

The title of today's sermon is *Motive and Intent*, and this will be *Part 4*, and this should be the final part of this sermon series.

If you'd like to turn to Acts 8, and we'll start reading in verse 1. Before we do that, while you're turning there, we'll do a quick summary.

We've looked at the fact that God has an intent, and that intent is "to bring many sons to glory," the creation of a spirit family with His mind, with His character. We also looked at Satan's intent. And as Lucifer he had the intent "to be like the Most High," and he set out to destroy God's creation. And he did that successfully in the sense of destroying the earth, making it void, and from that point God then set out to re-construct, re-create the conditions on the earth so that man could exist, all for the purpose of "bringing many son's to glory." And since that time, Satan has been confined with the third of the angels to this earth, and they have set out to continue to destroy God's plan. And we've looked at many attempts that Satan has made to destroy God's purpose in creating Elohim.

And from that we've also examined man's motives, man's intent. Now, mankind does not know or understand his own intent, his own thinking. He believes he does, but he doesn't. And we have also seen that it is only by the power of God's holy spirit that anyone can begin to see their true motive, their true intent.

So let's pick it up now in **Acts 8:1—Now Saul**, and we understand that his name was eventually changed to be "Paul," and he's referred to as "Paul," but here it is as "Saul." **Now Saul was consenting to his death.** Now, he was part of this persecution that was taking place, and he had consented to the stoning of Stephen.

At that time a great persecution arose against the Church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. So what was taking place was this great persecution against the true Church of God, those that were now following Jesus Christ, and the apostles were preaching Jesus Christ as the Messiah, as the Anointed One, and He was being preached as the King of kings to come. There was a preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God, about a future, about a future government and a future King. And of course, here we have the Jews were in hostility against God's true Church, and here we have Paul who has set out now to persecute the Church. In other words, now to actually find them to kill them, and then often just simply put them in prison so that they would be taken before judgement. And because of that persecution, many of the brethren had fled. So everyone had fled. Here it says, "They all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the 12 apostles," who stayed back in Jerusalem.

And devout men carried Stephen, and made great lamentation/grief over him.

As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering every house and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. And that word there, "havoc," is "ravaged or devastate." So he's actually devastating the Church. So anybody that was a member of the Body of Christ at that time was actually persecuted and they were moving from region to region as Paul/Saul was chasing them, trying to find out who they were. So there would have been a lot of secrecy in the Church, and it wasn't that simple

for a member of the Body of Christ. They were the called out ones, just as we are today, and here we have somebody actively pursuing them and persecuting them.

Verse 4—Therefore, those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word. And that "Word" is the "Logos," the gospel of the Kingdom of God. It was about the Messiah. It was about Jesus Christ as the Anointed Messiah. He was the Savior and soon coming King. So as they were scattered out of Jerusalem where the 12 apostles stayed, people went out and were preaching (were speaking and teaching) about Jesus Christ. It would have been about the death of Jesus Christ and who Jesus Christ really was, the Anointed of God. He was sent for the purpose of salvation, and they knew that so they would have been speaking about this to everyone that they came in contact with within a region.

Then Philip, who was a deacon, **went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ**, and that word is "The Anointed," **to them**. So here it is, down in Samaria, here it is Philip is now beginning to tell them about Jesus Christ. And it would have been, also, part of the plan of Passover, what actually took place on that very part of Passover, and now they had killed Jesus Christ and how He was resurrected by God the Father all for the purpose of "bringing many sons to glory." So here it would have been (Philip would have been) preaching the gospel, which is the plan of God, which is about "bringing many sons to glory."

Verse 6—And the multitude, with one accord, heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. And that word is actually "sign." And what is a "sign"? Well, a sign is the evidence that is given of the power that is coming from God. Philip is "doing a miracle." What were they? What did they consider these miracles, or this "sign" that it was? Well, here it states in **verse 7— for unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed**, and that word is "have a hold on." So here it is, evil spirit world had a hold on the minds, the thinking of people, **and many that were paralyzed**, so "many who were paralyzed," **and lame were healed**. So many that were feeble. So on a physical plane they were having something take place.

