

Welcome, everybody, to this seventh-day Sabbath.

The title of this sermon is *Everyone Must Change*, and this will be *Part 3*. The purpose of this sermon series is to explore what it means to change our thinking. Now, in *Parts 1* and *2* we have been through various aspects with regards to the way a person can change their thinking.

On a natural basis, human nature, people can change their thinking, but it's *not* powered by God's holy spirit, because they don't have God's holy spirit. Now, we have been given a calling for the purpose of changing our thinking, from changing from the natural carnal mind of selfishness to think like God does. So God's thinking is completely different than man's thinking. They can't be compared. God is love. The way He *thinks* is outgoing towards His creation, whereas mankind thinks inwardly. All mankind's motives and intents are selfish. Mankind doesn't know it. Mankind can't see it, but that is what God has said. Now, we believe God. We have been called to see the truth, to *see* ourselves, to see this natural carnal mind of selfishness. We have been called to change our motives and intents.

In *Part 2* we looked at God's plan for mankind. God's plan is "to bring many sons to glory." Isn't this incredible? "Many sons to glory." The purpose of human life is to have God transform our thinking, and this is done by the power of God's holy spirit. So the only way that we can think differently, to think like God (and we do that through repentance), is by the power of God's holy spirit. Because nobody can come to "see" God's thinking, to "see" God the way God *is* in the sense of not a physical sight but on a spiritual level. This can only happen by the power of God's holy spirit. So it does require conversion. It does require God's holy spirit.

We have also been looking at the various aspects of what has changed in our thinking. We've looked at the Sabbath, how we think differently. We've looked at tithing and how we think differently. We've also looked at other matters with regards to God's word and how we think differently. Now, because of this thinking differently we are going to be rejected by the world, the world cannot understand us, and we will be persecuted for righteousness sake. We looked at the fact that righteousness is God's thinking. So if we are taking on the very thinking of God, the very mind of God, we will be persecuted. So it should be no surprise to us, brethren, that we are rejected by the world because we think differently. And we should rejoice in this, because this is evidence, this is proof, that God is with us, because we think differently than the world. And we've also looked at the fact that God requires us to come out of the world: "Come out of her My people." Come out of this way of thinking.

Now, the natural carnal mind's way of thinking is selfishness. Satan inspires thoughts. He transmits wavelengths of thinking into the minds of mankind. Mankind then will have a choice to whether or not he's going to be influenced by it or not. Now, mankind *is* deceived. The whole world has been deceived by this transmitting of these thoughts because the natural carnal mind cannot resist the power of Satan. It's

just not possible. The natural carnal mind, because of its natural selfishness, will take on the very thinking of Satan and his demons. That is the way that it is. But for us, we're being called out of that way of thinking and we are to take on, now, the mind of God, and we do that by resisting the thinking of Satan, resisting and fighting against self, bringing in the very thought process of self-control (which has to be powered by God's holy spirit), and to bring on the thinking of God into our minds so that we have to choose. We have a choice in life. That choice is, will we choose our own selfishness, will we choose the thinking of Satan, will we choose sin, or will we *fight* sin? And we do that powered by God's thinking, powered by God's holy spirit, and therefore, we have this choice. We have this choice to see what we will do.

The purpose of life is to enter into a battle for the mind because our mind's natural and selfish. God's mind is completely different; it is outgoing. Therefore, we have entered this battle. We've been called to enter this battle, so at one point in time, if we continue the battle, if we continue to overcome our selves, overcome our selfishness, God will give us the blessing of spirit life where we will enter Elohim.

So we'll start today's sermon by just reviewing the fact that we are begotten sons of God. We have been called, and God has placed His spirit in us, therefore, we are begotten sons of God - not yet born, but we're heirs of a promise. We will inherit what God has given to Jesus Christ, but it's done in a time-order. But that's our potential! That is man's potential! That is the purpose of life, to inherit what God has given to Jesus Christ, which is spirit life in Elohim with the thinking of God permanently dwelling within us, so we don't have to battle, we don't have to fight self because there's *no* selfishness in Elohim, none at all.

But now let's turn to **Philippians 2:1**—This is Paul writing to the Church. **If *there is any consolation***, "if there is any encouragement," **in Jesus Christ...** Now, there *is* encouragement in Jesus Christ because of what He fulfilled. We are encouraged by the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ, what Jesus Christ has done for us in the fact that He has paid for the penalty of sin, the wages of sin being death. Jesus Christ has died for us so sin now can be forgiven. It can be covered and there is ongoing forgiveness available. So there is encouragement in Jesus Christ - the fact that we can overcome this selfishness because of what He has achieved for us. **...if any comfort of love**, so, yes, there is. There *is* comfort in love. Now, love is God's holy spirit. So there is a comfort because of the fact we know our calling and that God is working with us and God is the one who is transforming our thinking and our part is choice. **...if any fellowship of the spirit**, "if any sharing of the spirit," which is God's way of thinking. So if we have a relationship with one another, if we are part of the Body of Christ, we have fellowship with one another powered by God's holy spirit. So there is a fellowship, there is a sharing because we have God's thinking, therefore, we can share. Two can walk together because we agree. We agree with God. Therefore, we have this sharing, we have this fellowship with one another because we have God's holy spirit.

...if any affection and mercy... Well, how's that come about? Well, "if any affection and mercy," because this is a way of thinking. So if we have affection towards one another, if we have mercy towards one another (Godly mercy), we are living God's way of life. So our thinking has been transformed. Our thinking is changing. Because by nature we don't have affection towards one another, we don't have

mercy or live mercy to one another. We only do it to those that we select or those we *choose* to have affection for. And that affection is *natural* affection, it's not based on God's holy spirit. In other words, we're getting something out of it. If we don't have God's holy spirit and we have affection for another human, what is it really? Well, it's selfish! Mankind can't see it. People can't see it. But their affection for another human is actually something that is satisfying self. It's natural. Because that's what God has built in us that we have affection for those that we select or those we choose to have affection for. Whereas godly love, God's spirit does not have selective affection. God's spirit is love, and therefore, if we have affection based on God's holy spirit we will love one another.

...and mercy... We'll be thinking differently about humans. We'll be thinking differently about brethren in the Church because we will love the brethren and we will be merciful to the brethren. We'll be merciful to others.

How is it that a human could be merciful to others? Well, let's just take a step back and look at it. If we live mercy to another human, it's because we have God's thinking in our minds. Man's mercy is not mercy, it's actually hate. It's ill-will. I was just watching a program this morning where politicians in Australia had said that the whole parliament, which was every one of them, did *not* believe in the death penalty. Now, not believing in the death penalty, they believe they are showing mercy to people, yet history shows, the evidence is, the facts are that rapists when released on parole or released after five years or six years, the majority of them rape again. Murderers, if they murder once, if they're in prison for 10 years, 7 years, 20 years and are released, the majority, they have hate still, they have ill-will.

So let's look at this from the point of view of what God says. God says it's mercy to put somebody to death. Now, there is change of thinking that's going to have to take place all across the world. The death penalty is not murder! Yet, that's the way it's promoted. Those that say the death penalty should not be implemented believe they are being merciful. In actual fact, they're disagreeing with God and they're calling God a liar because God says it's the best thing. Now, the reason is they don't believe in the death penalty because they don't believe in resurrections. They believe that you get one chance and you either go to heaven or hell, therefore, there's no use putting someone to death. But, for example, if somebody was put to death by mistake - let's just say they went through the court system and there was an error, which there have been thousands and thousands of people that have been imprisoned and some executed by mistake, the wrong person is paying the penalty for the crime, well, how bad is that? I know it's an "injustice," because that's the best man can do with his natural carnal mind, *but* the person that was executed wrongly, the person that has paid the penalty wrongly will be resurrected in a Hundred-years to live life. Now, their biggest challenge is going to be to have to live affection and mercy to others. They're going to have to have God's holy spirit to change the way they think, because if they were resurrected, had their natural carnal mind and weren't converting, weren't transforming their thinking, not thinking differently, they're going to have ill-will, they're going to have hate towards those that wrongly persecuted them and put them to death. So we can see, brethren, that God's plan of salvation is a wonderful act of mercy, therefore, the death penalty should be implemented while the natural carnal mind is the way that it is because it's the best thing for it.

