

## Ephesians - Commentaries by Charles (Chuck) Hendricks

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Jesus our Lord, thou Morningstar how well we know thy name. Jesus the Lord the crucified in glory still the same. Someone raised that tune for this 124. Turn with me again to Ephesians 6, please. Ephesians chapter 6. I'm going to read again from verse 10. Finding my brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil. But we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand the evil day, and have him done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins gird about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints. And for me the utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly.

As I thought to speak, we were noticing last night that the Apostle commences this section with finally my brethren. This is his final word to the Saints at Ephesus. He had set before them the wonders, the blessedness of their position in Christ in the 1st 3 chapters, and all the blessings that are ours blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. In Christ Jesus, we set that all before them, individually and collectively. And then in chapters 4-5 and six he speaks of three spheres in which the Christian Wasps the sphere of the assembly, the sphere of the world, and the sphere of the of the family. And he now concludes by saying, finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. He's about to discuss the warfare that we are in the enemy. That we are engaged with and the character of the enemy, he is a wily foe. He is one that will attack us and seek to get us to act inconsistently with the position that we've been set in in Christ, risen and glorified in anyone or all three of or any two of those 3 spheres, The assembly, the world, the family. And in order to combat him effectively, we need a whole armor of God. And so he says in verse 11 put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the vows of the devil. And then in verse 12 he describes the conflict and those with whom we are wrestling. It's not an earthly, it's not a carnal conflict, but it's a it's a heavenly conflict, and it's with spiritual powers of wickedness in the heavenness against the all the Satan's hosts. And against all the powers of darkness. We can see as we look around us and Christendom tonight, how successful the enemy has been to divide and scatter the flock connections with the first sphere. Where the cardinal truth is, there is one body and we see hundreds of bodies, hundreds of bodies throughout Christendom, all calling themselves and content to do so by different names. It's been very successful in getting the Christian community not to give true expression to the truth that there is one body. And how successful he's been in the business world, where Christians often adopt the same principles in their business activities and in their dealings with others that the world adopts. And how successful he's been oftentimes in the family where he has come in and where there is disunity, in subjection family where the woman is the lead. Is not a family that is patterned according to the truth of God. It cannot be two heads. And God has said that the man is the head. The woman has a very, very vital and important place in carrying out the plan of God. But it's not in taking the lead, but it's really in the place of subjection and in the place of the family where she raises children and leads. According to the to the word of God. But there's only one head in the family unit, and that's command. But where you see that that order violated is violated all the time in the world and sometimes even in the assembly. Even among Christians, I should say you do not find. A family that's going on according to the truth of God. And so we have the first thing that's mentioned in verse 14 is stand, therefore. Having your loins skirt about about with truth, with truth, and and I mentioned yesterday there's one cardinal verse that we want to have before us. It's in chapter 4, verses 20 and 21. You have not so learned Christ. He's just described the Gentiles and how they walk, and he said it shall be that ye have heard him. And you have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus. Truth as it is from Jesus. And so we have all these truths that we're going to be looking at, that we were looking at a little bit last night, all related to Him. He Him who is the truth, He is the truth. When he was asked, Who art thou, He said altogether that which I speak to thee, even the same that I said unto you from the beginning, He was and is the truth, and so the truth is in Jesus.

We might look at, we might look at a few. Passages that bring together these first two bits of the armor. Having your loins gird about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness the loins girded, speaks of the position of service. All of our service should be according to the truth of God, and we seek to serve the Lord. And. The family circle is a place of great service to the Lord, and the woman has a place in service just as the man does. And it's it's every bit as important. We cannot have a happy family where either one is not fulfilling their God-given responsibility. And it's it's it's a it's a precious thing the the truth of the assembly being the bride of Christ. As unfolded in those last verses of chapter 5, elevate marriage to a position that never had before, where the husband is a type of Christ and the woman, the wife is the type of the assembly. And as the assembly is subject unto Christ, so that the wives be for their husbands in everything. And husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. The the truth. Of the assembly being subject to Christ, and Christ being the head of the assembly is is set forth in a Christian marriage. So it elevates this Christianity elevates the woman into a place that she never never had before, even in Judaism, a place of tremendous privilege and responsibility. As being the in the position that sets forth the bride of Christ, that which is the the chiefest object of the Lorde affections. In fact, if you read in the last in the first chapter of Ephesians the last verse, that's such an important verse we want to read it. Verse 22. God having exalted the Lord Jesus far above verse 21 all principality and power and might and dominion. Name not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and he got to put all things under his feet. He gave him to be the head over all things to the Church. Harry's not presented as being the head of the church, but head over all things to

the Church. And she is called, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth All in all. The first woman that was created was created from the side, from the rib of Adam, and so when he saw her he said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. You should be called woman, for she was taken out of the man. She was made for him to be his helper, to be alongside of him, to be his support and his stay, to stand by him, to support him, and he is to shelter her, to protect her, and to lead and to guide her. As the head of the family, he without her is incomplete, and so the Christ without the assembly is incomplete. She is the fullness, the completeness of him, that Philip Allen, all he and his person fills everything, fills the universe. Yet he would in one sense he would be incomplete without his bride alongside of him. And so it is with men. It's not good for men to be alone. So God created the woman to be by him with him his support. His health, and not the head, but to be alongside of him as one that is loved by him, the special object of his heart. Well, marriage has been elevated by Christianity in the position that it never, never had before. Now let's look at let's look at a sound in connection with some of these precious truths of Psalm 11.

Psalm 11. I'll quickly read the Psalm, and the Lord put I might trust. I'll say to my soul, please, a birth to your mountain. Below the wicked bend their bow. They make ready their arrow upon the string that they may privilege. Shoot at the upright in the heart. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in His holy temple. The Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes behold his eyelids. Try the children of men. The Lord tryeth the righteous but the wicked. In him that loveth violence is so hated. Upon the wicked he shall reign snares fire and brimstone and horrible Tempest. This should be the portion of their cup. Now notice verse seven or the righteous Lord. Loveth righteousness his countenance shall thou behold the the upright. Again chapter Psalm 15. Well the Psalmist asked the question, Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backlighteth not with the tongue, or doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor, and whose eyes a vile person is contempt. But he honored them to fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own heart, and changes not he that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved. These verses the righteous Lord loveth righteousness. And so we're told in in Ephesians 6 to put on the breastplate of righteousness. They have all of our dealings being righteousness with one another. What is righteousness? And there he's talking about practical righteousness. Practical righteousness is is conducting ourselves consistently with the position that replaced him to conduct ourselves consistently. With respect to others according to the position that we occupy, we are set here as children of God, redeemed ones saved out of this world, and to walk righteously is to walk consistently with that position. We are separated people. A Christian that is walking hand in hand with the world is not walking the path of righteousness because is not walking consistently with the truth of God, allowing skirted about with truth. The Lord Jesus prayed in John 17. He said they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. In John 15 he says if he were of the world, the world would love his own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hated you. We're not insured about with truth to realize who we are. We cannot walk as a Christian and we don't understand what a Christian is. We don't understand what Christianity is all about. Christianity is identification and association and unity with a divine person who is now a man and he's glorified on high. He's been cast out. Of this world and set and set it not down here and reject it. And we're identified with him. We're passing through this scene as strangers and pilgrims. Our home is on high where heavenly people as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly. And as is the earthly such are they also been earthly. We were once earthlings, we were once those that minded earthly things. But now we have found a truer game. Now we belong to the man who's now in the glory. That blessed one. And to walk down here in righteousness, to represent him properly, to do the right thing in these three spheres that we're talking about, the sphere of the assembly, the sphere of the world, and the sphere of the family, conduct ourselves consistently with the relationship in which he set us. It's even in one place, And I think I thought of this today, meditating upon this in in Second Corinthians, chapter 5. Excuse me, Chapter 8. Well, that's really chapter 92 Corinthians Chapter 9. I don't know if you've ever noticed this, but in chapters 8 and 9, the 2nd Corinthians, the Apostle Paul deals with the subject of Christian giving, the grace of giving. And he ends in in Chapter 9, verse 15. He says thanks the other God for his unspeakable gift. He is a great giver. We can never out give him. He's given all he could give. In the gift of his Son, and again in 2nd Corinthians 8, verse nine, we know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor. Ajith through his poverty might be made rich, might be rich, He gave himself, He came down and became poor, that we might be rich. Well, in this very portion he talks about giving. It says in verse seven of Chapter 9, every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give that grudgingly, or necessity for God loveth the cheerful giver.

And God and God is able to make all grace abounded toward you, That ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Notice now, as it is written, He has dispersed abroad, He had given to the poor. His righteousness remaineth forever. Now he that ministereth seed to the Tsar, both minister Brent for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness which causes it through us Thanksgiving to God. Notice how he uses righteousness a few times there in connection with the grace of giving. Righteousness is acting consistently with the position in which he has set us. He's put us into a place of blessing by sovereign grace. He has given us all that he could give. He couldn't give us more. He's given us his son, the diary of his bosom. Now the only righteous response, the only proper response to that is to give and to give and to give to to be a an exponent down here in this world. Of God to manifest his character, the Lord Jesus gave himself for us, and God has given his son. And so the very grace of giving is called righteousness, fruits of righteousness. Another thought in connection with that in Ephesians 4 that we were looking at at the end of the chapter it says. Let all bitterness verse 31 and wrath and anger and clamor. And evil speaking be put away from you with all malice and be a kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake or literally even as God in Christ have forgiven you that word. Forgiven means to show grace to God has shown grace to us, He has forgiven us. And if you go back to Matthew 18 connection with this thought, I'm linking this with the thought of righteousness. How often we can act towards others, considering how God has acted towards us. God has given to us when we were bankrupt, when we were without any ability to pay our way, any ability to to meet our need God gave. All that would meet our needs. And so it is appropriate. It is fruit of righteousness for us to respond in kind. And so with the thought of forgiveness. Notice in the end of Matthew 18 he gives this this story. Verse 23, Therefore is the Kingdom of heaven likened unto his servant, a certain king, which would take account of his servants, And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him 10,000 talents. He had not to pay. His Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children had all that he hadn't came up to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loose him, and forgave him the devil. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him 100 pence, And he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying pain he did. The oldest and his fellow servant fell down. At his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not. But he went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt. Some of his fellow servants saw what was done. They were very sorry, and came and told him to the Lord All it was done. Then his Lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt,

because thou desirously should us not. Thou also have compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee. Would that not be the right thing to do? If you're forgiven 10,000 talents, and someone comes to you with a cube paltry pence, that he owes you, and you insist that he pays you, would it not be the right thing to extend forgiveness?

To the one that owes you so much less than you had owed, to the one that had extended forgiveness to you, that would be the right thing to do, wouldn't you? That would be righteousness. But all he was called wicked servant, the very opposite of righteousness. He was a wicked servant because he didn't have that. That the spirit of forgiveness and that spirit of grace and that spirit of giving, that should be in the heart every one of us. There are these moral features that are found in the precious life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The truth as it is in Jesus, or we should you should feed upon him. We should meditate upon him and relate all the truths that we're considering to Him. The one that when he was reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself into the hands of him that judges righteously. I was just meditating the other day, the Lord Jesus at the Last Supper. They were all reclining a table and it was it was common practice that the first one to have arrived would be the one that would assume the responsibility of making all the guests comfortable by going around and washing their feet. There wasn't anyone to do that this time. And so the Lord himself, without saying anything, he takes a towel in the basin. He gets at the feet of the disciples. He washes their feet. And that was before. They were at the table. That was right at the beginning. Judas was there and it just struck me. The Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory, washed due to speed. Judas, the one who betrayed him, who kissed. He was there. He went out in the middle of the feast before the Lord instituted the supper. But He was there for the Passover part, and to think of the way the Lord Jesus dealt with him, even when he came to betray him. Friends, deliver this style. The Son of Man who traced out the Son of Man with a kiss, all the love that was in his heart. He did everything that was possible to do the game to win Judas's heart. But it was not winnable, and he was like this wicked servant. Here I did not know forgiveness, and he was most miserable. Well here. What is the attitude now of God the Father toward those that do not extend forgiveness when they've been forgiven so much? His Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors to eat till he should fail. It was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you with he from your hearts forgive not everyone. His brother in the trespasses, that's the government of the father and his family. Sometimes when there is not blessing in a person's life, it can be traced back to an unforgiving spirit. I remember an assembly once was in a in a bad state of soul. Everyone felt it. They didn't know it was wrong, and they were. They were. They were looking to the Lord. There were those that felt it keenly, but no one knew what was wrong. In one low upstate morning as the basket was passed around. It was passed to the to the wealthiest man in the town and he went to place his offering in the basket and he missed the basket and it was a coin and it rolled on the floor and then across the floor here a man that was a millionaire, a multi millionaire and he was just putting in a little coin in the collection. He was guilty of covetousness while he was dealt with. He was dealt with because of his covetousness, and the weight that had been on that meeting lifted, And there was liberty again, and there was blessing again. Sometimes there will be a weight that is upon us, an assembly, and they don't know why and they don't know what the cause is or who is it to blame, but they can cry to the Lord. The Lord is ahead, and He is the one that will reveal in such a case. There are other cases where. Families are loggerheads with one another rather than won't speak to one another in the same meeting. And there is not the spirit of forgiveness. There's not the spirit that ought to characterize us. God has forgiven me 10,000 talents. Who am I to withhold forgiveness to one that may only a few pence. Well, these are important principles. The Lord Jesus on the cross looking down upon those that had nailed him there, his persecutors.

It's tormentors, totally unjust, totally unrighteous, wicked men. And he says, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Is that spirit characterized my heart? Does it characterize our hearts as those who are the recipients of infinite grace, which reach down to pick up a Wretch like me and to set me among Princess, and has set me on the road to glory? Forgive me all my sins, cleanse me from all my iniquities. Set me on the Heavenwood Rd. Who am I there to refuse to extend forgiveness to one that comes to me and says I repent? Forgive me, I'm sorry for what I've done. I tell you to be in a position of refusing that put you in a very, very puts us in a very serious position. God will set his face against us if that is our state, and it will hinder blessing. First, Peter 117 If you call on the Father, who without respective persons judge it according to the work of each past and kind of your so journey here in fear, fear of displeasing him. Here, acting inconsistently with the position in which he set us. I love the little sticker that I've seen on some cars. It says forgiven, forgiven. And that is what's true of every one of us. We are a forgiven, A forgiving people, and what ought to characterize us is the grace that characterized him. Remember the woman in John 8? These these self-righteous hypocrites, these Pharisees brought this woman taken in adultery in the very act master and Moses commanded that such should be stoned upon her to the very act. What say is thou? And he's stooping down, wrote with his finger on the ground. And continued to ask him, and he lifted himself up, and he said he that is without cinema, without his first passage. And then he stooped down and wrote with his finger on the ground again. And being convicted from the oldest to the least, they left. And the Lord was left alone in the presence of that woman. She and he only alone have no man condemned thee, no landlord. And then he says those blessed words, Neither do I condemn thee. Cannot come to condemn the world, but to save the world. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And here was a woman that was broken before him. He had committed a grievous sin and wasn't here to condemn the world. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses. And have committed unto us the word of reconciliation We have the privilege of. Of ministering the word of reconciliation, the ministry of reconciliation to those roundabouts. And if we are hard and austere and unforgiving and unyielding, we are misrepresenting him. We are not. We do not have on the breastplate of righteousness. We're not acting consistently with the grace that the sentence of relationship with God himself and forgiveness, 10,000 talents. If we do not have a forgiven spirit well enough on that point, let's go back to Ephesians 6. Stand therefore, verse 14, having your loins heard about with truth. And having on the breastplate of righteousness, let's turn back to Isaiah 32. The verses I'm about to read apply to the Millennium. But they ought to be true of the assembly. Verse one and two. Isaiah 32. Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and Princess shall rule in judgment, and a man shall be as in hiding place from the wind, and a covered from The Tempest as rivers of water, in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock and weary land. And then verse 17 And the work. This is the verse I wanted. The work of righteousness shall be peace.

And the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for governor in that day, it ought to be so in the Assembly. The work of righteousness shall be peace, says in Second Timothy 2, describing the great house. There are gold and silver vessels, wooden and earth, and some to water, and some to dishonor. It says, if one shall have perched himself from these vessels to dishonor and separate himself from them, he should be a vessel to honor, sanctified lead for the master's use. And then he says, the youthful lusts follow righteousness, faith, love, peace. Pretend they're calling the Lord out of pure heart. Righteousness is first do the right thing. Depart from iniquity. Let everyone that name is the name of the Lord depart from iniquity and follow righteousness, faith, love and then peace is the end result. And that's what we have here. The work of righteousness shall be peace. And righteousness and. Effective righteousness, quietness and assurance forever turn back to the 85th Psalm in this connection. And I was noticing this the other day in reading it, and it was very precious to my soul. In

Psalm 85, verse 10, we often apply this to the cross. It's really a millennial Psalm. Again it says mercy and truth are meant together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. You see, if there's really righteousness, I don't mean self righteousness, I don't mean insisting on my way of doing things, but really righteousness, consistency of conduct in accordance with the position, the truth of God that has set me in a relationship with himself as a child of God. If there's true righteousness upheld and maintained, it will result in peace. And here it says mercy and truth are met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth and righteousness and look down from heaven. Yay, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase. Notice the last verse, Righteousness shall go before him and shall set us in the way of. Is steps we want to be set, do we not? In the way of our Lord Jesus steps Righteousness, has set us in relationship with himself and sets us in the way of His steps. How precious. Well, I know these sounds and some of these scriptures we're looking at have a millennial picture to them, but let's turn one more to the 122nd sound which brings before us. Jerusalem and Jerusalem is a picture of the assembly. It's the place where the Lord has placed his name. And that's what the assembly is today in this present dispensation in 122nd sound. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the place where the Lord had set his name. Jerusalem means the dwelling in peace. Dying in peace, Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together, that speaks of unity. Whether the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord under the testimony of Israel, that's his presence there. The testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord that his name is there, He has placed his name there. For there are set Thrones of judgment, the Thrones of the House of David. Righteousness is executed there. Judgment is executed there. His honor, his glory is maintained there. Discipline is exercised there. And then it says, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, Jerusalem here representing the assembly. Every local assembly ought to be a little miniature Jerusalem dwelling in peace, where righteousness characterizes the assembly. That is, they do the right thing, that all the actions that are taken in the assembly are according to holiness and truth in Ephesians 4. And the verses right afterwards speaks of the truth as it is in Jesus, it says. Our old man. It says put off. You're having put off the old man with his deeds and being renewed in the spirit of your mind. And you're having put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. The new man, which is Christ, is created in righteousness and true holiness, holiness of truth, literally holiness of truth.

So there you have the Newman with his loins girded about with truth and the wrestling righteousness on. And that's the way the new man is created to represent him. And the the end result of that action and all that goes on in Jerusalem is peace. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. We should never introduce into the assembly anything that would disturb the peace of the Saints. Unless it is for the glory necessary, for the glory of God. Unless it's necessary for the glory of God. But there are many things that are not of a fundamental character, fundamental nature, that should not be introduced to disturb the peace of the Saints. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. That's a prayer that we ought to be praying every day when we think of the assembly where we live. We live here in Peló. I live in Lawrenceville. We ought to be praying for the peace of the assembly where we live and all over the world. The enemy is the is the destroyer, and if he could have his way, he would destroy us. He would remove every last trace of testimony. To the name of the Lord Jesus. If he could pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they should prosper that long. They do love the assembly. Do you love the place where the Lord has set His name? Is Is that where your affections are? Is that where your your, your? Is that where your life revolves around? Where the Lord is in the midst of His own, you pray for the peace of that place. Peace be within my walls and prosperity within my palaces. Every assembly ought to be a place where the Saints can grow and prosper and are fed. And it's a place of peace. It's not a place where it's not a place characterized by legal criticism and and and hard, unforgiving spirits. It's a place where the grace of God is in every heart operating. And leading us into mutual confidence in one another and going on together in peace, in peace. That's part of the honorable our feet. The next thing that's mentioned, our feet shod in Ephesians 6 with the preparation of the gospel of peace, of peace wherever we go. We ought to exude the atmosphere of peace. We ought not to be a troublemaker. We ought not to be those that. If we would speak of moving to another place, they would. They are happy because wherever we tend to go, there's trouble. We ought to be men of peace. Blessed are the peacemakers. The Lord Jesus said they should be called the children of God. Well, he goes on to say in verse 8, For my brethren and companions sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee. For my brethren and companion sakes, because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good. Because the House of the Lord is there, Jerusalem. That's where the Lord has said his name. It's because the Lord is here, the Lord Himself is here. He is the Prince of peace. When he first appeared to his own after his resurrection, he showed him his hands in his side and said peace. Be up to you, Ephesians 2 He is our peace who have made both 1 broken down the middle wall of partition between us, Jew and Gentile, and brought us into this one body, this one Newman, so making peace. Is what I want to characterize our pathway going back to Ephesians 6 now? We've had the girdle of truth. All our. Conduct ought to be according to the truth of the word of God. And in order for us to know that, of course we have to know this this book. We have to know where to go. We have to know the Blessed Book, so that our loins could be girded with truth.