So here we have people that were possessed by evil spirit beings — they had a hold on them, a hold on their thinking, the way that they behaved because of the mind. And many of those that were paralyzed, many that were feeble and sick were healed. So this is all physical things pointing to something spiritual. So all of these physical events that they could see, that they could hear and witness by their minds eye (because it would enter into their minds; they could see it), well, it all pointed to something spiritual. It all pointed to the power of God and Jesus Christ. **And there was great joy in that city**. So that's what's taking place in Philip's life.

Then we go on to **verse 9—But...** so now there is something opposite to what is taking place. Here is something that is taking place by the power of God's holy spirit, by the power of God *in* Philip, and God is working *through* Philip to be a witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and who Jesus Christ really was.

Now, **verse 9—But...** so now it's going to be something opposite to that. **But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery**, and that is actually "magic." He was practicing magic **in the city**, which is in Samaria, **and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great**. So he's actually claiming that he was great, so it's something about self-promotion. And these people were amazed because of the words that he spoke and because of his personality, and he also did particular "signs," which was signs of trickery. Now, it's common knowledge in the world of magicians that the ears override the eyes. And I've seen a particular test where they actually put up nine particular

dots on a screen and you were to count those dots. Well, they then put up the dots again but this time they put a sound, and when they put up the sound they only sounded out eight, but they put nine dots up, so when you were looking at the dots, you thought you were looking at the dots, but each dot had a sound. Well, your ear overrode your eyes, and so when they said, "How many were there?" people would say, "Well, there was only eight," because they heard eight sounds. But in actual fact, there were nine dots. So this is knowledge amongst what is called "magicians" today, that you can deceive the eye. And that's why it's very difficult for the mind sometimes to work out what a magician is doing, because they see something, but their senses tell them that there is something that is wrong here. It doesn't fit into the normal logical thinking of the mind. And it's because of the sleight of hand or trickery, by the way things are done.

So Simon Magus was one of self-promoting. He was actually promoting himself, claiming that he was great, that he was important.

Verse 10—to whom they all gave heed, so they all "gave sway to," they all listened to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And there are words that have been added there that really can say, "This *is* the great power of God." So they were giving credit to the trickery and the things that he was saying and doing, to God, because, "This *is* the great power of God," and by that inference it can be, "This man *is* the great power of God," because they believed he was demonstrating it...which was a lie.

And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. So over a long period of time he had actually been working this "magic" in front of them, so they believed what they saw.

Verse 12—But when they had believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. So we can see from this that they believed, and they believed what was being said, and therefore, from that, which is the same as in Acts 2, which is "repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins." So here it is, it's a deacon, and he's actually baptizing people, *but* there was no laying of hands taking place because he did not have that authority.

Verse 13—Then Simon himself also believed, so at some point he heard Philip preaching and he actually believed what was being said, **and when he was baptized,** so he's actually been baptized, **he continued with Philip.** Now Simon Magus is continuing with Philip, so he would have been seeing and hearing all the things that are taking place. Now, he would have seen the power of God being demonstrated because of the fact that demons were being cast out, and paralyzed people were being healed, and sick people were being healed. Now, this is something that he couldn't do, but he's now witnessing it with Philip, **and was amazed, seeing miracles and signs which were done.** So his motivation was towards self-glory and now he's seeing all this taking place. Well, he wanted that glory. He wanted that same power that God had given Philip, but he couldn't see God in the picture, really. He just wanted the power. His motive was wrong.

Verse 14—Now, when the apostles who were in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. Now, this very fact was that they would have seen people being called by God (because it requires a calling from God), so they see all these people being called, they see these people repenting and accepting Jesus Christ as their Passover and soon coming King, and

they are now being baptized for the remission of their sins (as was outlined in Acts 2), but because Philip hadn't been ordained with the authority to lay hands on them to receive God's holy spirit they have now sent down Peter and John who have that ordained authority, because they were apostles of God and they had the authority to lay hands *on* people.

Verse 15—who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the holy spirit.

So here it is, they've now gone down to this area and they're coming down there for the very intent of laying hands on them so that they can receive God's holy spirit.

Verse 16—For as yet it had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in/into the name of the Lord Jesus. So this is a water baptism that took place. Now, we understand that baptism is for the forgiveness of sin, and the reason sin is forgiven is so that God can dwell *in* a person, God can dwell in them, because God cannot dwell in sin. So the laying on of hands is an outward sign *of* the receipt of God's holy spirit.