Well, here Paul is saying that if we have any affection or any mercy, it's the way we think towards our brethren, one another, **fulfill my joy**, fulfill Paul's joy, **by being like-minded**, so it's about their like-minded, it's the one spirit of unity, it's the same thinking. It's the transformation of the mind that has taken place. And what's this transformation about being like-minded? Having this one spirit? ...**having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind**. So this is saying we should have the same love, we should have God's thinking towards everybody, being of one accord. It's a way of life. We're in unity of spirit. There's only *one* spirit, it's the spirit of God, that can generate unity and love, "of one mind." So it's this same thinking. So this transformation that must take place is about having this one accord, the same love, the one mind, the one way of thinking. Now, this one way of thinking will produce one way of living life. And what is it about? It's about what was said before: It's this sharing. It's about an attitude of affection and mercy based on God's love (not natural thinking), and being like-minded, which is actually developing the thinking of God on all matters.

Now, to develop the thinking of God on all matters requires God's holy spirit, because we can't think like God, we *cannot* understand the Bible, we *cannot* understand God's thinking without His holy spirit.

Verse 3—Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit. So nothing that we do as far as our attitude or our intent and motive should be done for *selfish* ambition, which is selfishness, which is based on pride. So nothing that we do towards others within the Body or out of the Body, nothing at all in our life should be done from a wrong motive, which is that selfish motive, which is the natural carnal mind. So, "let *nothing* be done," absolutely nothing in thoughts, words, or actions be done by the natural carnal mind, which is this selfishness, selfish ambition, trying to get ahead, desiring to be better than others. "Or conceit," or lifting up ourselves in pride thinking we're better than others. No, we're not. We're not better than others. Only God's mercy makes us different from others. It doesn't make us better, it makes us different.

Now, we're living this difference. That's why we're going to be persecuted because we *are* different because we're thinking differently. We're not letting things be done through the natural carnal mind - selfish ambition or conceit. Now, what's the difference? ...**but in lowliness of mind**, so this lowering of the mind, which is about motive and intent, it's about humility. It's about understanding God's way of life. It's about understanding our true value of and by ourselves (which is nothing), **let each esteem others better than himself**. So this is *all* about the way we think, whether or not we respect others or we don't, whether or not we're living mercy to others or we don't. Now, let's just take an example. If we're not living mercy and love towards others we are not esteeming others better than ourselves. We're not esteeming others as being the *same* as we are. Because, what we're doing? We're lifting ourselves up with pride. So we are to live a life of sacrificing the self for the benefit of others. We are to respect others. How do we demonstrate it? By living love to them. And what's living love? By sacrificing, putting down our selfish ambitions, putting down our pride for the benefit of others, to serve others.

Now, Paul goes on and says, this is how it's done, this is how in lowliness of mind that each esteem others better than himself. How? **Let each one of you** (let each one of us) **look out not only for our own**

interests, so there are things where we should have our own interest. It's in our own interest to do our prayer and study. It's in our own interest to sacrifice time for God. That is our own interest. It's not about selfishness, this is about putting first the Kingdom of God, about seeking God. So it says here, "Let each of you," let each of us, "look out not only for our own interests." Now, we have to come to see it clearly. This is not about our own interests of selfishness. These are our own interests with regards to what is right before God. So our own interests would be eating clean food. It's things that are in unity with God's thinking. It's about this one spirit. So let's look out for these things that are in unity with God within our life - by prayer, communicating to God in prayer, through fasting, drawing closer to God, repenting of sin. These are in our own interests on a spiritual level.

Now, on a physical level there are things like our own health. So we should look out for our health. It's in our own interest. And the reason is, as Mr. Armstrong would often say, priority was God first and health was second. And we'd think, "Why would health be second?" Well, health is second because without good health you don't have a clear mind, for example. And without a clear mind, what have we got? We've got issues because we're not thinking clearly. We should look after our health. We should look after our own interests because that's what God says. So our *own* interests are those that line up with God's word.

So not only that, **but also for the interests of others**. Now, this is about us sacrificing to benefit others as long as it lines up with God's word. It has to be in unity of spirit, unity with God's way of thinking. So we would have this one way of thinking, we're living this life of sacrificing self, and we're putting ourselves out, we're denying ourselves, we're bringing ourselves into self-control *all* based on obeying God, putting God first, and then the interests of others. Now, what is the interest of others? Well, it still has to be *within* God's way of life. It has to be based on God's thinking. Because someone can have an interest that is against God. Well, should we put ourselves out for the interest, which is against God, of another person? The answer is no. We should sacrifice everything within ourselves (our selfishness) so that we benefit others based on something that would be in unity with God's way of thinking.

Now, what's really being said here? We're going to go into a future sermon and cover this in greater detail. We're going to look at Philippians 2:3-4 and look at what it really means on a spiritual level about our own interests, but also look at the spiritual component for the interest of others because it's based on a spiritual principle. God and Jesus Christ do not support sin. Jesus Christ sacrificed for sin so that sin could be forgiven, but Jesus Christ would not, during His life, sacrifice Himself to enable sin or for anything that supported sin. We're going to look at that in great detail. And it's rather exciting, brethren, that we can go through this, because it's all about **verse 5—Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ**. Yes, it *is* about sacrificing, *but* it's not about sacrificing so that we could enable or support sin.

Verse 5, which goes on to the very fact of covering the purpose of life which is about not our own interest (which we've looked at before), but the interest of others. Well, what do we have to do? **Verse 5—Let this mind** (let this thinking) **be in you which was also in Jesus Christ**. Now, what was that thinking? It was God's thinking! It was God the Father's thinking which was love. So Jesus Christ lived

love. He put Himself out, He sacrificed Himself for the interest of others, and He did not have His own selfish interests because there was no selfishness in Jesus Christ. He did not have a natural carnal mind. He had the thinking of God from birth. It was "God with us." So, "let this mind," let this thinking, "be in you," which is done through the power of God's holy spirit, "which was also in Jesus Christ." So God dwells in Jesus Christ, so we should now desire to have this happen in our life. This mind, this thinking that was in Jesus Christ, we desire it. So we're not looking out after our own selfish interests. We're looking for the interests of ourselves from the point of view of if it's in unity with God's spirit and increasing in having a better relationship with God, *then* we are also looking out for the interests of others if it is in unity with God's way of life - not if it's to do with absolute selfishness.

Verse 6—who, being in the form, which is the mind or the thinking of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal/like God, or equal with God, or like God. So He was willing to sacrifice Himself for the benefit of others, and that is the thinking that we have to have. "Let *this* mind," this sacrificing mind, this mind which is willing to sacrifice, to put itself out to benefit others, which is God's thinking. God's thinking is that He loves His creation, and God does everything to the benefit of His creation. Well, we have to take on this thinking. We have to do *everything* to benefit God's creation. What is God creating? God is creating Elohim through mankind. God is creating a change of thinking. So we should sacrifice ourselves to benefit God's plan. Therefore, when we get down to the very basics of life, we have to learn to think like God about all things. Therefore, we are willing to sacrifice for the brethren, we're willing to give up things for the brethren, because it's within the brethren (begotten sons of God) that God is creating Elohim. God is creating His family through the Church! Therefore, to have this same thinking, we will have fellowship with one another on a spiritual level. Therefore, as we've covered in *Part 2*, we understand the importance of iron sharpening iron, and it's done through fellowship, from Sabbath and High Days. That's how it's done. Because it's fellowship with God the Father first, and then fellowship with one another. So "let this mind," the mind of God, this sacrificing way of living, "be in us," and it's done by the power of God's holy spirit. And Jesus Christ lived this way of life. Jesus Christ walked a way of life which was God's thinking in the flesh.