Young brothers especially, I speak to you this evening. Study the word of God when you're young. You, you, you, your minds are are supple and able to take it in and to retain it when you're young. When you get older, you forget so quickly what you've read just a short time ago, how important to be in the world and to read these precious the precious ministry, the legacy that has been left us. We happen to be in a company of Christians. That have the greatest legacy of truth that has ever been left to any Christian company from the day of Pentecost till now. I say that without any fear of contradiction. I read some number of the modern day writers and they are epitome in comparison with the brethren who wrote 100 years ago. And the truths that were unfolding precious crews of Christ and His church. Read that ministry along with your Bible to be a real help in the assembly. To seek the good of the Saints, to be a blessing in the assembly they seek to be going on keeping the world out and going on in the path of separation for the glory of Christ. Down here your mind skirt about with the truth. He is the truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. Christ who is our righteousness, He is the righteous 1. Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the one, the Prince of Peace. He is the one that has made peace. Your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Turn back to Romans Chapter 12 for a moment, please. Chapter 12 of Romans. You see this theme all the way through the Epistles. Verse 17 Romans 12 Recompense to no man evil, for evil provide things honest in the sight of all men. That's having on the breastplate of righteousness, isn't it? And it could be possible, as much as lieth in you. Live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves. Don't be men of war, Don't be men retaliating an evil deed done to you with another evil deed done to the other. Avenge not yourself, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written. Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if I'm enemy hunger feed him. If he thirst, give him drink, or in so doing thou shalt keep coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. It would be possible, as much as life in you. Live peaceably with all men. Don't ever be the one that begins a fight an argument. Do that in the assembly. Live peaceably. Amen of peace. Do that in the world. Do that in your home. Be a peacemaker. You know what? Immense, immense blessing will flow from it in the 13th chapter. Verse 12. The night is far spent, the days at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. Now we've we've been reading in Ephesians 6 about putting on

the whole armor of God, and here he caught. He called, speaks of the armor as the armor of light. And all these truths that we're talking about are truths of the light. The loins girded about with truth, the breastplate of righteousness, our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. That doesn't just mean that wherever we go we ought to be carrying the gospel. It certainly includes that. But it means that wherever we go, we ought to be manifesting peace. We have to be bringing peace into our circumstances. We ought not to be Rawlers, not to be strikers, not to be contentious. Not to be quarrelsome. Not to be slanderers, backbiters, whisperers, evil speakers, these are all sowing discord. This is not peace. This is just the opposite of peace.

This is falling right into the hands of the enemy. I will feed Shah with the preparation of the gospel of peace. When you are used to carry a message which will sow discord or do an action which will divide brother from brother or sister from sister. No. So this is the arm of light. We are in the light. We are light in the Lord. What is children of light? The fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Again, we have a righteousness of truth. You have this armor that is mentioned in Ephesians 6 all the way through the New Testament, over and over again, all the way through the Old Testament. All of these precious characteristics that were true of him when he was here below. He was the great peacemaker was America, the Blessed Lord himself. Came to make peace by the blood of his cross. And so it says, cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. But as well honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and dark drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put you on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Well, in Ephesians six were to put on the whole arm of God, and here were to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we put all that armor on, we had him on, don't we? Because that armor speaks in him. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith. And we'll see that in a moment as we take up faith and the helmet of salvation and so on, all these precious truths that we have as our armor, our characteristics of himself. As it is in Jesus chapter 14. Chapter 14. Verse 15. If I'd rather be grieved with thy meat, now walk us thou not charitably. Now walk us not according to love. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Look not then your good be evil spoken of. Notice, for the Kingdom of God is not needing drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. These are the moral characteristics of the Kingdom of God. Righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. This was this was his pathway pathway of righteousness. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. And he was the one that always manifested the truth. He always revealed the Father in all that he did. For that he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Verse 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace. And things were with one may edify another for me to try not the work of God. Let us follow after the things which make for peace, Chapter 15, verse one. We then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good, to edification, for even Christ. Please not himself. He didn't please himself. We're to walk as he walked. The righteous thing for us, the consistent thing for us to do is to live his life. He's given it to us to be lived out. And so we are not complete ourselves. Let's go back to Ephesians 6. And then it says above all. Well, verse 15 Again your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We ought to carry the gospel of peace not only in our words, not only to preach the gospel to the lost, distribute tracks, give the word here and there, but our whole demeanor, our whole pathway, ought to be a pathway of peace, good news and peace. We ought to be the exponents in our persons of this truth that we're seeking to present. So it's how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. And to go on together in peace. And then he says in verse 16 above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, you turn to Hebrews 12, Hebrews 12, following the Faith chapter, which is Chapter 11.

It says in Hebrews 12, verse one. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses referring to these Old Testament worthies that he's just spoken about, let us lay aside every weight. And the sin which does so easily beset us and let us run with patience for race that is set before us. Endurance. The part of patience here is endurance. It's a long distance race. It's not a Sprint. We're not on a Sprint, but we're running the race. That's going to take quite a while to get through. So it's to run with endurance, the race for the set before us. And what's the object? Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, the word our shouldn't be there. It's not our faith, but it's He's the beginner and completer of the path of faith. He is the one that ran the course ahead of us. He ran the path of faith before we did, and he kept his eye on the gold ahead of him, who, for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand and the throne of God. He ran the course perfectly. He is the one that is set before us as who is now on high notice, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, the beginner and completer of the path of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God for considering him, consider him again the truth, as it is in Jesus. Where the shield of faith, when the enemy comes with his fiery darts to try to get us to question all kinds of things, maybe question things in the Bible, maybe there are passages someone has brought a passage to us that we don't understand. It seems to be contradictory to another and our faith is in danger of being shaken in the in the word of God. Or possibly trial has come into our life and it appears that that God is forsaking us. And we know that's not true, he says. I will never leave the ignore for safety. Now faith lays hold upon those promises. Faith believes those promises. Faith reaches out and and grabs onto those promises and says, no matter what my circumstances may look like, no matter how contrary to some of the truths that I find in the word of God my circumstances may seem to be, I believe God. That's fake. I believe God. And so, as the expiring dark, so the wicked one are thrown to at us, trying to get us to question God's interest in us, His care for us, His love for us. His compassion for us? The shield of faith wards off those fiery ducks, those suggestions from the enemy to cause us to doubt him, and to question his goodness or his concern or his love. For me, the shield of faith towards these are. The Lord Jesus went through this pathway down here, and he walked the path of faith. He ran the path of faith. And he had a joy set before him to be back with the Father and to have you and me with him someday, to be with himself on time. And so again we relate that truth back to him who was the one who ran, of course, perfectly before us. And he's Where does it end? Where does it end? It ends in the building. Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest he be worried and faint in your mind You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against him. You haven't been martyred, you haven't had to pay with your life, Paul says. He says you have forgotten the expectation which speaketh unto you is unto children, My son, despise not thou to chasing on the Lord, while faith will now have reducing him, or whom the Lord loveth, he chased them. And scourgeth every son whom he received. I remember 2 boys were fighting in the front of a house, And the father came out, and he laid hold upon one of the boys, and he gave him a spanking. And another man who'd been watching it, said, Sir, it was the other boy's fault. And the father said that made me so. But this boy is my son, and I have taught him not to fight, and so I'm dealing with him, not with the other boy whom the Lord loveth. He chastened it. And so if he deals with us, it's the proof that he loves us. That he takes the time to discipline us. It may not seem very pleasant at the time, no chastening, for the pleasant seemed to be joyous but grievous. But afterward deal with the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercising their life, and he doesn't. We might be partakers of His Holiness, And without holiness no man should see the Lord. He's going to have us there, and he's going to have us there in a fixed state of soul. So he puts us sometimes through the fire, and that's the proof of this law, that's the proof of his life whom the Lord loveth.

In chasing them back to Ephesians 6. I spent too much time on some of these, so. Time is running out. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, I would suggest that you study the whole 11th chapter of Hebrews, and you'll see those those worthies of faith, those men of the Old Testament, that through faith. Live for the glory of God. And it says there without faith it is impossible to please God. And in Second Thessalonians it says all men have no faith. I just think there are men that go through this world. They don't have any faith. They don't know what it is to believe in God, but to believe God, to trust God, you have confidence in God. What a precious, what a precious gift this is. It's a gift. God has given us to believe it's not something we can credit ourselves with. It's given us the the, the faith that it enables us to make hold upon the precious faith that He's given to us. But we leave him and trust him to have that shield of faith to ward off all the fiery Darcy of the wicked one, as he would seek to interject doubts and questions and. Impuning to God that which is, we know from the word of God, not true of Him. He does love us, and though we may not be able to explain all of our circumstances, now we interpret them in life of the love that was demonstrated in the cross and all its fullness force. Then he goes on to say verse 17, Take the helmet of salvation. The helmet of salvation. Salvation I believe. Here is the thought of the. Well, we know we have salvation now. Salvation is in three tenses. We are saved. We are being saved, and we shall be saved. We are saved. We have the salvation of our souls. Right now we know we're in a subtle relationship with God. Our sins are forgiven. We're gone to justify before God. We're reconciled with His. We're being saved from all the difficulties of the way, all the trials of the wilderness. And one day we shall be saved. It's not our sword. It's not our sword. Sometimes you'll hear someone say, well, have you brought your sword today? No. It's the sword of the Spirit. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Let me give this illustration. Please forgive me going over just a little close as quickly as I can. This one finish this. It's like, I heard this illustration in the conference once and I thought it was so good. Some of you may have heard it. It's like an apothecary shop person comes in and he's got a prescription written by his doctor needs this medication, and the pharmacist takes it, looks it over, and sees what ingredients have to be mixed in order to fulfill this prescription. He turns around. He goes on a shelf which just filled with all kinds of bottles, various kinds, and you'll pick this one and this one and this one, and then you'll mix it up. According to the percentage it should be in, and the prescription is fulfilled, well, we ought to be like that, that shelf, with our bottles completely filled. We ought to be so acquainted with the word of God, that when the Spirit of God needs a scripture in order to meet a certain circumstance or certain condition in the assembly, or a certain difficulty that may have arisen in our family or in our business, whatever sphere we're in the Spirit of, God can take that scripture and bring it to our memory and enable us to act upon it. That's the sword of the Spirit. It's his sword. But we have to have the shells filled. We have to be stole in the word of God, that the the everything is filled and the Spirit of God can then take whatever is needed for the particular occasion. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God and the last, the last part of the armor is prayer. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. It's the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. And our prayer is in the Spirit. The Spirit of God will never lead us to pray contrary to the Word. He has inspired this book, he has indicted it, and he never leads us to pray contrary to the Word of God. So we pray in the Spirit, praying we always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. I should say that all these weapons, all these disarmament, I should say.

Is defensive except the sword of the Spirit. That's offensive and prayer. Prayer is offensive in the sense too. So we have these last two that that reach out and lay hold upon the power that is in God. He's lost to the word of God and prayer, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints. Now it's good when we pray that we pray for all the Saints, we embrace them in our affectionate affections and our prayers. And then that we be specific. And for me Paul says, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in Barnes, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. So Paul says, pray for all the Saints, and also pray for me. We ought to have certain specific thoughts in our prayers, right specifically for certain individuals. That's very appropriate. And also to pray for all the Saints. Our prayers should embrace the whole company of God's redeemed once, many of whom we do not know. And we may not even meet many of them when we're here. But we can certainly embrace them in our prayers as being fellow members of the one body well to close. Finally, he says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might put on the whole arm of God. That you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil. And having done all to stand, May God give us to put that armor out, to meditate upon it, become more acquainted with it, to study Him who is the one that exemplifies all these precious truths that we've been looking at, and hold them as the truth is in Jesus. Let's close by seeing #130. With Christ starting begins the Lord of truth and love. When He had purged our sins, He took his seat above 130. With Christ, our pain begins to work. When he has worked ourselves.

Pella Conference: 1989, The Armour of God

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Address—C. Hendricks

Oh Lord, when we the path we trace which thou on earth has tried to man, thy wondrous love and grace, thy faithfulness to God, we wonder if thy lowly mind and fame would likely be in all our rest and pleasure. Finding learning, Lord of the someone raised opportunities. Who? Let's begin reading tonight from Ephesians Chapter 6. Ephesians chapter 6. Verse 10. Ephesians 6:10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might put on the whole armor of God, that she may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, And having done all to stand, stand therefore, having your loins gird about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly. To make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador of bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. We are quite acquainted, I believe, with the truth that the Epistle to the Ephesians contains. Probably the highest truth that we have in the entire Bible setting before us Christ in His exaltation, God's eternal purposes with respect to Christ and His church. And all that we've been brought into in him, in members of the one body, being the habitation of God by the Spirit, being sealed by the Spirit, and having an inheritance in him, being chosen in him before the foundation of the world, blessed with spiritual

blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.

Children of God. Saints of God. All the blessings that he unfolds to us in this epistle, and they are the 1st 3 chapters we might say are the doctrinal part of the epistle. As much individual truth in chapter one, His eternal purposes, in the 10th verse, we have God's eternal thought to head up all things in Christ, heavenly and earthly, even in Him in whom also we have obtained an inheritance. So we are brought into the most intimate and nearest place of relationship with himself, and the chapter ends with Christ being head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him, that Philip Allen all. We could go into that in more detail. That's not my purpose tonight. I wanted to look more at the practical side of the epistle. First three chapters we have the doctrine, and then chapters 4-5 and six we have the practical. Response that flows from our position in Christ and all the blessings that we've been brought into notice in Chapter 4, it begins. I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith your call, when he talks about fear about our walk, and again in chapter in verse 17 of chapter 4. This I say, therefore testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind. And we have in these three chapters 4-5 and six we have 3 spheres of responsibility, 3 spheres in which the Christian finds himself walking. Chapter four, one through 16, is the sphere of the assembly. We have assembly truth, collective truth. There is one body and how we are to walk or we're to walk, worthy of the vocation wherewith we're called. And that calling is we're calling members of the body of Christ. That's the number one point. And we're called to be the habitation of God by the Spirit, the Spirit of God indwelling the Saints collectively. You get that at the end of Chapter 2. These are the two things that we're called to in our collective relationship with one another. Again, we are called to be members of the body of Christ and to walk worthy of that calling. And we're called to be the habitation of God by the Spirit, the Spirit of God, of inhabiting the house which we are. We are indeed the House of God and the temple of God. It's not my intention to develop that anymore tonight. But just to point out that the 1st 16 verses of chapter 4. Have to do with the sphere of our collective responsibility in the assembly with respect to fellow members of the body of Christ and those who are in the house which the Spirit of God inhabits. Then from chapter 4, verse 17 through. Through chapter 5, verse 22, we have our responsibility. In the world, our walk. In the world we're not to walk as the Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. We were once in that state. We were once Gentiles, and now we're Christians. And so we're not to walk as they walk. We're to walk in a way which is glorifying to the Lord and pleasing to Him. The reason I was thinking of this hymn that we sang is that the one this hymn sets before us is the Faithful. 10 Lord, when we the path retrace, which thou on earth has tried to man, thy wondrous loving grace, thy faithfulness to God. Faithful amidst unfaithfulness, the darkness only light of its thy father's name, confessing in his will be light. We're called to be that unmoved by satans. Subtle Wiles, we're called to resist. Stand against the Wiles of the devil. He was attacked by the enemy, and he was unnewed by Satan's several wives. So his path.

Is our path. And as well as we consider the Christian warfare, which are the verses that we read tonight, that we realize that a warfare has to do with three Spears from assembly. The world Christian finds himself in the world rubbing shoulders with the unsaved rubbing shoulders even with other Christians in his business or at school or as he passes through this world and then the last. Sphere. Is from chapter 522. Chapter 69 and it's the sphere of the of the family. Notice in verse 22 wives in verse 25, Husbands, chapter six, one children. Verse two father and mother parents and verse four and he fathers in verse 5 servants in verse 9 in chapter 6 Masters. So you have a wife and her husband, children and the parents, servants and masters. This is the domestic sphere. This is the circle of the home and the family. And there are, there is conduct which is proper to the high calling that we've been brought into is unfolding in those first three chapters which. Is appropriate and proper for those of us who are the Lords. Now Satan is going to attack us. He's very subtle, he's a wily foe and he is going to seek to cause us to fail. In anyone or two or all three of those spheres, the assembly, the world, the family, any one of them. And if he can troop us up, he will do so in order to engage the enemy. We have to realize who the enemy is. We have to realize what he's about. We have to realize the spheres that we are responsible to walk worthy of the Lord in, and we have to put on the whole armor of God. There's no way we can stand against the Wiles and the artifices of the enemy if we don't have all the armor of God on. We cannot do without. Any peace of the armor? We need it all because if we fail to take and to put on the whole honor of God, the enemy will find entrance in that very area and defeat us in that area. Notice verse 11 of chapter 6 put on. Verse 13 Take unto you the whole arm of God. Verse 16 of all taking the shield of faith. Verse 17 Take the helmet of salvation. These are action verbs. They bring before us our responsibility. We are to put on the army. He doesn't put it on for us, He provides it for us and it's ours to take it, put it on, to wear it, and to be equipped to be equips us. He gives us all that is necessary to be engaged in this warfare and. It's for us, it's our responsibility to put it on notice, verse 10, where we began reading, says finally. And I read, having said all that, he has said the doctrinal part of the epistle, and then he has. Encouraged the Saints to walk worthy of their calling, and not to walk as the other Gentiles walk, and set before them the wonderful truths. That pertain to the different spheres that we were talking about, the assembly sphere, the sphere of the world, the sphere of the domestic sphere, the sphere of the family. And then he says finally my breath be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. In order to engage in the warfare that we're engaged in, and to do it successfully, we need the whole armor of God. Absolutely essential. The strength lies in him does not lie enough, finding my brethren be strong in the Lord.

Strength is his. He is the victor, the mighty victor. He is the one that has vanquished the enemy. And the strength that we have lies in dependence and obedience to the word of God. That was his path. His was a path of loneliness. His was a path of dependence. His was a path of implicit obedience. That's where our strength locks. It doesn't lie in our reasonings. It doesn't lie in our. Fancy strength? Are fancy that we are able to meet various situations that in front of us as we go through this world. But we need to have that spirit of dependence be strong in the Lord. He has provided all that we need, and in the power of His mind and in the power of His might. We can never excuse ourselves when we fail by saying, well, that's the way I am naturally, if I lose my temper, and short of temper and irritable of. Disposition and I lose my temper. I can't say, well that's the way I am naturally. That's just my nature to be short tempered because the Apostle Paul, before he was converted, calls himself an insolence overbearing man. And after he got saved, he says I was gentle among you as a nurse cherish with her children and as a father that deals with his own children. So the grace of God and all that God has provided for us. In this, warfare is sufficient to enable us to overcome all the natural tendencies of our nature, whatever they are. Some are much more patient than others, some are more quick tempered and some are slow to arrive at a decision. Others are very quick and arriving at a decision and they might be impetuous and say things before they think. Peter was something like that, very, very outspoken and oftentimes he spoke too soon. John and James were called the sons of Thunder. You don't usually think of John as the son of Thunder, because when he came became acquainted with the Lord Jesus, he made it his business to be near to the Lord Jesus. He is always the one you you can trace in the Gospels, that was near to the Lord Jesus who lay on his bosom. He was so close to him that even Peter, the boldness of the apostles, had to nudge John and the Lord said in the 13th of John. He says one of you shall betray me. Peter had to nudge John and say yes, who is it? Well. Down asking the question, Peter generally so bold, was not at that time he wasn't close enough as John was. Well, we want to cultivate that spirit that we had to see in John, though naturally speaking he was a son of Thunder. You see that that nature coming out in John when John and James the Lord's face was set

to go to Jerusalem, and the Samaritans wouldn't receive him. And they said, shall we command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them, even as Elias did? In the Lord Jesus had to rebuke him and say, you know not that manual spiritual, for the Son of man has not come to destroy him his lives, but to save them. And then they went to another village. So there are even occasions traced out in the gospels where the the, the, the natural disposition of John came out. Well, we can't hide behind that and can't excuse our failures. And that's why it's important that we realize that our strength. To resist the enemy. Our strength. To stand for the Lord is, is his strength. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might put on the whole arm of God that you may be able to stand against the Wilds of the devil, the Wiles that presents him in the character of a more as an Angel of light. So the one that will present a case to us that seems very plausible. Reasonable to act that way. But it is. It is his subtlety that would lead us astray. Get us to act. If thou be the Son of God, you're hungry. If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread and to satisfy your hunger. But the Lord Jesus didn't have a word from the Father to do that. And so he said, Man shall not live that bread alone. But every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man, that he didn't have a word to do that, and so he would not act in.

