

Welcome to the Sabbath, everybody. The title of today's sermon is *Self-Control*, and this will be *Part 2*.

The purpose of this sermon series is to explore the topic of self-control.

In the last sermon we answered the question: What is self-control? And we saw self-control is overcoming our selfish desires by the power of God's holy spirit. Self-control is *learning* to control the selfishness, the natural carnal mind which God made in us. Self-control is choosing to fight the selfish desires within our thinking. Self-control is *choosing* to sacrifice the selfishness within us. Because it is a choice.

Now, every one of us has failed with self-control. We all fail at different times in our life. In different aspects of our nature, we choose not to control ourselves. And that's why God created us this particular way, so that we would have a choice in life. Because of this nature we have, which we saw, which were, "the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes," these things that dominate our thinking, that dominate our character. And God created that in us for a purpose, and that was that we could be given the opportunity to see the truth and then make a choice. So once called, we are called, really, to the point of being placed in a position where we need to exercise self-control powered by God's holy spirit.

Now, mankind demonstrates self-control in his life, but it's all based on pride or vanity. It's all based on those desires that live within the man, all those desires that are *in* mankind because mankind desires to be liked. Mankind likes to be looked at as being important or looked at differently, better, being "better than," and therefore, mankind exercises self-control based on a wrong motive.

Well, brethren, we have been called to demonstrate self-control powered by God's holy spirit. Now, God created repentance for this very reason, because when we fail to exercise self-control—and that is every one of us, we all fail in this—God created repentance where we can come to see our mistake, where we can come to see our lack of self-control. And because of that God has granted us the gift of repentance where we can then take our sin—because a lack of self-control is sin—where we can take this sin to God and admit our lack of self-control in any particular area in life, and therefore, God says He will forgive. And God will grant us the flow of His holy spirit once again because of this repentance. So it is important that any time we demonstrate a lack of self-control (which is sin) that we then take it to God and then we repent. We admit our lack of controlling the selfish desire that is within us.

So we have been called, brethren, to control ourselves, and that controlling is done by sacrificing that selfishness that lies within us.

No one will enter into Elohim (the family of God) unless they engage in the battle of self-control or the controlling of self or the sacrificing of the selfishness that is within us. We have been called out of this world, out of this world's way, out of this way of thinking, which is this natural desire, fulfilling those natural desires that are in us.

Ephesians 2:1—And you who were dead, and that's talking about spiritually, **in trespasses and sin**, which is before baptism we are dead because of sin. We're in a state of non-repentance because we haven't been called to it. So, **you who were dead in trespasses and sin**, which is before our baptism, **in which you once walked according to the course of this world...** Now, that is of lacking self-control or no control of spiritual matters in our life, selfishness that dwells within us. So we walk according to the world. So the world walks in this manner, which is one of no spiritual control. It cannot because it doesn't have God's holy spirit. ...**according to the prince of the power of the air**, which we know is Satan, **the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience**. So mankind walks in disobedience to God; he walks in fulfilling the lusts and the selfish desires that are in it, and that is it doesn't have spiritual self-control. Well, we've been called to control ourselves on a spiritual level, and it's only done by the power of God's holy spirit. So when we see these desires, we see these lusts coming in our thinking and we then have this opportunity to choose. It's God that is revealing to us these very lusts. God shows us our selfishness, and then we have a choice whether we're going to exercise "the spirit of the world," which is selfishness and just dwell on it and then possibly fulfill that desire in a physical action, or we're going to overcome it, we're going to conquer it by the power of God's holy spirit, by correct thinking, which is thinking like God does about the very matter.

Verse 3—among whom also we once conducted ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as others. Now, that scripture explains the world, the condition of the world, which is everybody is conducting their life, fulfilling the desires of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the mind. Because it starts in the mind and it dwells in the mind and then it is manifested in actions or words or continuation of those thoughts. And, "by nature are children of wrath, just as others." So we once we're like that, brethren, but we've been called out of the world. We've been called out to be conquerors, to be overcomers, to have and to exercise self-control. And it is a spiritual matter; it's not a physical matter.

Now, we sin (by these things) and we fulfill our desires of our thoughts by dwelling on those things or by actions, or by words, things that we do. Now, we have the chance to repent. We have the chance to then go back in, work harder at controlling one's own desires powered by correct thinking, which is God's thinking in us, powered by God's holy spirit. We then have a choice. What will we do? And that's our life. That's what we've been called into. And this is the life of someone that has been called and is converting. And it is about this conquering and overcoming and exercising self-control.

We're going to now look at this particular scripture based on this topic of self-control. **2 Timothy 3:1—**But know this, that **in the last days perilous times will come**. We understand, brethren, we are in the last days. We are in the last days of man's self rule, and perilous (dangerous) times will come. Now, this

word "perilous" really means "times of stress, hard to do, fierce or difficult." So there's going to be *difficulty* coming upon mankind. Well, it's going to be difficult for us too, brethren. The time we are now in is going to be *difficult* because there are dangerous times ahead, not only physically, but spiritually, because we have to exercise our life in a manner of using God's holy spirit. We have to live love to all no matter what situation we find ourselves in. Well, here Timothy is saying, "Well, in these last times dangerous times are coming." Well, they're coming for mankind, but they're coming for the Church. Now, this is an ongoing matter for mankind, which is it's always dangerous, it's always perilous for them, because of the way the world is, because of the way man is, his selfishness. Well, it's difficult for us. It's going to be fierce. It's going to be a time of stress for us also because we have to live a particular way of life.

Now, why is it dangerous? Why is it going to be difficult? **Verse 2—For men** (mankind, human beings) **will be lovers of themselves**, so mankind is not going to exercise self-control. They're going to do the opposite. They're going to exercise their selfishness. Their intent is going to be to fulfill their own interests. So, "mankind is going to be lovers of themselves," which they are by nature. Well, it's going to be magnified.

They're going to be, **lovers of money**. They're going to love money because they will still see that having or *acquiring* is going to be their savior. And it's going to take a lot for them to begin to turn to God. So they're going to be "lovers of money," which is greed. They're not going to be wanting to share. They're going to be covetous. They're going to want to take, having a wrong priority. So we're in these times now where mankind has a wrong priority. Their priority is fulfilling their selfish desires.

...**boasters**, which is someone who's bragging or someone who is an empty pretender.

...**proud**, so someone that's proud *pretends* to be something they're not. They are preeminent in their thinking. They look down on others. "An overwhelming estimate of one's means or merits, despising others or even treating them with contempt." "Haughty," is another word. So we understand what it is to be proud. It all starts in the thinking. It's a wrong estimate of one's true value compared to God's. Because pride is something we take to ourselves. We lift ourselves up. We view others as "less than," or "less than us," therefore, pride enters the mind.