Verse 7—but made Himself, talking about Jesus Christ, of no reputation. He took all the ridicule. Because He had the mind of God, He was ridiculed and rejected. Well, He took that, **taking on the form of a servant**, which is what we have to do. We have to give up our own interests. We have to give up what we are and what we desire for our self, the selfishness, and we have to become a servant, servants of God. ...**and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in the appearance of a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the stake.** So this is what Jesus Christ did for us. So here we see this lowliness of mind has no superior thinking. It does not think it's *better* than others. It doesn't have wrong measurements in its thinking. Well, Jesus Christ lived this. Jesus Christ didn't think He was better, He became a servant. He was willing to give up His life (as it says in scripture), "even the death of the stake," which was a cruel and hard death. It was a difficult death because of the pain and agony and the sorrow. It was brutal. But Jesus Christ was willing to go through all of that suffering because of the way He thought.

Well, we, brethren, have to take on this very mind, this way of thinking, which is giving up of our selfishness, putting to death the self. Now, it's difficult. It is difficult because we have a natural carnal mind that is selfish by nature. Our motives and intents are one of selfishness. So we have to come to see this selfishness. We have to come to see our motives and intents (powered by God's holy spirit) *then*, based on seeing, we have to then willingly choose to fight against our selfishness. Now, it *will* be painful. Putting the self to death is a painful experience. But there is a glory that is attached to that suffering, and that glory is taking on the very thinking of God, the thinking of Jesus Christ.

Verse 9—Therefore, God also, which is talking about God the Father, **also has highly exalted Him** (Jesus Christ) **and given Him the name which is above every name**. Now, we understand that Jesus Christ now is our Savior. So His name is above every other name because He is our Savior, He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, because Jesus Christ has been given this by God the Father.

And what's the outcome? **Verse 10—that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth**, which are those that are dead that are going to be resurrected to come to this position of giving Jesus Christ the honor and the glory, that they would bow to Him because He is the King of kings.

Verse 11—and that every tongue should confess, every tongue should acknowledge, **that Jesus Christ is the Lord... Why? ...to the glory of God the Father**, because it's God the Father that made Jesus Christ who He is. So our relationship with God the Father is through Jesus Christ. He is the Savior. He is the Savior of us all. Of course, God the Father established this, this way. So we in our life must confess by the way we live (not only with tongue, but the way we live) that Jesus Christ *is* our Lord and Master, because we live the mind of God, we live the *thinking* of God. And by doing that we come at-one with God. "Let this mind," let this thinking, "be in you, which was also *in* Jesus Christ," which is this mind of God, which is sacrificing to the benefit of others, for the benefit of His creation. Well, we're to do the same.

The reason we think differently, brethren, is because of a calling, that God the Father called us to think differently, to take on the very mind of God, the very thinking of Jesus Christ (because Jesus Christ was the Word of God). So we have been called to change the way we think and everyone must change the way they think before they can enter Elohim.

So what are some of the things that we must change in our thinking? Now, we understand that Satan has influenced mankind's thinking, therefore, mankind's thinking is based on selfishness and Satan's inspiration, which has been developed and fulfilled within the world. Now, one thing that we have to change the way we think is this theory or this thinking that a "white lie" is okay. Because there is a concept that lying is okay based on certain circumstances or under certain circumstances. God clearly states in His word that all men are liars. We have this understanding within the Church, that lying is sin - based on the 10 Commandments: "Thou shall not lie." But we all lie because of pride.

Now, when we look at this concept of a "white lie" being justified, it's actually still sin. There is *no* circumstance where a person should lie. And a so-called "white lie," which is considered a little weenie lie compared to a "big lie," that that's okay, that there's nothing wrong with it. Well, that's something that has to change within mankind's thinking. Now, lying is natural for mankind, and it's natural for mankind because of his pride. He will defend himself! Now, we can look at this from an example. If somebody makes a mistake in life, no matter what it is, and then they're challenged, what happens? They justify. Mankind justifies themselves. Now, justification is like a lie because they'll defend themselves. They'll lie about it. They will make an excuse. They won't be open and honest. Now, this is a common thing within mankind because nobody likes to have their pride affected - nobody! There's not a human that likes to have their pride challenged, what they are, what they *think* they are. Therefore, often, "white lies" come out. Now, "white lies" come out in the sense of it's still a lie - shouldn't be called "white." It should actually be simply a lie.

Mankind lies in everything that they do. They lie on their tax returns. They lie on TV. They lie in the TV advertising. Because it's all about money. It's about pride and money. So we'll often see lies on TV where it says if you buy this particular product your life's going to change dramatically because if you just do this, if you just wipe this bench so clean with this particular product, it's going to be fantastic! And they give this impression that this is going to make you happy. That's what it's all about, making you happy, your being fulfilled. You're more fulfilled, because if you buy this product (no matter what that product is), whether it's a car, if you buy this car, girls are going to look at you. If you buy this car, you're going to be seen as more successful. If you buy this particular product you are going to be greater. Well, it's all based on pride and lies. It's all deception. And there's deception in the pricing. When we go into stores there's great deception. Often what would happen in retail environments would be that companies will manufacture from cut-off fabrics and they'll bring them into the store with margins of 4-500%, all for the purpose of having a 50% off sale. Now, that's a lie. That's deception. Their motive, their intent is deceit. Instead of being valued at \$100, they'll bring it in at \$200, then they'll have a 50% off everything sale within a particular category of product, and therefore, people rush in to buy it for \$100 but *that's its true value*. And people, yet, are deceived.

Manufacturers, retailers, everyone is lying. TV programs, TV products that are advertized - all of these things - politicians, everyone is lying. Everything is deception because that is about pride and Satan who has deceived the whole world. He's deceived the whole world in the way that they think. Because mankind thinks selfishly, whereas God is requiring us to stop lying, to think like Him, because God does not lie, God *cannot* lie. It's not in His nature. It doesn't enter His thinking because it's not who God is.

This is something we have to fight within ourselves. We're called into the Church, we have to become transformed in the way we think, therefore, as we tackle pride we have to start being open and honest in everything we do. Now, it all sounds simple, and it all sounds like it would be done within the Body of Christ; those that are called into a relationship with God would be open and honest. Well, that is not true. That is not true. Because people can write emails or people can write various reports, people can do lots of things, but the truth is actually tucked away. Why is the truth tucked away? Because of pride.

Because deep down there's a lie. Because they're not being open and honest. They're actually covering something up. So to cover something up is lying. It's a deception, because their intent is not to reveal the truth, not to reveal everything about a matter. Now God says in His word, "No lie is of the truth." "No lie is of the truth," therefore, if we have God's thinking we will not lie. Now this is a battle for mankind. This is a battle for every member of the Body of Christ because we have to come to realize who we are, what we are, and that we *all do lie*. Now, often we don't even understand we are lying about matters because we're covering up because of our selfishness because of our pride.

Another area where we think differently is that about smoking. Smoking is an act of selfishness. Now, members of the Body, when they are first called into a relationship with God, may come out of these environments, which is one of smoking. Some smoke 5 cigarettes a day, some smoke 20, some may smoke over 30. The end result is we have to change the way we think. Once called we have to come to think differently about a subject like smoking. Smoking is selfishness because of the very fact that mankind has taken to himself his own way of thinking. He desires to satisfy self, and this chemical that's been built into all of these cigarettes and everything is actually fulfilling something within mankind. It's fulfilling something within his thinking, which is to do with addictions.