Verse 17—Then they (the ministry) **laid hands on them, and they received the holy spirit,** which is the power of God, the ability to "see" spiritual matters. And it all takes place in the mind.

Verse 18—Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the holy spirit was given, he offered them money, so this now comes back to that whole aspect of why he was doing what he was doing. He saw this power. He saw what was taking place, and he'd seen Philip. Now he can see that an apostle, an ordained minister of God, was now able to lay hands on a person and the power of God will be given to them, into their mind. They would have this power. Now, he saw the power as not one of conversion, one of changing a person's inner thinking. This was about working miracles because that's what he had done before. His trickery and his magic was something to deceive the people for self-glory. Well, he wanted more. He wanted *this* power because of the credibility and the credit that would be given to him from others.

Let's have a look back in **Acts 6:2** (hold your place there). **Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.** Now, this is about something spiritual. They wanted to focus on the spiritual, but they were bogged down with physical matters, and because of this they wanted to now set up a structure that would support them in the work of God, which is they didn't want "to leave the word of God," which was preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, "to serve tables," which is about physical help, physical aid.

Verse 3—This is what took place. They actually told the brethren, **Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the holy spirit,** so they had to be converting. They had to have already been through this process of being baptized, repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands, **and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.** So this is about a physical act that is to take place. So the role of a deacon was to serve the Church, serve the brethren on a physical level. There is a spiritual principle connected to it, because it is about a spiritual matter, a willingness to sacrifice, a willingness to serve, which is spiritual in nature.

Verse 4—But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. So this is about the ministry and the work of the ministry, which is to preach the gospel and to have God involved in the life, because it is the work of God that is taking place.

Verse 5—And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the holy spirit, and Philip, and the others there, (verse 6) whom they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed they lay hands on them. So this is an ordination to the role of a deacon.

Verse 7—and the word of God spread and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, so the more people began to follow the way, the ways of God. They became students, a disciple of God. **And a great many of the priests,** and this is talking about "from the priesthood," which is the Levitical system, **a great many of the priests** from the Levitical system (Jews) **were obedient to the faith.** So there was a conversion that was taking place across many different ways of life, many different peoples within Jerusalem at that time.

Going back to **Acts 8**, and we'll pick it up again in **verse 19**. So Simon now had seen what had happened, and now he's **saying, Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the holy spirit.** So he wanted this power all for selfish reasons. He didn't realize it required a calling from God, it required genuine repentance, and then the receipt of God's holy spirit *wasn't* for self-glory but for the discipline of the self, to manage the self. The reason that we have God's holy spirit is for this transformation that must take place within the mind, within the way we think, from selfishness to giving.

Verse 20—But Peter said to him, Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased through money! So this is that motive. Here it is, Peter is doing the works of God by the power of God, by the power of God's holy spirit, because it is God's mind in him. God's power comes into his mind and he yields to it, and therefore, God can do the works out to the benefit of others. And it is God's holy spirit that is given to people from God; it doesn't come from a human being. So this "laying on of hands" is not about the person laying hands on a person. He can't do anything—he/she cannot do anything in relation to giving somebody the holy spirit. So there are times in times past (that can happen), where a person may demonstrate particular signs and a minister of God may come and lay hands on a person and God may not honor the prayer, that God's holy spirit may not be given to that person, because the ministry (he/she that does the role of an elder) has the authority to lay hands on somebody, does not mean to say that God will honor that. Because the person ordained as an elder is only fulfilling the role as they are directed, as they see it. But that does not always mean that God will honor that, that God will fulfill the actual outcome of the laying on of hands. Because it is a gift of God. It is something that God gives to a person—which is the power of His holy spirit, the power of God's mind *in* a person—and it cannot be purchased with money, because it requires a broken, contrite heart. It requires humility. It requires what God is doing with a person's life, not what the minister is doing. It's what God is doing.

Verse 21—You have neither/no part nor portion of this matter, so this matter is the Word. That word "matter" there is actually "Logos." "You, Simon Magus, have no part nor portion (no part) in this Logos," in the spreading of the gospel, in the preaching of the Word, the Word of God, **for your heart** ("your inner intent") **is not right**, and that word "right" is "straight," which is "not crooked." So, **Your heart is not right, it is not straight before God, is not right or straight in the sight of God,** which is "not right *before* God."