...**blasphemers**, so they're going to be "speaking evil against," or "slanderous," or "not living God's way."

Now, this is the time we are entering, brethren, where mankind is going to be these things.

...**disobedient to parents**, so they're not going to be compliant to parents. They're going to look after themselves. They're going to do things that will be at the expense of their parents.

...**unthankful**, so they're going to be "thankless, ungrateful," or "unpleasing," is another way to put it. So they're not going to be pleasing God. They're not going to be pleasing others. They're not going to be thankful for *anything*. They're going to be actually *unthankful*. They will look after themselves.

...unholy. Well, we understand that a person can only be holy if God's spirit lives and dwells in them because it's God that makes anything or anybody holy. It's God's presence. So they're going to be unholy, they're going to be carnal, and they're going to look after themselves in these end-times.

...unloving. Now, this is "without natural affection, hardhearted." So to be unloving is not to have any feeling or really any concern for the welfare of others.

...unforgiving. They're going to be truth-breakers. They're going to look after themselves.

...slanderers. They're going to be false accusers. They're going to be blaming others for their peril, for their outcome.

...without self-control. So they're going to be powerless because they don't have God's holy spirit. Because the reality is *anybody* without self-control becomes *powerless* because it requires God's holy spirit to have the power of self-control. So mankind is going to continue in his selfish lusts, his desires, and he isn't going to exercise any self-control because he's not going to have God's holy spirit. It's only those that are called into a relationship with God that can actually exercise self-control.

Now, mankind can exercise a level of self-control, even though it's based on pride and vanity. He can do that. Well, we, brethren, have been called to exercise by having this power (because we're not powerless, we actually have this power), the power of God's holy spirit who places His thinking in us which will enable us to live the right way, which will enable us to live self-control, the controlling of self, the sacrificing, the putting down of a desire, the sacrificing of our selfishness. So we can walk according to God's holy spirit because we are *not* powerless.

...brutal, which is "savage, fierce, no mercy." Well, we can see that coming.

...despisers of good, so they're going to despise those that exercise good. And only God is good so it's those that have God's holy spirit. Those that are exercising self-control are going to be despised. "Opposed to goodness and opposed to God." So that's what mankind is.

...traitors. They're going to be betrayers. They're going to betray God and God's people. Now, we understand that Judas was a traitor. He betrayed Jesus Christ. So we can look at this word, being a "traitor," being a "betrayal of God and God's people," well, we understand this can happen when God withdraws His holy spirit from us because of our thoughts, words, and actions, and our non-repentance. So when we betray God it's because of a way of thinking, *because* of a lack of God's holy spirit living in our life, because we've chosen the wrong way.

Let's just quickly look at this, at Matthew 26:14. We'll start with, Matthew 26:14. **Matthew 26:14**—Now, this is where Judas agrees to betray Jesus Christ. Now, this is all about a way of thinking. He did not have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in him. God allowed Judas to be a betrayer of Jesus Christ to fulfill a purpose, but Judas' mind was one of a betrayer. He was willing to give up something for something else, which is he was willing to give up Jesus Christ to the priests, to betray Jesus Christ for

money, for wealth. And in this it really shows a lack of control of one's thinking to go down this path, to think about it. Because there's a lot of thought that is behind this betrayal.

Verse 14—Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you? So the question is, "How much are you going to give me for this action? For this betrayal?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him. So this is a willful action and it has taken a lot of thought, and he's agreed to this amount. Now, this is a demonstration of a lack of control, because he's allowed his desires to conquer him.

Matthew 26:21-25, this is Jesus Christ speaking, Now as they were eating, He said, Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me. And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him (to Jesus Christ), Lord, is it I? Now, this is interesting in the fact that they, within themselves, would ask such a question. Because if we were asked that question, "There's one of you are going to betray Me (Jesus Christ)." Would we say, "Lord, is it I?" or would we simply say, "I would never do that! I would never do that!" Here we can see, from this, that the disciples were not really sure of their own character at this point of time, where in the future they would know that they would not betray Jesus Christ. But here they're unsure of what was really going to happen. They did not have the conviction or the confidence or the faith of Jesus Christ at this point in time. They were still babes and they were still being brought along slowly to the point of Pentecost of 31 AD. Although God's holy spirit was guiding them and leading them, it was not dwelling permanently in them at this point, so they were still doubting their own character, who they really were and what they were. And of course, we understand, that in the future they demonstrate this by the fact that when Jesus Christ was put to death they then all fled and went back to their own work, what they were, which was fishermen (in the main).

Verse 23—Then He answered and said, He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. And the Son of Man goes as it is written of Him, but woe to the man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, Rabbi, is it I? And He said to him, You have said it. So this is an interesting discourse, really, because here Jesus Christ has clearly pointed out to Judas that it's him. Well, Judas in his thinking knew that it was him because he had previously already agreed to the thirty pieces of silver.

Verse 36—Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, Sit here while I go and pray over there. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. So here we have Jesus Christ has now gone further on into the garden and He's taken Peter, James, and John, and the others have been left behind.

Verse 38—Then He said to them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me. So here it is about being on guard, "Stay awake and be with Me." Well, we can look at this for a spiritual direction here, brethren, where it talks about being on guard against sin. We are to

watch for examples of a lack of self-control. So we understand that when we are tempted, where sin enters into our thinking, that we have a choice to reject it. And if we reject it and declare and fight for God's way of life, fight for God's thinking by the power of God's holy spirit, that we have not committed sin. It's only when we let our guard down and we dwell on the thought that it develops and potentially leads to a word or an action.

Jesus Christ is saying here, "Watch with Me," while He prays. Well, we're to be on guard. We are to be watching all areas of our life for this "lacking of control," this "non-sacrificing of self." It's easy for us to lack self-control in thoughts, words, and actions. Very easy! And the beauty of it all, of course, for us is that we have the gift of repentance, that we *can* see sin, and therefore, because we can see it and we can see when we do sin, when we do lack these controls of our desires, that we can actually repent. And when we repent, God has said that He will forgive and forget and that we can move forward.

The problem is that we tend to hang on to those things and walk around with the guilt of the sin still, rather than shedding it and moving boldly forward knowing that God and Jesus Christ are with us and are for us and that we have God's holy spirit and that we can walk boldly because of it. We can walk boldly because of repentance. Because we *will* fail, it's a guarantee; it's a given. We all have these desires that are in our flesh. We have the "pride of life." These are natural for us. Our goal is to conquer them. Our goal is to overcome them powered by the power of God's holy spirit. So we can watch and we can look brethren, at ourselves. So we can watch and guard ourselves at all times. Now, when we fail, the beauty is that we can repent.