In Independence of the Father. And that's one of the things that I want to stress tonight that all that we're going to say about the Christian warfare, if we if we just talk about it in a doctrinal way, we just talk about having this different ward, different armor on. And we don't relate it where we learn principles of truth from the epistles but we don't relate it back to the person of the Lord Jesus who was down here and went through this scene and met all the artifices of the wild and. Machinations of the enemy. We don't relate it to him, to the Lord Jesus himself. We're not going to have the power that we should have turned back to the 4th chapter and it says in verse 20 while we're on this point, but you have not so learned Christ. If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. The truth is in Jesus. And again, that's why I thought of seeing this hymn. We want to we want to ponder his path. We want to ponder his speed and how he walked. We're to walk in his steps. Were to walk as he walked, John says first John 26 he that saith he abideth in him off himself also so to walk even as he walked. Blessed precious Savior to walk down here the path of lowly dependence. When he came from heaven's glory and laid aside the form of God and took upon Him the form of a servant. He then came into a different set of circumstances where it was appropriate for Him. The eternal Son, who had never up to that time obeyed because he always given orders. He was the Supreme commander. He was God the Son. And only that. But now he becomes a man, and it's proper for man to be obedient to to his God and to his Father. And so here we see that perfect obedience manifested in the Lord Jesus Hebrew. Hebrews 5 puts it this way. Though he were Son, though he were that Person who is the eternal Son of God, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. He came into the place where obedience was proper to him, and he never departed from it, never departed from it. But that the world may know that I love the Father, even as the Father gave me commandment, Even so I do arise horoscope, and that was his path. The Father has not left me alone, for I do always those things that are pleasing to Him. The root principle of sin is to do your own will. Sin is lawlessness is the absence of being subject to another. And when the Lord Jesus became a man, He took the place of subjection. Took the place of subjection. As God He is the supreme ruler. But he became a man. He entered his own creation, and when he did so he assumed the responsibility to be a subject and obedient. How wonderful to trace that and. The truth we learned the epistles. We must always relate them. To the Lord Jesus the truth as it is in Jesus, notice it doesn't say in Christ, it says you have not so learned Christ. It shall be that you have heard him and have been taught by him, even as the truth is in Jesus, in the man, in the man Jesus that blessed one used down here. So the question should not be asked, I've heard it asked. A certain circumstance presents itself to us and we're in a quandary what to do? And we say, what would Jesus do? That's not the right question. The right question is what did Jesus do? If we say What would Jesus do? Then the answer depends upon what I think he would do. But no.

I believe there's never a circumstance that we could be in. That he hasn't been here. He has met all the necessitudes of life the word says so. It says that he was tested. He was tempted in all points, like as we are cinepark, every trial and difficulty, temptation and testing that we're put through. He went through sin apart. He had no temptation from evil nature because he didn't have one. That's The only exception, but all the testings and all the temptations from without, from the enemy without. And from all that is we meet with as we pass through this scene, the results of sin, sickness, pain, suffering, sorrow, weeping, He went through all that he had compassion and love and feeling and righteous indignation at the hardness of heart of those that would not believe while I mentioned that point. Notice in chapter 4, verse 26 being angry. And sin not let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Turn back to mark chapter 3, marks Gospel, chapter 3. All of these truths that they read in the Epistles, we want to always connect them with the Blessed Lord Jesus. Mark 3 verse one he entered again into the synagogue, and there was a man there which had a wooden hand, and they watched him whether he would heal him on the Saturday that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hands stand for it. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil, to save life, or to kill? But they tell their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, you say it unto the man stretch forth on hand, And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored old as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him. How they might destroy him. It's driving because he had healed men who sat today. Well, that provoked the Lord Jesus to a righteous holy Indian nation and angry. One of the Puritan writers has said about this verse in Ephesians 4, verse 26, to get angry and Sydney that we ought to be angry at nothing but sin. Nothing but sin. Oftentimes we get angry when we get offended and when we get insulted and when our rights are trampled upon. But that's not the that's not righteous anger at all, That's just self justification. And that's the kind of anger that the word tells us we're not to have. Notice At the end of chapter four in Ephesians it says in verse 31 what all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice and be kind one to another and so on. So I believe the only time in the New Testament. In the Epistles, where anger is a proper emotion, is here in Ephesians 4:26, there are times when it would be sin not to be angry. From the Lord's heart is trampled. In August, when the Lord saw how that they were making merchandise in the father's house, the overthrew the money changers tables, drove them out and said make not my father's house and House of merchandise. There was that the zeal of U.S. House devouring him. And there was a righteous anger against the the profanation, the profaning of the. Father's house. We ought to have that righteous indignation with sin when it's presented to us, but we must not dwell upon it. That's why immediately it says consignment, because that can so quickly degenerate into personal feelings. Against the individual that may have committed the offense which is so which is so grievous. These Pharisees, the Lord says, is it is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And they wouldn't answer him because set their teeth and just were waiting for him to do that which they could accuse him of and. And there was no right feeling in their souls. They were locked into a religious system and legal way of doing things, and they couldn't break out of that. They couldn't see how the grace of God was greater than all their legal restrictions and forms and ceremonies, and that going out in goodness to meet a need.

Goes beyond the letter of the law, which they were so bound by, and that caused the Lord Jesus anger. He looked upon them. There are things that we would be wrong, absolutely wrong, not to be angry about, but then we mustn't dwell on it. So it immediately says, And sin, let

not the sun go down upon your wrath. Very well known, brother. Some years ago with the Lord now just to say never. Lay your head down on your toe at night with an unkind thought towards anyone. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Don't hold that anger, It will soon be generated into sin. You will give place to the devil. And so he says in the next verse. And neither give place to the devil in verse 27. Well, let's go on to the 6th chapter now and really giving some thoughts that flow from the the armor that we have. And we will remember these thoughts as we proceed in chapter 6 of Ephesians, verse 11. Put on the whole armor of God. But you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil, the whole armor of God. I want to emphasize that it's set again in verse 13, taken into the whole armor of God. We cannot do without anyone that's provided to us. The Enemy, verse 12. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now that last expression, high places, is This is the fifth time in the Epistle to the Ephesians where that expression is. Let's quickly look at them. Chapter one, verse 4. Verse 3 Excuse me, Chapter one. Verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ, heavenly places or the heavenlies. You notice the word places is in italics. Which means it's been supplied by the translators. It's really in heavenlies, in the heavenlies in Christ. So our blessings, our spiritual, and they're heavenly. Then at the end of chapter one, that's the first occurrence of that expression, the end of chapter one, verse 20. It says, verse 19. What is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward? Who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places in the heavenlies. Christ is seated in the heavenlies. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. He's seated there. Our blessings are there. And then in Chapter 2, verse 6, God hath raised us up together and made us to sit together in the heavenlies in heavenly places. In Christ Jesus, our blessings are in the heavenlies. Christ has been exalted far above all principality and power, and seated on high in the highest place in the heavenlies, and we're seated in the heavenlies in him. Our position? This is the doctrinal part of the epistle. Our blessings are heavenly, our blessings are spiritual, and he is in the heavenlies and we're seated there. And in the third chapter, verse four, we have the 4th instance to the intent that now that is the truth of the mystery that he's been talking about in the third chapter. Is that unfolded and the mystery consists of verse six, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs with the Jews. And of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel joint partakers. I'm going to read that as it is in a new translation. But the Gentiles should be joint heirs and a joint body and joint partakers of this promise in Christ by the gospel. That is, there's three things mentioned, and the truth of the mystery is that the Gentiles are joint heirs with the Jews in these three different ways. There's no subordination now. The Old Testament speaks of the blessing of the Gentiles, but always subordinate to Israel. Israel is the head, and the Gentiles come in and play subordinate to Israel. They're going to be the head in that coming day, and the Lord will reign in Jerusalem and and Israel will be in a place of promise. Today they're not, but they will be in that coming day. But in that day the Gentiles will be blessed also, but under Israel, subordinate to them.

Not as joint ears, not as joint members of the one body, not as joint partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. That's the mystery that Paul is unfolding here in Ephesians 3 and it's in it's verse 10. Now it's to the intent that now, right now, under the principalities and powers, in heavenly places in the heavenlies, there's that same expression that he might might be made known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God so. God is brought out of these Gentiles, those that were without Christ. They were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise. Having no hope and without God in this world, God has brought up the Gentiles into this one body, made the joint heirs joint partakers of all the blessings that the Jews are brought into. There's no advantage of the Jew over the Gentile today. We're all blessed jointly. In Christ? Well, that's the mystery that was hidden and never revealed in the Old Testament. That the Gentiles should be brought into a place of favor and blessing just with the Jew and and there's no advantage of the Jew over the Gentile in this present day. Now the heavenly beings, the principalities and powers in heavenly places are learning through the Church the manifold wisdom of God. That God in his marvelous wisdom has purpose to have a bride for his son church. Is composed of June Gentile and he's brought them together into one new man made peace and. That the the heavenly aims of the principalities and powers of the heavenlies are learning the manifold wisdom of God through the ascendant marvelous grace of God and wisdom of God. That's the fourth time. And then the fifth time is in our 6th chapter. The one that we were looking at, verse 12, Let's read it again. Well, we wrestle not against flesh and blood. We're not in a wrestling ring fitting our physical strength against an opponent. That's not the nature of the conflict, Paul says. But against principalities. Against rulers, Against the ruler, Against powers, Against the rulers of the darkness of this world, Against spiritual wickedness in the heavens. In chapter 3, the powers that are mentioned in the heavenlies are. The good powers, those angels elect holy angels. Here they are fallen angels that are mentioned. Both are in the heavens. And here we have a power that is in the very sphere where Christ is the very sphere where we are seated. The very sphere in which all our blessings are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies the very sphere where the good angels behold and manifold wisdom of God. In the very sphere where the evil angels, the evil forces are raised against us. To cause us to misrepresent. What we are in Christ, whether it be an assembly in the world, in our families, to misrepresent in some way, and in order to properly withstand the enemy, in order to resist him and to be aware of his Wiles, his cunning. He presents himself not as a roaring lion here, but the wild suggests. He presents himself as a very subtle, crafty, wily foe, transforming himself even into an Angel of light, so as to deceive us. And the apostle says in chapter 4. Of Ephesians he says, verse 14, That we henceforth these gifts have been given in the assembly, so that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love. And they grow up unto him in all things, that he who is the head, even the Christ.

So we've been given all the helps that we need in order that we be not deceived, that we be not misled, that we do not carry away into all kinds of false people, doctors, and they are legion out there in the Christian world. We are in the last days. The tree has grown into a massive system housing all kinds of birds of the air. Unclean birds Speaking of these principalities and powers in the heavenlies that are on Satan's side and also it houses the clean birds, the principalities and powers that around the world side. But the enemy is arrayed against us. We should be aware of it. The way so many of us Christians live our lives is though we are not in a conflict, we're not even aware of being in a conflict. We're not even aware of the. Spears in which the enemy will attack us and try to to cause us to. To fail and to misrepresent the Lord. Be unfaithful. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in the heavens. Turn back to 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 for a moment. 2nd Corinthians chapter 10. He says. I'm going to read from verse one now. I found myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of the price. Notice how he begins his chapter. He beseeches them by by his meekness and his gentleness, meekness and gentleness suppressed. Who had presence in base among you? But being absent in bold toward you? But I beseech you that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. All had told them he was going to come. He didn't come. He tells him in the 4th chapter of the first epistle. I didn't come to you when I said I was because I wanted to scare you. He

had written a very faithful letter and he waited for the Spirit of God to work in their hearts repentance and self judgment. He worked for the Lord to work. He waited for the Lord to work that work in their hearts that only the spirit of God can do. And they were saying he's he's not true his word. Paul is not true to his word. They were saying about Cloud, that he's only out for what he can get out of you. Corinth was a very wealthy assembly. Paul tells them in his second epistle that he determined he wouldn't take anything from you. He was going to cut off occasion from those who were seeking to find thought with him and underrate. To speak against his ministry and against himself, he took away all ground from them by refusing to take from them. And he's referring to this kind of thing. He says some think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. We said we were coming and we didn't come. So we're not, we're not being LED of the Spirit, because if we said we were coming and the spirit really LED us to say that we would have come. That was the argument that they were laughing against the impossible. False argument, he intended on coming, but he waited, and he had good reason to wait. And he says, For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not common, but mighty. Through God they are not common. They are not according to natural mandate, schemes and plans and manipulates people. And you see someone that manipulates bread, that tries to manipulate his bread, tries to get around and tries to to, to use worldly wisdom. They do that all the time in management. A good leader is one who knows how to get the people to do what he wants them to do. Well, he wants them to, but true leader. In the face of God is to get the people to walk in obedience and dependence upon the Jesus. And not to exalt self, but to exalt Christ. We only have one to exalt, and we only have one to follow. And I would do you a great disservice, or anyone that would speak to you if they would get you to follow them. No, we want to follow him and lose sight of all inventors of men. So it's as though we walk in the flesh. We do not war after the flesh.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but. Mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations in every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ anything that was against the knowledge of God. He would refuse and cast it down, and seek to lead the Saints here in quantum into a proper understanding of the mind of God and the word of God. And to be obedient to Christ? Well, we could go on in that chapter, but let's go back to the 6th of Ephesians. I do not plan on getting through these verses tonight. I didn't plan it when I read them. But we have another night where we can continue the Lord helping if He's come before then, and if then we'll be home and all these precious truths will be fully understood by us. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, there's 12, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places as we look around this beloved at the Christian community. And by that I don't mean just a gathering of Saints. I'm talking about all believers the world over. And we see the division, some 12 to 1400 denominations in this country alone. And we see how that the enemy has. In this warfare, he has succeeded to divide and scan the flock he is succeeding in. Destroying Kristen Holmes, he has succeeded in causing brethren to act upon the principles of the world and their business dealings in their relationships with their fellow men and with one another outside of the assembly sphere. And it's because we don't have all the harm around. We don't have the whole armor of God. And you don't have that spirit of dependence and submission. And we may not be aware of the character of the conflict. In order for us to really know the true nature of the conflict, we have to understand our position in Christ, risen and glorified at the right hand of God. We have to understand that we are identified with the rejected man, one whom God is exalted upon the highest heavens, and we're seated in the heavenlies in Him. There our blessings are there. Our portion is there. This is not our home. This is not our portion here. And the measure in which we don't understand that and seek our portion here get occupied with things here, is the measure in which the enemy has succeeded. It causes to misrepresent. The Lord. And to not walk as a Christian, to not walk as a separated 1. This world is filled with religious systems, Christian. That are not walking together pulling together and they're not separate. So many of us Christians are not separate from the world we are trying to get. We're trying to make the most get the the, the best of both worlds. I think is what we're trying to do often times and it cannot be done that is that is violating the scriptural principle. He cannot that he should know he cannot serve God and that. Cannot God enriches God, and he that will be rich falls into temptation, snare into many? Hurtful whose lust with strong men in destruction and tradition of soil. So we're in a war there, and the enemy would would get us in any one of these three spheres to act contrary to the word of God. Now verse 13. Wherefore take unto you That's an action that we have to take that armor to the whole armor of God, but you may be able to withstand in the evil day. We've never been in a day that's more evil than today.

The evil day, and having done all to stand. Notice stand that you may be able to withstand an evil day, and having done all to stand verse 14, stand therefore. Take a stand. If the truth of God isn't worth standing for what is? If this book doesn't give us what we are, what is worth standing for and and sacrificing for, and giving up earthly gain and earthly prosperity? What is by the truth and sell it not? And if the truth of God isn't worth any sacrifice, what he is. The prophet Elijah challenged the children of Israel. If they'll be God, follow him. If the Lord be God, follow him, follow. The Wishy Washy Latitude and Aryan Laodicean Luke, Warm Christians. Most distressing. It's time that we stood up and were counted. I am his and belong to him. I'm going to live for him. I'm going to have that entire arm around that I'm going to be able to withstand the enemy. That I'll be aware of his wild and understand all his cunning and all his subtleties and how he's seeking to destroy. He's a great destroyer. He is destroyed. A true representation of the assembly, except in a very small remnant. And he's doing his best. Did you know that that there are many, many groups of Satan in the world today and when they pray to their leader, the devil, they pray for the break up Christian families? Because they know that if they can, that if Christian families have broken up and everything is destroyed, that's the backbone of the nation. It's the backbone of the assembly. The assembly cannot be any stronger than those who make it up composed. And if there's distress, if there's a. Disharmony and unhappiness in the family. Cannot help if we stop and you send. If one is not going on for the Lord and his business dealings. He has a bad conscience, Paul said. I have exercised myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. And how important that is? Well, now we come to the armor stand. Therefore having your loins gird about with truth. The girded lines speak of service. When the children of Israel ate the Passover land, their wines were girded. They had shoes on their feet. They were ready to move out of Egypt. They were ready for action. When the Lord Jesus and John 13 washed the disciples speed, he girded himself. He got down at their feet. He he came their servant in a new in a new way to remove the defilements of this world, and serving us in that capacity right now from the glory. He's serving us. He was the perfect servant here, but his lines were girded about with truth. When they asked him who art thou, he said altogether that which I say to you, he he he was the truth. He spoke the truth. He lived the truth. It's not like it's true of us. So often. Do as I say. Don't do as I do. He was the perfect expression of all the Pacific, all that, he said. And so when they went to take him, he opened not his mouth. He did not resist. He had taught them not to. He had talked about the man might be on one cheek, turn the other cheek. And that's exactly the way he acted. As the truth is in Jesus, that's the truth that we learn as it is in Jesus. As he walked down here, let us study him. Let us take all these precepts and teachings and and doctrines of the New Testament epistles and let us relate them to the truth as it is in Jesus. As he walked down here. Now what would he do? But what did he do? How did he react in this situation? How did he act? Was he a politician? Study him. Did he change the world? Is that why he came? The first time? He will the second time He comes, coming in an entirely different way. He's going to establish his rights. He's going to set up his authority down here. He's going

to subdue his enemies under his feet. But he didn't come. The first time he came in, meekness and loneliness presented himself to his people to see if there was a heart in them that would respond to that kind of a Messiah. They were looking for a Messiah to come in power and glory to to freedom from the yoke of Rome. And the sentence make them the head. But they weren't in a in a moral state where it was possible for God to do it, and so the Lord came in lowly gods.

Born in this stable, lady, the Manger, the son of man, if not where to lay his head. From his birth, that lowly 1. That wasn't a very attractive person to follow for the religious leaders of the day. They wanted something dynamic and powerful and to put the Gentiles in their proper place and to exalt Israel. What were the hearts such as they had? It was impossible. And so we have the Lord Jesus presenting himself, leaving the state of things just as he found them, and yet believing all that were oppressed of the devil, God was with him in healing and manifesting the goodness and the love in the heart of God in the midst of evil. And distance and hardness as we saw there in 1/3. Hardness of their hearts, which produced the emotion of anger, righteous saying. Against their undefeated and hardness to the need of the soul where it was in the city. Because they were locked into the system of religion that made them insensible. Their insensibilities are manifested, the Lord says, even if He's of his own, his own disciples, oh. Generation of Vipers, How long knowing? Who doesn't say? Generation of life is about herself. Who says that to the person. But he says, Oh, faithless generation, how long should I be with you? How long should I suffer? He felt it and was science, so we should learn all these truths that we're talking about. As the truth is in Jesus. If you don't learn the truth of God as it is in Jesus, if you don't related to that blessing one. Something's very lacking. He is the truth, he said. I am the way, the truth and the life. One man cometh unto the Father, but by me. So our lines are to be girded about with truth. Our service is to be according to truth. According to true. He is the truth. The Spirit of God is the truth. The Word is the truth. By word is the truth. So we have the Spirit subjectively indwelling us as the power to live out all the truth of God. Have our loins girded about with the truth teared up the loins of your mind, the apostle Peter says. And then he says. Having on the breastplate of righteousness beyond that. And rescue your righteousness. Rescue protects the heart. How much service is done going back to the loins of truth girded? Gird your lungs. It's true. How much service is done according to the truth today? Christian how much is done in the business world? That is not according to truth, not according to righteousness. Righteousness is very simply, doing the right thing, doing the right. Doing the right thing, whether it's exercising my authority as a father in my family. Whether it's a child being subject to the parents, the right thing for the children is to be subject. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. It's right for a child to go to obey. It's right for a child to do what he or she is told. It's wrong for them to assert their own independent wills. It is right for them to obey. It is right for a husband to love his wife even as Christ loved the church. It is right for the right to submit herself to her husband, even as the church was subject unto Christ. So let their wives be to their husbands and everything. It is right to meet according to the truth of the one body, because we are one body impressed and not independent denominations, all of all of which deny that there is one body.

It is right to give the Spirit of God the place supremacy in the assembly of the Saints when we come together, because we are the habitation of God by the Spirit. And he is sovereign there, and he is given the place where he is free to use whomsoever he will for the edification and blessing of the Saints. It is right to take A to refuse a promotion. If taking the promotion you are obligated to. Misrepresent the truth and not do the right thing. And we could go on and on and on in these three different spheres and assembly, the world defense. And every time we read one of these bits of war of armor, we should relate it in our thoughts, and we won't have time to go into that in its entirety. I don't think I have the capability of doing it, but just to suggest some things to us. So let's close there for tonight. 312. Lead on, Almighty Lord. Lead on to victory encouraged by Thy blessed word with joy, and follow thee.