Verse 22—Repent. Now, this is the first part that needs to take place before baptism, repent. Well, here now he's being told, Peter is now telling Simon, "Repent," which is to *change* the way you think. **Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, your ill will, your sin, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your**

heart may be forgiven you. So the purpose is "that the thought, the purpose of your heart"... what is your intent? Well, that God be forgiving it.

Well, the reality is that Simon Magus did not repent. He did not change the way that he thought because of his selfishness. He desired self-glory. And we understand from that point, which we read in *Part 3*, about the formation of the Catholic Church, which took us to the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, that Simon Magus became the "Peter" of the Catholic Church.

Verse 23—For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity ("bound by sin"). So the cause of this bitterness was his own selfishness and idol worship because he worshipped something different. He worshipped a false god, and therefore, he was envious, he was bitter against the truth, because he couldn't *get* what he wanted out of it. He wanted to take for himself the glory that went with miracles.

Now, we understand that the working of a miracle or a sign is from God, and no credit can be taken to self. But the natural carnal mind can't see it that way. They will always look to the person who does the miracle or does the sign. Hence, his path was one of trickery, one of magic, and therefore, he took all the glory, "Look at me!" and therefore, all credibility was given to him for "his great power." Where the truth is, when it comes to God's Church, all the credit, all the glory for *everything* goes to God, that there is no minister that can "see" the truth. There is no apostle, no prophet, no evangelist, no elder that can "see" the truth of and by themselves. All the credit goes to God. So if somebody does "see" spiritually, the credit goes to God. It is not about the individual. It's about the work of God, what God is doing with a person.

Verse 24—Then Simon answered and said, Pray to the Lord for me—why?—that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me. So this is also selfishness, because he didn't want to pay the penalty. He was scared of the punishment. He wasn't scared of the sin, what the sin was, which is this envy and bitterness and asking for the holy spirit and, "I'll give you money," trying to bribe somebody to receive something, to receive power to self. He wasn't sorry for that. He was sorry at the fact that he might have to pay a penalty. And he wanted to be prayed for, "Let me not receive the penalty. I don't want to suffer in this in any way."

Verse 25—So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

Acts 9:1—Continuing on with Paul (or Saul as he was known then), and what he was actually doing. Now, we understand that he was there when Stephen was killed and that he gave authority for that to actually take place (when Stephen was stoned). Because *his* role, at this point, his intent was to destroy the Church of God. That's what his motive was and he was a very zealous man, and he was doing it with great zeal and vision and driven to this very point of destroying this "cult," this "way of life." And that's what *his* motive and *his* intent was. Where, the apostles' motive and intent was of preaching the good news, the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Acts 9:1—Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder, and that is "slaughter." So he was preaching this, he was still speaking against this way of life. He was talking about murder/slaughter **against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest...** so now he's looking for this authority. He wants to do *more* than what he is actually doing **...and asked letters from him** (from the high priest) **to the**

synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether man or woman, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now, this "were of the Way," this is that way of life. This is about us, brethren! We are "of the Way." Isn't that exciting to read, that there were many people then that were "of this Way," the ways of God. They were Commandment keepers. They were Sabbath keepers. They were Holy Day keepers. They were "of the Way" that Jesus Christ had lived and preached. And they were being persecuted on a physical level here, where you have Saul going around looking for every opportunity to take people and bind them, and in often cases they might even be killed. So we are "of the Way," and today we are still persecuted because of people's lack of knowledge.

At the moment there are persecutions going on in everybody's life in different ways to different degrees, all for the development of holy righteous character, if we understand what is really taking place. Because nothing takes place within a person's life without God's knowledge. We are the children of God. We are begotten sons of God. And therefore, what happens to us, God allows certain things, all for our spiritual benefit. And we often don't see that spiritual benefit, we can often look at it as a physical persecution. Well, here we have Saul physically persecuting people and desiring to kill them.

Verse 3—And as he (Saul) journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? So this is that principle that we can look at. If we are to ever talk about a member of the Body of Christ in a negative way, if we are to *attack* a member of the Body of Christ in any way, physically or spiritually (by the words that we speak or acts, or actions that we do), it's the same thing, "Why are you persecuting Me (Christ)?" Because we are members of the Body of Christ and we have Jesus Christ and God the Father living and dwelling in us, if a person attacks or accuses a member of the Body, they're attacking Christ, because that's the principle. To attack a member of the Body of Christ is to attack Christ. It's a principle we should always remember.