Verse 39—And He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will. So we must be all willing to suffer for others, just like Jesus Christ did. He was willing to suffer for others. It's God's will be done.

Now, often in our prayers what we pray about is about taking trials from us, or to take the suffering from us. Yet that suffering is the best thing for us because it's through this suffering and trials that we can draw closer to God, that God will be *with* us during those trials so that we can learn to "see," so that we can come to "see" what we really are. We can come to "see" these desires of the eyes, these desires of the flesh, and the pride of life. And when we see them, we can repent. So we suffer for the point of seeing spiritually. It's the best thing for us, but when we're in it, it's no fun and we don't see it's the best thing for us. We actually yearn for the non-suffering. That's just natural. That's the way we are.

So here it is that Jesus Christ has said, "Father, take away this from Me, but not My will, Your will be done." Well, that should be our prayer, brethren, that while we are in stress or distress, while we are suffering, we can pray that, "God, if there is a way to take this away from me, show me what needs to be learned. Show me the sin that I need to overcome." Or, "Show me the knowledge, and have the understanding, have the wisdom to 'see' what it is I am to learn."

I remember in a discussion not long ago saying to somebody that, well, one thing that for me, personally, that I've learned is that the trial has remained with me until I learned a lesson. And until I've

learned the lesson, generally, I get back into the same trial over and over and over again and I fail over and over and over again. And it's not until I actually learned the lesson, for what God is developing *in* me, in my thinking, that when I've learned it, well, then God can remove the trial from me and I don't need to go back through it because God *knows* how I will respond, because I've changed my thinking to be in unity with God, to think the way that God thinks about the matter. But maybe until I've learned the lesson, maybe that trial will remain with me. And that's *my* experience, the trial remains with me until I've overcome it, until I've changed my thinking about the matter.

Verse 40—Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? "Couldn't you just stay awake and watch with Me?" Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. So we're to stay spiritually alert. And that's what we can learn from this. We should *watch* and pray. We should watch our character, watch our desires, watch what's going on in our mind. And the moment we start to see, we should *pray* to God about these matters. And if we don't, what will happen? We will fall into the temptation. We will fall into sin. We will sin. We will give into those desires. We will *not* exercise self-control on a spiritual level; we will fail.

The spirit indeed is willing. It is willing. It's able to produce fruit, **but the flesh is weak.** Now, we should understand that. God is all-powerful. God is almighty. God has called us and given us His holy spirit, but our flesh is weak, and it remains weak because that's what we are. It's *natural* to have these things go wrong in our life, but by the power of God's holy spirit we can overcome and conquer these things.

So we are to stay awake spiritually. We're to watch spiritually. We are to pray about these matters that are in us, these desires that we have, and we're to fight against them. These desires can conquer us often in many ways. And as God, in His mercy, shows more and more about these desires and about the "pride of life" that we naturally have, well, that gives us the power to "see" and it also gives us the power to change it, by the power of God's holy spirit. Because we have to *choose* to change. We've got to want to *desire* to change, to get rid of this selfishness, or this lack of self-control, these desires that we have. We don't want them. We don't want to be that way. So God gives us the power to "see" them and He gives us the power to overcome them, but we have to choose. We have to *choose* to not want these things.

Verse 42—He went away again, a second time, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done. Now, this should be our attitude, brethren, that we are physical, we are living this life, and many of our trials will not pass away from us. We have to drink them. We have to *suffer* because the *only* way to enter Elohim is through tests and trial of our character, of our nature. These desires we have, have to be conquered, so "God's will be done." We have to trust in God that what God is doing is for our benefit.

Now, often when we're in trials we don't see it and we don't like to think, "Well, I'm in this trial for my own good." Or because of a decision that we've made or a wrong choice that we've made we might be in that trial. But it's still for our own good because there's something to be learned in that trial. So our attitude is one that, "Your will be done." God's will be done in our life. Our desire is to overcome the

self. That is the most important thing that God has shown to His people. Our desire must be to conquer, to overcome the self, and we understand what the self is. We've been through that in scripture, the selfishness that's in us. Our desire is to conquer self. Our desire is to *sacrifice* the self, put it to death, get rid of it altogether. Because that is the way of life God has called us to, this overcoming of self.

Verse 43—And He (Jesus Christ) came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them and went away and prayed the third time, saying the same words. And asked them a question, *Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going. See, he who betrays me is at hand.* Here we are at the garden, and now Judas is coming with the priests and others for the very purpose of betraying, of being a traitor, because he's now not showing any control of self. Something has dominated his thinking, and that is greed. Greed has conquered his thinking. Now, greed is in the mind. It's one of the "desires of the flesh," because it's about *acquiring for self*.

Now, there would have been an aspect of pride in this, because pride drives *everything*, but here, this betraying of somebody, is a desire, this desire to gain for self. And this is what Judas is demonstrating.

Verse 47—And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, and these are like sticks that they were carrying, came from the priests and the elders of the people. So here we have Judas coming with a group of people for the purpose of taking Jesus Christ.

Verse 48—Now, His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, *Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.* So they had already pre-worked out: "How would we identify amongst the people that were there?" Because they knew that Jesus was with the disciples. "Well, how do we know which one's which out of all of these people?" Well, Judas has told them clearly, "I'm going to go up and kiss the person, therefore, you'll know that's the right person and you'll be able to seize Him."

Verse 49—Then immediately he went up to Jesus and said, *Greetings, Rabbi!* "Greetings, Master," and kissed Him. So he's now provided the sign that the multitude needed to know, who to take.

Verse 50—And Jesus said to him, *Friend, why have you come?* Which is asking him a direct question. Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly, one of those *who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.* So here we have Peter—he's now got excited about it; he was going to defend Jesus Christ—pulls out his sword and swings it and cuts off the ear of one of the servants.

Verse 52—Then Jesus said to him, *Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish (die) by the sword.* Now, this is a principle of an attitude. So whatever attitude we show towards others, it's going to come back to us. So if we show aggression, in the world aggression is going to come back to us. *Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?* So that's... a legion is about six thousand, so that's about 72,000 angels that would be provided to fight for Jesus Christ. Well, that's not God's purpose and that's not Jesus Christ's purpose, because Jesus Christ's purpose and God the Father's purpose was that Jesus Christ

would be our Passover, *our* sacrifice for sin, *our* sacrifice for our *lack* of self-control. Because sin is a lack of controlling the selfish desires that is within us.

