church Age. Baptism was a testimony to retroactive positional truth and current positional truth before the completion of the Canon.
3. Partaking of the Eucharist.

C. Psychological Works.

1. "Come forward" in an invitation at the end of a service.
 2. "Raise your hand" during prayer.
 3. Walking down the aisle.
 4. Give a public testimony to your faith in Christ.
- These are jumping through psychological hoops, it's psychology and not salvation. These make an issue of you and call attention to yourself. But salvation is designed to call attention to Jesus Christ!

D. Corporate Works.

1. Join the church; if you don't join, you're not saved.
2. The Tithe, this was commanded in the Mosaic Law as a 10% income tax for the client nation Israel. Tithing has no spiritual connotation, either for salvation or blessing. Giving is a matter of the privacy of your own priesthood. The amount you give is based on your own self-determination and has nothing to do with any blessing.
3. Church-related works. Just work faithfully around the church and God will save you. This becomes more popular at certain times.

E. Religious Works.

Religion is the devil's ace trump. Satan counterfeits Christianity through religion. Religion is one of the greatest systems of both moral and immoral degeneration.

1. Keep the Mosaic Law. This is a result of the Reformation. It started out with justification by faith, but it gradually moved to the works of keeping the Law and eventually developed into the Galatian compromise: First you have to believe in Christ; then you have to keep the Law.
 2. Do penance.
 3. Practice the "Lordship of Christ." This refers to the false doctrine taught by the ignorant that "if Christ is not Lord of all He's not Lord at all." This is a failure to understand one of the forty things done for us at the moment of salvation. By the baptism of the Holy Spirit entering us into union with Christ, He is our Lord at the very moment of our salvation. Whether we recognize this or not is a matter of cognition of pertinent doctrine. But you do not have to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord for salvation. It is "believe in Christ" only.
 4. Practice asceticism. What you give up at any time is inconsequential! People want to take what they have given up in their lives and compare it with the work of Cross! But the work of salvation was provided "en toto" on the Cross.
 5. Self-denial.
 6. Maintain a healthy body. To associate salvation or spirituality with health foods and vitamins is ludicrous!
- All of these are forms of being an enemy of the cross of Christ, as we conclude Phi 3:18.

Do You Know Your Enemy?

12-17-00

An expression that has long been a part of military vocabulary is "know your enemy." Sadly, the majority of Christians do not. 1Jo 5:19 tells us "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." Rev 12:9 teaches us what Satan and the kingdom of darkness specialize in: "And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." Whether we are talking about our spiritual enemy, or our natural enemy, it is always wise to know who your enemies are. After all, the Bible says, "Love your enemies"; therefore, how do you do know what enemies to love unless you know who they really are? It is rather shocking to actually see, but our Lord warned us that some of our worst enemies would be members of our own family in Mat 10:34-36. You may not look upon the members of your family as your enemies, yet if they are antagonistic toward doctrine, or apathetic and not interested, that's about what it amounts to. If someone we love is taking us away from the Word of God, then according to the Bible, they are our enemies whether we realize it or not. The problem many believers have is that Satan succeeds in wearing down and deceiving the saints, Dan 7:25, "And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One." The verb translated "wear down" is the Aramaic word "bela," indicating that this is a very slow process. It does not happen all at once; rather, Satan does it gradually and invisibly, but all the while continually. Little by little the saints are worn down. Maybe he'll use someone of the opposite sex as he did against Samson in Jdg 16:16, when he used Delilah. It is done by wearing down their physical body, their emotions, and their hearts. If we could see in the invisible realm, we would be shocked at the satanic plot designed to distract Christians from "the things above." In fact, as we begin to study Phi 3:19 we will see that "their end is destruction, whose god is their appetite [emotions], and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things." One of the definitions of the word "diabolo," translated "devil," is to "rip apart." This is what Satan psychologically tries to do as he tries to tear apart the mind. Satan does this in three ways

- (1) Create discord,
- (2) Break up unity,
- (3) Destroy patterns. He brings in false concepts as "truths," convincing people to live by his lies and supposedly "be free." However, this is how we actually begin to lose our freedom. Many believers come under bondage to their freedom, Gal 5:1,13-14.

Anything that causes confusion and division, and splits our thinking, is what we call "cosmos diabolicus," or "of the devil's world system." This wearing down of the saints, little by little, is often difficult to detect. It may appear to us as something very insignificant. Nevertheless, Satan knows the value of subtlety and the small things. In Luk 16:10, "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much." Satan wears on the bodies of the saints through mental and emotional pressure, and therefore we are warned in 1Pe 5:7-9, "Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you. Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world." For many believers, this pressure causes restlessness, unhappiness, and depression, and wears out their spiritual life. In fact, the cosmic system teaches us to trust God less and less, and ourselves more and more.

It is necessary to define an enemy on the basis of biblical concepts. In dealing with this subject, the Bible specifies certain hostilities and alienations. Both are irrational acts. Alienation means to be well acquainted with someone and to not like them at all; hostility means to not know someone well and to not like them at all. Hostility is based upon ignorance. As absurd as it sounds, many people who dislike us know nothing about us. They have no information about us at all, except through hearsay. Perhaps they don't like the way you look, or they regard you as a challenge in some way, or they are jealous of you. Sadly, many people dedicate their entire lives to being enemies of others, trying to build their happiness on the basis of someone else's unhappiness. Alienation applies to those we do know, sometimes all too well.