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Like to read a number of scriptures beginning in Ephesians 4? Ephesians 4. Verse 17. This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that she henceforth walk not his other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness. With greediness. Then we'll read 2nd Corinthians 5. Beginning at verse 17. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To it that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead be reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Next we will read Colossians one verse 19. I'm going to change one word in the verse to make it. More accurate. Verse 19 For it pleased the Godhead, that in him should all the fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his cross. By Him to reconcile all things unto himself, by Him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, and you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now had He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you wholly. And unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight. And then we'll read a passage from Ephesians 2. Verse 13. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both 1 and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments containing ordinances. For to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body. By the cross having slain the enmity thereby. And then Romans 5. Romans 5, verse 10. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation that ought to read. And lastly, Luke 15. Verse 22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring, hit her the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry. For this, my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found and they began to be married. You've probably discerned in the reading of these scriptures that I'm going to talk on reconciliation. I was thinking how the theme of the meeting this morning at the breaking of bread remembrance of the Lord was. Very suitable. For what the Lord laid upon my

heart. Reconciliation tremendous.

New Testament doctrine. You don't find it in the Old Testament. You find the word, but if you check it out, you'll find that the word translated reconciliation in the Old Testament is more properly rendered atonement. The thought of reconciliation is appalling doctrine. You don't find it in the other writings of the New Testament writers, and it's in the epistles that he wrote to the Gentiles. Addressing Gentile believers. Reconciliation. That class that was the farthest from God, has been brought the nearest. The distance that. Existed between US and God has been removed. What is reconciliation? In order to get God's thoughts of it, don't reach for the dictionary because it will give you a definition which falls short. Of what the word presents. You'll probably read something like to set things right, and that's true as far as it goes. To set things right, two parties are at issue with each other and they get reconciled with one another. They have set things right between them, and the alienation, the distance, the enmity, the reserve, whatever it may have been, is removed and they are reconciled. There are hymns that have been written of old. We don't sing them because they're not scriptural. Talking about God being reconciled, well, thank God, I can say this afternoon that God did not need to be reconciled to man. Man needed to be reconciled to God. Man. Man's heart was turned away from God's, from God, not God's heart turned away from men. God needed to be propitiated. He needed to have His holy nature vindicated as to the question of sin that took place at the cross, but man is the one who needed reconciliation. Now, with that as an introduction, let's break up the subject into. Why do we need to be reconciled? What is the need? For reconciliation, well, the first verse we read in Ephesians 4 brings that before us probably the most. Vividly of any verse in the New Testament. In Ephesians 4 verse 18 describing the Gentiles that he's mentioned in verse 17. That these Saints now that had been saved out of that state, out of that condition of being Gentiles, He says that you walk henceforth not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened. Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them. Because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, unto lust. To work all uncleanness with greediness. Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them. There's a passage in First Corinthians 6 where the apostle outlines the number of evils and sins that the Saints at Corinth used to live in and after outlining them, he says, such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, such were some of you. But when it comes to this question of alienation, this question of. Conciliation and the need for it, we would have to say. Such were all of you. You were all everyone of you in this room, Every one of us. Was alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in US. We were so far off that it is impossible for us to measure the distance until we look at the cross. And there we see God himself. Coming into this scene, becoming one of us. And spanning that tremendous distance that existed because of this alienation from the life of God through the ignorance that is in US.

We were dead in trespasses and sins. We sometimes sing an expression and I'm going to change it. It's just the opposite of what we sing. Farther we could not be. Father, we could not be the expression is nearer. We could not be, for in the person of the sun we are as near as he and the only way to properly. Estimate the distance that man is at with God. Is to look at the cross. For there we see what it cost him. To bring to remove that alienation. And to bring us into favor with himself. So the need for reconciliation is that everyone of Adam's race, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, boy and girl. Older one, younger one doesn't make any difference. Alienated from the life of God. Every single one of us in this room was in that category at one time. Alienated from the life of God, So we were. Away from God, we were in a life which is at enmity with God, a life of self will, independence. And self pleasing and self love. That was our life alienated from the life of God, not a movement Godward. I was struck in hearing something. Over the airwaves the other day and traveling. How that man continues to cling to the false hope. That he can solve his problems. He is simply unwilling to face the indictment. Which has been pronounced by God himself on the whole human race, and you get that in Romans 3. The whole world is guilty before God. Man is no longer under trial. He was under trial for 1500 years under the law. And the cross ended that trial, and the judgment has now been pronounced. Man is guilty. Every evil that's in this world, whether it be drugs, they talk about coping with it and addressing the issue and they never address the real issue. They refused to face the truth that man is alienated from the life of God. He's past feeling given himself over unto lasciviousness with greedy, unsatisfied lust. Such as man's life, as far from the life of God as could possibly be. Not one thought, not one movement, not one desire. In the heart of fallen man towards God. Alienated enemies in your mind by wicked works. Turn to 2nd Corinthians 5, where we come to the ministry of reconciliation. We've seen in that verse in Ephesians, and there are many more I could reproduce. That of man's desperate need of reconciliation, of having things set right. I didn't give the full definition. According to the Word of God is to set things right according to God. According to God. Reconciliation to set things right according to God, so that everything is brought back into a state which is suitable to God Himself. That's reconciliation. Being everything being set right according to God, being brought back into true and proper relationship with respect to himself, to be reconciled, and we're going to see the vastness of the subject. But now let us look at verse 17 of 2nd Corinthians 5. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, we've seen the need of reconciliation, the need of a change of state. We're not talking so much when we're talking about reconciliation, of removing guilt that has to do with our sins, that has to do with what we have done. But here we're talking about state. We're talking about what we. In the flesh what we are in Adam, and it is we are in a state which is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us because of the hardness of our hearts. That was our state, a state of alienation, a state of enmity against God such as man, whether he be the most.

Educated the most. Refined and trained and learned or whether he be the bomb on Skid Row doesn't make any difference. He's his life is alienated from the life of God. So now we need a new creation and he says therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. There is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold all things are become new. Now that's absolutely essential in order to effect reconciliation. The old has to be removed from before the eye of God, totally removed. Not only in at the cross are we privileged to see our sins removed. Wonderful truth, tremendous truth, to see that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from every sin. All sin, but to also see that that work that he did was to remove what we were in the flesh, what we were in the first man, what we were in that state of alienation, to remove it from before the eye of God and to bring in something which was suitable to God. So there's a new creation now. If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation. We are. Creatures, we are a new creation. All things are passed away. The old order of things gone forever. All things have become new in that new creation, and all things are of God. Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation? This to me is just a tremendous thought, that He has taken the likes of me, and who was so far from Him could not farther be. I could not more wretched have been than I was in my sins and in my state in fallen Adam. And neither could you have been farther. And he has reconciled us to himself by a person, by Jesus Christ, and then he's given to you and to me the ministry of reconciliation he has committed to us. You might think, well, he would never commit that important message to the likes of us, we who were so far we who were such a failures and just groveling in sin. But no, he's he hasn't committed that ministry to angels. He hasn't committed that ministries to those that do his bidding and perfection those holy spirits. Those angels who are spirits ministers do his will. Now the holy angels, but he's committed that ministry of reconciliation to us. We who have come into the good of reconciliation, we have been brought near. We for whom

all the distance and the enmity and the alienation and being outside of the life of God, we've been brought near into this new creation, partakers of this new life, Christ himself being our life that he. Life that was with the Father and was manifested to us, now communicated to you and to me, and brought into this new creation of which Christ risen is the head, and He's committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, verse 19, that God was in Christ. When did this ministry of reconciliation begin? It began with the person of the son. Become a man down here in this world. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. The best illustration of that that I can think of is John chapter 8, where the Pharisees brought this sinful woman. Into the presence of the Lord Jesus. And they posed a question to him, which they thought no matter how he answered it, they would have him. And he said this. They said this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. Now Moses and the Law commanded us that such should be stoned, But what sayest thou? Now if had he said let her go free, they would have accused him of violating the law. If he had said stone her, they would have accused him of having no mercy. He said neither. He stooped down, and with his finger he wrote on the ground, stooped down.

He came from heaven's glory. Down into this world, stoop down to the very dust of death. The very finger that had written the 10 commandments on those two tables of stone. Wrote another message on the ground. You can view it two ways. He who was the Lawgiver. He who was the only one in that whole company, when the Lord Jesus said, he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. He was the only one qualified to cast that stone. He was the only sinless one there. And he stooped down. He answered them. How was he going to harden this woman? Is it possible? And the only way he could do it was to stoop down to the dust of death. To become one of us in a part, and die that ignominious death on the cross. And so he says, as they are convicted, from the oldest to the youngest in their consciences, and they leave his presence and her presence. And he says to her, Hath no man condemned thee? And she said, No man, Lord, neither do I condemn thee. Neither do I condemn thee. That word imparts to her the power. To fulfill the next words, go and sin no more. It is the sense of forgiveness. It is the sense of not being condemned. It's the sense of grace in our souls which imparts the power to live above sin. The law doesn't do it. The law requires it. The law demands it. But the Word of God says the strength of sin is the law. It doesn't give the power to carry out its demands. What does the sense of grace, the sense that he who could have thrown the stone, he who could have condemned me? Refused to do that. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He did not throw the stone. He could have, but he refused to. Not imputing their trespasses unto them. And he has committed unto us the word of reconciliation you have committed to you. I have committed to me the most glorious message that has ever sounded out on human ears. It's the word of reconciliation God is beseeching. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech by us. Be, we pray you in Christ's dead. Be reconciled to God. That's the message. Be reconciled to God. God is beseeching man through whom? Through what? Messengers, through you and through me. God is beseeching we who have been reconciled, we who have been brought into the benefits of reconciliation, the distance having been removed, we who are now new creatures in Christ. Old things passed away. All things become new. We've been reconciling. He's committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, and we can go out and say God is beseeching you. Be reconciled to him. Be reconciled to him. I'm his ambassador. That's the message he's given me to proclaim to the world. He's given it to you. The Ministry of Reconciliation. Now, what is the basis for reconciliation? There has to be a basis for it. God couldn't just. Proclaim such a wondrous message to man who was alienated from him, who had not one movement towards God, not one thought towards God. God goes out to such and says be reconciled to God. Come back. My arms are open, I'll receive you. What's the basis for it? The next verse tells us verse 21. For he God hath made him Christ, to be sin for us who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, the one who knew no sin, the one who came from heaven's glory without the taint of sin in his nature, the Holy One of God, the impeccable. Christ. The one whose humanity?

Was not innocent as Adams. But holy. Impossible for him to sin, impossible for him to desire anything contrary to the will of God. It was his very meat and drink to do the will of God. My will. My will, he said, is to do my meat. Excuse me is to do the will of him that sent me. And to finish his work, it's, it's what sustained him here. Is very neat. He could say, the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him. He was the one who knew no sin, that one, the altogether righteous I. He became sin. He went into that darkness which enveloped Golgotha's cross, the three hours. Before that darkness set in, he looked down upon his tormentors. Well before he got on the cross, we see him in the struggle in the garden. The father gives him that cup to drink. And he has to say to Peter, the cup which my father hath given me, Shall I not drink it? Put up the sword into the sheath. And then he has that struggle. As a perfect man. Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. As another has said, he couldn't find his meat in the wrath of God. And as he looked into the cup that he would have to empty, to the very dregs, filled with the unmitigated wrath of a holy sin hating God, he cries out in the holy horror of his soul. Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. John 12. He says, Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. And so in the garden he says, not my will. But thine be done. And again on the cross, he uses the term of relationship as he looks down upon those that had nailed him to that cross of ignominy and shame. And he says, Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do. And as he emerges from the darkness again, he uses the term of communion and relationship. Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit. But during the three hours. During the three hours. It wasn't father. It couldn't be. We hear that cry piercing the thick darkness, telling what was transpiring during those awful hours. When an eternity of suffering was condensed. Into three hours. Of. Infinite. Unknowable. Suffering. It was my God. My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Not the term of intimacy and relationship and communion. But the term he uses. Tells us. Enables us to fathom just a little bit. Of what was happening. During those three hours when he was forsaken of God. It was God in all that He is, as God in his holy nature, as the judge of sin. He cries to him as man, my God. My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Alone he bare the cross, alone its grief sustained, His was the shame and loss, he the victory gate. Now none of you, nor I, nor any of us will ever know, will ever really fathom. What transpired during those three hours? When all that was in God against sin. Was poured out upon the head. Person of our substitute, when he who knew no sin. Made sin for us. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him, he went into the very thing that we were. For we were nothing but a mass of sin, alienated from the life of God. You can never judge properly how far you were from God, how far I was from God. Until we view the Savior on that cross, enveloped in those three hours. Of unfathomable darkness, not one ray of light.

Not one stream of comfort reaching him then. Nothing to mitigate the sufferings. As wave upon wave of divine wrath against sin rolled over his soul. There we find that He answered not only to God for our sins. But for the whole state that we were in as sinners. Behold, the Lamb of God, John announced. That taketh away the sin of the world. All that evil principle of sin that entered in through the disobedience of the first man. The affront to God's holiness. The insult that sin is to God. To be dealt with. Christ became. Sin on the cross. And now we have become. What He was the righteousness of God. In him we who are nothing but sin, have now been made righteous. He, the altogether righteous, I was made sin. That he might span the distance that reconciliation might be effective. That the distance might be removed and that God could have a righteous basis now. To communicate a new life and a new position and bring us into a new creation where all things are of God.

Marvelous, wondrous subject of reconciliation. The basis was the cross, for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. There are two of the offerings in Leviticus. That say they are most holy. The one is the meat offering. The other is the sin offering. The need offering lest we fall into the error that so many today in Christian circles have fallen into. It was without leaven. Levin always a type of evil, the meat offering. The holy humanity of Christ. Showing that he was impeccable. Showing that he couldn't sin. It's not enough to say he didn't sin. But he could not sin because of who he was. The holiness of his nature. Is holy humanity. It is most holy, it says. It also says that about the sin offering, lest we. Fall into the air of saying that during those three hours of darkness on the cross. He wasn't pleasing to God. Never was he more pleasing to God than when he was burying the wrath of God. But that pleasure could not then be expressed to him. But never was he more the delight of God the Father, than when his obedience rose to such heights as to accomplish the will of God in the face of divine wrath against sin. So he could say in John 10, Therefore doth my father love me. Because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. A fresh motive provided to the Father's heart. He was obedient even unto death. And that the death of the cross, the sweet savour of that burnt offering, ascending up to God. The Savior of Christ's obedience, even when forsaken of God. So it would, I believe it says of the sin offering it is most holy. Had to be. It was anything but holy. He could not have been the sin offering. God hath made him. That holy one. Sin for us. That we, the unholy, the unjust, might be made the righteousness of God in him. And as we're. Going to be seen in the glory. They'll be able to point to us and say there they are, the display, the exhibition of God's righteousness in Christ. Now let's look at the scope of reconciliation, the extent of reconciliation. We've looked at the need for alienated from the life of God. We've looked at the Ministry of Reconciliation, which is committed to us, the reconciled ones. We've looked at the basis of reconciliation, a place that Christ took on the cross when forsaken of God. Now let's look at the scope of reconciliation. Colossians 1. Verse 20. Having made peace.

Through the blood of his cross. By him. To reconcile all things unto himself. By him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. Here reconciliation in its scope goes out to the whole universe. Everything in heaven and everything in earth is going to be brought back into suitability to God Himself. It's all based upon the cross. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. He laid the moral basis for that on the cross. He hasn't done it yet in power, but all it will take will be an active power to remove every trace of sin from His universe, whether it be a heavenly or an earthly sphere. He made peace by the blood of his cross. I believe that that's the thought of peace. There is the work of Christ, God, word. God would. He has answered to God for every every aspect of sin. Whether it be our individual sins or whether it be the nature and principle of sin. Which motivates the natural man. He's made peace. By the blood of his cross, the blood Speaking of the death of Christ. Speaking of the value of that death for the putting away of sin. He's made peace. Through the blood of his cross, so that now God can bring in the new order. He's he's answered to God for the old order. He's removed it. From before the eye of God. In the judgment that has been executed against it. Sins forgiven the old nature condemned. Romans 8 says he condemned sin in the flesh. The thought of forgiveness for the old nature is foreign to Scripture, but it's condemned, not forgiven, and it's all been done at the cross. Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by him, by Christ to reconcile, to bring back into suitability to God, to set everything right according to God, all things unto Himself. By him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. Today righteousness suffers. In the Millennium righteousness will reign, and in the eternal state righteousness will dwell. And then? Everything will be brought into this reconciliation, every trace of sin. From God's fair creation will be removed. I saw a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. No sin will ever be there in the Millennium. There'll still be some sin. Righteousness will reign, but there'll still be traces of sin here and there. But not so in the in the eternal state. Then this reconciliation will be completed with respect to heavenly and earthly spheres. Now verse 21 and you. That were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, Yet now had he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. We've been reconciled. Now you will never be more reconciled to God if you're a believer. Than you are right now. We now have the reconciliation. The heavens and the earth await a future day when He'll put forth power to effect it. But the work that is the basis for it was accomplished on the cross. We saw that in 2nd Corinthians 5:21, the basis for reconciliation. So the scope is to include all heavenly spheres. Even the heavens are not clean in His sight. Satan has access to the heavens, the demons there and the fallen angels there, and sin has defiled the very heavens. Well, the heavens have to be purified as well as the earth. All is going to come on under the beneficial sway of Christ. And every trace of sin forever removed, it's been, it's true of us now, you that were sometimes that were once alienated. We were so far we could not farther be. We were enemies in our minds by wicked works, Yet now hath he reconciled. He spanned the mighty gulf. He's eliminated the distance. He's brought us near, near to himself. Yet now hath He reconciled everything set right. How did He do it? In the body of His flesh, Through death on the cross He was charged.

He was held accountable, responsible for all that we were. As well as all that we had done. And God condemned. All that we were at the cross, he put it away by the sacrifice of himself. In the body of his flesh through death. It's a question of our state, not a question of our guilt Here it's a question of our state, the deeper thing, the tree that produces that ugly fruit. Those evil works of the flesh. Has brought us into a new creation. And he's reconciled us right now. To present you verse 22. He's reconciled us in the body of his flesh through death. To present you wholly. And unblameable. And unreprouvable. In his sight. Think of it. We are holy. We are unblameable. We are unreprouvable as a result of this reconciliation. We are as suitable to God in the new creation. As it is possible to make us it is not in the sight of the angels, it's not in the sight of one another, but in his sight, and it must be so. And it's all begins with having made peace through the blood of his cross. Peace was made. It's the work of Christ, God word. So as reconciliation can be effective, every bit of. Of evil removed. Everything unsuitable to God in heaven and earth removed, and everything in US removed. Well, it's not all removed yet. We still have the flesh. We still have the old man that we have to cope with. But as soon as we leave this scene. That will be forever gone. That will be forever gone. And will be there. In that scene of glory, supreme. Light and love supreme. What a day he waits us. We're going to be there wholly. Unblameable. Unreprouvable in his sight. We are that right now. Because of the work of Christ. There's one more thought of the scope of reconciliation in Ephesians 2 That we read. We might just look at that. Ephesians 2. In verse 13 Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, and O how far we were. Are made nigh. By the blood of Christ. For He is our peace. Now here the thought of His being our peace has to do with the removing of the alienation that existed between Jew and Gentile. And bringing these two opposing factions of humanity into one. Newman so making peace. Reconciling. The thought of reconciling here is to bring Jew and Gentile into harmony, to set things right between them, to remove the distance that existed between them. We know how that the Jew would look upon the Gentile as a dog. And the Jew was dispensationally near, and the Gentile dispensationally at a distance. But now in Christ Jesus, that distance has all been removed and those earthly distinctions forever gone. And he's made one Newman. Let's read it. But now in verse 14. But for He is our peace. Our Jew and Gentile, who hath made both Jew and Gentile, 1 and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself. Of Twain. Of Jew and Gentile, 1 Newman. So making peace. The thought here of peace. Is to bring into harmony, and to remove all distance and alienation and enmity between you and Gentile into one Newman,

and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross having slain the enmity thereby. And he came and preached peace to you that were afar off, that's the Gentile, and to them that were nigh dispensationally near the Jew, but not. Near until truly saved. For through Him Christ we both Jew and Gentile, have access by 1 Spirit unto the Father. That's the great effect of reconciliation.