Verse 54—Jesus continues in saying, **How then could the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?** It has to happen this way. **In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, Have you come out against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me?** Which was the question. I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. **But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.** Just as it had been predicted previously. **Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.** So here we see the disciples had asked previously, "Was it I?" "Was it me?" "Am I going to do it?" Well, they didn't know themselves. Here we see the *desire* for self-protection kicks in, which is abandon everything. Jesus Christ has been taken. He's been seized. Let's just go back to the way we were.

Well, this is all about our human nature. It demonstrates what we're capable of. We're very capable, brethren, of not controlling the selfish desires that are within us. And our desires, we often don't see them. It's only by the power of God's holy spirit that we can "see" our desire and we can "see" the *intent* of the desire. For example, "the lust of the eyes," the intent of that is gaining for self. Now, the eyes go straight through into the mind so it begins to affect the way a person thinks. Now, there's been lots of things that I've seen that I wish I hadn't seen. And there's lots of decisions that I've made that I regret that I have made. Well, we've got to be very careful about guarding the eyes. Now, it's one of those things that is very difficult. The eyes take in everything. It's the way we judge people. It's the way we look at people. And the way we look at people is the way we judge them. We discern through our eyes because it's all entering into our minds.

The other one is this "desire of the flesh." It's the gratification of the flesh. Now, this can dominate people's lives, this self-gratification. Now, it can come through food. It can come through sex. It can come through lots of different things, but it's all about a way a person thinks. It's wrong thinking that dominates the mind. And it's only by the power of God's spirit that we can think correctly.

And the other one, of course, is "the pride of life," which we all have. We all have an image that we're trying to generate out to others or one we're trying to protect. And that's why we'll defend ourselves or justify ourselves because it's all about this image.

Here we see Jesus Christ is saying to the disciples they shouldn't resist because it's God's will to be done in *His* life. And the moment that He is taken they all go back to "the pride of life, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes." They're going back to what is best *for them*. They've forsaken Jesus Christ and they just flee back to what suits them, what makes them comfortable within themselves. Well, that's natural. That's what we all do, brethren, because of the nature we have.

Continuing on in that scripture where we were in **2 Timothy 3**. And the next one is, **headstrong**, which is "to act rashly, to fall forward headlong into a matter without thinking." So if we're headstrong we go straight into... really it's pride, because we're just headstrong, we're stubborn, we're proud. And then we make decisions that are rash or reckless because we move headlong into it. We already know, and therefore, we don't *think* about a matter. We don't stop and think that *self* could be wrong...*self* could

be wrong. Self could be wrong; we don't consider it. Well, we see in the last days people *are* headstrong. They don't think about anything. They're rash and reckless.

...**haughty**; they're lifted up in thinking.

...**lovers of pleasure**, selfish desires. So this "lovers of pleasures," it's about fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and it's at the expense of others. And there's no consideration for the needs or concerns of others. So people are **lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God**. So God is not their priority. God is not first in their life.

...**having a form of godliness**, which is "an 'assemblance,' or 'a resemblance' of this." In other words, they're acting out a role, **but denying its power**. The very power of God to work in transforming one's thinking. So people can act out roles of righteousness or being part of something that *is* righteous. For example, someone can act out a role of being part of the Body of Christ, but they are not, really, because they are denying its power, the very power of God's holy spirit.

Now, when Timothy wrote this, he's talking the end-times, about people that would be associated to the Church or being part of or being perceived to be part of the Church. So as we move forward in time, brethren, we will see more and more people come to the Body of Christ, yet not every single person will have the right motive. Not everyone. They will have a "form of godliness," which is "acting out a role," but "denying its power," the very power of God to transform one's thinking, the very power of God to generate self-control and a person to choose self-control.

And it says here, **from such people turn away!** So anybody that is not demonstrating self-control and is just denying the power of God by denying their controlling of their desires and the pride of life, it says we should "turn away." You shouldn't have anything to do with them. **For of this sort there are those who crept (have come) into the households and take captive the gullible women**, which is "silly or foolish people," to allow this, **loaded down with sins**, in other words, they're not exercising this self-control. They're leaning on their own understanding. They're using their own desires, **led away by various lusts**, which is fulfilling their selfishness, their selfish desires, the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes." These desires, they're just fulfilling them. They're just natural, **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth**. So they can be hearers of the word but not doers. They don't use God's spirit. They don't choose to yield. They don't choose to yield to God.

Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifested to all, as theirs also was, referring to Jannes and Jambres. Now, they were two Egyptian magicians who were in the presence of Pharaoh and they imitated the miracles. And if you remember when Moses and Aaron came, well, these were two magicians that were in the court then of the Egyptians, and they were actually the magicians of Pharaoh. And "they," it says here, "they resisted the truth," and they were "men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith." Well, they'd made a choice in their life.

Well, brethren, we have a choice in our life. We are not to resist the truth. We are not to resist the truth. We are to demonstrate and exercise our control of self by overcoming.

Colossians 3:1—If then you were raised with Christ, which is at baptism, seek those things which are above, which are about spiritual matters. Seek those things that are of God, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. So we are to seek spiritual matters. We have to change our thinking, change our behavior, the way we think, by placing God first in our life. And by placing God first in our life we are demonstrating we are seeking those things that are above, which are from God, which is the truth and God's spirit living and dwelling in us. And we understand that Jesus Christ, as our High Priest, is there sitting at the right hand of God. And He "sits" there in the sense of authority. Jesus Christ is in authority in the high places (which is in heaven). Now, He has been appointed as King of kings, but He just hasn't been set up and established as King of kings on this earth at this point in time. But we wait for that.

Now, what are we to do as we are to seek these things which are from God? We are to, **Set your mind on things above...** We're to seek those things that are from God. They're not physical; they're spiritual. ...not on the things of the earth. Not on the physical things. This is what our life is about. We are to fight our nature. Now, we have been called to do this. We have been baptized, so our sins have been forgiven. All those sins that we had prior to our baptism were there then at baptism they were all forgiven. Now, we don't have to go back over them. Then God has allowed us to have a true minister of God lay hands on us for the receipt of God's holy spirit, the impregnation of God's holy spirit which now empowers us and gives us the ability to think differently, to *not* think the way we used to think with those desires that were out of control, satisfying self all the time. Well, now we have the power of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us for the purpose of *controlling* the desires that are in us. So we are no longer to set our minds on the things of the earth, things of the flesh that satisfy the selfishness that is in us.