So let's look at this aspect of smoking from a practical point of view. We have a body and that body is to carry our minds around. And God says to us that we are to look at looking after our environment, which is our bodies. We are to look after ourselves because we are the temple of God's holy spirit. We carry around God's spirit within our thinking, therefore, our body is the vehicle which carries our mind around. Now, God has made laws about clean and unclean foods all for the purpose of having good health. Because good health will support clear thinking. Now, smoking will actually destroy the body. Now, people often say, "Well, it's *my* body. I can do what I want with it!" Well, no, that's not what God says. God says the purpose of life is to enter Elohim. God says we've been given a body for the purpose of carrying around His thinking, so that at some point He can transform our thinking. Now, we are made in the image of God, so God has hands, God has a nose, God has a face, God has eyes. Well, we've been made in that image, therefore, we cannot just do as we want.

Now, this principle, "we cannot just do anything we want." "It's my body. I want to do whatever I want with it," that covers many-a-things. It covers things like abortion. So people will say with abortion, "It's my body. I can do as I please, therefore, I can abort a baby." Well, no, you can't. Euthanasia, people say, "Well, I have power over my life. I can do with my life as I please." No, you can't. People can say, "I can consume excess alcohol. It's my body. I can do what I want!" No, the excess consumption of alcohol is sin. Smoking is sin because it's an act of selfishness. Euthanasia is sin. Abortion is sin. Because God made the human body for a purpose, and when we reject that purpose, we're acting selfishly. So selfishness drives all of these things that we just covered, and in particular, smoking, which reflects true selfishness.

Now, there are addictions and those addictions can take over the mind. And it is hard. And it is a battle. But smoking simply affects the human body so it does not work clearly because it will affect the mind and it affects others. It's not done in the interest of others, it's done for the satisfaction of self. Excess

alcohol is about the satisfaction (perceived satisfaction) of self. It does not benefit others. So excess alcohol is wrong because God says that we are to have clear thinking, we are to be on guard all the time about the way we think. Well, excess alcohol affects the thinking. We do not have clear thinking. Our judgments will be blurred, therefore, we're opening our minds to Satan's influence. The natural carnal mind is selfish of and by itself, so why would a person in the Body of Christ consume too much alcohol so they reduce their awareness of their ability to think clearly? Because the excess alcohol will pervert a person's judgments. It'll pervert the thinking.

We are to guard against wrong thinking. *Anything* that affects a person's thinking, or an attitude that opposes God's attitude on a matter, for example, sex. A person's mind that is perverted or being changed or influenced against God's way of thinking, the way God thinks, that is wrong, that is sin.

So let's look at the biggest topic of all - we're not going to spend a lot of time here - but the biggest topic that man has to change his thinking, and we have changed our thinking, and we're in this process of *changing* our thinking, is that of the topic of sex itself. God made sex between a man and a woman, and He did that for the purpose of love, showing love towards each other, for the two to become one. It doesn't talk about having two women together or two men together. No, it's a man and a woman, and they are brought together to be at-one for the purpose of love, showing love within an environment of marriage, but also to populate the earth. Because it's only done through a man and a woman. It's not done through two females or two males. It's not possible. It requires a man and a woman, because that's the way God ordained it. That's the way that it is. But today's thinking is now twisted and perverted. So let's look at these perversions quickly to realize we have to change the way we think.

Now, many-a-people think that two people, a man and a woman, living together outside of marriage is okay. 50%, I believe, or more now live together before they're married. The principle there is, "you have the right to try before you buy." Well, that is actually a manmade principle, it's a manmade concept, and it is sin. It is sin because that's what God says. It is not the purpose of life. It's not the purpose of life for a man and a woman to live together before marriage. So one of the greatest perversions in a sexual relationship is a man and a woman who live together and have a sexual relationship together before marriage. That is actually a perversion of the way of thinking. It's a perversion in the mind! So we, brethren, have to think differently. We have to view that a man and a woman living together before marriage and engaging in a sexual relationship before marriage is actually *a perversion*.

Now, we don't think that way just normally. The reason is because of the media and because of everything that goes on in Satan's system and man's thinking of selfishness. People would say that a man and a woman living together before marriage is not as bad as a gay "marriage" or two women being together or two men being together. Now, mankind is going down the path of legalizing things that God says is sin. They are legalizing things that are perversion in thinking.

God says clearly that a man and a woman should not have a sexual relationship until they are joined at-one in marriage, where the two have become one, and they do this through a sexual union and a way of thinking. Mankind has taken things of God and twisted and perverted them and rejected God's word.

Mankind has rejected God's word when it comes to the way he should live. So this is a change of thinking that's going to have to take place. And in the Millennium it's going to be introduced that this thinking is going to have to be taken on and people are going to have to learn to think differently, they're going to have to repent. They're going to have to repent about their thinking about abortion. They're going to have to repent about their thinking about euthanasia, that they have the right to kill themselves because of whatever environment they may be in. They're going to have to repent of their selfishness of smoking. They're going to have to repent of their excess alcohol consumption. They're going to have to repent of wrong sexual relationships. Because it is *God's* thinking versus *man's* thinking.

This sermon series is about two ways of thinking. We're either thinking like God or we're thinking like man. And what's man's thinking? Total selfishness. Total selfishness. We're either sacrificing ourselves or we're not sacrificing ourselves. We're either thinking differently or we're *not* thinking differently. We either have God's holy spirit or we don't. We're either obeying God or we're disobeying God. Because obedience, obedience to God's word, this way of thinking (which is obedience) is an outward sign of an expression of fearing God. It's an outward sign. So obedience to God on the Sabbath, obedience to tithing, obedience to the sexual laws that God has established, obedience to God's word is an outward sign that we love God and that we fear God. That we don't fear Him because we're "scared" of Him, we fear Him because we agree with Him. We agree that He is right and His thinking is right and we fear to sin. We don't want to be that way.

Yet the opposite is disobedience, it's an expression, it's an outward expression of *selfishness*. Disobedience to God's word is an outward expression of selfishness. Selfishness is the natural carnal mind. It's the wrong way of thinking.

Romans 12:1—I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present (yield) your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*. Which is the practical or logical service. Because this yielding is required. This living sacrifice, which is this yielding to God, denying our selfishness, well, this is our reasonable, logical service, because this is this transformation of the mind. This is this thinking differently. So Paul is saying here to the Romans that they yield their bodies, their attitudes, their way of thinking to give up the self, to live a living sacrifice, yielding their attitudes - one of sharing, one of giving, one of sacrificing self - holy (which is something that is separate, yielded to God, according to what God desires, what His word says, acceptable to God), which is your reasonable or logical service. So we are to serve God in obedience. And how do we do that? Well, we've already seen through some of the things where we think differently. We do it through Sabbath keeping. We do it through tithes and offerings. We do it by giving up or sacrificing our attitudes, sacrificing what we want to benefit others as long as it's in tune with God's word.

Verse 2—And do not be conformed, which is "don't be blended into," **this world**, don't be conformed to this world. So we have to think differently. ...**but be transformed**, which is that metamorphosis, which is that change. So be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Now, how do we prove something? We try it. We live it. So we

have to be transformed. We have to have our minds changed. How do we do it? By the renewing of your mind, the renewing of our mind, the renewing of our thinking. We are to learn and learn to *choose* to think like God.