To remove the earthly distinctions whenever we set up. Earthly distinctions like Peter did. We were discussing it last night in Acts 15, Peter says. God put no difference between us and them, us Jews and them the Gentiles. Giving them the same spirit that He gave unto us. Therefore we believe that they shall be saved, even as we know He doesn't say it that way. He says that we Jews shall be saved even this day, where we have to be brought in on the same ground of sovereign grace as the Gentiles have brought into. And yet that same man, that great apostle when certain, came to Antioch from Jerusalem. Peter withdrew himself, separated himself, and didn't eat with the Gentiles, and Barnabas was carried away too with their dissimulation. The presence of legality can cause us to succumb to it and to deny in our action, which is what Peter did, the very truth of the Gospel. That's what he did. He denied the truth of the gospel, and he received a rebuke from the apostle Paul, and even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. They were setting up. Peter was setting up. And what he did there in Galatians 2. When they came to Antioch. He was setting up a distinction and he had said God put no difference between us and them. No difference and that's the truth of reconciliation. God has reconciled us both unto God in one body. No distinction between races, colors, creeds, nations, languages, tongues, whatever it is one in Christ, and whenever we. We make a distinction whenever we set ourselves up above any of our brethren. We're denying that truth. We are one in Christ. He's reconciled us. Now let's turn to Romans 5. Romans 5 verse. Verse 10. For if when we were enemies. Colossians we read Enemies in Mind by wicked works. Here when we were enemies. In verse 6 he says we were without strength. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly, without strength, helpless, unable to help ourselves to deliver ourselves from our lost condition. We were ungodly, we had no thoughts towards God. We left God out of our calculations. And ungodly person is one who lives his life without referring to God, just as though God didn't exist. I know well what that is. I live 19 years of my life when I got saved as a young man at 19. I lived an ungodly life. It wasn't excessively wicked. But ungodly God was not in my thoughts. And then it says in verse 8, God commanded his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us. Now that's more active in doing those things that are hateful to God. A Sinner is one who does what God forbids. He does acts of sin which are contrary to God's holiness so that we we pass more from the passive state of being ungodly and just living our lives without referring to God into active sins and then. Verse 10. When we were enemies at enmity with God, alienated from the life of God, enemies of God. Man won't admit that. He won't admit that he's an enemy of God, but he is. An enemy of God, such as his state so far, is man from God. What does it say we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son? It doesn't say we were reconciled to God by the blood of Christ here. It doesn't say we were reconciled to God even by the death of Christ, but the death of his Son. The death of his son, having therefore one son, is well beloved, he said. I will send him also. They will reverence my son, the darling of his bosom, the Son of his love. He couldn't have given more. He gave his son into death. He is reconciled as he's turned our hearts back to him. We look at that cross and we see the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. The death of his Son, that's won my heart. That's removed the alienation. That's removed the distance. He loves me so much. He's given all he could possibly give. God himself exhausted himself. In what He has given in order to effect this reconciliation. Having reconciled us, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Much more, more than that. Yes, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

We shall be saved by his life. I'd like to talk about that tomorrow night, Lord Willie. Not how he's brought us into relationship with himself, but how he maintains it and restores us. Restoring grace of God is to me, is as wonderful a theme as the saving grace of God. That here we're looking at the saving grace of God. Reconcile this to himself by the death of his son. If God hasn't won your heart, what more could he do to win it? He's given all he could give, the darling of his bosom the death of his son. Much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. He's brought us to Himself, set us in a place of nearness. He said to us, Come near to me, and he's brought us near and wrapped us in his arms of love, and blessed us with all that he has in his heart for us. Now he wants to keep us there, and so he's living on high. We shall be saved as we walk through this wilderness, this defiling. Wicked evil scene of death and defilement. He saves us from all the defilements of the way, and He's going to bring us all the way home to glory. We shall be saved by His life. And not only so verse 11. But we also now this is the this is the apex in the Epistle to the Romans, and it's probably a height in the New Testament beyond which you cannot go. Not only so, but we also joy in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom we have now. Right now, receive the reconciliation. We join God. The first verse of our chapter says Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, peace with God. That was the theme of our meeting this morning. Peace has been made. By the blood of His cross, he's brought us into it, and the effect of that is that we join God. It's not just as it says in verse 2. At the end of the verse, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. We want to be there, that place that we came short of all of sin and come short of the glory of God. Now a work has been done. We've been declared righteous. We have peace. We're rejoicing in hope of that glory. But there's something even more than that. Wherejoying in God Himself, who is the author, the source of it all, with joy in God. We've been brought so near. There's not a cloud between us. And as I said a moment ago, we can't rightly evaluate how far we were until we look at those three dark hours on the cross. We won't fully ever understand it. That's where we see how far we were. He had to go there. He, the holy, spotless, sinless One, had to go there. In order to bring us near, how near are we? Well, we sang it in this hymn. It says. In the deep eternal Council chose us in Christ the Son, before the earth's foundation or sin had yet begun, that we might all the nearness. Of the beloved known. And brought to these children our children's praises. Flow will not know how near we are. Until we understand a little how near he is. That's how near we are. We won't know the distance we were at until we see him and understand in some way, in some measure. The place he took when he was made sin. But the nearness? Is the nearness of the beloved. Of God. This is my beloved son. Whom I have found my delight, and he brings us. Into that nearness. Not only so, but we also joy in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom we have now received the reconciliation. Joy and God. Delight in him. Joy in God Himself.

Now let's look at Luke. 15 and then we're closed. The word reconciliation doesn't occur here, but the the truth is right here in verse 22. But the father said to his servants. Bring forth the best Grove. That's Christ. Christ is our righteousness. And put it on him. And put a ring on his hand, the symbol of eternal love. And shoes on his feet that we might walk here for him. And bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it. We feast upon. Christ, the fatted calf. The very same food that the father feasts on. Here we have the gain of reconciliation. The gain of reconciliation. We've looked at the. The need for reconciliation alienated from the life of God. The ministry of reconciliation, He's committed that to us be reconciled to God. The basis for reconciliation God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I mean we might be brought into such a place of favor and blessedness. The scope of reconciliation, Heaven and earth will all be brought back into divine suitability to God himself. We already have been reconciled to God, Jew and Gentile, brought into one body in Christ, reconciled to one another, for He is our peace. And then joy in God. We have joy in the God who has done it all. God who has reconciled us to Himself. We have joy in God, and here we find God having joy in US. The gain of reconciliation. Bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it, and let

us eat and be merry. We're brought into the divine merriment. Were brought in to enjoy what God enjoys. And all the highest thought. In addition to our joy in God is He joys in US. He rejoices to have you reconciled to himself. And He's going to joy for all eternity the divine merriment to have us around himself and to share all that is in his heart of love. With the likes of us. Bring Heather the fatted calf and kill it. And let us eat and be married the God who said let us make man. Here says, let us make merry. We're going to be in that. Bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry for this. My son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. They began to be merry. No end to that. No end to that. It is his own joy. In having us. With himself for all eternity. Let's sing in closing 27 in the appendix so nigh. So very nigh to God I cannot near be. Or in the person of the Son I am as near as He, so dear, so very dear to God, more dear. I cannot be the love wherewith He loves the Son, such as his love to me.

Hemet Conference: 1998, Members of the One Body

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Address—C. Hendricks

Turn to Ephesians 4 please. I therefore the prisoner of the Lord. Beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. With all lowliness and meekness, With longsuffering for bearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit. Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord. One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all. And in you all. But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens. That he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth. According to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself. In love. These last three chapters of Ephesians we have the. The doctrine taught in the first 3 and now we have the. The walk flowing from that. Doctrine taught what we've read. These verses that we read has to do with there's three spheres that are in these last four, three chapters. There's the assembly sphere, and that's what we have in these verses that we've read. We have the sphere of the world in which we move every day. And then we have the family sphere. And at the end of the epistle there is armor to be put on to equip us to. Stand against the the enemy of our souls in these three spheres. The assembly, the world and the family. And I'm just concerned this afternoon with the assembly sphere. Notice that the 4th chapter begins very similar to the third chapter, The 3rd chapter for this 'cause I, Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles. And this chapter starts, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you. So he picks up where he began in chapter 3. And so chapter 3, verses 2 to the end are in a parenthesis. And there we have the mystery unfolded in the fullest way we have in the stairs. So when he speaks here in Chapter 4, he says, I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation or the calling wherewith ye are called. What is that calling? Well, you have to go back to Chapter 2 to see what that calling is. There's three things that are brought out there in Chapter 2, starting with 11. Where he speaks of our. Our portion now.

He says. In verse 15. Having abolished in His flesh Chapter 2:15. The enmity of and the law of commandments. Contained in ordinances for to make in himself of twain of Jew and Gentile, 1 Newman making peace that new man. Has a body composed of Jew and Gentile, and a head in heaven. The Lord himself, that's that one, Newman. And we what we get here is a very solid Christian truth. And that he might reconcile both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body by the cross. That's the foundation of it. Having slain the enmity thereby, the enmity between Jew and Gentile has been dealt with and slain there at the cross. And he came and preached peace to you, which were afar off. That would be the Gentiles dispensationally afar off, and. That were nigh the Jews. They were dispensationally near. But in verse 13, backing up a moment, we get something more than just dispensational distance and dispensational nearness. We get what is vitally so for both Jew and Gentile. But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, that's the Gentiles. Are made nigh by the blood of Christ. That's the vital nearness, isn't it? The Gentiles were dispensationally afar off in the Old Testament and the Jews were near. But now he talks about a nearness that is by the blood of Christ, which is for both in that verse especially encompassing the Gentiles. Then verse 14 For He is our peace. He is the one that has not only made peace with God for us by His work, but peace. Among. Jew and Gentile who were at issue with each other. He hath made both one. Notice He is our peace. Verse 14. Who hath made both? You and Gentile 1 So I think the peace, the thought of the peace there is to remove the enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile, and made them one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to making himself of Twain one new man, so making peace. Wonderful to see that in Christianity there is no Jew nor Gentile, but one new man, members of the body of which Christ himself is the head in heaven. It really is sad to think of all the divisions that the enemy has brought in in the Christian profession, and how he has succeeded in dividing those who are members. Of one body. Who are one in Christ? Here he does away with the. You might say insuperable difficulty of the enmity that existed between Jews and Gentiles. It wasn't. It wasn't. Allowed for a Jew to even eat with the Gentiles according to the law. Peter was taken to task when he went in and did that with Cornelius until he told them the vision that he had and how that God was going to bring the Gentiles into this new order of blessing. That began on the Day of Pentecost. Well, that he might verse 16 again, that he might reconcile both. Unto God in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. All that existed of old, the enmity between Jew and Gentile. Since the cross has done away with the first man, whether he's a Jew or a Gentile. And crucified him, for we are crucified with Christ, Paul says. He says it in the singular in Galatians. I am crucified with Christ. And that's true of every believer. We can say that the cross is the end of the history of the first man. Whether he's a Jew or a Gentile, and he's made now one new thing. 1 Newman, Christ and his church here. So to persecute the church.

Is to persecute Christ. Remember when Saul of Tarsus met the Lord on the road to Damascus? The Lord didn't say Saul. Saul, why do you persecute my brethren? Why do you persecute my brethren? He doesn't say that, he says. Why are you persecuting me? It's true that we are

his brethren, but. Persecuting himself because he is one with us. I've often thought that's a very good verse to refute the ultra dispensationalist that say there's a Kingdom church that Peter preached and then the Pauline church that Paul preached. When Saul of Tarsus met the Lord, he said you are persecuting me when you're persecuting. My disciples, those who are my followers, they are one with me. That's the truth of the assembly now. The truth of it wasn't out yet, but it existed before. The vessel that was going to explain the truth of the assembly was converted, and it was, and it was stated to that very vessel Saul saw why persecuted thou made persecute. The assembly is to persecute Christ, because we are one with Him. We cannot be closer to him than we are as members of his body. There is nothing closer to me than every member of my body. It's all 1. And so it is in Christianity. And this is what makes the divisions that exist among Christians so such a tragedy, and it's such a sorrow, and we ought to feel it very keenly. Verse 16 and that he might reconcile. Remove the enmity, remove the alienation. That he might reconcile both unto God in one body. By the cross having slain the enmity thereby that. That 16th verse is just rich with meaning. Reconcile both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body by the cross. Having slain the enmity thereby, the enmity is gone, and so there ought to be no enmity existing between Christians, those who are members of that one body. And he came and preached peace to you which were afar off the Gentiles, and to you that were nigh. The Jews both needed to be brought into a new position. That only. Is true now that we have a man in the glory and the Spirit of God down here to unite us to that glorified man. For through him. This is a verse I missed last night, speaking on the Trinity or the night before. This is the Trinity in here, for through him Jesus, the Lord Jesus, we both have access. By 1 Spirit unto the Father. That's Christian position, Christian truth. Christian access wasn't true. Before the cross, it wasn't true. Before the resurrection and his ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit. Now we're brought into the fullness of it. Now the conclusion of what he's been saying is now, therefore you are no more strangers as we the Gentiles once were, and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the Saints. And of the household of God, that's the first thing that he talks about. The household of God, he says. You Gentiles are brought into that. You're part of God's household along with the Jews. No distinction, no difference. You have the same privileges, the same blessedness, the the same position and relationship as any Jew has that believes. I love it the way Peter pronounces in Acts 10. He says we believe we Jews believe that we. Shall be saved even as they he doesn't say they should be saved even as we you would expected you to say that. Because they always considered themselves the standard. But he says we Jews shall be saved, even as they Gentiles. How are they saved? By pure sovereign grace. And he had come to recognize that. That's the way the Jews are brought in as well. No more strangers and foreigners, fellow citizens, with the Saints and of the household of God.

That's the first thing God has a household, those that are in relationship with himself as his children. And all who believe the gospel, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, makes no difference. There is no Jew, no Gentile. In the household of God we are all one in Christ and are built upon the found. Now he's talking about a building here. First he talks about a household, now he talks about a building where you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. This foundation of the assembly is found in the Scriptures. We don't have the apostles and prophets here, but we have their writings, and so we can read their writings and understand the truth of the assembly. The foundation of the apostles and prophets every time the prophets follow the apostles. In the New Testament here it's New Testament prophets, New Testament apostles. He's not talking about the prophets of the Old Testament. They knew nothing of the church. In spite of the fact that our King James translators placed headings over some of the Psalms and some of the prophetic books, the Church does this and that. The Church did not exist. We had that in our young peoples last night. Why do we need as we do? The Church didn't even exist in the Old Testament, didn't exist when the Lord was here on earth, didn't exist during His 40 days as a risen man. Down here, and not until you ascended to heaven and sent down the Holy Spirit. That formed the assembly and united all those 120 believers into one body. That's when the church began. It was the birthday of the Assembly, the day of Pentecost. Wonderful day that was indeed. You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. In home, in him, all the building fitly framed together. Groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. The end result of this building that is being built. Is a holy temple in the Lord. It is growing every soul that is saved. Is an added stone in that building, and it's built upon the foundation that it was laid. By the apostles and prophets of the New Testament. And then he says, In whom ye also are builded together. You also right now. Verse 21 looks on to the future when the completed building will be a holy temple in the Lord. But right now ye are builded together. Verse 22 for inhabitation of God through the Spirit. God the Spirit dwells among the church. In the church. And this is the characteristic truth of Christianity. You remember when the Spirit of God came in Acts 2, it says the first effect of His coming was it filled all the house where they were sitting. I think that's a picture that was literally the house where they were. I know that. But I think it's a picture of the assembly here as presented as the House of God, where the Spirit of God dwells. He dwells. Among his people. And we have no claim on that. Over and above any other Christian, the Spirit of God indwells each one of his own, and he dwells among them as well. If that were not so, if the Spirit of God was not present to lead and guide among Christians that are not with us, then you couldn't fault them for setting up a one man ministry or an arrangement of their own because the Spirit isn't there. But he is there. And that's what makes their ignoring his presence there and setting up a man made arrangement to be sinful because he is there and he ought to be relied upon to lead and guide in all functions of his people who are God's household. And who are God's building? He is there, He's there, and he's there to be relied upon and counted upon. And he can be quenched and he can be grieved. And I believe that many Christians do both. And we're guilty of that too, at times. Quenching him or greeting him. Well, he is there among his people, His redeemed people.

It doesn't. His presence there does not depend on our faithfulness. It's founded upon the perfection of the work of Christ and His person. So it says, in whom you also are builded together for inhabitation of God through the Spirit. That's true of all the Saints wherever they are found. That's a different truth. Than the presence of the Lord in the midst, as gathered to His name. That's a different truth. Talking about the presence of the Spirit of God among the Saints everywhere and when the rapture takes place, He will go with the Saints in the character that he's presented to us here as forming the assembly. So really in this chapter 2 we have 3 truths. We have the truth of the one body, the 1 Newman. All united to one another and to Christ as head in heaven. We have the truth that the Christians are the household of God, and that they are the House of God. The building of God, growing to a holy temple, the habitation of God by the Spirit, the dwelling place of God. It's a wonderful truth that God has ever thought of dwelling among his redeemed people. He did it of old with Israel, and now he does it in the most vital and intimate and effective way by himself, coming the Holy Spirit and dwelling among his redeemed people, making each making the local assembly, or making, I shouldn't say the local assembly, making the church universal. The habitation of God through the Spirit, because that's the view. That's given to us in Ephesians. Corinthians gives us the local assembly, but here we have that which is true. Of all. Now going to the 4th chapter where we began. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation or the calling wherewith ye are called. What have we been called to? We've been called to the membership of the body of Christ. And by the way, that is the only membership that Scripture knows about. It does not know about or speak about membership of a local church. And when one joins something, we are never told in scripture to join anything. But the Spirit of God, when he comes upon us and dwells in us, He joins us to this

one body which he formed on the day of Pentecost. He joins us and He makes us to be members of the one body. And that membership applies to all Christians. We have no special. Privileges than any other company. Do not have. As far as this truth is concerned, we are all members. Of the one body. Well then, we're exhorted to walk worthy of that calling, to walk worthy of the one body. There's two ways that we can deny the truth of the one body. We can have a fellowship, that is. Than the truth of the one body, and that is. Sectarianism we can set up. Requirements for reception amongst us that is narrower than the one body. I'm not talking about cases where discipline is in order. I'm not talking about. I'm talking about. Those that are going on, well, the one body, we can have a fellowship that is larger than the one body. Take the Episcopal Church, the Church of England. If you're an Englishman, you can be a member of the Church of England whether you're saved or not, whether you're a member of the body of Christ or not. Now that's a fellowship which is broader than the one body and it denies it or you can have. Conditions of fellowship amongst your group. Whatever it might be that are narrower than the one body, you have to subscribe to this doctrine or to that or the other. And again, I'm not talking about fundamental truths here that all of course, must hold to, such as the Trinity and the deity of Christ in his.

Sinless humanity and so on. We wouldn't receive any that are not that I'm talking about those that are going on and holding the truth as to the fundamentals. So the the the one body can be denied. We say we are the principle of gathering is the one body. We're gathered on the principle of the one body. That's the ground of gathering. Well, that means that if one is a member of that body and there's no scriptural reason to exclude them. That they have a place at the table and it's open to them. We make it narrower than that. If we say you have to be of us before you can break bread, we're nothing but another sect in Christendom. Did you hear that? If we make reception to the table narrower than membership in the body of Christ, when there is no other scriptural reason to exclude them, we make ourselves a sect. Then we are all part of the family of God, the household of God. And we're to walk worthy of that. Were all part of the building the house? Collectively viewed where the Spirit is present and if we set up. Rules and arrangements in our assemblies, in our meetings, and when I say our I'm talking about the whole church. I'm not talking about us as a company. I'm talking about Christians wherever they are, if we set up. That kind of thing where the Spirit of God is not relied on, counted on, and he's not there to lead and guide, but we appoint one man, say, to do it all that is quenching the Holy Spirit, really setting him aside. It's a gross dishonor to his being there. There are some that even still pray for the Holy Spirit to come. He's been here for nearly 2000 years now. And it's a, it's a. Not to know that he is here. And it's a sad thing that he has been ignored in many cases. Oh, I know they talk about them, many do. They talk about him and so on. But they have a, an arrangement of things which ties his hands, so to speak, so that he can only use certain vessels. He cannot use whomsoever he will. And this is what we gather from. Walking worthy of the vocation, the calling wherewith we are called. We are to walk consistently with the truth of His presence in the House, and consistently with the truth that we are members of the one body. With all other believers. How can we do this? How is it possible with all our differences of views and our differences of dispositions and? Nationalities and the way we've been raised and trained and differently one from another, how can we? Do this with all loneliness. And meekness with long-suffering forbearing one another. In love. It's the only way it can be carried out. We have to set our own wills aside. And then the next verse comes to that, endeavoring using diligence to keep, not to make. We can't, this truth. What is the unity of the Spirit? It is the unity which the Spirit of God formed on the day of Pentecost when He came, uniting all believers. Into one body. Into one body. It says the Lord says in Acts One that they were to tarry in Jerusalem and in a short time they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is to bring us into the one Body, and the baptism of the Spirit in First Corinthians 12 encompasses Jew and Gentile.

The Jew in Acts 2, the Gentile in Acts 10. So you might say the baptism of the Spirit. Was not completed until the Gentiles were brought in because they were encompassed by it. It was initiated on the day of Pentecost, and when the Gentiles were brought in, then we have the full complement that is in enveloped in that truth, the unity of the Spirit, He united into one body, both Jew and Gentile. We're told to keep it. Endeavoring using diligence to keep. The unity of the Spirit. We can't break it. He made it. Maintains it. Every believer is a member of the one body. We can't change that. But we can fail to keep it. We can fail to keep it. If we don't walk in company with the Spirit of God, there's three kinds of unity that we have in Christendom today. I remember when I was with. Another group of brethren and they were considering reunion with another group of brethren. And older brothers said to us all, he was very esteemed. He said, we have to agree. To disagree. If you have a different. Opinion or doctrine than I have, we have to agree. To disagree, that is. We're not all going to see everything alike, so our unity will be formed upon union by mutual concession. That's the. That's the ecumenical spirit of the day. Doctrine does not matter much, but we unite under the umbrella of Christian love. That's the union of Ecumenicism. And we see that in many, many movements today. I have a book at home. It's called Evangelicals and Catholics Together. And it's pathetic, pathetically sad. Where evangelical leaders are considering union with the Roman Catholic Church. There is absolutely no way that there can be agreement between those two gospels. The Gospel of Rome is not a gospel. It is. It is a wicked. Gospel a wicked teaching. Not good news. I don't like to use the word gospel for it, but it is the system of works and law. And Paul says. Cursing. Is the one that preaches that gospel or that comes under it? He's pronounced a curse. At the Council of Trent, the Roman Church considered all the recovered truths of the Reformation. One of which is the all sufficiency of the Bible as the rule of faith for the Christian, not the church, but the word of God, wonderful truth. And the other was justification by faith apart from works, and that was recovered, and they considered all those truths, and they pronounced anathema upon them all. Anyone that says that we're justified before God according to the Gospel of Rome, without works anathema upon that person. So the gospel that Paul preached. Anathematized in the gospel which they preach, Paul anathematizes. There is no complicity, there is no agreement between the two. But this union, by mutual concession, I'll concede my point here, you concede your point here, and we'll come together on the principle of compromise. That's the ecumenical movement. That's what characterizes the new Promise Keepers movement. I remember getting a pretty scathing letter. Maybe that's too strong a word. Censoring me because I was passing out some literature to alert the Saints as to the evil of that movement and I was criticized for it. Well, I don't apologize for doing that and I will continue to try to make the Saints aware of what's going on.