More than likely we liked each other in past. For example, alienation can occur in marriage. It is very possible for two people to get married and become lifetime enemies. Marriage cannot be held together by the physical relationship. When the physical relationship runs out of gas at some point, and there is no virtue in the relationship, two enemies will now spend the rest of their lives hating, fighting, and despising each other. This is the reason for Paul's commands to both the man and the woman in Eph 5:22,25,33, Col 3:19. The mature believer need not be concerned with his enemies, because of the protection given by God inside of the wall of fire, Zec 2:5, Psa 21:7-8.

Even though you may have enemies in your life, leave them alone. The wise believer will learn from his enemies. In fact, one of the greatest things to learn is to keep your mouth shut! When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you. Enemyship can be seen on the personal or historical level. Personal enemyship existed between Esau and Jacob; historical enemyship exists between the Arabs and the Jews. Isaac had twin sons; one is an Arab (Esau), the other a Jew (Jacob). The ongoing battle between the Arabs and the Jews is dramatized and illustrated by Esau and Jacob. Both were Semitic, with the same father and mother, and they were twins, yet they are different as two people can be, Gen 27:41. We should never hate our enemies, because it affects our judgment. Esau hated his brother Jacob for taking his birthright, but he had willfully sold his birthright; his mental attitude sins blinded his judgment, and he became bitter, Heb 12:15-17. The historical enemyship between the Jews and Arabs is a manifestation of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is hostility toward the Jews on the part of a person, group, organization, or nation. The term is defined as intolerance, hatred, prejudice, opposition, persecution, and the exercise of terrorism and military activity against the Jewish race. Since the church is already victorious over Satan in its identification with the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross (Col 2:14-15, Heb 1-2), the Jews are now the center of the angelic conflict. A great satanic motivation and opposition against the Jews, can be seen, not only in the Middle East, but also scattered throughout the entire world. Anti-Semitism, then, is one of the greatest forms of evil in the world today.

Satan's persecution and hostility against the Jews will reach its peak in the Tribulation. Satan is the sponsor of all anti-Semitism, and is constantly seeking to gain his objectives through hatred and prejudice. In Rev 12:1, "A great sign appeared in heaven [the beginning of the Jewish race through circumcision, as well as the fulfillment of the Cross], a woman [Israel] clothed with the sun [Jacob] and the moon [Jacob's wives and mistresses (who reflect him as the moon reflects the sun), from whom the twelve patriarchs came] under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars [the twelve patriarchs]. Since the day that Satan discovered that Israel was to be the source of the incarnate Christ, Israel has been the target of his hatred and antagonism. There is a historical and eternal relationship between the uniqueness of Christ and the uniqueness of Israel. In the following verses, Rev 12:2-5, "And she [Israel] was with child [the virgin pregnancy, as well as the coming [holocausts], and she cried out [the greatest holocaust of all, which will take place at the end of the Tribulation, with the third demon assault army of Rev 9] being in labor and in pain to give birth [she desires to be delivered from this anti-Semitism]. And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon [Satan] having [control of] seven heads and ten horns [the revived Roman empire of the Tribulation and the ecumenical religion], and on his heads were seven diadems [crowns]. And his tail [Satan's power] swept away a third of the stars of heaven [the prehistoric revolution in Heaven, in which one third of the angels followed Satan] and He [God] threw them to the earth [in the middle of the Tribulation]. And the dragon stood before the woman [the virgin Mary] who was about to give birth [Satan, anticipating the virgin birth, was desperate to stop the humanity of Christ], so that when she gave birth he might devour [destroy] her child [the humanity of Christ]. And she [Mary] gave birth to a son, a male child [our Lord Jesus Christ in hypostatic union], Who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron [capital punishment during the Millennium]; and her child was caught up to God [the ascension] and to His throne [the session].

Here is the basis for the calling out of the Royal Family, of which we are members today. The Greek word "ekklesia," translated "church," literally means "called out ones." Rev 12:6 continues, "And the woman [true Israel, Jews who become saved during the Tribulation] fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God [for refuge], so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days." "One thousand two hundred and sixty days" is the last half of the Tribulation and the time

of "Satan's desperation." Satan has always and will always hate the Jews. Satan has two major objectives in the unfolding of anti-Semitism.

1. The historical objective, in which Satan sought to keep our Lord from being born, and then, to kill His humanity before He reached the Cross.
2. The prophetic objective, in which Satan still seeks to destroy Israel before the Second Advent, so that the four unconditional covenants to Israel cannot be fulfilled.

God promised that Israel will have certain blessings in the future, and these blessings, or "covenants," are unconditional; God must fulfill them, because He has so promised. Therefore, Satan is doing everything he can to undermine these covenants.

The Abrahamic Covenant defines the race for client nation Israel. Abraham became a Jew at age 99, and circumcision was the sign, Gen 12:1-3, 13:15-16, 15:18, 22:15-18, 26:3-4; Exo 6:2-8. This is a grace covenant in which God made a favorable disposition to Abraham and to his seed, as the party of the second part. This Covenant defines the Jewish race as the citizens of the first and last client nation in history. Like all covenants related to client nation Israel, Abraham and his spiritual seed are the beneficiaries of blessing and logistical support from the justice of God. Abraham's spiritual seed is patterned after Abraham's own salvation in Gen 15:6, "Then he believed in the Lord; and He [the Lord] reckoned [credited] it to him as righteousness." Abraham believed that what God had promised (that he and Sarah would have a son), God was able also to perform. The demonstration of his faith was submission to the ritual of circumcision. Abraham became the father of a new race which would become the client nation Israel. Gen 12:3 warns us against anti-Semitism: "And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." The "real estate" promise is also given for the first time in the Abrahamic Covenant, Gen 13:14-16, 15:18-21. This covenant was confirmed to Jacob, as opposed to his twin brother Esau, in Gen 28:13-14, 35:12.