So that's what this sermon series is about, "Everyone Must Change." Everyone must be transformed in their thinking. How is it done? By the renewing of the way we think, from selfishness to God's way of thinking. How's it done? On Sabbaths and Holy Days. How's it achieved? By the power of God's holy spirit. It's the only way. And God is saying, "Well, test Me in this. Prove it." Prove God's word is true by keeping the Sabbath and we'll learn. We'll learn the *truth*! We'll learn God's way of life and our minds will be transformed. We will renew our thinking. We'll *think differently*! And if we think differently, we're going to be persecuted. We're going to be separated from this world. Because we come every Sabbath, we come to all the High Days, and we have this transformation of the mind, the renewing of our minds take place - which is the change - and then we implement it into our life and we prove it. We live it! We test it! Because in the end, we think like God. We think like God on all of these different topics that we've looked at so far. We think like God when it comes to the use of the human body - that it's not our own. We can't go and just eat anything we want. We can't go and smoke. We can't go and consume excess alcohol. We can't have unlawful relationships. We can't do those things. We have to come into unity of spirit with God, God's way of thinking. Because it all leads to an outcome. The purpose of life is to enter Elohim.

Now, mankind abuses himself and breaks all of God's law because he rejects God's word about the purpose of life. Mankind could choose, like Israel could have chosen, to simply obey the mechanics of the 10 Commandments. And by that I mean physical observance, because they couldn't keep the spirit of the law, but just the mechanical part of keeping a rest, seventh-day, or simply of not killing. They would have been fulfilling the principle of the word of the law, which is the basic physical component of it. But because of selfishness man doesn't want it. Man doesn't want to be controlled. He would rather have self-control, the way he wants to run his life. He controls himself the way *he* desires. But self-control really is about having God's holy spirit, being powered by God's holy spirit so that we bring self into control to benefit others. We bring self into control to match God's way of thinking, therefore, we control our selfishness because of that.

One of the major things that changes within a human's thinking when they are called is that of government. So when we are just natural, when we're living in the world and we haven't got a relationship with God, our view on government is completely different than what God says about government. We either believe in a democracy, we might believe in an autocratic style government, or republican. There are many, many different types. Or we can believe in a monarchy type of government. But none of that is powered by God's holy spirit because that is from human reasoning. Mankind works out for himself what he thinks is the best form of government and it all comes from within his mind. Now, amongst all of that, if we look at *all* types of politics, *all* types of governments on this earth, every single one of them (outside of God's Church), *all* of those governments are based on selfishness and pride - every one of them. And every one of them is based on *lies*! Every single one of these. No matter what

they are, whether it's the monarchy, whether it's the republican, whether it's democracy, whatever type it is, or liberal, whatever name we would like to use for these types of manmade governments, they are all based on one thing - lies. They just lie about every single thing. It's about how to twist the truth. There may be some truth, but you have to twist it so that it's not seen or believed by others, therefore, everyone believes a lie. *Everyone* believes a lie. If a person believes in Christmas, they believe a lie. If they believe in Easter, they believe a lie. If they believe that democracy is the best form of government, they *believe* a lie. Religions lie. Manmade governments all lie. It's all a big cover-up.

So we have to come to see that we need to change the way we think. We come to see that all governments are all liars - every one of them. All politicians are liars by nature. They have to lie, otherwise, they won't be kept in their jobs. But we come to see there is only *one* form of government that will work, and that is God's government. Now, we know that Jesus Christ is returning to this earth to set up a new government, and all the governments of this earth, and all the religions of this earth will be put down. They will be destroyed, and after that, everyone must change the way they think about governments. Because there is only *one righteous* government, and it's righteous because it *has* God's holy spirit living and dwelling in it. It's *thinking* is different. So God's government thinks differently.

Now, the Church on earth today has God's government; it has God's thinking in it. So Church government has God's thinking in it. Its motive and intent is to put God first and to love others. That's its motive and intent. Now, within God's Church we don't always see that all decisions are based on love. We just don't see it. But God has set up a government on this earth, and it's led by an apostle, and we know this from scripture, that God says there's first an apostle, then there's prophet, then there's evangelist, then there's ministry. Well, these things are all God's government. So we have to come to see God's government in our life. And what do we come to see? We have to learn, we have to come to see that we have to first govern ourselves (powered by God's holy spirit), and if we govern ourselves (powered by God's holy spirit) we will be in unity with God's government within the Church. Because they're not really separate. We can't have two separate types of government. We can't have God's government in the Church, the way the Church functions based on the spirit of a matter, that's how God's government works on this earth (within the Church it's based on the spirit of a matter), well, if we're not judging ourselves, if we're not governing ourselves based on the spirit of the matter powered by God's holy spirit we will not be at-one with God's government within the Church. It's not possible. There's not two types of government, there's only one. God's government is based on righteousness. God's government is based on the spirit of the matter, and it's all powered by God's holy spirit. Now, God's government has to work within our life first - now, we have to come to see this - that we have to yield to God's holy spirit. And if we're yielding to God's holy spirit, we're under the government of God within our life and we're under government within the Church.

So, brethren, we have to transform the way we think about government. Mankind, what's ahead of him, he is going to have to change the way he thinks about government. And people won't be able to lobby, people won't be able to run campaigns to be elected. They're all just lies. It's all just vanity. Because in God's government we can't lobby for a role and we can't lift ourselves up because that's just simply pride.

We have to rely on God's holy spirit to function within God's Church, and we have to rely on God's spirit to function within our life. So in the future we're not going to see advertizing campaigns about politicians going out there saying, "Elect me!" We're not going to see political manipulation of news. We're not going to see political manipulation of the truth. Because all of these things are manipulated because there's an advantage to mankind, there's an advantage to someone.

Well, under God's government there will be no elections held. There'll be no campaigns. There will be *no voting*. We will not be voting for who's going to be in charge. Jesus Christ and the 144,000 will rule this earth *in righteousness*, the righteousness of God, the thinking of God. So what we look forward to, brethren, is a change of thinking of mankind, and therefore, we're going to see a change within the government of a person's life and the government of the earth, and they will yield to the Church. And if they don't? A consequence has to be paid. For a person not to yield to the government of God, there is a consequence. There's a penalty to be paid.

Let's look at **Matthew 5:1**. This is referring to those that have God's holy spirit. **And seeing the multitude, He (Jesus Christ) went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying...** Now, here we see this is Jesus Christ talking to the disciples, in the sense of teaching them. The reality is this is for the Church today, because it's Jesus Christ teaching us a way of life. Jesus Christ is talking about attitudes here. It's talking about the mind of God, things we must change in the way that we think.

Verse 3—Blessed... Now, the word "blessed" here is "benefitted or fortunate or favored," **are the poor in spirit**. Why? **For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven**. So blessed or fortunate is anybody that is poor in spirit. Well, how can we be "poor in spirit?" It's actually referring here to "poor in human spirit," where we don't serve ourselves. In other words, there's a level of humility. So fortunate is, if we are called and we begin to see our human spirit, we begin to see our human nature, we begin to see God's spirit, God's word, well, "Blessed," or fortunate are we, "if we are poor in human spirit," we are coming to see humility. We're talking on the very mind of God, which is humility. We see ourselves as we truly are - carnal and selfish. Well, when we see ourselves as carnal and selfish, we become "poor in spirit," because we're seeing ourselves as we are. Therefore, we become humble, our mind becomes humble. We won't lift ourselves up in pride because we see ourselves. We see ourselves as we really are, proud-filled, selfish. We justify. We protect ourselves. We look after our *own* interest. We don't look after the interest of others. We do on the natural carnal mind, if it interests us or it's a benefit to us, but outside of that we don't. Therefore, God is saying here through Jesus Christ, "Fortunate (favored, blessed) is anybody who is poor in spirit," anybody that is called into a relationship with God and changing the way they think. Why? "For theirs," the called-out-ones, those in a relationship with God where they have God's holy spirit, "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven," the Kingdom of God. That's the outcome! So the benefit, the blessing of the changing of this thinking is we will inherit the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed (fortunate) are those who mourn. Why? **For they shall be comforted**. So "blessed (fortunate)," are those with God's holy spirit, who are transforming the way they think, and who are developing

compassion, they're developing compassion for mankind. They're seeing *all* men and women as *equal*! They don't see themselves as better. They see themselves in reality, the way God sees them. "For they," the ones that are called, the ones that are transforming their thinking by the power of God's holy spirit, "shall be comforted," by God's spirit because they're going to be dealing with reality. They're going to see the truth. They can "see" they are taking on the mind of God and they're thinking differently. They are blessed. They are so blessed. And God says that He will intervene into their life and He will give them peace. He will give them peace of mind.