In the Christian world. That we don't support something. It's sad to say sometimes you find Saints are even sending money to some of these organizations that are absolutely false to the gospel of Christ. And we don't want to do that. We have to be intelligent in order not to. There's another kind of unity that is in Christendom, and it's the worst of all. It's to agree to agree. Let me give you an example that's Popish Unity. You have to submit to what the Pope says. You don't have a right to have a differing opinion. You have to accept it. The Jehovah's Witnesses has exactly the same thing in principle, though they have no fellowship at all with the Roman Catholic system. But you cannot oppose the Jehovah's Witness hierarchy. You can't oppose that. It's not allowed. You're not allowed to even. Think. Your own thoughts if the hierarchy of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Has pronounced on something. You, being a Jehovah's Witness, have agreed to accept that, to agree with it. Whether you so it takes away all liberty and freedom to judge according to the Word of God. That's the worst \*\*\*\*\* there is. There's no worse \*\*\*\*\* than that. That's popery. Potpourri. And I'm afraid that we have a form of that. I have heard it amongst us. That when an assembly makes a decision. You must agree with it. That is potpourri. You submit to its authority, but you don't necessarily agree with what

was done, and to insist that you agree with it means that you have given up. Your liberty to judge according to the scriptures. No delegated authority is infallible. Every delegated authority is fallible. If the authority was infallible, then of course you'd have to agree with it. God is infallible. He can't make a mistake when he speaks. We agree with that. That's the unity of the Spirit. The unity of the spirit is to bring us all into oneness of mind with the spirits, mind with the mind of God. That's true unity. That's what it is to keep the unity of the spirit. If you and I differ on a point and I say to you, well, I'll concede this and you concede that, I'll meet you halfway. How do we deal with the truth of God? We can't deal that way with the truth of God. If you have the truth and I don't, you don't give in any part of that. You seek to enlighten me as to it. Leave it to the Spirit of God to teach me and bring me up to the only true standard, which is the mind of God. That's true unity. And I'm afraid that the reunions that have taken place among brethren have in large measure, and I'm not entirely, I would give them credit for a lot of sincerity in many ways, but in large measure it is come about as a result of union by mutual concession. You can see this point. You can see that point. That's agreeing to disagree. But potpourri? Mr. Darby back then in connection with the problem that developed in Plymouth with Mr. Newton's heterodox teaching on the Person of Christ. The position that was taken by those at Plymouth that were under Newton's authority was there is no recourse. You can't disagree with what's been done here. And if they cleared him, then he's cleared. And Mr. Darby says that principle is nothing but potpourri and he resisted it strongly. Thankfully he did. And the Saints, in large measure, got delivered from that kind of thing. So I submit.

You submit. We submit to a decision that is made because by an assembly because it has authority to make that decision. We don't necessarily have to agree with it. If it's a mistaken decision, then the assembly is responsible to rectify it. It is not to be left to stand if the decision is wrong. Or their position is wrong. It is to be rectified. And that's and all believers have a part in that rectification process where needed. And that's how do you, why do you say that? Because there's one body. That's why I say it, the easy way to see that is if the whole Church of God the world over there was a building large enough so we could all fit in that one building, then everyone in that one building would have a part in the decision that was made there. And that's the that's the truth of the one body. And I'm afraid that in, in some areas amongst us, we have fallen into the thought of. Pendant assemblies that make a decision, no one can challenge it. Actually, there's no such thing in Scripture as an independent local assembly. Every assembly locally is merely in miniature, a part of the whole, and every decision that it makes affects the whole. And so others in other assemblies have a right to make their voice heard in that assembly, and that assembly should not. Refuse it. The decision, of course, is theirs to make locally, because the one that's locally there. Is the one they may be dealing with, but there is the right because we're members of one another to make our voice heard. And if you question that. Read volume 2 of the letters, page 198 to 201. It's the most balanced letter. Mr. Darby wrote it, of course. It's the most balanced letter that I have ever read on the subject. We're talking about. And it's beautiful how he brings this point out, and then he brings this point out to balance it. And then he brings this one out to balance that. And the the the truth of God, if it's held properly, is in perfect balance. Who is it that keeps it in perfect balance? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, he inspired it, He gave it to us, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in. In a word, that means to walk in company with the Holy Spirit, a divine person on earth, to walk in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, to be taught of him. Now, if you do that and I do that, and you do that and you do that, we'll all be walking together, won't we? We'll not have just one mind, but we'll have. The same mind, and it'll be the mind of God. And this is what if you read Philippians 3, where if in anything you are otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. There's no thought of concession on the part of the one who has the mind of God to the one that doesn't. And meeting them halfway, it says God will reveal this to you who needs added light from God, and He will do that. But the truth is the truth. It's not relative. And we are to have the truth and to contend for the truth. The Spirit is called the Spirit. Of truth. Spirit of Truth endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. Oh, how wonderful it is when the Saints go on like that. That means I give up my will. I don't have my thoughts, You don't have your thoughts. We don't want our thoughts. We want His thoughts. We want his will. We want his guidance, his mind, and that's the unity that God is seeking to. Promote in the word of God. Agreeing to agree is terrible \*\*\*\*\*. Agreeing to disagree is just compromise. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. There is one body. One spirit, even as ye are called, in one hope of your calling. Someone has beautifully said these are these are three circles.

Verse 4 is the inner circle. Composed of all true believers, all who are members of the one Body, brought into that one body by the one Spirit, and who all have that one hope of Our Calling which is to be conformed to the image of His Son. That's the inner circle. All true believers are in that circle. I was in a meeting once and they were having a special meeting. They called a special meeting to consider why we meet as we do, what is the ground of gathering and so on. And to my horror I heard a brother say that verse four. That inner circle was the gathered Saints period. And then the next circle, which is 1 Lord, 1 faith, 1 baptism. That would be Christians outside of us and then. The last circle, one God and Father of all. Well, that's very serious error. The inner circle is composed of all members of the body of Christ. We saw that this morning at the Lord's table, where the one loaf on the table represented the whole Church of God, The whole Church of God. There's that one body, united into it together and to Christ the head. By the one Spirit, and with the one hope of Our Calling to be with them like Christ in glory soon. The next circle, 1 Lord, 1 Faith, one baptism, is the circle that's a little bit larger. It's a circle of profession. The 1st circle is reality. No one is a member of the body of Christ that is not a real Christian. There is no mere professor in that circle, but one Lord, 1 faith, one baptism. There are many that profess him and they're they're of the Christian faith and they've been baptized and so they're in that circle, but they may not be real many in that circle. Of course everyone in the 1st circle is in the 2nd circle, but there are some in the 2nd circle. That's a little bit larger that are not real. And then the 3rd circle is the circle of creation, one God and Father of all, who was above all and through all. And then it goes back to the first circle in you all. So there we have the three circles. They have reality in verse 4, profession in verse 5, creation in verse 6, and then reverting back to that inner circle that is only. Entered into by those that are baptized, that are sealed, I should say by the Holy Spirit. Verse 7 But unto everyone of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. I've heard it said, well I don't have any gift. I don't have any gift. I wish I had the gift of brother so and so, or whatever that verse says. Unto everyone of us is given grace. Gift is grace. According to the measure of the gift of Christ, everyone of us has something that we can contribute. And do in the assembly. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive. That means he led the power that had held us captive, Satan captive. He led the power captivity that had kept us captives to sin and Satan. He led that captive. Through death, Hebrews 2, he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. And delivered them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to \*\*\*\*\*. So when he ascended on high, the Lord ascended on high. He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Wonderful that these that he doesn't choose angels to give the gifts to, to minister to the Assembly. \*\* \*\*\* chooses sinners saved by grace. He chooses you and me, He gives us so that we who are once sinners and lost and on the road to hell can now help to rescue others from that and bring them into the place where they can be taught and nurtured and fed and taken care of the Assembly. Now that he ascended verse 9, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? That's of course his death.

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. Now from that place ascended to the glory far above all heavens. Now He gives gifts for the establishing and the ongoing blessing of His assembly. Down here He gave some apostles. From where? From where did He give these these gifts that are mentioned? Verse 11 From the glory remember when He was here on earth, He, he commissioned the apostles, and their Commission was to the lost sheep of the tribes of a tribe of his tribes of Israel. But this is not that many of those that were called by the Lord to minister to Israel and and the initial 12 apostles, many of them now are brought into this apostleship. But this apostleship is different. It's not a Commission. That Commission is entirely different. This is heavenly, comes from a heavenly head in heaven. And he commissions us to now the apostles and prophets as we saw in. To laid the foundation of the assembly and their writings established the truth of the assembly. And then the evangelists, pastors and teachers build on that. Build on that. So it says he gave some apostles. The comma after some is wrong. It shouldn't be there. It shouldn't say he gave to some apostles and to others this and that. It's he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors. And teachers. The apostles and prophets were foundation gifts. They existed in the 1st century for the establishing of the Church. The ongoing gifts evangelists, pastors and teachers. Are still with us today. The evangelist goes out and brings souls in. The pastor or the shepherd, that's what the word means. Takes care of them and the teacher. Teaches the word to them. The teacher is occupied more with the Word, the pastor with the sheep. And the evangelist brings them in, brings them in. Now verse 12 is very important. What are they there for? For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, unfortunately. Our King James translation is faulty here because it uses the preposition for in these three cases. And the preposition is different. The first one for the perfecting of the Saints is the prime. Reason for these gifts that the Lord from Hanhai has given, that the Saints might be perfected, established in the faith individually, that we all individually might understand the truth of the gospel. I remember reading a letter by Mr. Darby once he was in Canada, and he says he's been there. Ministering for three months and he hasn't touched church truth yet. They needed to be established in the truth of the gospel. They needed to get established first in that. I think we do a lot of harm to souls if we bring church truth to bear upon them when they're not even clear as to eternal security or other fundamental gospel truths. We must. Establish them soundly on an individual basis. If they're not sound individually, they can never function collectively. Amongst the Saints for the good and profit, they'll cause confusion. The one does not know that. I talked to one young man, he says, well he's he's a good sound Christian, just has a few problems. He doesn't understand eternal security. Well, he's not a good sound Christian if he doesn't understand eternal security. That's a basic fundamental of the gospel, is it not? You can't help other souls if you're not sure yourself. How could you even worship if you did not know that you had a settled, eternal, unchanging relationship with God? You are His child. You could never be lost no matter what comes until you know that. How can you help another in in the truth if you're uncertain as to a fundamental principle like that?

So the first primary reason for these gifts? Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers is for the perfecting the establishing of the Saints individually. Then we get the next two things, and in Darby's translation, it's instead of four, he uses with a view to with a view to once that first objective has been attained and the Saints have brought been brought to maturity and perfection. That's what the thought of perfection is, maturity and understanding. They're standing in Christ, that they are reconciled to God, that they're justified by faith, that their sins are forgiven, that they have eternal life. That they're sealed by the Holy Spirit and they're going to spend eternity and glory with Christ. These are all truths connected with the perfecting of the Saints. That they are children of God, sons of God, sealed by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, all these individual. Wonderful truths of the Word of God. Now once that's obtained, then they are, then they can be useful in the ministry. Now the ministry doesn't mean someone standing up here and preaching. It means that the members of the body can function, can minister one to another. Whatever gift he's given you, whatever it might, whatever gift he's given, each one of us can use that gift for the help and blessing of all. Verse 16 describes what that that ministry is. From whom? The whole body. Fitly joined together and come. Impacted by that which every joint supplied. You are a joint, I'm a joint, I'm a member, you're a member and we're all supplying something for the health of the body. Which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part they get increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. So the the ultimate objective is that the body be built up. And that can only be if each member in that body has reached the state of maturity and perfection. Now we know in the human body if you have a member. That is ill, that's sick, that is not functioning properly. The body. Is sick. And that's the picture we have here. First of all, each one has to be brought into the state of mature growth and understanding his standing in Christ. And then he's he functions in the work of the ministry, the service. It simply means the service that each one is given to perform in the body. Doesn't mean public ministry necessarily at all. In fact, most of the ministry that takes place in the church is not public. It's private. It's not for the public eye, so to speak. And then what's the next result when the ministry is working and each member is flowing properly and helping each other member? Then edit. The body is edified for the edification with a view to the edification. The edifying of the body of Christ. What's the end result? Till we all come, till we all arrive at New Translation, till we all arrive at. The unity of the faith. And of the knowledge? Of this God, don't we know who he is? Well, yes. But in one sense, not fully. And in another sense, we'll never know as He, as the Father, knows who he is. But to know him? We're working towards that, the unity of faith. That all believers. Are one or one in Christ, one body and the knowledge of the Son of God? I must confess that some of these expressions are. Beyond me to explain, I don't think I understand them fully myself, because they are. They are so. Wonderful and beyond even my our comprehension. Unto a perfect man, fully mature, full grown man. Unto the. Stature of the fullness of Christ. Well, these gifts have been given to bring us to that and we won't arrive at that point until we're home in the glory. But that's where we're headed. They were given to bring us into a fuller, richer, warmer tour, understanding of all that we have in Him so that we can function together for the good and blessing and the edifying of the Body of Christ. What a wonderful picture.

That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro. And carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. I just have to issue this warning. There's so much out there in the radio waves. And radio and television and so many voices, and there's so much ministry. Some of it's all right. Some of it's very bad. And. Too much. Habitual listening to that, you're going to be confused. We have so much precious ministry. That we know. Good. Why do we dabble with? That which is questionable, I'm not going to the extreme of saying all the ministry is bad and only ours is good. I'm not saying that I've heard some very good ministry from those that are not with us. But I'm just saying and habitual diet of that kind of thing is going to hurt your soul. But speaking or holding. The truth in love. They grow up unto Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. So that's the end that he has in view, and I've already read verse 16.

Chicago Conference: 1988, Our Collective Responsibility

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Ephesians chapter 4, beginning at verse one. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith you are called, with all loneliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit. Even as you're called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, 1 faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints. For the work of the Ministry for the edifying. Of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplier, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself. In love. The first three chapters in Ephesians give us the doctrinal part of the epistle, starting with chapter 4 and the verses through verse 16 that we've read together. We have our collective responsibility. Our walk in connection with the truth of the one body. As being members one of another and of Christ the glorified man on high and then from verse 18, excuse me, verse 17 of chapter 4 of through chapter 5. Verse 20 we have our walk more out in the world. I walk more in connection with those roundabouts. And then starting with. Verse 21 and 22 especially we have. Wives, husbands, and going on into chapter six, children and father and mother, the parents and then the special word to the fathers. And then in verse five you have the servants in the household, and verse we have masters. A little bit farther down, verse 9, ye masters. So we have the household, and then the end of the epistle we get the Christian warfare. So the practical part has to do with our assembly life. Are functioning together as members of the one body and then our relationship with those roundabouts in the world and how we are to manifest the character of Christ in that regard. And then the family, family relationships, husband, wife, children, parents, masters, servants and then the end is the warfare. Well, I'd like to talk a little this afternoon. Briefly on Christian ministry. What is Christian ministry? Let's just quickly look at these verses we read, have no intention of going into them in detail, but to concentrate on the subject of Christian ministry.

He exhorts them in the first verse to walk worthy of the calling, the vocation wherewith you're called. Now that goes back to the second chapter because chapter 3 is a parentheses and it goes back to true two truths that are brought out in that second chapter, and that is that we're called to be members of the one body and we're also called to be the habitation of God by the Spirit. These true these two wonderful truths. Call to be members of the body of Christ. Now he says that here in verse four there is one body. He had already developed its formation in the second chapter and of what it is composed. It's composed of Jew and Gentile. Brought into one Newman reconciled in one body by the Cross. All the enmity and all the distance existing between these two classes of peoples on the word in the world removed by the cross. The cross is the great leveler, removes all that would give me distinction from another down here in this world. It's the great leveler. And then the formation of the one body by the one Spirit, and he also forms the the assembly becomes the habitation, the dwelling place of God by the Spirit. And he exhorts the Christians to walk worthy of that calling. We are responsible to walk. Worthy of being members of the body of Christ and to walk. Worthy of being the habitation of God by the Spirit. That's our collective responsibility. We can no longer, as Christians, be merely individuals. At chapter 417 to 521 or so, we have more responsibility out in the world as individuals and the testimony that we render to those roundabouts. And then we have a responsibility in the in the family. But here in these verses we have the assembly functioning and viewed, I should say, in its in its universal character as composed of all believers forming that one body. Now we're to walk worthy of that and the practical, and I don't want to get into that in great detail, the practical. Truth that flows from that is that that eliminates independency. It establishes the the the wonderful truth that all Christians are one, and that means that all local expressions, every local assembly is a local expression of that one universal church. Which is, which is referred to here as one body. Every local assembly is an expression of that. So there's no such thought in Scripture as independency, and also the the assembly viewed in its universal character viewed as forming. As composed of every believer in the Lord Jesus, everyone a member of that one body. You cannot be a believer in Christ sealed by the Spirit and not a member of the body of Christ. This is not a privilege. For certain, a certain few. Every believer in the Lord Jesus who has eternal life and the indwelling of the Spirit, is a member of that one body of which Christ is the head in heaven. So we have corporate responsibilities. This morning when we broke bread, we looked at that loaf on the table and it told us it. It speaks to us not only of the body in which our blessed Lord Jesus suffered and bore our sins, but it also. Picture in its undivided form of the assembly, the body of Christ. Now ye are the body of Christ, and it's a picture of that. And so when we break bread, we cannot just say, well, I just break bread for myself as an individual and I'm not concerned with those round about me. No, the truth of the one body is that when we break bread, we give expression and expressive fellowship. The fellowship of the body of Christ from first Corinthians 10. Well, I don't want to get into that too deeply because I do want to touch upon the Christian ministry. Let's go down a little bit. It says in verse 3, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The Spirit of God coming down on the day of Pentecost formed those 120 individual believers into something entirely new that had never existed before he baptized them into.

Body. And something existed from that point in time onward that had never existed in this world before. It's called the Church or the assembly. And the Spirit of God formed that unity. We're not told to keep the unity of the body. That would mean we'd have to walk in fellowship with every believer on the face of the earth, which is an impossibility in view of all the divisions round about us. But we're told to keep the unity of the Spirit. And he is a he's the Holy Spirit of God, so we are to keep that unity. Which he has formed, which he himself maintains, and. To keep it in the uniting bond of peace. Now that requires endeavouring, and so on. And He establishes there is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling. Notice the emphasis on the Word 1 all the way through here. 1 Lord, 1 Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all. And in you all, if one would come from some part of the world that had never heard of Christianity before, and we toured this country with that person and then we read those verses to him. There is one body and one spirit, even as you're called in one hope of your calling. They would have to say, I don't see that. I can't relate what I'm reading here in the Word of God to what I see out there in Christendom. Because I see many bodies, I seem to see many spirits. There seem to be. Various and many views of the of the Lords coming. It's not, it's not a unified thought throughout the ranks of Christians, but the Word of God talks

about one hope of your calling, one body, one spirit that has formed that one body. And there's one Lord. Well, at least we can be thankful that all those that profess the name of Christ do own the one Lord, Lord Jesus Christ. There's one faith and one baptism, and that baptism identifies us with the Lord Jesus in his death, and one God and Father of all. Now, as I said, if we would look at the actual state of the church today, the professing church, it would be hard for one to relate that to what we read here. It's a day of ruin, a day of departure. And yet the exhortation to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called, we're called to be members of the one body. Sometimes, you know, we're tempted, as we see the ruin and the worldly state of things, and sometimes the low state of our local assembly, to throw our hands up in the air and say, I'm just going to stay home and go it alone. Well, God hasn't given us that option. We're to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we're called, and we're called to be members of the one body. We are called into a unity which the Spirit of God Himself has formed, and we're in to use diligence to keep it in the uniting bond of peace. So the option of independency is ruled out, and the option of individual. An individual path without any regard to my corporate responsibilities in the member in the body of Christ are those are ruled out. God has not given us that option in the word of God. So we're to walk worthy of that calling. We're called to be members of that one body. We must walk with our brethren, others who are fellow members of the body of Christ. How can it be done while it can only be done with all loneliness and meekness, with long-suffering? Forbearing one another in love. And then we're called to be the habitation of God by the Spirit, to own the sovereign action and presidency and supremacy of the Spirit of God in our midst, whenever we come together for praise, prayer, worship, remembrance of Himself. Ministry of the Word, that the Spirit of God may be left free to use whomsoever He will, within the limits that its Scripture itself lays down, to use whomsoever He will for the edification of all.