The Palestinian Covenant defines the land for client nation Israel, Gen 15:18, Num 34:1-12, Deu 30:1-9, Jos 1:3-4. This establishes the territory of the client nation. God, as the party of the first part, made a favorable land grant to Israel as His client nation forever. (Israel will again be a client nation in the Millennium.) This covenant lays down the following modern geographical boundaries: The northwestern border is the Mediterranean Sea (this territory includes all of present-day Turkey). The southern border is the Nile River (the Red Sea will dry up); it encompasses northeastern Africa (Egypt, Kenya, and Ethiopia) and all of Saudi Arabia. The eastern border is Transjordan and Iraq (the Euphrates River is the north-eastern boundary).

The Davidic Covenant defines the dynasty for client nation Israel, 2Sa 7:8-16, Psa 89:20-37. 2Sa 7:16 reads, "And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." As the party of the first part, God made a gracious disposition to the party of the second part, David. This is the divine promise to David that he would have a Son [the Lord Jesus Christ] Who would rule Israel forever. It is the promise of the perpetuation of the Davidic dynasty. While the Davidic line continued for about 72 years in the Northern Kingdom from 998-926 B.C., and for over 400 years in the Southern Kingdom from 1000-586 B.C., this was not the fulfillment of the covenant. The fulfillment of this covenant occurs in two increments.

1. The virgin birth of the humanity of Christ, classified as the First Advent, called the Hypostatic Union.
2. The Millennial reign of Christ. The final fulfillment of this covenant transpires at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ in His Millennial and eternal reign. The Son of David will rule, not only for the last 1,000 years of human history, but forever and ever.

The Davidic Covenant defines the ruling family, the eternal authority of the client nation Israel under the rule of Christ.

The New Covenant defines the restoration of the client nation Israel at the Second Advent and its millennial "modus operandi," Jer 31:31-34. This, again, is an unconditional covenant, unlike the Mosaic Law. This covenant confirms and guarantees the fulfillment of all the unconditional promises of God. Being "a husband to Israel" is an analogy to the faithfulness of the Lord to the Exodus generation. The Lord was always faithful to them, even when they went apostate. The fulfillment of these covenant will seen

during the Millennium and the eternal state, Isa 61:2-11, 59:20-21 (quoted in Rom 11:26-27). The New Covenant to Israel is an eternal covenant, Eze 16:60. The New Covenant to Israel applies to two categories of Jewish people - first, to the historical Jews of the Old Testament who believed in Christ as He was revealed to them, and second, to the eschatological Jews of the Tribulation and Millennium who believe in Him. The New Covenant cannot be fulfilled to any Jew unless his salvation requirement has been fulfilled the Cross, and he has eternal life. As the book of Romans teaches, all Israel is not true Israel, for to be true Israel, you must be born again.

These covenants to Israel are defined as God's gracious promises and provision for the new racial species, called the Jew. The key to the covenants to Israel is based on the Jews as a new racial species and Israel as a client nation to God. Every Jew, however, must believe in Jesus Christ in order to qualify for the blessings of these covenants. The subject of God's covenants with Israel, and the resultant anti-Semitism from the kingdom of darkness, is a perfect example of enemyship, and should serve as a warning to us, to never fall into something so evil.

In This Love...That God Loved Us and Sent His Son 1 John 4:10

12-24-00

The Doctrine of the Enemies of the Cross Part 2. We have begun the doctrine of Enemyship and we have seen that in both the natural and spiritual realm that most do not know their enemy.

Point 1 in the doctrine defined Enemyship: the Bible specifies by categories certain hostilities and or alienations; these are irrational acts on the part of humans. Alienation means to be well acquainted with someone and not like them at all. Hostility means to not know someone well and not like them at all.

Point 2 we noted that there is both personal and historical Enemyship. This existed between Esau and Jacob. Historical enemyship still exists between the Arabs and the Jews.

Point 3 is the Importance of Understanding Angelic Enmity. As the ruler of this world, Satan is constantly seeking to gain his own objectives by means of hatred and by means of enmity. Satan and fallen angels are the enemies of the believer and they use their expertise of deception. This is taught in 1Ti 5:14-15, and also taught in 1Pe 5:8 "Be stabilized, be on the alert, your enemy the Devil, prowls about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." This adversary is not just an enemy but also a hunter. He is one with a vengeance. He has knowledge of all those believers who have lived before us, the ones who have failed as well as the ones who have succeeded. Satan and the kingdom of darkness know how to wear down the saints, distract them and tire them out, until emotion supersedes thought. Satan knows that all warfare is based on deception. That's why the Bible warns us about and prepares us for deception in many passages. In fact, one of Satan's most successful tactics is to defeat the enemy without even fighting. The kingdom of darkness is not concerned with the majority of believers because they could care less about the plan of God and living the spiritual life. We call this being apathetic, lifeless, indifferent, unconcerned or uninterested in the things of God. One of Satan's most successful tactics is to defeat the enemy without even fighting. We are told by God what to do concerning our angelic enemyship.

Eph 6:11 "Hold your ground against the strategies of the devil."

Notice that we are not to attack him or bind him, but rather "Hold your ground against the strategies of the devil."

Eph 6:13 "Hold your ground in the day that evil attacks you."