Now, we, brethren, have peace of mind. We have peace of mind. Although we are developing this mind and we are at difference or at odds with the world, there's a great comfort in this. As we move away from the world, coming out of the ways of the world, the ways of thinking, God says He will comfort us with His word. Now, if we are Sabbath-keepers, if we're tithing, if we're faithful to God, we're faithful to God's word, we're keeping the Commandments, we're taking on the mind of God, we *are* comforted. We are comforted, because we think peace, we think with maturity, we think with the power of God's holy spirit. We're comforted. We know the truth. Therefore, we can see what's going on in the world and we can have compassion for those that lose loved ones, but we're comforted because we know the truth! We're comforted by the truth. We're at peace because of the truth. Because those that have died will be resurrected and given an opportunity like we are today, given that opportunity to transform our thinking.

Verse 5—Blessed (fortunate) *are* the meek. Well, what are "the meek?" The meek are those that are taking on humility. They'll have loving kindness or this gentleness about them. And it's a godly gentleness, it's not a weakness. It's a gentleness in thinking, and they don't raise themselves up in pride. So why is a person blessed or fortunate if they are reducing their pride, if they're battling their pride, if they battling their selfishness, if they are developing loving kindness towards all - men and women - not just a bias but to *all*? **For they shall inherit the earth.** In other words, someone that is meek is someone that is teachable. They're taking on this way of thinking. They have this gentleness about them. They have a loving kindness and they're going to be teachable because of their attitude that they have. They see themselves as they are. They know they have to be humble and they desire to be humble. And being humble they are then teachable. They're under government, for example. "And they shall inherit the earth." The word "earth" there is actually "land." So they will inherit the land. What is God going to give to those in the 144,000? They will inherit eternal life (life-everlasting). They'll inherit spirit life. They'll inherit the thinking of God. And they will inherit the earth because they will be governing the earth, and God's plan for His family in the future is to place all things, which is all the planets, all the universe under mankind, which is under Elohim when mankind has entered Elohim.

Verse 6—Blessed (fortunate) *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. So, brethren, this is an incredible scripture, really. We have to hunger and thirst for righteousness. We have to hunger and thirst for God's thinking. So in other words, it's going to have to take effort. We have to *seek* God's view on everything.

Now, let's look at the topic of righteousness here. So if you'd like to hold your place there in verse 6. If you'd like to turn to **1 John 2:28**—John writing to the Church—**And now, little children**, which is members of the Body of Christ, those that have been called into a relationship with God, begotten sons, begotten children of God, **abide in Him**, abide in Jesus Christ, **that** - So what's the reason we are to dwell in the truth, dwell in Jesus Christ? Because we have to dwell in Christ to have the truth. ...**that when He** (Jesus Christ) **appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him**, (before Jesus Christ), **at His coming**. So we understand, brethren, from this that there *is* a continual coming of Jesus Christ in our life through the power of God's spirit. We understand that. But also this can refer to something that is going to happen in the near future, very soon now, less than four years, where we should have this confidence, because we're abiding in the truth, we're abiding in Jesus Christ, we're abiding in the thinking of God, we're abiding in the very mind of God, the way Jesus Christ thought. "That when He appears," when He returns, "we will have this confidence that we're not going to be ashamed before Him at His return." We understand that this is talking about a return of Jesus Christ, but also that this ongoing basis, this continuing basis of Jesus Christ coming into our life.

Verse 29—**If you know that He** (Jesus Christ) **is righteous...** Now, we understand, we know that Jesus Christ *is* righteous. Jesus Christ is righteous because He had the *mind*, the thinking of God, because righteousness is the mind, the thinking of God. Now, we know that Jesus Christ is righteous, that He has the thinking of God. ...**you know that everyone who practices righteousness**, which is the thinking of God, the way that God thinks, the way that God lives, if we practice it, if we put it into use within our life (we have to practice it). Now, we understand what practice is. Practice is we have to put in effort. We've got to go out and *do* something. We can't sit in the chair and become a good runner, because we have to go out and practice running. Well, we have to practice (put into use, do something about) righteousness. We have to choose to change the way we think. We have to *choose* to obey God. We have to *choose* to obey the commandments. We have to *choose* to practice God's thinking in our life. And we've looked at many examples of God's thinking in our life. We looked at Sabbath keeping. We looked at tithes, a way of thinking. We looked at smoking. We looked at sexual relationships. All of those things are about a way of thinking. Well, we have to *practice* it. We have to put it into use within our life. ...**is born** (begotten) **of Him**. Now, we are begotten sons of God because God is *in* us. We have been begotten by God's spirit, and that enables us to practice this righteousness.

Now, I find this really exciting, brethren, that we are in this process of changing our mind. Because everyone is going to have to change the way they think. Well, we have already started it! How blessed are we? We are so far ahead of the world! So far ahead of the world because we've *started* this transformation. That doesn't make us any better; we're all the same. It's just that we have been shown great favor and great mercy as Matthew 5 says, "Blessed is the person who has been called to transform their thinking." Blessed is the person! How fortunate we are that we can exercise humility, that we can exercise self-control, that we can change the way we think. This is exciting! We understand the consequence of it - we're going to be persecuted. We're going to be blessed by God because of the way we are transforming our mind because God is achieving in us what His plan is - to enter Elohim - to be transformed in our thinking so we can enter Elohim.

We're going to be rejected by the world because they don't understand what's happening. Therefore, what should we do? We should rejoice, brethren! We should rejoice that we are taking on and practicing this righteousness. And if we are practicing it, we know where it's coming from. We should rejoice in this because it's coming from God because we've been born (begotten) of God's spirit! We should rejoice! So every time we're persecuted because of righteousness, because we're taking on this very mind of God and we're practicing it, we're putting it into our life - because of our Sabbath-keeping and because of our obedience to the Commandments, because of our choice to deny ourselves, because of our choice to watch our intent, to look at our motives, our choice to *love everybody*, to not have prejudice or bias or to be racist, all those things— we should rejoice when we live it, when we practice it, because this is the evidence that we have been begotten by God's holy spirit. Because this is the only way a person can transform their thinking. It has to be by God's holy spirit.

1 John 3:1—Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Isn't this incredible? From a calling, God has bestowed on us the name "begotten sons (children) of God," and because we're children we're heirs of a promise. We can enter Elohim because of the promises of God. God the Father has promised that if we are to take on His holy spirit, based on a calling from Him, and we're yielding to Him, we're yielding to His government in our life, yielding to God's thinking, that we can enter Elohim. This is an incredible calling, an incredible promise. **Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.** So the world can't know us, brethren. So as we come out of the world, as we transform our thinking, as we take on different thinking than the world, the world won't know us. They haven't received God's holy spirit, they're not begotten sons. They're in their selfishness. They are not transforming the way they think. They are not choosing to change the way they think, because they can't, because it needs God's spirit. But for us, "Therefore, the world does not know us," they *can't* know us. We can't have a relationship with them because we think differently. The two cannot walk together unless they agree. They can't. It's absolutely impossible. Therefore, brethren, we should not expect the world to agree with us and we should not expect the world to cooperate with us. We'll be isolated because they are *not* sons (children) of God, therefore, the world does not know us and they can't...they can't. Because? "They did not know Him." They did not know the mind of God. They don't know God the Father. They do not know who God is. They do not know who Jesus Christ is. We do. Now, with this knowledge (because of God's calling and God's power placed in us), we are going to be separating ourselves in the way we think. That is what is happening to us.