We can look at this and say, "What was Saul doing? That he was persecuting Christ by running around trying to destroy God's Church. He was a vehicle for Satan." Because that's exactly what Satan wants to do, which is to destroy God's Church. Well, here Saul is being used by Satan to destroy, and now we have Jesus Christ saying, "Why are you persecuting Me?" Now, Saul would not have realized that he was persecuting Christ. He would have seen it that he was just doing God a favor, really. In his own eyes he would think he was doing God a favor by getting rid of these people that were against *his* way of thinking.

Verse 5—And he said, Who are You, Lord? "Who are you, Master?" And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Is it hard for you to kick against the goads. This is another way of saying, "to offer a vain or dangerous resistance." It's a waste of time resisting God. It's a waste of time resisting Jesus Christ. So you're kicking against, you're going against something that you can't beat. "So it's all so hard, why you bothering? You can't win this!" So, "Is it hard for you to kick against the goads?" And he would have understood what that meant. "It's all a waste of time resisting God, resisting Jesus Christ."

Verse 6—So he (Saul), trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what do You want me to do? So this is that willing submission. "What do You will me to do?" So his submission, his yielding is obvious, because this is something that is taking place and he's struck down in his thinking as well, not only physically down to the ground but he's also seen within his mind's eye that there is no point resisting. This is an incredible event that is taking place in his life. **And the Lord said to him, Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.**

Verse 7—And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, so they could hear something and they could see what happened to Saul, but they were dumbstruck at this point. They just couldn't speak because of the event that had happened **...hearing a voice but seeing no one**. So they're hearing a voice, but they wouldn't have heard the words that were spoken to him—but they can hear a voice speaking...and they can't see anything that's going on, just hearing the voice.

Verse 8—Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. So he's opened his eyes and now he's blind. **But they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank**. So he's fasting during this three day period, but he's blind and he's actually in Damascus.

Verse 10—Now, there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord (talking about Jesus Christ) **said in a vision...** Now, this vision, we're not really sure, it doesn't say exactly, but more than likely it was in his mind's eye, in his mind. So Christ has said, **Ananias. And he said, Here I am, Lord**.

Verse 11—So the Lord said to him, Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, and behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him so that he might receive his sight. So also, Saul now has had this vision, he has seen in his mind that he is going to be healed, and it's going to be through Ananias. Now, this is actually evidence of God working that would have been great for Saul, because he's seen something, and when it takes place he knows this is God. And at this point he probably understood that this was Jesus Christ and what He was doing, and he'd had three days of fasting and God would have been working with his mind to bring him to a point that when this event takes place (when Ananias arrives) his conviction will be magnified.

Verse 13—Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. Saul's reputation was widespread, because the brethren, remember, had just scattered abroad and only the apostles were left in Jerusalem; and they had fled everywhere just to avoid this persecution. And Ananias is now saying to Jesus Christ, "Well, I've heard about this man. I know his reputation and how much harm, how much destruction, what he's actually done to Your saints," because they are the called out ones from God. They are people that God has set aside for holy use and purpose. They are people that are called for God's will and purpose because they are God's saints. They are God's holy ones. **And he has authority/power from the high priest to bind all who call on Your name**. So he has this authority, because of the priesthood, that they have given him this authority to act on their behalf, to destroy those that are "of the Way." So anybody that called on God's name, anyone that represents the Church of God could be persecuted by Saul.

Verse 15—But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before the gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. Now, this is an interesting point, because here it is Jesus Christ says, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine." Now, brethren, we are chosen as well. We are called and we have been chosen by God to fulfill a role in the Body of Christ. So we are chosen vessels, we are chosen vessels of God, and we have to fulfill a particular role, whatever that role is at this particular time. And one of those roles is "to bear My name." Well, we bear the name of God, we bear the name of Jesus Christ by the way we live our lives, the way we respond to God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us.

Well, here it is that Saul had a particular role that he must fulfill, so he'd been called "a special vessel" of Jesus Christ. Why? "To bear My name," the name of Jesus Christ, "before the gentiles, before kings, *and* the children of Israel." So he was to carry God's name, to preach the gospel to these particular groups.