Jam 4:7 says, "Submit therefore to God [execute the PPOG]. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Peter said this in 1Pe 5:9 "But resist the devil by being firm in your doctrine" Satan knows many of the principles of warfare that great military leaders have learned throughout the years. For example Sun Tzu taught, if you are near the enemy, make him believe you are far from him. If you are far from the enemy, make him believe you are near. Many of God's people have no idea when their angelic enemies are near. In war, to fight and conquer all your battles is not the ultimate victory; the ultimate victory consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without even fighting, which is why war is based on deception. Deceive them without them knowing that they are being deceived. If our enemy makes us believe that he is not our enemy or that he does not exist, then he already has a tremendous advantage over us. We have angelic enemyship; and there is a devil, there are demons, and there is spiritual world. There is a hell, an eternal lake of fire. This angelic enemyship that we face has one goal in mind regarding the life of every believer; their goal is to lead all believers astray. Any area that we are not stable in doctrinally is an area open to deception. This means that anything that we think or do, that is not oriented to the way God thinks, is open to deception. Angelic enemyship is designed to infiltrate our soul with deception, which is demonization of the soul and personality of the believer or unbeliever living in the cosmic system.

There are degrees of deception. As a believer, it depends on how long you reside in the cosmic system without the use of rebound and recovery. This deception is thought transference of demon doctrine to the believer or unbeliever in the cosmic system. All believers and unbelievers in the cosmic system are under some form of satanic deception. This is why the apostle Paul said in Col 2:4 "I keep on communicating these things in order that no one may delude you with persuasive argument." In 1Co 3:18, Paul said, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him

become foolish [realize that he is a fool] that he may become wise." The woman in the garden, who was perfect and didn't have an Old Sin Nature ended up deceived by the craftiness and subtlety of Satan. This is why in 2Co 11:3, the apostle Paul said, "But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray [or deceived] from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."

It is the "mind" which is led astray, not the body. We may think that nothing is really happening in our life, when in reality, something is, without us knowing about it. While 1Jo 4:4 is true "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." that does not mean that we do not need to be warned and be alert. In 1Co 16:13, Paul warned us to "Be on the alert, stand firm in doctrine, act like spiritual adults, be strong." In Eph 6:18, he said "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints," As we have seen, the protection that we need is only given by God inside the Predesigned Plan Of God (PPOG) or inside the wall of fire of Zec 2:5. When our angelic enemies are using their forces against us, they'll appear as though they are being inactive. That is why when you have tranquility and peace, that's the time to build and prosper spiritually.

Another principle that angelic enemyship uses against us is to hold out bait to entice us. Satan has been dealing with members of the human race for over 6,000 years. He can read us almost perfectly. He knows the types of human personalities that exist and how to lure them away from the plan of God. This is why John commanded us in 1Jo 2:15 "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world." Our angelic enemies use the things of the world to lure God's people away from the plan of God. By holding out bait, angelic enemies keep believers on the march in the cosmic system; then at the proper time, lie in wait to ultimately deceive them. This is why Paul said in 2Ti 2:4 "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier." This doesn't mean we are to be hermits and not "live" in the affairs of everyday life. Rather it says that we "do not entangle ourselves in the affairs of everyday life." By holding out bait to the believer, our angelic enemies can cause the believer not only to live in the ways of the world or the cosmic system, but also to be in bondage to it.

2Ti 2:24-26 "And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."

By bringing in situations of pressure and suffering and inflicting damage, angelic enemies can make it possible for the believers to draw near to them rather than draw near to God. Do not swallow bait offered by the enemy. This is why we should "know our enemy" and analyze the enemy's plans so that we will know their shortcomings as strong points for yourself. Our angelic enemies also have shortcomings and weakness. Their weakness toward us is always based upon our strength in The Lord Jesus Christ. They know this they try to separate us from operating in the power of God. If we are strong and secure in certain areas, our angelic enemies are prepared for that and they will evade us in that area. They will bring in situations of success and victory so that we may become arrogant. They know the principle behind Pro 11:2 "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom."

Pro 16:18 "Pride {goes} before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling."

Their aim is to take captive as much as they can by their strategic plans. This is the art of offensive strategy. Therefore, there are some principles concerning our angelic enemies: we must know when to fight and when not to, meaning when to be on the offensive and when to be on the defensive, Eph 6:11-13. Never rebuke Satan and the kingdom of darkness, resist Satan and the kingdom of darkness. We must know our real enemy, Eph 6:12, and understand how they war against our soul and how we are to stand against them. This means to "hold your ground." We must also know the value of unity because the one whose ranks are united in purpose will be victorious. Eph 4:2-3, "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We must know the importance of discipline and preparation because only those who are alert and prepared will be victorious. Paul warned the pastors at the pastors' conference in Ephesus to be alert as shepherds over sheep in Acts chapter 20. Therefore, we are to know our enemy and know yourself. We should examine and investigate the enemy's plans so that we will know their shortcomings and weakness as our strong points. Our angelic enemies have been tempting members of the human race for over 6,000

years. When it comes to warfare, they master in the art of subtlety and secrecy. Think about it, our real enemy is invisible and inaudible. The areas of our life that they intend to attack, they do not want us to know about. Paul said in Eph 4:14 "We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming." Only the truth can keep false thinking and false doctrine out of the soul.

Point 4. Demons are called the Enemies of God, 1Co 15:25; Heb 10:13. Demons are a category of fallen angels operating under the command of Satan today. Operating under Satan's discipline, they are the enemies of God 1Co 15:25.

Heb 10:13 "He sat down on the right hand of God, from that time on, waiting until His enemies, [and in this context the enemies are the fallen angels] have been allotted the footstool of His feet."