Verse 2—Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, as a spirit being, but we know that when He (Jesus Christ) is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Well, we're going to see Him as a spirit being. Well, what's going to happen here is for those that are part of 144,000 that are going to be changed to spirit, "conformed to His image," the image of Jesus Christ, they will see Him as a spirit being. They'll have the same mind, the same thinking. They will be in Elohim. There is a time for everybody to come to know God, to know God on a spiritual level. And then they have the opportunity to see Him as He is. "We shall be like Him," which is a spirit being. Many will have this opportunity. Some have already made a decision that they will *not* be given this opportunity because of a sin, an unpardonable sin, or because they have set their mind against God.

Verse 3—And everyone who has this hope, the hope of this change, this hope in **Him**, the hope in Jesus Christ, to be changed to be like Him, **purifies himself**. Now, this is a moral purity. So he purifies himself on a spiritual level. How do we purify ourselves on a spiritual level? It's done through repentance. It's about thinking differently. So we have to purify ourselves by thinking like God, by repenting, by rejecting the way we are, repenting and changing the way we think. *Everyone* is going to have to go through this process. *Everyone* is going to have to change the way they think. Everyone in the Millennium and the Hundred-years will have this hope, which is in Jesus Christ, of purifying themselves through repentance, to bringing their thinking in unity with God.

Continuing on in verse 3... **just as He** (Jesus Christ) **is pure**. He's pure in thinking. He has no sin. He does not sin. He cannot sin because He has the mind of God.

Verse 4—Whoever practices sin, which is a choice to practice it, **also commits lawlessness**, they break God's law, they break the spirit of a law, they transgress God's law, **and sin is lawlessness**, or sin is the lawlessness. So we, brethren, are not to practice sin. We do not continue in the habit of sin. We don't practice it. We actually have changed the way we think.

Verse 5—And you know that He (Jesus Christ) **was manifested to take away our sins**, and in **Him** (Jesus Christ) **there is no sin**. There was no sin in Jesus Christ, and there is no sin in Jesus Christ. He practiced righteousness. He practiced the mind of God, the thinking of God.

Verse 6—Whoever abides in Him, "whoever dwells in Him," who is with the *thinking* of Jesus Christ, which is the thinking of God, **does not practice sin**, because Jesus Christ doesn't practice sin. He doesn't commit sin. If we abide in Him, if we have the holy spirit and God's thinking in us, we do not practice it, because God can't sin. Now, when we sin it's because of our selfishness, we've allowed the desires of the flesh, the desires of the mind, "the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life," to dominate us. Then we sin. Now, the point here is, we don't *practice* it; we repent. We continually repent. We don't continue to practice sin. **Whoever practices sin**, by not repenting, by not desiring to change their thinking, **has neither seen Him**, they haven't seen Jesus Christ, they haven't seen God, **nor knows Him**, doesn't know Jesus Christ because they don't understand what they're doing. Their selfishness is dominating them and they don't know it.

Little children, let no one deceive you. So let's not be deceived, brethren. We have to change the way we think. God has called us to change our thinking. So let's not be deceived to think that we can just continue to live our life in our own selfishness, to yield to our selfishness. So, let's not be deceived in that. **He who practices righteousness**, "he who lives righteousness," he who puts on the thinking of God, yields to God's spirit, takes on the word of God into his life and changes the way they think to think like God, **is righteous**. So if we practice righteousness it's God's spirit in us that does the works, it's God's thinking that is righteous. Well, if we do that and we allow it and we yield to it, well, we become righteous because of faith, because of yielding to God's thinking. So, let's not be deceived. "He who lives (practices) righteousness," practices the thinking of God, implements it into their life and *yields* to it and *does it*, "is righteous," **just as He** (Jesus Christ) **is righteous**.

We believe God is right and we now implement this change of thinking in our life, and therefore, we live it. We keep the Sabbath. We tithe. We keep the holy days. We keep the 10 Commandments. All of these things. We watch the spirit of the law. We implement justice. We live love. We live mercy to all. We don't have any prejudice. We have no *bias*. We yield to God's word. Well, if we do all those things, we become righteous because we're living faith...we're living faith. Because faith is what? Believing God and living it. Faith is believing God and *living* God's way of life, living God's thinking. "He who practices righteousness," he who implements righteousness, God's thinking in his life, "is righteous," because God made him this way, "just as He (Jesus Christ) is righteous."

Verse 8—He who sins, "he who practices sins," is of the devil, for the devil (Satan) has sinned from the beginning. So he has no desire to change the way he is. He is actually against God, he's an adversary of God. **For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,** Jesus Christ was manifest (revealed), **that He (Jesus Christ) might destroy the works of the devil.** Now, how does that happen? (Or "the deeds of the devil.") How does that happen? Through Christ living and dwelling in us. So Jesus Christ was manifested (revealed), and He paid the penalty for sin so that sin could be forgiven, so that we could practice righteousness. So that we could repent and we could then live and yield to God's spirit, yield to righteousness. "That He (Jesus Christ) might destroy the deeds of the devil." What are "the deeds of the devil?" Sin! Practicing sin! So we are not going to be practicing sin. Jesus Christ has come to destroy sin, and the penalty of sin can be gotten rid of by repentance because God is offering us mercy. So Jesus Christ living and dwelling in us means we will not practice sin, we'll be practicing righteousness.

Verse 9—Whoever has been born (begotten) of God, so if we have been begotten of God, have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us and we're yielding to God's thinking and we're *living* God's thinking, **does not sin.** It's not possible because God does not sin. So "whoever has been begotten of God," God lives and dwells in us and His thinking is in us, "they do not practice sin," they do not *live* sin. Now, we might make mistakes where we do sin, but we have the gift of repentance and God has promised us His mercy. So if we have God's spirit living and dwelling in us we will not be willingly and willfully practicing sin. We do not practice sin, **for His seed (God's seed) remains (abides) in us,** so God's thinking lives in us. So if we have God's thinking and we're yielding to God's thinking and we're *doing* God's thinking, we don't sin, we don't practice sin, **and he cannot sin, because he has been begotten of God.** So we sin in the flesh by nature because our selfishness dominates us, but once we are called and we are changing the way we think, by the power of God's holy spirit we will no longer practice sin because we'll be fighting against it. And we will win many-a-battle, brethren, but we will lose some. But we must be *striving* to overcome sin. We must be striving *not* to practice sin. And when we're tempted, we must yield to God's thinking on a matter.

Verse 10—In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest, whether or not we're practicing sin or not. **Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God,** so if we're not yielding to God's way of thinking, we're *not of God*, **nor is he who does not love his brother.** So there's two parts here. So we're *not* of God, we're not practicing God's thinking, we're not practicing righteousness *if* we are not *striving* to overcome ourselves. We're just not practicing righteousness because we're yielding to

ourselves. So we are of Satan. We still have this carnal mind. This carnal mind is dominating us because we're not practicing righteousness and we're not implementing it into our life. And it's also revealed by the fact that we don't love our brother, we don't *think* the right way towards our brother, we're thinking wrongly. We're thinking pride. We're thinking selfishly. We think we are *better* than our brother. So here, what John is saying, is that we are children of God or we're children of Satan. We're either thinking righteousness or we're thinking selfishly. And whoever does not practice God's way of thinking is *not of God!* We don't have God's holy spirit because we're not practicing yielding to God's spirit. "Nor is he who does not love his brother." Because? We're thinking selfishly. It's all about pride and self.