It says in verse 7. But under every one of us notice that unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Christ has measured out a certain gift to each one of the members in that body and. To everyone of us, sometimes you hear it said, Well, I don't have any gift and. My presence in the meeting or not doesn't make any difference. The truth of the one body. If we understand it, if it has weight in my soul, I can never say it doesn't matter if I'm there or not. That would be like saying it doesn't matter whether they have this little finger or not, doesn't matter. Whether I have my left leg or not doesn't matter. If one of those members were cut off and non functioning, yes it does matter. Because to every one of us. Is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. There is not one of us brothers and sisters who does not have grace given to him or to her to function. For the blessing and the good and the health of the entire body, the very figure of the human body is used. To relay to our minds what the what the church is the assembly. It's the body of Christ. We were hearing about bones this morning and. We are of his flesh and of his bones, Scripture says who are part of himself, and he is the head, and he is the one that tells what, tells every member what to do. He is the one who has equipped each member in the body. With that needed grace to function in a way which is for the help and the blessing of all in the body. Unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, when the Lord Jesus ascended upon high, having defeated Satan on the cross. Having gone through the stronghold of His power and come out in mighty triumph in resurrection, He ascended up on high. He took all the power of the enemy captivity, that power Satan, which had held us captives, which had held us in \*\*\*\*\* He led that power captive. He took captivity, Satan and all his hosts captive. He led captivity captive. And then what did he do? He liberated us. He delivered us from Satans \*\*\*\*\*. Who through death delivered them? Who delivered him? Who through death? Destroyed him that had the power of death and delivered them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to \*\*\*\*\* So he has defeated the enemy. The proof of it is Christ going on high. The vanquishing the enemy, leading captivity captive, taking captive the very power that had held us captive, and then equipping us, we who were once under the power of Satan, deluded by the enemy. Servants to the enemy, He has now given grace to me, to you, to each of us. None of us excluded and that's what's so important and that's the message. I have a burden on my heart to get across. I go about and I see there are many that do not attend midweek meetings. You, you have to go on a Lords Day morning in order to see them. Some I have not seen in local assemblies because I haven't gone there on a weekend. That is, that is not. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace that is not walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we're called. We're called into one body, and the only way that can function properly is that every member of that one body in a locality is there and functioning.

It may only be in the way of prayer. It may only be in the spirit. Have you ever walked into a meeting and you immediately sense I've. I've done it many times. I've sensed it. Peace. That's what Jerusalem means. It means a dwelling in peace. You, you, you, you come into a meeting and there's a there's a sense of peace there. You can feel it. The brethren are at peace with one another. And other times, sad to say. I've gone into a meeting and the atmosphere is highly charged. There are divisions, there are parties. Opinions of men which have divided the Saints. Have you ever noticed in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where the apostle addresses. Many, many ills. The the the immorality. Which was not even named among the Gentiles is not even addressed until the 5th chapter. They're going to law one with another is not addressed until chapter 6. What is the first thing that he addresses in the very first chapter? It's been reported to me by them of the House of Chloe that there are divisions among you, and I partly believe it because some say I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Well, if every member in the body of Christ were functioning, you know it's not nice to preach to empty seats. It's it's not very encouraging for the one who travels about to visit the assemblies. To preach. To nothing. We know God can bless the Word to the few, and He does. But all. What a responsibility we have as being members of the one Body. Each one of us has received a gift, grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And what is characteristic of that wicked servant Luke chapter 12, is that he he didn't use the gift. Matthew 25, Luke 19, he wrapped the gift up in a napkin, laid it by itself. Maybe he did that under the false excuse that I don't have a gift. Well, the word of God says we all do. And so we're all needed every. Everyone of us is needed there, and when our seat is empty, there's a hole, there's a void, there's an emptiness there in the assembly when it comes together, which which brings a sort of a dead weight upon the meeting. Is it important that we be there? Is it important that we function in a God-given way? May only be in silent prayer for some. And for others, in a more active way. Our brother was just referring us to the the lack of participation that he sometimes has felt at the remembrance of the Lord. A heart should be filled, our baskets full. To praise, to worship, to adore that Blessed One. Well, he goes on to say, now he that ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth, He went to the very bottom. He that descended is the same also that S ended up far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things well, He set us free. We were once serving Satan. He set us free and then he's gifted us. He says now I want to use you to minister to the needs and the blessing of others. Could have used the angelic hosts. No, he says. I'm going to use you. He gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Now the gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4 are persons, apostles and prophets, the foundation gifts.

He's referred to that in chapter 2, verse 20. You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. The foundation of the apostles and prophets. Paul says I have laid the foundation, Others build upon it. So we had those

foundation gifts and then the evangelist, the pastors and teachers. An evangelist is one that goes out. One is like a compass, one leg in the assembly and the rest sweeping out to the world to bring them in to the place where they can be taught. A pastor is one who deals with souls. And a teacher is one who deals with the Word and explains the Word of God and what it means to us so that we can be properly fed. It used to be said, well, brethren have many teachers. And what we need is pastors, and I agree with that, but I also agree we need sound, solid scriptural teaching. That's been the that's been the the strength of the gathered Saints is that they are taught of God. The Lord says to Philadelphia, Thou hast kept my word. That's impossible without teaching, without being taught in the word. And studying it and pondering it. Now verse 12 for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, that is these gifts, these persons. And in Romans 12 we have the gifts mentioned as spiritual powers. In first Corinthians 12 we have the gifts mentioned as spiritual powers. Romans 12. It's more the gifts in connection with the general good and blessing of all. And in first Corinthians 12. Those gifts are mentioned which have to do with the functioning mostly in the local assembly. One of the gifts mentioned in one of those lists is Helps helps. We don't generally think of that as a gift. Faith is another one, and we know we all have faith when we believe. But that's a special gift to do a work something like, well, George Mueller did with his orphan homes. A work that requires counting upon God. Extraordinary faith to count upon God when there are no resources. In our hands. And there are many other gifts mentioned. But there their spiritual powers here they are the individuals in whom those spiritual powers are operating, apostles, prophets, foundation gifts and then evangelists, those that go out to the world and bring souls to Christ. And then having been brought to Christ, the the shepherd care. The word pastor is shepherd, the shepherd care that is so needed. The shepherd deals with souls. Never was there a day more needed for shepherds and the teacher deals with the word of God gives the sense gives the sense of the word of God explains it rightly divides the word of truth all how important that is. Paul says thou hast known my doctrine. That's number one. His teaching, my manner of life and so on. In his sufferings, the outlines, but the first thing he mentions is the doctrine. The teaching. If our teaching is not sound, and many of the groups round about us in Christendom, their teaching is not sound. How can their walk be according to the mind of God when they are not taught the mind of God when the word of God is not rightly divided? But these gifts have been given for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. There are three fours in that verse in our King James translation, but the the preposition in the original language is not the same. And if you have a new translation by Mr. Darby, you'll notice that he translates the first four different from the last two. The first four gives the primary reason for the gifts. The perfecting of the Saints, that's number one. That's the primary thought for the gifts being given. And then secondary to that and following and flowing from it is the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ. Now I want to dwell on this a little bit so that we understand the force of what I've just said.

The perfecting of the Saints that's viewing us now individually as individual Saints. The perfecting of the Saints. Gifts have been given for the perfecting of the Saints that we might be mature, full grown Christians understanding the will of the Lord. That we be no more children tossed to and fro, Verse 14, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness. Whereby they lie in wait to deceive. There are legions of false doctrines floating around in Christian circles today, and many not being established, not being full grown, not being perfected as an individual Christian. Has been misled. Into wrong collective experiences. Wrong collective fellowship. If we are taught of God individually and brought to that state of maturity and full understanding. Then we are ready to function in our corporate responsibilities. The ministry and the edifying of the body. Both of those last two thoughts have to do with collective things. The first one is individual. I read a letter from Mr. Darby once he was up in Canada ministering the word said. I've been three months here and I've never yet touched on church truth. Now what did he mean? They needed to be established in the truth of the gospel. They needed to be established in the Epistle to the Romans and the Galatians and these epistles which firmly established the soul in the faith of the gospel, in the person of Christ, in the work of Christ. And once that's accomplished and the soul knows where he is and that he is saved and eternally saved, and there's no question is mine, there's no doubting as to whether he's saved or lost. Can you imagine someone that denies or doubts, I should say, his eternal security functioning for the help of other fellow members in the body of Christ? He wouldn't be a help, He'd be a hindrance. He's not even sure himself that he's eternally saved. He may even lose his salvation if he slips and falls. And the Lord should come at that moment. He would perish. That's the teaching of many in Christendom. Bad teaching, very bad teaching. Well, so these gifts are given. For the perfecting of the Saints, that we might individually, first of all understand. Who we are as Christians, A heavenly people. Not of this world united to Christ the man in the glory. Many truths are individual truths that we have to be established in the first chapter of Ephesians deals with that. Deals with individual truth. Where elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that's an individual truth. He is predestinated, each one of us to be placed before himself as sons. We can cry. ABBA Father, by the Holy Spirit. Each one of us is sealed of the Holy Ghost. Each one of us has the hope of glory before his soul. That's the hope. These are individual truths, and to apprehend these and to know that I'm eternally saved, I have eternal life, and I can never lose that, Then I'm in a state of soul to help others. And so the secondary thoughts after the primary one for the perfecting of the Saints is for the work of the ministry now that a soul has been matured and fully grown. And perfected, he can now function in the ministry. I used to puzzle over this expression. What is meant by the work of the ministry? The common thought is the clergy, those that wear the stiff clerical collar and long flowing robes and who have reverend at the end of their name, That's the Ministry. Or maybe amongst us, we would think of those that take the platform, such as right now is happening and minister from the platform. Is that what's meant by the ministry?

It's part of it, but a very small part of it. And as one travels around. From meeting to meeting. Sometimes I feel. What little good can I do? To help those feeble ones there in that assembly. I'm only there for a few days. And I'm sure other brethren that visit assemblies have felt the same. What can we do? And sometimes I was at a place recently. And I was told to go there, they need, they really need church truth. So I gave them church truth. But unfortunately, most of the chairs were empty. And very few heard the needed ministry. And I know it was needed because those that were there and heard it told me so oh, how we need this. And I said, but where are the others? Well, what little good we can do whatever it is. That's the point I want to get across, even though you think your contribution is so small. And I have felt that so many times and so insignificant. Don't cease to make that contribution. Whatever gift he has given you, use it. But that's the problem. You say I don't know what my gift is. I'll give you a beautiful formula for discerning what your gift is. It's. It's a word that the Lord's mother gave us. It's found in John two very simple instructions that she gave to the servants at the marriage feast. And she said, whatsoever he saith to you, do it. And if you'll just follow that out, he'll never tell you to do anything that he hasn't qualified you to do. He'll never assign you a task that you're not gifted, given grace to perform from himself. Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Just do it where you see a need. If he produces an exercise in your heart and you see a need, whatever it might be, it might be just getting to the meeting room a little bit on ahead of time. So that when the Saints arrive, it's not blistering hot or freezing cold, but it's at a temperature that they can sit comfortably and enjoy the word of God. That's just a simple illustration of a help, a help or setting the chairs up or. There's 1000 things that you can think of that we can perform and sisters are certainly a part of that ministry. Oh, and it's not just when we're together in assembly character that

we're talking about. We're talking about visiting in homes we're talking about. The older sisters teaching the younger sisters, that's what Scripture says. That's godly order. It's the older sisters. They're the ones who are to teach the younger sisters how to do in the home, how to raise their children, how to love their husbands, and so on. Read it in Titus chapter 2. It's not going to. Some some meeting to learn these things, but the older brothers should take in hand the younger brothers and instruct them and help them and the older sisters with the younger. How to raise children I don't believe it's in place for an older sister to to get a meeting together with other sisters and say, well, we're going to study the we're going to study the revelation and we'll take it up a chapter a week and, and she is the teacher there. I believe that's a brother's function. But there are teachings that a sister can perform with her younger sisters that. Have to do with the domestic circle. And how they are to get on. Sometimes we'll find a family doesn't know how to manage their money. That know how to handle money. They need help. They need help from their older brothers or older sisters in the assembly. How to take care of the tidiness in the home?

How to prepare a meal? Sometimes a young brother and sister get married and the sister doesn't know how to cook. She's never cooked at home. She may need a little help. This is all part of the ministry that takes place because we're members, one of another and none of us can say I have no need of you. We all need one another and we need to function together. And so there's the work of the ministry. The work of the ministry is every member in that body functioning and using the grace that's been given to him or to her. For their health and the building up and the blessing of the body. For the edifying of the body of Christ. The first thing is that we must be brought to a state of perfection individually. Perfection in understanding full growth, maturity, adulthood, if you will. To send one out into the work where he has to do with the corporate responsibilities when he's not fully established in the truth himself is a dreadful mistake. If you haven't reached that point where you are mature in Christ. Get better. Sit at the feet of those that know more than you and be brought into that state of maturity and then he can use you. What is being done today? Soul gets saved and he knows next to nothing and he's immediately thrust into Christian work. That doesn't seem to be the order here. The perfecting of the Saints comes first and then the work of the ministry, every member functioning in some small way. It doesn't mean that you have to know all the truth. Don't, please don't misunderstand me. I don't mean that. It doesn't mean that you have to be brought to to understand all the truths of Scripture, but the fundamentals. One couldn't be any help in a corporate way to others if you didn't even know he was saved himself. Or wasn't sure of it. Or had doubts about it. No, he must. There are certain things that we have to be fully established in before we can really be helpful to others. You can't help someone from if he's a doubter, if you're a doubter yourself. For the edifying of the body of Christ, how does this really work? Verse 16 tells us from whom the whole body. It says in the end of verse 15. I'll read verse 15. But speaking the truth in love may grow up unto him. Christ in all things, which is the head, even Christ from him from whom? From Christ the head, the whole body. Notice the language fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth. If this is going to work, beloved, every joint has to be supplying the needed nourishment. Has to be making the needed contribution in the body. Notice how it's put. Compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. The work of the ministry is the functioning of every member in the body of Christ. Together as led by the Spirit of God, each one doing his little small part. And whether you think it's small or large. If he's given it to you to do whatsoever he saith to you, do it. Hospitality. Wonderful privilege to have the Saints in your home. Sometimes there's sickness or there's feebleness and it's not one is not able to do what one desires to do, but to do what you can do. She has done what she could. She hath done what she could. Can that be said of you? Can that be said of me? The work of the ministry. There's a ministry, it's not those that take the platform only. It's part of it, but it involves all of us, every joint supplying the effectual working in the measure of every part. And when that's functioning according to the mind and thought of God, it makes increase of the body. Under the edifying of itself in love, the body becomes healthy.

The healthy articulation of the body is only produced. By every single member, every joint of supply, every part in that body doing its necessary function. You know it works with the human body. If one member gets, if you stub your toe, all the members suffer with it. If one member is honored and glorified, all the members rejoice with it. We're members one of another. We feel the sorrows, we feel the joys. We weep with those that weep. We rejoice with those that rejoice, because we're members one of another. And so there's a ministry that goes with that. It's the ministry of love, the ministry of care, the ministry of concern, one for another and helping one another. And that results in the building up the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. This is the grand end result, the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man. Under the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. That's why these gifts have been given. But if the gift that has been given to you and to me is not being used by him as he sees fit, it says in First Corinthians 12, God hath set the members in the body as it pleased him. And everyone of us has something to do. And if you're not in the assembly meetings? When they're there, when the Saints are together collectively for prayer, the reading of the Word, the remembrance of the Lord, the preaching of the gospel, whatever it is, if you're not there, then you're not performing. Your function as a member of the body of Christ, you are needed. Everyone of you, everyone of us is needed for the health of the assembly where you reside. And if you've been one that is given to the thoughts. Well, now I have to go home. I'm leaving this conference where we've been under such precious ministry and I have to go home and, and now I go to that dead, lifeless little meeting where I go. Change that. You can change it. The change has to begin with you. You have to start functioning. You have to be there in all the meetings. You have to be there in an enthusiastic spirit. Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord just to be there with that kind of an attitude can work wonders. In the state of the local assembly. May God encourage us to encourage one another to help one another to function. As I remember in this body of mine has to function for its health. One member goes awry, the whole body suffers. Become sick and if you happen to be in an assembly which is sickly. You are responsible. To function in that assembly. Stop grumbling, stop murmuring. Everything you grumble and murmur about may be absolutely true, but grumbling and murmuring never healed the body. Start functioning. In a healthy way. Let them hear your voice in prayer, young brother. I don't know anything more more uplifting to those of us who are a little farther on in years to hear a young brother. Pray in the prayer meeting or give thanks even. At the Lord's table it's hardly ever heard, but oh how encouraging it is. I remember in our whole meeting a young brother gave thanks 1 Lord's Day morning. It just it was such a joy to hear his voice. You know what I mean? You've experienced it. Young people. Don't sit back. And make a contribution and fail to make a contribution because you feel you have no gift. Whatsoever he saith to you, do it. And the assembly will grow.

It will grow. The body will be edified as the ministry is performed. By those who have been brought into a state of maturity in their souls. Individually.

Walla Walla Conference: 1991, Building and Builders

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Like to talk this afternoon upon building and Christ. And us as builders. Don't know if you realize that you're a builder. We're all building. The result of Christ's building is we can read a bit in Ephesians 2. I just want to read those verses. In Ephesians 2, verse 19. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners. But fellow citizens, with the Saints and of the household of God. And are built. Upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom all the building? Fitly framed together Groweth. Unto an holy temple in the Lord. So we're in this building that Christ is. Erecting here his church. He said to Peter. In Matthew 16. On this rock. Peter had confessed he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and the Lord says on this rock. I will build my church. And so here we see the church in building. Fitly framed together, growing unto an holy temple in the Lord. So the end result of Christ's building is this holy temple. In the Lord. But there's another kind of builder here. In this world. And that is man viewed. The builder viewing it as man. Now let's turn back to Genesis 11. We want to consider just a little bit man as a builder and you get that first mentioned. Genesis 11 I'll read from verse one, and the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, go to let us make brick. And burned them throughly. And they had brick for stone. What Christ builds as the living stone, he builds into his building living stones. But man doesn't use that. Man uses a different material brick. It's made of clay. It's made of the clay of the ground. The first man is of the earth, earthy. The second man is the Lord from heaven. Two orders of man 2 builders. The first builder is Man Man of Clay. And he builds with a material that is just like himself. The man of clay bills with brick. Let us make brick and burn them truly, for they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. So what man builds? Takes its character from himself, the man of clay. And he builds with brick. And slime. The things of this world. That which is. Characterized by himself. And they said go to let us build us a city. Place where humanity is. Bunched together the city. And a tower, there has to be a religion. Man has his religion. Man's a very religious creature and he has to have his religion in his city. So he builds a tower. Whose top may reach unto heaven. They had. And let us make us a name. In the book of Acts we read of the name. The name. There's only one name for the Christian. And that's the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins. God hath given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God of the Father. But what man builds is characterized by Let us make us a name. Let us make us a name. Lastly, be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth, the very thing that they were seeking to avoid. Is the very thing that happened to them as a result of God's judgment because they left him out of their plans?

And the Lord came down to see the city in the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is 1. And they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to let us go down and there confound their language. That they may not understand one another's speech and so the curse of. God comes upon them and the confounding of their language. Up to this time in the history of man, they had one language. Everyone understood what everyone else said, but from this point on there was confusion. So the Lord scattered them abroad from fence upon the face of all the earth. And they left off to build a city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel. Because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth. And from fence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. So here you see the first man building. He's a builder. And the material that he uses is brick. And slime for mortar, brick instead of stone. Stone speaks of Christ. We are all living stones. In the building that he is building. But man uses other material. He uses that which comes from himself and is of himself. And is characterized by his principles. Let us make us a name. And build us a tower. Oh yes, man has his religion all right. But the truth of the true God is shut out. Now we have much to cover, so we won't dwell there long. Let's turn over to Daniel where we will see again. This. This building. Daniel, Chapter 4. The place was called Babel. And there God confounded their language. And in Daniel chapter 4. We have Daniel faithfully relating to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his dream. And it says verse 28. All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar at the end of 12 months. God gave him 12 months to repent. Daniel had said to him in verse 27. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities, by showing mercy to the poor, that it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility. But there was no sign of repentance. And so all this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of 12 months, he walked in the palace of the Kingdom of Babylon. It's striking that. The Jews who were at the divine center where the Lord had set His name in Jerusalem because of their unfaithfulness to maintain the glory of that name. They are carried captive to Babylon. And this book, this prophet Daniel. Tells us about the children of Israel that were captives in Babylon. It was probably the greatest city that man has ever built. And Nebuchadnezzar says the king spake and said, verse 30 is not this great Babylon? That I have built. For the House of the Kingdom, by the might of my power. And for the honor of my Majesty, notice how that all the elements that we saw back there in Genesis 11. Let us make us a name. And. This city, Babylon. It was gigantic. The walls were 69 feet thick. 300 feet high. They compass the entire city of Babylon. I don't recall the number. How long each wall was 4 square? The Euphrates River ran right down through the center of the city. It was absolutely impregnable. It had not only 69 foot thick walls, but it had a Moat that was the same thickness. And filled with water. Virtually. Impossible to conquer such a city. Greatest city that man has ever built. And in the middle of that city was a tower. A tower to a God. A false God. That they had built just like they did back in Genesis 11. A tower. A religion.