Point 5. Unbelievers are the enemies of God, Rom 5:10, Col 1:21. All unbelievers are in a state of alienation, hostile in thinking, and evil in deeds. Col 1:21 says "And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds," All unbelievers are said to be in a state of alienation. The state of alienation comes from the fact that all of us are born with an old sin nature. From this point on we are in a state of alienation until we are born again.

Col 1:21 "And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds," There are two ways in which that hostility is expressed. First in thinking human viewpoint and secondly in evil deeds. Whether you like it or not or agree with it or not, unbelievers are said to be of their father the devil, Joh 8:44.

Point 6 is that the fallen angels and unbelievers will be judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire, Rev 20:10-15. The unbeliever is like the fallen angel, in that the fallen angel has made the decision in some angelic history of the past, and has been consigned to the lake of fire even though he is not there as of yet. The sentence has not been executed even though it has been given says Mat 25:41 "the eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. "But the sentence has not been executed, and will not be executed until the end of human history, after the Millennium, Rev 20:10. However, a sad principle is that this place that many call Hell, had to be enlarged to make room for members of the human race who remained enemies of God, Isa 5:14. The fallen angels represent a category of creatures that had the chance over a long period of time to make a decision and did not do so and therefore they are Satan's servants during this part of the angelic conflict. Many subjects that are not directly addressed in the word of God can be theorized as to the truth behind the subject if you fall back on the character and nature of God. A question that a lot of individuals have regarding principles behind the angelic conflict is "Did one third of the angels fall or did they all fall and two-thirds came back to Christ?" Remember the elect angels are said to be elect or chosen. For example, in 1Ti 5:21 "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality." The information we have on the prehistoric past is very vague, but there are certain passages and principles of doctrine that give us insight into what may have transpired in eternity past.

Both categories of the enemies of God, the fallen angels and unbelievers, will be judged in the lake of fire and we need to note the reason. When God created the universe, He formed a race of super-creatures, classified in the Bible as angels. Angels are rational beings with the ability to travel throughout the vast universe God created for them. God made them perfect, without sin, acceptable to His absolute righteousness. Because volition is a necessary component of a rational mentality and of capacity for love, God gave the angels free will so that they might understand His character and worship Him. Furthermore, God established a system of angelic authority and organization within which the angels lived and functioned. He perfectly blended freedom, authority, and responsibility, creating a structured environment within, whereby each angel could express his own volition. In the beginning, the most exalted of all the angels was the anointed cherub, called Heylel translated Lucifer-, the son of the morning, Isa 14:12. Entrusted with responsibilities he was also granted privileges beyond those of any other angel, but he abused his freedom through arrogance and rebellion against God, Eze 28:12-19. Arrogance is the worst of all sins because it is the distorter and obscurer of reality, an enemy of every rational creature. Arrogance was the self-deception that caused that magnificent creature called Heylel or Lucifer to compete with God rather than love and worship Him. Arrogance is also the reason for his horrible future and suffering

according to Mat 25:41, just as arrogance already has caused his frustration and discontent through the thousands of years since he revolted against God. We do not know how long ago Satan fell, but in spite of his protracted arrogance and suffering, he remains the most talented, attractive, and personable creature to come from the hand of God, Eze 28:12; 2Co 11:14. His force of persuasion is as compelling today as when he convinced one third of all the angels to join his prehistoric revolution against God, Rev 12:4a. Satan's fall and his leadership over thousands of angels led a revolt in the prehistoric warfare called the angelic conflict. A conflict that continues to this day and will be concluded only with the final judgment at the end of human history. A comparison of Scripture with Scripture leads to the conclusion that God held a trial in eternity past. In this prehistoric trial, God was the judge and the prosecution; Satan was the defense. God considered all the evidence and pronounced a guilty verdict. He sentenced Heylel or Lucifer and all the fallen angels to "eternal fire," Mat 25:41. Further Biblical evidence for the prehistoric trial of fallen angels is found in Satan's titles. The words "devil" and "Satan" are not names but titles, both of which mean "accuser" or "adversary," Heylel or Lucifer means "translucent, light of the dawn," identifying a creature of exceeding beauty. Called the devil and Satan he was the defense attorney who represented himself and the fallen angels at the prehistoric trial and because he continues to act as an attorney now that the trial has entered its appeal phase during human history, Job 1:6-12; 2:1-5; Zec 3:1-2. Mat 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;" This eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels, but because the sentence was not immediately executed, and, in fact, will not be carried out until the end of human history (Rev 20:10), we can accurately infer that Satan appealed the sentence. The elapse of time between the sentence and its execution indicates that human history is part of this momentous trial, the appeal trial of Satan.

One of the main reasons for undeserved suffering is because human history is a part of an appeal trial given to Satan and the fallen angels. Because of that God calls mature believers to the witness stand to testify concerning His justice and His supreme grace. Therefore, we are called not only to witness to the world but to be a witness before both the elect and fallen angels, 1Co 4:9, Eph 3:10. We are in the midst of a conflict between God and the elect angels verses Satan and the fallen angels and this is the result of angels being in opposition to God, which began with the fall of Satan and continued until all angelic creatures had made a decision for or against God. What case could Satan possibly construct to reverse the verdict of perfect, omniscient, and just God? Perhaps we can speculate from a common objection that is frequently repeated in the devil's world, unfortunately even by some Christians, although many cults ascribe to it. Satan's appeal probably followed this line of argument: how can a loving God cast His creatures into hell? Human history provides the answer. When Satan appealed his sentence, God convened an appeal trial which is coterminous with human history. Consequently, man was created to resolve the angelic conflict and become part of that trial. Before He created man, God anticipated man's fall and in His matchless grace designed a plan of salvation for all mankind through faith in Jesus Christ. This is not something an unfair, unjust, unloving God would do and it is why salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone. Furthermore, God created fabulous assets, privileges, and opportunities for every believer so that he might enjoy fellowship with God. God's grace is freely available to every human being but for anyone who refuses to believe in Jesus Christ, the only alternative is divine judgment. Human history displays God's magnificent character and gracious policy to Satan, to all the angels, and to mankind, Luk 15:4-10.