1 Peter 2:18. This is talking about an attitude, of whether or not we are yielding to God, God's spirit, God's thinking about life, or we're not. We've only got two choices here. We're either humble and yielding to God's way of life or we're not. There's these two ways of thinking that we've just looked at.

1 Peter 2:18—Servants, can be "employees," anybody that is employed, anyone that is under authority, **be submissive**, which is "to yield or to be under or to be subject to," **to your masters**, those that are over us. Now, this can be physical in employment or it can be spiritual authority, **with all fear**, "with all respect." So we are to yield our spirit (the natural carnal mind), we're to yield and respect authority - all authority. So we are to have this "fear," which is this respect toward authority over us, physical authority and spiritual authority, **not only to the good and gentle**, not only to those that are treating us well because they might like us, **but also to the harsh**. So someone that is harsh is someone that is not on the straight path. They've gone off and they're doing their own selfishness. So this is not going to be easy. It's not easy to do, which is this yielding to a harsh authority. Because this takes character. This takes faith. This takes a change of a way of thinking. Because what's the natural way? Well, anyone that treats us harshly, by nature we'll go and pull them down and we'll criticize them. We'll justify ourselves. We'll *defend* the self. Yet Jesus Christ gave us the example: "When He was reviled," He was pulled down, He was criticized and mocked, "He reviled not," because He had clear thinking. He had the mind of God. He knew about His purpose.

So, brethren, if we are criticized by those that are harsh (in other words, it's not justified, it's not really fair), we don't retaliate. We don't go out and try to defend ourselves, and we don't get out and try to get revenge. No, we respect the authority. We take what it is and we work with it, because we have to develop the mind of God. Because that's the purpose of life, to take on the mind of God.

Verse 19—For this is grace, this is God's way of thinking, **because of conscience towards God**, because of the way we think, because we have a relationship with God, **one endures grief, suffering wrongfully**. Now, *this* takes godly thinking. This takes character. Because by nature we won't do it. We will not do this. We will *not yield* to correction from somebody we think is unfair, or it's unjust: "I don't deserve to be corrected." "For this is favor," so this is something that we should be thinking about and taking on board, "if for conscience towards God," because we think towards God, we love God and we show God-love by the way we live, "we endure grief," in relationships, "suffering wrongfully." So we're criticized or something goes wrong, there's an injustice in this. Well, this is taking on righteousness. We're suffering

for righteousness' sake. Because we think differently, we are different, we will be criticized, we will endure grief, and we will suffer wrongfully in relationships and there will be a lot of injustice because we think differently. Now, *this* is a guarantee, brethren. We think differently, we are going to suffer ridicule and persecution, *but* that does not mean that we should *stop* sacrificing ourselves. We should *not* be criticizing others. We should *not* be retaliating. Because we're different. We should rejoice in it. We don't have to retaliate because of our suffering for righteousness sake. We should take it because this is favor or this is what God knows is going to happen to us because of our conscience towards God because of what we do. We obey God. We yield to God's spirit. We're going to endure grief. We're going to endure sufferings, and we're going to be accused wrongfully in all types of different relationships. Not only at work but within marriages as well.

Verse 20—For what credit is it if, when you are beaten, which is "corrected," **for your faults...** Let's just say we do something wrong just naturally, because that's the way we are, that's our personality, we're going to get beaten for that. Well, we deserve that. We actually *deserve* that. ...**you take it patiently?** So what credit is it if we're corrected because we are wrong and we take it patiently? We should just simply swallow our pride and not justify ourselves. We should just take it. We deserve it. It's not an injustice, it's probably justice. So what credit is it? Well, there's none. That's what we should be doing anyway because we should be corrected because we're wrong.

But when you do good and suffer for it, if you take it patiently—we should take it patiently, we shouldn't be retaliating—we should take it patiently; **this is commendable** (this is grace, this is favor) **before God.** "But when you do good," if we do good, which is God's good, which is righteousness in us, "and suffer for it, and you take it patiently," this is what God desires of us. This is what God requires. So if we do something wrong on a physical level, on a human level and we get corrected, well, that also, brethren, we should take it patiently, because we are of God. But if we do something good, which is God's good, which is righteousness, and we suffer because of righteousness, we take it patiently. We should. Well, that's what we *should* be doing. Well, God says that's what He desires of us. That is God's favor living in us because we're living as Jesus Christ did. We're living the thinking of God.

Verse 21—For to this you were called, so this is why we were called. We're to live grace towards others, we're to live love towards others. That's why we were called. Not to retaliate, but to live the thinking of God is why we were called, **because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps,** that we should follow His steps. All those that are called are going to suffer. So we're going to be called, we're going to come into a relationship with God, we're going to change the way we think, we're going to *suffer* because of this change in thinking, because we're taking on the mind of God, the mind of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ suffered for an example that we should follow Him. We're going to follow in His suffering. So, brethren, we're going to suffer. We're going to be spoken ill of. Well, we should be rejoicing in it because it's grace before God.

Verse 22, now talking about Jesus Christ, because He's suffered because of righteousness sake, He, **who committed no sin, nor was guile**, which is "deceit, or insult, or a manipulation, or a lie," **found in His mouth**. So He didn't retaliate. He didn't have any lie or deceit (which we have by nature).

Verse 23— who, when He was reviled, which means when He was insulted - He was righteous and was insulted - **did not revile in return**. He didn't retaliate. He didn't try to get even. He didn't even *think* about getting even. But we do. When we're reviled we will justify and we'll try to defend ourselves. Well, we have to learn to think differently about it. So when reviled we are to revile not. Now, we can only do this if we learn to take on the thinking of God. We should have clear thinking on the spirit of the matter. Continuing on... **when He (Jesus Christ) suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him (to God the Father) who judges righteously**. So we're not to lift ourselves up, brethren, to think that we know better or we know what is right and wrong in a matter. We should take these things and we should understand that we've been called to suffer. We've been called to change the way we think, and therefore, this transformation *can* take place because God will power it by His spirit.

Verse 24—who Himself bore our sins, referring to Jesus Christ, **in His own body on the tree, that we, baptized members of the Body of Christ, having died to sins, might live for righteousness**. So we have the benefit, brethren, of being called, and our sins can be forgiven (based on baptism and ongoing repentance), that we might live for righteousness. What is "living for righteousness?" Living for righteousness is taking on the very mind, the very thinking of God. That's why we live, to take on this change of thinking. ...**by whose stripes you are healed**. So we are healed on a spiritual level because of what Jesus Christ did.

Verse 25—For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and the Overseer of your life. So we have this spiritual healing, and that spiritual healing is the healing of the mind. We have one way of thinking and now we are changing the way we think (powered by God's holy spirit), because that is what God is doing in our life. Well, we are like sheep who have gone astray, wandering off everywhere, *but* we are now returning to the Shepherd, to Jesus Christ, the Overseer of our life, of our spiritual life!

So, brethren, we have this opportunity to continue to transform the way we think by yielding to God.

Now, we'll change the sermon series name, but we'll continue on with this theme of righteousness, God's thinking versus selfishness (our thinking), and this whole transformation that must take place. And we're also going to look at what we *have* changed and things we still need to change within our thinking. Because there's many of things that God has placed in the Church where we think we have changed the way we think. The reality is we've only just scratched the surface of changing the way we think about matters, because we have a human nature and we have grown up in this world. And God requires us to come out of this world, change the way we think, and it takes time. A person cannot change the way they think about a matter in just an overnight experience. This takes time. It takes time to absorb the way *God* thinks about a matter in its deep spiritual intent. No, we have to live our life working towards

yielding to God and overcoming selfishness. That is our purpose in life - all for the purpose of being changed to Elohim.

So we'll pick up the sermon shortly, but there will be a change in the title of the sermon.□