Verse 3—For you died, at baptism, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. This is referring to those that are part of the 144,000, those that have been called and chosen to be part of the Kingdom of God at that time. **Therefore, put to death your members.** Now, it's not talking about killing one another, but it's "put to death the 'members,'" which is our nature, the things that go on in our mind, those desires that we have, the pride that we have. We should get rid of it. Now to "put to death" is "to destroy it," which is to conquer it, to put it to death, to destroy it, **which are on the earth**, which is in us. So we are to put to death those selfish desires that are in us by nature. And what are they? ...**fornication**, which is selfishness. It's an immoral act. It's immoral thinking. It's fornication. It's a relationship that is unlawful. ...**uncleanness, passion, evil desire**, because that's what we have, all these desires, **covetousness**, which is about greed, **which is idolatry**, which is putting something before God. **Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.** So the penalty for these things, the penalty for not repenting is death. And that is what God is referring to here. "The wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience," on those that are continually desiring to satisfy self and not demonstrate self-control or the controlling of the selfishness that's in us. ...**in which you once walked when you lived in them** because that's what we came from. That's what we've been called out of.

But now you must also put off all these things. So continuing on with these desires that are in us: anger, wrath, malice (evil), blasphemy (living a lie or falsehood, which is speaking against somebody else). It can be slander. But we can blaspheme God by the way we live, by what we do and what we say. ...**filthy language out of your mouth.** So all of these things, this abusive language or derogatory language that can come out of our mouth, these are the things that we need to be putting to death. We need to be getting rid of them. We need to be overcoming them. We need to be conquering them. Now, we can only do this by the power of God's holy spirit.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old person and the deeds, or it says, "his deeds," but we have put off this way of life, the deeds, the thinking, **and have put on**, so this is the new way of thinking, **the new man**, this new way of being (this is that continual repentance), **who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him**, in the image of God. We have the mind of God. We have the power of God living and dwelling in us because of a calling. ...**where there is neither Greek nor Jew**, so there's no prejudice about anybody, about any "status," circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave **or free**, but Christ **is all and in all**. So this is about the Church. This is about Christ living and dwelling in us.

So we, brethren, have to get rid of any thinking where we may think we are better than others, by being thinking we're one thing or another, "circumcised or uncircumcised." It makes no difference. We, as individuals, have been chosen and called by God for a purpose and we've been called and chosen to come into the Body of Christ for a purpose. And it is Christ living and dwelling in us that makes us who we are and it's God and Jesus Christ living and dwelling in us that powers self-control or this controlling of the selfishness that we have within us. So it doesn't matter "who" we are, it's whether or not we're using God's holy spirit or not.

James 1:1-11—James, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ... Now, James was an elder within the Church of God, and this is really about a relationship we should have within the Church with one another. ...**to the twelve tribes**, which is the twelve spiritual tribes, **which are scattered abroad**. Because of the captivity that had taken place they were scattered abroad, and it's talking about the Church, spiritual tribes which is the spiritual Church, the Body of Christ, because James is writing to the Church. So when he talks about "to the twelve tribes," he's talking about spiritual tribes which is the people that consist of the Church of God, "which are scattered abroad," because they were scattered abroad. **Greetings.**

Verse 2—My brethren, count, which is "to consider," or to think, **it all joy**, so we are to "think it all joy," **when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience**. So here we see the beginning of a calling, and we see that this "falling into trial," this testing, this coming to "see" the desires that we have and these things that dwell in us by nature that God has allowed in us, the natural carnal mind, that we know that the "testing of our faith," so every time that we fall into tests and trials we have a choice, whether we believe God or not. We are being tested. And if we are being tested, we have to endure. It produces this endurance. It produces patience.

But let patience have its perfect work, by letting it be completed, by letting it continue until it's concluded, **that you may be perfect (mature) and complete, lacking nothing.** So by these tests and trials we can become mature.

Verse 5—If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to you. So now this is talking about something that is spiritual. Wisdom is a spiritual gift from God. All wisdom comes from God. So we, first of all, have to have this knowledge. We then have this understanding of the knowledge, and then we live it; it becomes wisdom. When we implement it into our life and it changes our *thinking* it is then wisdom, because it's the thinking of God that is in us. So if we seek anything that is spiritual from God, any gift of God's thinking, God says He wants to give it to us. We are to ask God and He will give it to us, *and it will be given to us for the purpose of developing God's character.* Not to take it to self, to make ourselves think we are better, not to fulfill any of our selfish desires. But these are right desires! Because amongst desires, when we are called, there are right desires and there are wrong ones. All from the natural carnal mind are wrong; they are sin. All desires of the flesh are sin. *But* there are desires that we can choose to have which are about God's way of life. So if we *desire* wisdom, if we desire the fruit of the spirit, we're to ask God for it. It's a right desire because we want to be more like God. So God says, "If you want to think like Me, you need to ask Me," and He would give it to us based on God's will and purpose. Not for consumption of self, not to edify self. So if we ask wrongly, "if we ask amiss," by asking, for example, wisdom for vanity. Well, it's not going to be given to us because we're simply taking something to ourselves. We're actually sinning because we're asking for something for a wrong motive. Our intent is *sin*. Therefore, we need to ask for wisdom, which is God's thinking on a matter under all circumstances.

So if we ask for something on a spiritual level for the right purpose and the right motive, which is to be more like God, to think like God, to overcome and have self-control, **(verse 6) But let him ask in faith,** we have to believe that God is going to provide it and that God can provide it. Well, we know that God can. ...**with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.** So it's a lack of focus, and it won't come to us because we doubt that God will give it to us. But God says He wants to give us His thinking. That's the purpose of life. That's why we've been called into the Body of Christ, the Church of God at this time. It's the purpose of life for us, is to change our thinking. We want to have wisdom. We want to have the mind of God.

Verse 7—For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord (from God). So we shouldn't think we're going to receive anything if we're asking in a lack of faith, if we are doubting that God will provide us His nature. ***He who is double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.*** So he's not consistent. He's wishy-washy, because one part he's double minded. In one way he's using his natural carnal mind; he's trying to consume it based on his selfish desires. He's double-minded. Well, we can be double-minded because we can have God's spirit and we can have the natural carnal mind. So we have two minds! Well, we have to be careful that we're not using the desires of the flesh, or the desires of the eyes, or the pride of life in asking anything from God. It all has to be based on God's spirit, which is all about having wisdom, having the mind of God to ask these questions of God. We're to ask God for

spiritual fruit for the purpose of *changing our thinking*, not to consume to self to make ourselves better or think we're better.

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, so let's do it with a humble spirit. We're to give God the glory for what He gives us. It's about an attitude. We're not to take *anything* to self. We are to ask God for the right reason. It's about the right intent.