Both fallen and elect angels are observing how human history is turning out. History also demonstrates that no one goes to the eternal lake of fire or hell but by his own negative volition, Joh 3:18,36. In one small corner of the universe called planet Earth, man was created a lower creature than the angels, limited in strength, intelligence, and mobility. But like the angels man is rational and possesses the same free will that angels possess. The resolution of the angelic conflict lies in man's exercise of volition for or against the Lord Jesus Christ, for or against the plan of God. Angels observing human beings will witness proof after proof of Satan's own guilt and condemnation and proof after proof of God's perfect justice and grace, Job 1:6;2:1-3; Luk 15:7,10, 1Co 4:9; 11:10; Eph 3:10; 1Ti 3:16; 5:21. So, the appeal trial of Satan is coterminous with human history. In human history God is duplicating every situation that Satan used as a basis for argument and objection in his prehistoric trial and a major issue in that trial was the

concept of suffering. Satan argues that men, like angels, will not be able to handle suffering, especially if they consider the suffering unjust. The only reason anyone re-mains faithful to God, Satan charges, is because God blesses him. This was the argument in the book of Job. Job, however, discredited Satan's theory and was entered as evidence in God's case against Satan. Despite a period of failure, Job remained faithful to God not because God was blessing him but because of the doctrine he had learned and eventually applied. As a mature believer, Job possessed the resources to take extreme suffering in stride and to identify his circumstances as suffering for blessing rather than punitive suffering. Satan likewise was given tremendous assets prior to his fall. He did not fall through any fault or negligence on God's part; he failed through rejection of all God had provided. Satan has no legitimate case, no excuse. Numerous other figures in Old Testament history such as Abraham, Moses, David, suffered intensely, but their suffering did not reduce them to being miserable, whining creatures. Their strength in suffering demonstrated the power of metabolized doctrine to sustain great happiness under every circumstance of life, to equate living and dying, prosperity and adversity. Only Satan and his fallen angels are to blame for the state to which they have fallen and that's why they hate to see any creature remain faithful to God in spite of the suffering they go through. Satan argues that men, like angels, will not be able to handle suffering, especially if they consider the suffering unjust. Another argument is that no one will remain faithful to God if offered sufficient wealth or power. In other words, everyone has their price. This argument is a direct defense of Satan's own fall from his office of anointed cherub, the highest-ranking status among angelic creatures. The issue is will the creature's lust for power, fame, wealth, or any other attainment be more powerful than the plan of the Creator?

Will man choose self-promotion and self-aggrandizement independent of God, or will he execute God's plan and allow God to promote him? This is the evidence test Satan leveled against the humanity of Christ during the Incarnation, Mat 4:1-11. Satan had been created in perfect innocence as Adam was created in perfect innocence. The angels have free will as man has free will. Adam freely and deliberately chose to follow the pattern of arrogance which characterized Satan's original revolution. The fall of Adam duplicates the fall of Satan. The rebellion of Satan in the Garden of God resulted in the fall of angelic creatures, Rev 12:4a. The disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden resulted in the fall of mankind, Rom 5:12a. In angelic history God had provided a decision-making process by which angels could express non-meritorious positive volition. Likewise, God provided salvation for all mankind so that man can express non-meritorious positive volition through faith in Christ, Joh 3:16. Through the exercise of free will, angelic creatures are divided into two categories: elect and fallen, Heb 2:2; Rev 12:7. Through free will mankind is divided into believers and unbelievers, Joh 3:36. It could be said then that the reason the angels are called "holy angels" is because God made them holy by providing for them some non-meritorious way to receive His righteousness, Rev 15:4,16:5. In Rev 7:10-12, resurrected believers praise the Lord for salvation and the angels join in by twice saying Amen, in which they concur, agree, express that they believe it! They say "Amen" concerning salvation because they personally understand it. In the Tribulation, while angels bring divine judgment upon the earth, no angel is allowed to execute this judgment a part from Jesus Christ because He alone is worthy, Rev 5:2-5.

The Doctrine of the Enemyship

12-31-00

Both Categories of Enemies of God, the Fallen Angels and Unbelievers, will Be Judged in the Lake of Fire. The Bible says that the enemies of God will not only be judged but then thrown into the lake of fire for all of eternity, Rev 20:10-15. "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." The unbeliever is like the fallen angel who made his decision in some angelic history of the past, and has been consigned to the lake of fire even though he is not there as of yet. The sentence has not been executed even though it has been given says Mat 25:41 "the eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels;" Notice that this place that many call Hell, had to be enlarged to make room for members of the human race who remained enemies of God. The fallen angels represent a category of creatures that had the chance over a long period of time to make a decision and did not do so and therefore they are Satan's servants during this part of the angelic conflict. A question of those who understand the angelic conflict is "Did one third of the angels fall or did they all fall and two-thirds came back to Christ?" Remember that the elect angels are said to be elect or chosen. In 1Ti 5:21 "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality." The question is what were the angel's chosen to? The information we have on the prehistoric past is very vague, but there are certain passages and principles of doctrine that give us insight into what may have transpired in eternity past. We need to understand the reason why both categories of the enemies of God, the fallen angels and unbelievers, will be judged in the lake of fire. When God created the universe, He formed a race of super-creatures, classified in the Bible as angels. These are rational beings with the ability to travel throughout the universe God created for them. Because volition is a necessary component of a rational mentality and of capacity for love, God gave the angels free will so that they might understand His character and worship Him. God also established a system of angelic authority and organization within which the angels lived and functioned. He perfectly blended freedom, authority, and responsibility, creating a structured environment within, whereby each angel could express his own volition.