Let's have a quick look at Revelation 10:11 (hold your place there). Because the reality is, brethren, we carry the name of God and we have the responsibility to carry the name of God before all people, gentiles, and the children of Israel, all of mankind because of the way we live our life. Well, here it's referring to an event that must soon take place again.

Revelation 10:11—And he said to me, You must prophecy, which is to speak of God's ways. **You must prophecy** (inspired speaking) **again**, and that word is "anew." **You must prophecy again/you must prophecy anew about**, well that is "or at" or "before" **many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings**. So this event is yet to take place. This is the future of the two witnesses of God, who are going to have to go again, because it's already been done once through a book called *2008—God's Final Witness*. It has already happened once. *Now* God is instructing them, that He said, "You must prophecy anew (you must prophecy again) about (at/before) many people, nations, tongues, and kings." Well, this is what God had called the two witnesses to. Well, this is something that God had called Saul to as a chosen vessel of God, chosen vessel of Jesus Christ, to bear God's name, to bear the name of Jesus Christ before gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. What an incredible thing that it is! That that is why when we go through scripture and we read the book of Revelation that we realize that this is the work of God. It's not the work of two people; it's the work of God *through* those two particular people.

Dropping down to verse 16. So we're in **Acts 9:16—For I (Christ) will show him**, and that word "show" is "forewarn." So here it is Christ is now going to say, "I'm going to forewarn Saul, **how many things he must suffer for My name's sake**." So he is going to suffer. And we know through various books that have been written that Paul did suffer for the sake/name of Jesus Christ. Well we, brethren, are the same. We are forewarned by God through the ministry that we are going to suffer because we're going to have to *choose* to love God before anything else.

Now, involved in that (Jesus Christ has warned us) that we're going to have to suffer for His name's sake. Well, we suffer because we carry the name "Church of God—PKG." We suffer. We suffer because we are obedient to God in spirit and truth; therefore, we have been forewarned that "this is what is going to take place." Our life is one of suffering all for the purpose of transforming our mind, all part of God's true intent, which is "to bring many sons to glory." And we suffer because of that. And we suffer because we have an adversary. We have Satan and his demons who set out to destroy us at any opportunity, looking for the weak link in our armor...because we have weak links which are called sin. *Any* sin that we have is a weak link in our thinking, and therefore, we are going to suffer because of choices that we make. We're going to suffer because the choice to obey God.

I know in various conversations with people that it's come up and I've said, "Your life will be one of suffering." And the reality is, when we get into that in more detail, it's because of two things. If we follow God, we are going to suffer because of the persecution that comes from Satan and his demons; therefore, man's system will fight against us. And part of that suffering is so we obey God, we're going to suffer. Obedience causes suffering because we live in this present evil age, where, in the future when we get into the Millennium and the Hundred-Years, obedience will not cause *suffering*. It's a beautiful thing to come to understand, that at the moment, all obedience to God causes suffering because we have an adversary and we have this world's system that fights against us.

Let's take, for example, the Sabbath day. Obedience to God on the Sabbath brings a joy and a delight because it's a day of education, it's a day of God pouring out His spirit to us to develop the mind of God, the thinking of God, to develop the Word in us, the thinking of God in us. Well, we're persecuted because everybody in the world (and Satan's system) requires us to work on a Holy Day or on a Sabbath. That's what *they* require; therefore, there is a suffering, there is a financial suffering. There is a suffering because people will turn against us often in employment. Now, we're blessed if that doesn't happen. But there are many other things that we will suffer in this world because of Satan's system, because it sets out to punish us for our obedience to God. So, we suffer.

Well, if we don't obey God and we fall into man's ways or in Satan's system, we're going to suffer because there's a penalty for breaking God's law, and it's in the mind, often, but often to do with physical as well. So either way we are going to suffer. Obedience to God will cause suffering because of Satan and the demons and man's system. Obedience to Satan and his system will cause suffering because there is going to be a penalty for sin. "The wages of sin is death." The wages of sin, on a progressive basis, is a deterioration of the mind...a deterioration of the mind. We'll become mentally ill. And it's talking about something spiritual there.

Verse 16, again... For I (Christ) will show him (Saul) how many things he must suffer for My name's sake.

Verse 17—And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, whom appeared to you on the road as you came, He has sent me and that you may receive your sight and be filled with the holy spirit. "Be filled with the Logos, filled with the power of God's mind, the way to think."