Verse 10—but the rich in his humiliation, so this is about the pride of life that can happen in a person, **because as a flower of the field he will also pass away**. So we have to be motivated by the right reason for why we're asking. We have to ask for the glory of God, the mind of God, the ways of God in our thinking. By the power of God's holy spirit it can be put into us and it *is* given to us. We have to choose to use it. This is about conversion. We desire to enter Elohim. This is not about a consuming to self to make ourselves any better or better than others.

Verse 11—For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers, which is about pride (and pride will go, it's only temporary) **it withers like the grass**. So all of these lusts and desires that are in man, they're only temporary because they're going to pass away when a person dies. **...its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits**. So it's about this right desire that we have to have. So we have to desire to overcome self. We have to have the desire to conquer the self.

James 3:1. This is talking about "The Unbridled Tongue," which is about the way we use words and we don't control our thinking. **My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.** So this is about the control that is necessary within ourselves. We're not to make ourselves a teacher. We're not to become teachers by the way we speak. Now, this is a difficult thing for some of us more than others. Various things can happen in a person's life where we have to be careful about what we say to others, because without knowing it we can become teachers. Now, there are various terms that are used, like "teacheritus." A person can have "teacheritus," which means that they ...almost it's like a "know all" thing. It's about an opinion, and it's the way that it's spoken. So we have to be very careful about the way we speak to others.

Now, within the ministry we also have to be very careful about what instructions we give. And this, of course, is about being very careful about what we say. We're not to make ourselves a teacher. Now, if we do we're going to come under stricter judgment. Now, this is a difficult thing for mankind to come to see, that our opinions are irrelevant. Without knowing it we can give our opinion in many a situation over many times without even understanding that we're giving an opinion. We're becoming a teacher. We have "teacheritus."

Verse 2—For we also stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect (mature) man, able to bridle the whole body. Now, this, brethren, is an incredible statement. "For we all stumble in many things," so we all stumble, we all fail, we all show a lack of self-control. "If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a mature man, able to bridle the whole body." Now, this is about this self-control. So if a person can control *their* thinking, so much so that they don't speak wrong or don't speak ill will of anyone, or don't speak that which is incorrect according to God's word, they speak the truth, they only use God's word correctly, "he is a mature man who is able to bridle the whole body." In

other words, God's holy spirit is living and dwelling in him because it's God that does the works. He is exercising self-control because he's able to bridle the whole body. He's able to bring all his thinking into line with God's word. It's God living and dwelling in him. It's powered by God's holy spirit.

Verse 3—Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, so we put those in the mouth and it controls the horses head, **and we turn their whole body**, by the fact that it's about controlling the direction that the horse is heading in. **Verse 4—Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires**. So such a small thing turns this large vessel that's being tossed around. And yet at the back of the boat there is something very small that's actually steering it or making it control the direction. And that's the key to this. It's about the direction can be controlled. **Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things**. So it's such a small thing, but it can change the direction of a person's life or other's lives. "And boasts great things." It will talk out what comes from the mind.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! So this "large forest," a little teeny fire starts off but it gets out of control. So everything starts in the mind. The key here, everything starts in the mind. It starts off small, as we've covered before. It starts out with a small desire. Well, it has to be conquered. But this small thing can actually grow and grow and grow until it kindles a great fire, a forest fire! So anything that disagrees with God's word *is* a small fire that will kindle and start a bush fire, as we would call it here in Australia. A large bush fire would take place; a forest fire will take place. So we are charged, brethren, with controlling our thinking... controlling our thinking.

Verse 6—And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell (gehenna). So this, brethren, is talking about within the Church. A person speaking can start a small fire, because of disagreement with God, false doctrine. "The tongue, so set among our members," which is the members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, "that it defiles the whole body." It *can* pollute the whole body, "and sets on fire the course of nature." Human nature! Human nature! "And it is set on fire by gehenna," because the outcome is death. The outcome is death.

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. Because that's what mankind has done. **But no man can tame the tongue**, because it all starts in the mind and you can't control the mind of and by itself. Without God's holy spirit we cannot control the mind, cannot control the thoughts. ***It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and our Father***, which we pray to God with it because it starts in the mind and it comes out from the tongue, **and with it we curse men, we gossip, who have been made in the similitude (image, likeness) of God**. So we, brethren, have to be careful. One minute we're praising God, next minute we're pulling down members of the Body of Christ in the Church. Isn't that incredible we have that power?

Out of the same mouth proceeds blessings and cursing's. My brethren, these things ought not to be. So we have been charged, brethren, we have been called for the purpose of controlling or overcoming the self, overcoming the selfishness that is in us.

James 3:11—Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? No, it doesn't. So it's either one or the other. So fresh water comes out of a spring, it doesn't send out salt water. **Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives? No. ...or a grapevine bear figs? No.** Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh. It's either one or the other.

Everything that is of God *comes* from God, and everything from self comes from self. Now, we have to choose, brethren. We have to be in agreement with God. We have to be in agreement with the truth. There is no contradiction in God's way. We must speak *for* God and *be* for God. And we shouldn't speak against God or justify ourselves, which is being against God. We are to be *of* God and not carnal. So the choice is ours and it can be achieved by the power of God's holy spirit. And this is about exercising control... exercising the control of our desires.

We also understand, brethren, that self-control is actually a fruit of God's holy spirit. Self-control is a fruit of God's holy spirit. It's what will be borne. Because in this last scripture we were looking at, it's talking about, "What can a fig tree give?" A fig tree gives figs. Self-control, what we can produce, *is* self-control, controlling of the self, because it's a gift of God's holy spirit. So it can be done.

Now, self-control is an outcome that can be produced by somebody yielding to God's holy spirit. Now, we've looked at this before where there is self-control based on human nature, which is selfishness still. But this self-control is spiritual; it's spiritual in nature. Self-control is an *outcome* that can be produced by someone yielding to God's holy spirit.

Now, God desires that we control ourselves. We have to add self-control to our character.

We're going to conclude this sermon series by looking at the benefits that God has said are going to be given, the blessings that are going to be given to those that control themselves by the power of God's holy spirit.

1 John 5:1-5—Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born (begotten) of God because we have to be begotten of God's holy spirit to believe. We have to have God's thinking in us to believe, **and everyone who loves Him (loves God the Father), who begot** (which is "has been begotten of Him"), **also loves him who is begotten of Him**, which is talking about members of the Body of Christ. So we can prove we have God's holy spirit by the love of the brethren. So if we love one another (if we love others in the Body of Christ), we have God's holy spirit, because we consist of God living and dwelling in us. We have God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 2—By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. So we'll be living this love; it's a way of life. We've been called out of the world and we are now living a way of life. We don't speak evil or have ill will towards anybody. We don't speak ill will of anybody at all.