In the beginning, the most exalted of all the angels was the anointed cherub, called Heylel translated Lucifer, the son of the morning, Isa 14:12. Entrusted with responsibilities, Lucifer or Satan was also granted privileges beyond other angels, but he abused his freedom through arrogance and rebellion against God, Eze 28:12-19. Arrogance was the self-deception that caused Heylel or Lucifer to compete with God rather than love and worship Him. We do not know how long ago Satan fell, but in spite of his protracted arrogance and suffering, he remains the most talented, attractive, and personable creature to come from the hand of God, Eze 28:12; 2Co 11:14. His force of persuasion is as compelling today as when he convinced one third of all the angels to join his prehistoric revolution against God, Rev 12:4a. Satan's fall and his leadership over thousands of angels led a revolt in the prehistoric warfare called the angelic conflict. This conflict continues today and will be concluded only with the final judgment at the end of human history. A comparison of Scripture leads to the conclusion that God held a trial in eternity past. In that trial, God was the judge and the prosecution, Satan was the defense. God considered all the evidence, pronounced a guilty verdict and sentenced Heylel or Lucifer and all the fallen angels to "eternal fire," Mat 25:41. Further biblical evidence for the prehistoric trial of fallen angels is found in Satan's titles. The words "devil" and "Satan" are not names but titles, both of which mean "accuser" or "adversary," as an attorney accuses

someone in court. His proper name, Heylel translated Lucifer means "translucent, light of the dawn," identifying a creature of exceeding beauty. He is called the devil and Satan because he was the defense attorney who represented himself and the fallen angels at that trial and he continues to act as an attorney now that the trial has entered its appeal phase during human history, Job 1:6-12; 2:1-5; Zec 3:1-2. Mat 25:41 tells us what the sentence is "Then He will also say to those on His left, Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;" From Rev 20:10, we can accurately infer that Satan appealed the sentence. The elapse of time between the sentence and its execution indicates that human history is part of this appeal trial of Satan. One of the main reasons for undeserved suffering is because human history is a part of an appeal trial given to Satan and the fallen angels. Because of this God calls mature believers to the witness stand to testify concerning His justice and His supreme grace. We are called not only to witness to the world but to be a witness before both the elect and fallen angels, 1Co 4:9, Eph 3:10. We are in the midst of a conflict between God and the elect angels versus Satan and the fallen angels. The angelic conflict is the result of angels being in opposition to God, which began with the fall of Satan and continued until all angelic creatures had made a decision for or against God. Satan's appeal argument. What case could he possibly construct to reverse the verdict of perfect, omniscient, and just God? Satan's appeal probably followed this line of argument: "How can a loving God cast His creatures into hell?" Human history provides the answer. When Satan appealed his sentence, God convened an appeal trial which is coterminous with human history. Consequently, man was created to resolve the angelic conflict and become part of that trial. Before He created man, God anticipated man's fall and in His matchless grace designed a plan of salvation for all mankind through faith in Jesus Christ. This is not something an unfair, unjust, unloving God would do. God also created fabulous assets, privileges, and opportunities for every believer so that he might enjoy fellowship with God. God's grace is freely available to every human being through Jesus Christ, but for anyone who refuses to believe in Jesus Christ, the only alternative is divine judgment. Human history displays God's magnificent character and gracious policy to Satan, to all the angels, and to mankind.

History also demonstrates that no one goes to the eternal lake of fire or hell, except by his own negative volition, Joh 3:18,36. Like the angels, man is rational and possesses the same free will that angels possess. The resolution of the angelic conflict lies in man's exercise of volition for or against the Lord Jesus Christ. Angels observing the human race will witness proof of Satan's own guilt and condemnation and proof of God's perfect justice and grace, Job 1:6;2:1-3; Luk 15:7,10; 1Co 4:9; 11:10; Eph 3:10; 1Ti 3:16; 5:21. A major issue in this trial is the concept of suffering. Satan argues that men, like angels, will not be able to handle suffering, especially if they consider it unjust. The only reason anyone re-mains faithful to God, Satan charges, is because God blesses him. This was the argument in the book of Job. However, Job, despite a period of failure, discredited this theory and was entered as evidence in God's case against Satan. Job remained faithful to God not because God was blessing him but because of the doctrine he had learned and eventually applied. As a mature believer, Job possessed the resources to take extreme suffering in stride and to identify his circumstances as suffering for blessing rather than punitive suffering. Satan likewise was given tremendous assets prior to his fall. He did not fall through any fault or negligence on God's part; he failed through rejection of all God had provided. Satan has no legitimate case, no excuse. Only Satan and his fallen angels are to blame for the state to which they have fallen and that's what they hate to see any creature remain faithful to God in spite of the suffering they go through. Satan also argues that no one will remain faithful to God if offered sufficient wealth or power. In other words, everyone has his price. The issue is this: Will creature lust for power, fame, wealth, or any other attainment be more powerful than the plan of the Creator? Will man choose self-promotion and self-aggrandizement independent of God, or will he execute God's plan and allow God to promote him? This is the evidence test Satan leveled against the humanity of Christ during the Incarnation, Mat 4:1-11.