City was filled with idolatry. The worship of false gods. Israel had gone a \*\*\*\*\* after those gods, and so God in governmental dealing let them be carried captive to that city, where they could get their fill of idolatry and all the attendant evils that went with it. Is not this great Babylon? That I have built for the House of the Kingdom by the might of my power and the honor of my majesty. Here was a city that had all the elements in it to bring glory to the first man. And we're living in a day when man's building has never been equaled. When what man is doing is truly impressive, I think everyone of us were truly impressed. At that short. Lived. War in the Mideast. At the awesome power military power. Of the United States. The awesome weapons that man has devised. Making the enemy look as nothing. Man has great boasts today, just like. Nebuchadnezzar did. Invincible. And yet. In the very next chapter. Belshazzar the King. He drank himself drunk. And it says in the 30th verse. In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldean, slain. Darius the Mede took the Kingdom. How did the enemy get in? They diverted the waters of the Euphrates River. And had they been watching the level of the water through the city, they would have seen it going down, down, down. Until finally it dried up. And the enemy walked in under the lead gates into the city, and conquered them in their drunken debauchery. That was the end of Babylon. And so the present Babylon will come to a sudden end as well. But before we get to that, let's turn over to. Let's just look at Matthew 16 for a moment. In Matthew 16. Here again we have. Christ as the Builder. Verse 13 When Jesus came into the coast of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that? I, the Son of Man? And they said, Some

say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremiah. So one of the prophets he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Notice how that the the people confessed something of the Lord Jesus, which was short of his person, who he really was. They compared into John the Baptist or Elijah or Jeremiah the weeping prophet. Well, one of the other prophets, great men. But something far short of who he really was. And so he asked his own Whom say he that I am? And we have this beautiful confession from Peter. Thou art the Christ. The Son of the living God. In the other gospels Peter just says the Christ of God, but here we have his full confession. And upon this full confession Christ says, I'm going to build my assembly. Thou art the Christ. The Son of the living God brings before us the truth of His resurrection, and the assembly is built upon a dead and risen Christ. He is the Son of the living God. Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon by Jonah, that was his natural name. That was his name by nature, the man of clay. Simon Barchona. For flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven. Now the Lord gives gives Simon a new name. I say unto thee that thou art Peter. A stone. A living still. And he had learned the truth of this new name that the Lord gave him here because he tells us in his first epistle, chapter 2, that we've come to Christ as the living stone. He also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to OfferUp spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. So we're called living stones. And so he gives him this new name. Thou art Peter. And upon this rock. He had just confessed Christ. The truth of this person, he says. I'm that truth, but I am the Christ, the Son of the living God. I will build my church.

Future yet? Couldn't be built until he was risen. That's what you have. Figured in those words, the Son of the living God, the risen Christ, and the gates of Hades tell her Hades shall not prevail against it. This building of Christ is truly invincible and impregnable. Because it is built of him. But now I want to turn to. What man is building? We've been in First Corinthians in our readings, so let's turn back to First Corinthians and start from chapter 3. First Corinthians, chapter 3. Verse one. I'll read this quickly. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal is, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with me, for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able, for ye are yet carnal. But whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are you not carnal? And walk as men. Walk as the first man is what he says, for while one saith, I am of Paul. They were still following men, even gifted men, even spiritual men. I am of Paul and I am of Apollos. Are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos? But ministers by whom he believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. They were just servants. Never to be placed alongside of Oregon compared with the master. Whom they were serving. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth. Notice the figure here is a farmer planting and watering his crop. And. It's God that giveth the increase. And he can go through all that labor, and if God doesn't give the increase and send the rain. And give the right weather conditions. All that labor will come to nothing. And as we minister the gospel to the lost, we have to realize that salvation is of the Lord. If he doesn't give the increase. All our efforts will come to nothing. It's the work of God. Verse 8 Now he that planteth, and he that watereth are one, one in the service of the Lord. And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. Notice the reward is mentioned here as a result of sowing the seed planting. And then watering that sea. So the figure is the figure of a farm. A husbandry. Verse 9 says, For we are laborers together with God. It ought to read, We are God's fellow laborers. Laborers together with God sort of gives the idea that we're on the same level as God himself. No, we're his fellow laborers. We're serving Him and He's working with us, true, but this puts him in his proper place when we read it. We are God's fellow laborers. And then he says, Ye are God's husbandry. He looks upon the Saints as a cultivated field, a husbandry, a farm, so to speak. And he was sowing the seed with them and watering that seed to produce. For God, as God gave the increase. And now he changes the figure. He says ye are God's husbandry, God's field, God's farm, and then he says ye are God's building. Now we come to the. To the part of the passage I want to dwell on a little bit. We're viewed as God's building. According to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master builder. He's not looked at here as a farmer sowing seed anymore, but now he's a builder. And Paul was the master builder, he says. I've laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. Here man is the builder. Christians are building your building. I'm building. What are we building? Is it going to meet with his approval? Are we using the kind of material? In the building. That is approved of himself. Or does it take its character from the first man?

Is it are you building with bricks or are you building with stones? Are you building with material that takes its character from the second man? The living stone, or from the first man. It's one or the other. It's either. That which? Speaks of Christ. For that which? Speaks of. Man in his fallen condition. Paul says I've laid the foundation. We don't have to do that. That's already been laid. But he says, let's every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundations can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ. Now we were noticing in our readings how that man's wisdom. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Now when man builds everything that he builds takes the character takes its character from. From the first man. It has to be that way because. He can't rise beyond that. The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them. But they are spiritually discerned. And those that are in the flesh cannot please God. They can't build with spiritual material, but Christians can because they're not in the flesh, but they're in the Spirit. If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in them. So we who are believers, we have the new, the new life, the new man. The second man. The last. He is our life. And we have the Spirit of Christ. Spirit of God. So that we can build according to God. And we have the divine instructions. In the word of God. And we don't go outside of this book. To get our wisdom for how we're going to build in his house, in God's house. And what is the great sin of Christendom? That in God's house man has built. Human material, human principles. Worldly things. Things which take their character from the man of clay, not the man of stone. But the man of clay. Verse 12. Now if any man build. Upon this foundation. Which is Christ that can't be relayed and reestablished. We're talking about Upon the Christian profession now here. And man building upon this foundation. We're not talking about Mohammedan country or a Hindu country or a Buddhist country. We're talking about where Christianity is. And we're living in a country that has been largely considered to be Christian. I know that there's no such thing as a Christian Nation Today. But still, we're living in a nation where the Bible. The word of God. Has formed the basis for much that has taken place. It's fast being overthrown, sad to say. So we're building on this foundation. What is that foundation? It's Jesus Christ, and everyone of us is a builder. You may never have thought of yourself as a builder, but you're building. You're either building something that is of Christ. Or something that is of the first man. If any man build upon this foundation gold. That would speak of his. His personal glory. His deity, the gold. Upholding and maintaining. The truth of this person? Building the gold. The Silver would speak of the truth of his work redemption. Building silver. Not sully his person. Not sully his work. You know, there's a lot of true Christians, true believers, sad to say. That have done that. They have come out with doctrines and teachings. That sully his glory. Take away some of his excellencies, and the last thing mentions precious stones, His varied glories. As God and his man. The eternal Son that's being denied. Stopped at a bookstore recently and I picked up a book. By a very famous man in the camp in the Christendom.

He has a congregation of well over 5000 I believe. The verse where it speaks of Thou art my son, as have I begotten this day, have I begotten thee. And there he taught. Repeatedly, in more than one place. It wasn't a slip of the pen. That the thought of sonship connects strictly with

time. He wasn't the Son in eternity past, He was God. Yes, he allowed that. Thank God for that, but not the Son. He didn't become Son until he became a man. That was his teaching. That's a lie. That's false. Scripture says though he were Son, that's his essential glory, what he always was. Yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. He said the Father, glorify thou me with the thine own self, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was. It was the son addressing the father. He was in that glory with the Father as Son. From all eternity. To deny that is not to build with gold. But to build with something that is very tarnished. And then there are those that say he didn't sin, but he could have. And that denies the true humanity. Of the Lord Jesus. He didn't. He couldn't sin, not just because he was God, but because he partook of holy humanity. And what is holiness? Its abhorrence of evil and delight in what is good? Humanity has been in three different conditions, innocent in the Garden of Eden before the fall, fallen humanity which we all partake of, and holy humanity. Which we partake of now in Christ, and which of course, was His. Humanity, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. So when he came into this world, he carried his sonship into this world. It's one of the things he did not lay aside. Says in Philippians 2 he emptied himself, but what did he empty himself of? Not of his sonship. Not of his love, not of his grace, not of his mercy, not of his truth and righteousness and holiness. But of the outward form of glory that he had with God. He emptied himself of that by taking upon him the form of a servant, and then he died. Shed his precious blood. This same writer that I was referring to that denied the eternal sonship also said these startling words. The blood that flowed in Jesus veins has no more power to cleanse from sin than the flood that flows in mind. One hesitates to even repeat such blasphemies. That's not silver. What are you building? Precious stones. All the very glories of Christ. But then we have three other things mentioned that man builds with. Materials. Wood. That speaks of. The first man. Hey, and then finally stubble that worthless stuff that's good for nothing. Stubble. This is the material that that man builds, and being a Christian does not guarantee that you're not going to use man's material because we all have the flesh. The unsaved can only build with material that is. Of the first man. But the Christian can build with. Material, that is of the Newman or of the old man, one of the others, because we have both. And what have we seen today? What has developed? Well, we'll come to those verses. Notice what he says in verse 13. Every man's work shall be made manifest. As the day coming. When all that we have done in the in this building will be made manifest for the day, the day of manifestation shall declare it, because it that day shall be revealed by fire. The fire of God's holiness. And the fire shall try every man's work. Not of how much it is, but of what sort it is. The quality of the work will tell them and what we have built. Oh, I'd much rather be identified with a little feeble company, the twos and threes gathered to the Lord's name and have his approbation in that day, then be identified with thousands.

But not have the gold and the silver in the precious stone. Any man's work abide. Goes through the test of the fire, Meets with God's approval. Which he hath built. Thereupon he shall receive a reward. It says back in. Verse 8 He that planteth and he that watereth are one, and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. That's more the reward for an evangelist, I would think, but here it's the one building in the house. And there's been so much built. We're at the end of the day of grace. And we see around us everywhere the results of man's building. Man's building, most of it is worthless. Most of it is going to be burned up by the fire. But what does he say in verse 15? In verse 14, if the man's work abide which he hath built, thereupon he shall receive a reward. There'll be rewards given to those who are the Lord's and have built. For His glory. But then there are those who are the Lords but have used the fleshly material and fleshly ideas and are pressing things which take their character from the first man. And they can do that because they have the flesh. We have the flesh, we can do that. Any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, he loses his reward, which he would have had he built according to God. But he himself shall be saved. So there's a saved man yet so as not by the fire. He's not saved by the fire, he's saved through the fire. The fire can't touch him because he's under the blood of Christ. But the fire can destroy his works, and that it does. What are you building? We've been very concerned, also burdened. Of what the enemy is bringing in. These last moments. Are these new principles? These new. Interpretations that are being placed upon the Word of God. Are they right? Have those that have builded before us whom we esteem so highly. Have they been deceived? We thought. I thought. I think just about everyone here has thought they were building with gold and silver and precious stones. And the truth has been recovered to us. But now we're hearing another sound. A different slant, a different interpretation placed upon well known passages of Scripture. Is it the sound of the shepherd's voice? Or is it a strange sound? Is it gold and silver and precious stones that is being presented to us today, or is it wood, hay and stubble? It's one of the other. It's either truth or error, can't be both. How serious? How serious this is. Oh, how serious. It's going to all be tested by the fire. And there are those that are saved and they'll they'll come through the fire, but they won't have any works. They're going to be burned up. They've been deceived. Any man's work should be burned. He shall suffer loss. But he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? He's talking to the Saints at Corinth and he says you are the temple of God locally. God's Temple. Representatively, they were God's temple, where God himself dwells by the Spirit. And that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, among you, viewed collectively, corporately in the 6th chapter. He says that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. That's individual, but here it's collective. The Saints locally. The temple of God, The Spirit of God dwelling among us. In US. And then he talks about a third kind of builder in verse 17. This man's not real. He's not a saved man at all, though he professes to be, if any man defile the temple of God.

Him shall God destroy. Now that word in the Greek defile and destroy same word. Many men destroy the temple of God by defiling it by corrupting its true character. Him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy. Which temple are ye? Temple of God is holy, and here comes one end that introduces doctrine and teaching and practices which destroy the true character of the temple of God. Think of this this last vote by a large denominational body in Christendom admitting. Perverts. To the ministry. They've destroyed the temple of God. Destroyed its character of holiness. By what they have decided to allow. In that denomination. And then he goes on to say, Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world. Let him become a fool that he may be wise. We have to be ready to give up our human wisdom. That which we have gotten from the teachings of. This world. And not use that. In building the assembly. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise. That they are vain. Therefore, let no man glory in men. Oh how these Saints at Corinth needed this ministry, because they were giving place to the first man. For all things are yours. Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours and you are Christ's. Christ is God's. We're builders. What are we putting our seal of approval upon? Is it material? Are they principles of truth from God's Word? Or are they misapplications of the Word of God, misinterpretations and doctrines built upon this which swamp the truth of God? Take it right out from underneath us. Are we going to allow that to happen? This is serious business. It's not something that we can take lightly. Let us be alert and alive as to what is happening. Don't allow the truth to be taken from you. Hold fast that which thou hast. That no man takes thy crown. It's necessary to speak plainly. In light of what is happening. Let's turn to Second Timothy, chapter 2. For a few verses here we see the result. The result of man's building. Man's building, his materials. And some of the materials are. Of God. Verse 19 Second Timothy 2 Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ. Depart from iniquity. This is a 2 sided seal. The 1st is that the Lord

knows them that are his. We can't tell. Just who is the Lord's and who is not? There is such confusion. It's become a Babble over Second Timothy is imprinted the word Babylon. Confusion. Very difficult to find one's way. This know also than in the last days difficult time shall come. We're in those days. Let everyone that name it the name of Christ or Lord, it should be depart from iniquity. That's our responsibility. That's my responsibility not to look around and see that Brother John is in this or that. Thing which I see to be evil or? Going on with iniquity, unrighteousness, that's what it means. That which is not right. I have to judge it by the word of God. And that's been done. And some have separated from what has been built of man in this great house, this confusion of things at great cost to themselves.

Great cost to themselves. Verse 20 in a great house in the first epistle of Timothy, he calls it the House of God because it was more or less in order then, but now it's called the great house. Because it's in disorder. In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver. That speaks of what is real and genuine and for the glory of God. But also of wood and of earth. And that's not going to stand the test of the fire. And some to honor and some to dishonor. Now he's already said the Lord knows them that are his, and we don't know who they are. There are some that I really thought were the Lord's, really thought were the Lord's. 10 years ago. Today, the way they're going on. And what they've given up. I can't say they're the Lords. You see, we don't know. You can't look into my heart and I can't look into your heart. But God can, and He's the only one that can. And he knows the heart. All things are naked and opened under the eyes of him with whom we have to do. You can even fool yourself into thinking that you're a real Christian, a real believer. And you may not be. Though we do have that verse in Romans 8 that says the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God. And if we're going on in any measure with the Lord, we'll have that witness to us and we'll know that we're His. I trust you all know that. But what does it say here? Some to honor and some to dishonor. One who is to dishonor. It's not a question of I have to perceive whether he's truly saved or not, but how's he walking? Is he going on with evil unjudged? Then he's a vessel to dishonor. The question. Whether he's saved or not doesn't even enter into it. God knows them that are his. But will to depart from iniquity and if I see a one who professes to be a real believer going on with iniquity, I have to separate from that iniquity. I'm not separating from the believer so much as from the iniquity that he's connected with, and he refuses to separate from it. I believe that's the clear principle here. Verse 21 Says if a man therefore purge himself from these, that's individual responsibility to separate from the vessels, to dishonor those that are going on with what is clearly contrary to the scriptures and they don't intend to change. What is our resource in such a case? If a man therefore purge himself from these. These vessels to dishonor. He shall be a vessel unto honor. So separation is necessary in order to become a vessel to honor in a day of confusion such as we have in the great house. And suppose you have done that. And suppose another has done that. And suppose I've done that. We then could walk together in happy fellowship. And separation from evil. That's the picture that we have here. The man therefore purge himself from these. He should be a vessel unto honor, sanctified. Separated from the evil and meet for the master's use. Suitable to to the master to use. Because he's a clean vessel now, and prepared unto every good work. Flee youthful lusts. But follow righteousness. Faith, charity or love? Peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. I believe those that are here described as calling on the Lord out of a pure heart are those in the midst of this confusion, this battle of confusion that is in the great house. And the great house is called all of Christian profession and we're in it just like everyone else. We don't separate from the great house. But we separate in the great house from vessels to dishonor. And then become a vessel to honor, and with others that have done the same, they call on the Lord. Out of a pure heart we follow righteousness. First thing, righteousness, doing the right thing when so many are doing the wrong thing. Faith bringing God in, connecting my. Action with God Himself in faith.

Love, love to all the Saints. How is it shown? By walking in the truth. And then the result is peace. That's God's formula. In the last days. For a collective. And it's obtained by individual exercise, separating from iniquity and then following on with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Now let's turn to Revelation 17. In Revelation 17, we have the. The end result? Of man's building. It's this great house. Is referred to here. We have. The false church. The result of man's building and. What the enemy has done. Let's read it. Revelation 17 And there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come, hit her. I will show unto thee the judgment of the great \*\*\*\*\*. That sitteth upon many waters. This is the false church now. He who professes to be the bride of Christ, but she's called by the Spirit of God a great \*\*\*\*\*. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. She hasn't maintained a path of separation from the world. She's done just what Israel did. She was to be Israel, was to be a testimony to the true God in the midst of the idolatry of the heathen roundabout. And she intermingled with them, she intermarried with them, and she was then carried as a judgment from God captive to Babylon. 2 tribes. And so here we have the false church. So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet colored beast. The woman in scripture pictures the church, whether the true one or the false one. Here it's the false church. Full of names of blasphemy, having 7 heads and 10 horns, and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. Oh, these are the these are the ornaments of this world system Here. It's not what we're looking at, the typical significance of what we're looking at in First Corinthians 3, but here it's what characterizes the wealth and riches of this world. The church has so fallen that she is embellished. With all that the world confers upon her. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. I picture the woman standing there holding that cup out. As the inhabitants of the earth look at it, they see a golden cup. Isn't that beautiful? But as heaven looks down and sees what's in that cup. It's full of filthiness. And fornication. Abominations. Idolatry, every kind of wickedness has been practiced in the false church. And what is the word to her? Well, I'll read it in verse 4 of chapter 18. If we can just go there for a moment. I heard another voice from heaven saying come out of her, my people. Is it possible that he has his people and there's still some of them at least are in that system that is so hateful to God? He calls them out. He says, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you and double under her double according to her works. In the cup which she hath filled, filled through her double, how much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously. So much torment and sorrow giver. For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine, And she shall be utterly burned with fire. For strong is the Lord God. Who judges her? And now we hear the lament of earth. The kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, Babylon, that mighty city. For in one hour is thy judgment come. That's the way it was with the Babylon of the Old Testament in one hour.

Her judgment came, and so it will be with the false church. But let's go back to 17. Five. And upon her forehead was a name written Mystery Babylon the Great. The mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with great, not admiration. There was nothing to admire in this wicked woman, but he wondered with great wonder. He marveled how could something that began so wonderfully and was so pure. And was true to

Christ. In those first years, how could it? Turn out this way. The the reason is man has built his material. This is all the result of man's building. It's good to see the end of what we're doing. It's good to see the end of what is being introduced. Where will it end? We are all suffering from myopia. We only see a very short distance ahead. Where will it end? If this continues to be allowed. We're builders. And this is the. Of man's building. It meets with the unmitigated judgment of God. And once that judgment has been executed. And I don't have time to read it all, time is running out. We'll get the the response of heaven chapter 18 verse 20 we saw the response of the earth of the kings of the earth that they lamented, but now we have rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty Angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall this great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. You can read it. Yourself. The judgment. Of man's building. But before we close this message, let's look at. The results of Christ's building. Revelation 21. And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come, hit her, I will shell thee the bride. The Lamb's. He carried me away in the Spirit through a great and high mountain. You remember in the 17th chapter when he showed the seer, the harlot, he took him into the wilderness and and he viewed the the false church from this vantage point of the wilderness. Nothing for God there, just a dry, barren waste wilderness. That's the false church. That's the result of man's building. And here you have the result of what Christ has built. He showed me that great city, that that holy city. The Holy Jerusalem. Descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God. And her light was like unto a stone most precious. Even like a Jasper stone clears.

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