Verse 3—For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, in spirit and truth. And His commandments are not burdensome. So this is that expression of love. We're living love to God and to one another.

For whoever is born (begotten) of God overcomes the world. So this is about overcoming. We have to overcome the world. Now, to overcome the world, we are overcoming the selfishness of the world,

which lives and dwells in us. **And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.** So we have now conquered the world by our faith because we *live* what we believe. Now, that's how we overcome. We overcome the world by living the truth, by living what we believe. **Who is he who overcomes,** "who is he who conquers or is overcoming" **the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?** They believe God. They believe God's plan. They believe God lives and dwells *in* them. So they believe God.

So Jesus Christ lives and dwells in us. God the Father lives and dwells in us, and because of that we are now overcoming the world. We're overcoming the selfishness that lives and dwells in us.

Revelation 2:7. Now, these are the promises that have been given to the seven Church eras, and we're going to quickly go through these because they reveal much about this overcoming aspect that God has called us to, this demonstration of controlling self, which is conquering or overcoming the self.

Revelation 2:7—He who has an ear, spiritually, who's listening spiritually and implementing something into their life, **let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.** So it's the churches of this particular era, but it's also to the Church of God now, because these Church era's went through various times. Well, we, brethren, have to go through all of these tests and trials as well. But this particular era of God's Church, which was that started on 31 AD, God said to these people, **To him who overcomes,** so him who conquers the selfishness by the power of God's holy spirit, **I will give to eat from the tree of life,** which is God's holy spirit will never stop, **which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.** So access to God's holy spirit will never stop to *anybody* that enters Elohim. So anybody that is *conquering* their selfishness, God has a promise for them.

Revelation 2:10—Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days, which was symbolic of ten years, that the Church would be distressed during that time. **Be faithful unto death.** Same for us, brethren. We have to remain faithful unto death. No matter what happens to us and when it happens, we have to remain faithful. We have to continue in this desire towards God, this desire to conquer self. ...**and I will give you the crown of life.** Salvation! And this is referring here to the 144,000, that God would give it to them.

Verse 11—He who has an ear, he who's listening spiritually, **let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.** **He who overcomes,** he who conquers self, **shall not be hurt by the second death.** They will be given eternal life (everlasting life, age-lasting life). They will not have to suffer the lake of fire. They will not have to be totally destroyed because they will enter Elohim.

Here it is. This promise is to anybody that is willing to overcome the desires they have, "the pride of life," the natural carnal mind that has been given to us. If they *choose* to do it, if they endure to the end—even if they die—God says that if they've set their mind and chosen to overcome it, by the power of God's holy spirit, they will be given *life*, life everlasting, and they will not have to face a second death. They will live forever in Elohim. What a great promise this is to those that are willing to endure to the end, those willing to fight, those willing to conquer themselves?

Revelation 2:16—Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth, which is the word of God. **He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.** To him who overcomes (to him who conquers the self) I will give some of the hidden manna to eat, which is the word of God, which is spiritual food. And I will give to him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. So isn't this an incredible promise? It's something yet to be revealed to somebody that enters Elohim, that is continually decided, continually choosing, continually desiring to conquer, to overcome self, to demonstrate self-control, to sacrifice the self. This is the promise that God has now promised to those that are willing to do this.

Revelation 2:25—But hold fast what you have till I come. And this is talking about the truth that was actually in the Church at that time. **And he who overcomes (he who conquers) and keeps My works to the end...** Now, "the works," are the works of God, which is God living and dwelling in a person (by the power of God's holy spirit) flowing out to the benefit of others. These are the works of God until the end, until death. ...**to him I will give power over the nations—He shall rule them with a rod of iron.** So this is about spiritual service with godly authority. So this is about being in Elohim. So anybody who overcomes self, anybody who conquers self will be given rulership in Elohim. **They shall be dashed to pieces like the potters vessel**, which is broken or humbled, as I also have received from My Father. So they're going to have this authority. ...**and I (Jesus Christ) will give him the morning star.** So if we wanted to know what "the morning star" is, it's actually referred to in Revelation 22:16. **He who has an ear (spiritually), let him hear (spiritually) what the spirit says to the churches.** Because these are about promises for overcoming self.

Revelation 3:3—Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Now, this has been a problem within God's Church, because people forget how they have "received and heard." Well, how did we receive the truth? Well, we received the truth from a calling. We were called by the power of God's holy spirit. We were called (isn't this incredible?), individually chosen to be called! So we were called for a purpose. And we received the word of God through God's Church. We didn't hear it out in the world; God called us into the Church of God—PKG at this time for a purpose, and that was to receive the truth. And we've heard the truth; therefore, what does God say? "Hold fast." We are to hold fast to what we've been given – the truth. We are not to divert from it. So anybody that leaves God's Church, the first thing, they have forgotten how they received and heard the truth. They've forgotten it! They've taken it to themselves. And how arrogant is that? How proud-filled is that? To think that a person can receive the truth or hear the truth of and by themselves. We should take nothing to ourselves, absolutely nothing!

All truth, all knowledge, all understanding, all wisdom comes from God and it comes through a set process, and it comes through God! It comes from God to Jesus Christ to an apostle to the Church. That's how truth enters the Church. Now, we should never forget it! But the problem is, that's what people have done. They've forgotten how they received and heard the truth. And why have they done that? Because they've allowed their desires of self, "the pride of life," to conquer them. They've not been conquering self. They've lacked controlling or the sacrificing of self because self wants to take to

self. Self wants to lift self up. Self wants to do these things. Well, they have been called to control it! Well, they're no longer controlling it; it's controlling them. And when self controls a person, they become selfish, and that selfishness takes a person out of the Body of Christ.

So here Jesus Christ is saying, ""Remember, therefore, how you received and heard; hold fast and repent." So we're to hold fast to the truth, "and to repent," to continually change. **Therefore, if you will not watch**, if we won't watch our spiritual condition, if we won't *remember* how we received the truth and we won't *watch* against our selfishness, **I will come upon you as a thief**. God is going to take His holy spirit from us, **and you will not know what hour I will come upon you**. Now, we understand that because of not being spiritually alert, because of letting down and relying on self, that Jesus Christ is saying here that the holy spirit would be removed from us. So we have to take heed to ourselves. We have to guard ourselves, remember how the truth comes to us. We have to hold fast to the truth we have received via God's Church, and continually be in a state of repentance, continually changing, continually fighting the selfishness in us, continually *sacrificing* the self all the time.

Verse 4—You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me (Jesus Christ) in white, for they are worthy. They are worthy because they've endured to the end. They've watched their spiritual condition. They'll be part of the 144,000.