Human history provides the same circumstances and options which be-longed to angelic history before man's creation. Satan had been created in perfect innocence; Adam was created in perfect innocence. The angels have free will, man has free will. Adam freely and deliberately chose to follow the pattern of arrogance which characterized Satan's original revolution. The fall of Adam duplicates the fall of Satan. The rebellion of Satan in the Garden of God resulted in the fall of angelic creatures, Rev 12:4a. The

disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden resulted in the fall of mankind, Rom 5:12a. In angelic history God had provided a decision-making process by which angels could express non-meritorious positive volition. Likewise, God provided salvation for all mankind so that man can express non-meritorious positive volition through faith in Christ, Joh 3:16. Through the exercise of free will, angelic creatures are divided into two categories: elect and fallen, Heb 2:2; Rev 12:7. Through free will mankind is divided into two categories: believers and unbelievers, Joh 3:36. Angels are called "holy angels" because God made them holy by providing for them some non-meritorious way to receive His righteousness, Rev 15:4,16:5. We can see this from such passages as Rev 15:4, Col 1:20, and Rev 16:5 which says "And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous art Thou, who art and who wast, O Holy One, because Thou didst judge these things;" In Rev 16:5 Jesus Christ is called the only Holy One, this can only refer to the fact that He alone is the one who remains experientially holy. The elect angels are called holy and this can only be because they were made holy after they were found unholy. In Rev 7:10-12, resurrected believers praise the Lord for salvation and the angels join in by twice saying Amen, in which they agree and express that they believe it! They say "Amen" concerning salvation because they personally understand it.

In the Tribulation, while angels bring divine judgment upon the earth, no angel is allowed to execute this judgment apart from Jesus Christ because He alone is worthy, Rev 5:2-5. In Job 4:17-18 we find the statement that God charges error against His angels and this is used to argue that no man can be just before God. The argument would lack logic if only some angels were charged with error. At the fall, Satan offered man a counterfeit salvation prior to God offering man a true salvation. True salvation looked ahead to Christ, Gen 3:21 "And the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them." Satan's counterfeit was offered in the fig leaves, Gen 3:7 "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings." A counterfeit presupposes understanding of the real. Satan would have had to have some prior knowledge of salvation in order to offer a counterfeit plan for covering sinfulness and disobedience. As we have noted, one of the main reasons why God allows undeserved suffering is because we are in the midst of a conflict between God and the elect angels and Satan and the fallen angels. This conflict or appeal towards God's judgment on Satan and the fallen angels is coterminous with human history. In human history God is duplicating every situation that Satan used as a basis for argument and objection in his trial. This is a very serious point because the angels have already been incarcerated once time and were then let loose for their appeal trial, Gen 1:2, Jer 4:23-26. The only sin that is unpardonable is the sin of rejecting the Gospel in the allotted time. Angels would not have been exempt from this condition. If only one third of the angels fell, would not God have offered some salvation to them? If offered, are we to suppose that not one of the angels who fell accepted it? Then if we suppose only one third of the angels fell and God did not offer a plan for reconciliation, then God would be unfair if He then offered the reconciliation to man who also fell. Satan would have had a very strong objection if God was willing to offer a means of salvation to man and had not offered a means of salvation to the one third of the angels who fell.

Another principle to consider is that during the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union, angels observed every part of the first advent and incarnation of our Lord, in 1Ti 3:16 which says that He was "Beheld by angels" Why were they so interested, if they were holy and never fell it would be no great sight to behold our Lord, they could say they also holy. Why is it that during the dispensation of the Church-age, angels observe the royal family of God in their failure or success to execute and fulfill the PPOG, 1Co 4:9; Eph 3:10; 1Ti 5:21; 1Pe 1:12? Again, if they never fell, they could say we are holy, what great feat is this? The point is that the elect angels observe us. Why? If they never fell, and remained holy, why do they regard believers with such respect and honor? HEB 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies A footstool for Thy feet"? The angels must have been offered some means of reconciliation and forgiveness but they refused it. The first sin that the first creation committed was the sin of independence, it is also the sin that the human race commits. We can see in the initial fall of man and the subsequent attempt at deception by Satan and then the salvation offered by God a possible parallel to Angelic salvation: Satan's fell due to his own initiative and then deceived other Angels. In the same way Satan as the serpent deceived the woman, Gen 3:4-5. Adam fell without deception. He chose to disobey God just as Satan did. At the fall then we have one who disobeyed out of

his own initiative and one who was deceived. This pattern reflects what happened in the Angelic realm.

Summary:

1. Satan counterfeited salvation to Adam and the woman prior to God's offer of salvation to them which would indicate a prior knowledge of salvation.
2. Any position regarding what happened in the fall of angels, their salvation, etc is simply a personal opinion. The only value of one over the other is its consistency with the character and nature of God and the parallel to other known events.
3. God is a God of mercy and the greatest expression of mercy is to offer peace or reconciliation to one's enemies.
4. God is absolutely just and fair and could not have offered salvation to man and not offered it to another creation, angels, who had fallen.
5. Only Christ is forever holy and pure and blameless. For another creature to have these characteristics inherent in them and maintained in them by free will would have meant that they had kept themselves holy as our Lord did.
6. Angels are very much a part of the tabernacle, the ark, the veil, the curtains which all look ahead to Christ salvation work.
7. The garments of Angels are the same garments given to saved mankind in eternity.
8. In 1Ti 5:21 angels are called chosen or elect which would indicate that there was a time when they were not chose and not elect.
9. Col 1:19-20 seems to indicate that Christ reconciled all things to Himself, thing on earth and things in heaven.