Verse 5—He who overcomes, he who is fighting the selfishness, he who is conquering the self, **shall be clothed in white garments**, just as Jesus Christ is, righteousness. So what's a "white garment?" It is righteousness. It's the thinking of God in a person. ...**and I (Jesus Christ) will not blot out his name from the Book of Life**; they'll be given the opportunity to enter Elohim as one of the 144,000. ...**but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.** **He who has an ear** (spiritually), let him hear (spiritually) **what the spirit says to the churches**. So this is a warning to *watch our thinking*. We are warned here to watch our spiritual condition. We are to continually to be fighting, desiring to fight the self, desiring to fight the selfishness, the pride that is in us. And if we do, brethren, God has got promises for us because if we are fighting the self, we are overcomers. We are desiring to overcome. We see the difference between the natural carnal mind and God's holy spirit and the vast difference of them. And we have chosen by a *free will choice*, by the freedom we have to choose, we have chosen *not* to be of the natural carnal mind. We have chosen and desire to choose to be like God, to *think like God*.

What an incredible choice we have! Well, this is the choice we have every single day. Now, we *don't* always achieve it. We often lack the control of our desires, because we're natural. But we set our heart to be like God, and therefore, when we stumble, when we fall, when we give into our selfishness, the most important thing is to repent quickly, is to go to God and admit we were wrong, that we failed. And from this we can gain a great strength. We can gain a boldness and a confidence that God has forgiven us and that we can move forward in the truth. We can continue to fight these desires.

Now, often these desires will be based on the tongue. We have certain thoughts, and at certain times we will let it all out, we'll let these thoughts out. But we should have controlled the thinking in the beginning. We should have used God's spirit, used God's word to guide our thinking. And from that we will then control that thinking. And if we are controlling that thinking we'll be *controlling the tongue*.

Things won't be said out of place, things won't be said that are sin, because God's spirit has *controlled our thinking*. By the power of God's holy spirit it controls our thinking because we're yielding to God's thinking in us.

Revelation 3:11—Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast to what you have, so what truth was there, **that no one take your crown. He who overcomes** (he who conquers self), **I will make a pillar in the temple of My God**, so they will be in there to support God's Family. There will be a structure of God's Family. They'll actually be located *in the Family of God, and he shall go out no more*. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which is about the temple, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And *I will write on him My new name*. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:19—As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Well, this, brethren, is to the Church of Laodicea, which is the Laodicean era that has come and is finished. These attitudes can still exist within members of the Body of Christ. As we're in this transition period from Laodicea to the millennial Church of God, this can still be a problem. But God says, "as many as I love," and God loves His people, those that are called out for a purpose of having a relationship with Him, God says, "He will rebuke." He will expose their sins to them. They need to look at self. They need to compare themselves against God's word because (we understand) they have become lethargic. Well, God says He loves us and He will continue to expose our weaknesses, expose our desires that are wrong, these wrong desires and the pride that we have. And God says because He loves us He will correct us, He will chasten us. And He says, "Therefore, be zealous and repent."

So Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church is telling us that because of the love of God, that Jesus Christ will continue to correct us, expose our faults, expose our wrong desires, and we will be corrected. Our thinking needs to be changed. We are to "*be zealous, therefore, and desire to change*," because repentance is change.

So we are, brethren, called for the purpose of *change*. We have to *change* the way we are. We have to *change* from pride. We have to be *changed* from this lack of controlling of self. We have to learn to control ourselves powered by God's holy spirit.

Verse 20—Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, so to hear spiritually we have to be in a relationship with God. And to "open the door" we have to open our *minds*. We have to open our minds to correction, open our minds to God's holy spirit and choose to have God live and dwell in us. **I will come in and dine with him, and he with Me**. So we will have this spiritual food provided to us and we'll have the same mind *in us*. Because if we are "dining with Jesus Christ," we will be having God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. We'll have Jesus Christ and God the Father living and dwelling in us. They will *live in us* and that will give us the power to fight self.

Verse 21—To him who overcomes (to him who conquers self) **I will grant to sit with Me** (Jesus Christ) **on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne**. So spiritual authority, as part of the 144,000, will have been granted to this person. But this, brethren, is about this entering Elohim. No matter who we are or what time-order we are in, these principles of overcoming the self still apply to all of mankind, in the Millennium, as they apply to us, as they apply in the Hundred-years,

that we have to be overcomers (conquerors) of self. And if we do, if we, by the power of God's holy spirit learn to understand ourselves and come to see that this nature that we have is desperately sick, incurably sick, that we *are* wrong, that our motives are *wrong*, that our desires are *wrong*, if we come to see this (by the power of God's holy spirit) then we have to choose. And that's the key. We have to choose not to be that way, and then we have to choose to repent, continually going to God because we're going to make mistakes all the time. We're not going to control the tongue. We're not going to control the mind. We're not going to control the desires of the eyes, the desires of the flesh, what goes on in our minds, "and the pride of life." We're not going to control those all the time. They're going to get control of *us* because that's natural. That's the way we are.

So we, brethren, have this choice. We have to desire God's thinking. Now, if we desire God's thinking and we allow God's word to wash over our minds, we can have right thinking powered by God's holy spirit.

Revelation 21. We'll conclude in **Revelation 21:6—And He said to me, It is done! I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give the foundation of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.** The plan is now completed in making mankind into Elohim, all powered by God's holy spirit. There is a new purpose for God's family, and that God's spirit will continually flow through and in His family. It is without end. And we will have this *desire* for the thinking of God forever. We will not be able to *think sin*. This is incredible! There will be no *self* left. There will be no *selfishness* left at all within the spirit realm. So there only will be God's thinking. And we will have access to "the foundation of the water of life" forever.

He who overcomes (he who overcomes self) shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. Isn't this incredible? To be called a begotten son of God!

Now it goes on and shows the comparison. It shows the comparison of those that are *not* with God's thinking, have not developed God's thinking, have not *chosen* to yield to God's holy spirit, have allowed *selfishness* to conquer them. Well, here we see the nature of man is now destroyed; it is got rid of. All *selfishness* will be abolished.

Verse 8—But, so it's the opposite to what was previously said, **the cowardly (fearful), unbelieving, abominable, murderers (haters), sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars**, which is anyone that is not sincere, **shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.** So that is the outcome of the judgment. At the end of 100-year period of judging, of judgment, the outcome is dished out, which is this lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. So there will be no more *selfishness*. There will be no more *self* or any *selfishness* left. There will only be God's thinking.

So, brethren, how important it is that we now learn to demonstrate the controlling of self, the sacrificing of self, and to exercise the fruit of the spirit, which is self-control.□