Verse 18—And immediately there fell from his eyes, like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. So he's gone through this process now. He's been baptized and also he has been now filled with God's holy spirit.

Verse 19—And when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Verse 20—Immediately, so this is something that has happened straight away. He's been now healed of his sight problem, he has now been baptized, he's also received God's holy spirit, and he's taken some food and he's got his strength back. Then, **Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.** So he's filled by the holy spirit; it is God is living and dwelling in him doing the works, providing him the mind, the words to speak. Because of? God's holy spirit.

Verse 21—Then all who heard were amazed, and said, Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose? So now they're saying, "Well, he's come now (his intent, his purpose, his motive) is 'come to destroy.' He's sort of like a 'plant.' He's coming here to destroy us. And isn't that what he's really intending to do?" **...so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?** So they've asked this question: "Isn't that why you're really here?" **But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ/is the Messiah.** Now, all his preaching would have been from the Old Testament scriptures (because the New Testament hadn't been written at this point), which is about the Messiah, about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ *as* the soon coming King.

Verse 23—Now, after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. Now we can see the intent, the motive, and the purpose of what the Jews had done. Because here we have this Jew (Saul) and he had set out to destroy the followers of Jesus Christ, those "in the Way," the way of God, and that's what Saul had done. Well, now they've had someone who's done a complete reversal, that Jesus Christ has intervened into his life and God now has set him for a task which is to *serve God*, to serve God, to preach the gospel, and to declare God's name (the name of Jesus Christ as well), "before the gentiles, before kings, and all the children of Israel." So we see this happening. So the Jews now have had to change direction. Now they've had to say, "Well, what are we going to do?" Well, the easiest way is "to cut him off, to kill him, to cut off the head." So the Jews now plotted to kill Saul, **But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him.** So they've set a trap. So their intent is to kill him. His intent is to save his life and get out of the place. **Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.** So this is the motive and intent, which we can see.

Now the purpose of going through all these, brethren, is because we need to examine our motive. We need to examine *our* intent. We need to look at why we do the things we do. Now, if we look at things like the way we respond... if somebody says something to us, generally we kick straight into our natural carnal mind's recording, which is a normal response, the same response, the one that we've always had. Well, God requires us to examine ourselves, to think through *why* we responded.

So, let's just say we do respond a particular way that isn't Godly, and because of the conviction of God's holy spirit we come to see that that response was not right. Well, now the point is that we need to go into our minds and look at, say, "Why did we do it?" Well, we know, we understand, brethren, we see, that our response is based on self-protection. It's based on pride. It's based on pride. Now, once we know it, we then can sit down and say, "Well, next time this happens, *this* is the way I plan to respond," which is in a Godly manner. Now, it may be no response is the best response. But there may be another way to respond, which is, "Yes, you were right and I was wrong." They're the types of responses we need to think through, and not to justify our response, not to justify ourselves, which is caused by pride.

Now, this is something that we can learn over time and it's something that we can start to implement. And the best way to do it is to start with something small. Whenever we catch ourselves responding in a wrong way—which is an unGodly way, which is a way of pride or self-defence or justification—we can catch ourselves in it. And we may not fix it there, straight on the spot, but next time we can determine and set in our mind that we want to act in a Godly way. So we can "jump the needle out of the groove," and set a new way of responding so that when that happens to us it won't be an automatic response from self, but it will be a response based on God's holy spirit, because we've had time to think about it, we've had time to meditate on it, and we've had time to *choose* to respond God's way. And that's the secret to it, to have come to a decision where we have already *chosen* the way to respond, which is using God's holy spirit. And that's why motive and intent is important.

Motive and intent is important to God because it's the foundation of who we are, why we do the things we do. Well, if we are transforming, if we are changing, we'll be working on changing our intents, changing our motives. We'll be working on self. Now, that is the sign that we are begotten children of God, because we'll be looking at the way we think, every day examining ourselves, "Why did I do *that*? Why did I do it *this* way?"

Well, I know from experience in my own life that there are many times that "the needle is in the groove" and my response is automatic because it's from me; it's from the self; it's self-protection; it's

justification. When examining it, I realize that I was wrong, but often because of pride we hold on to our own integrity and think we're still right. But deep down we know that we were wrong. So when we see that, the point is now to choose to change, so to think through a response so that the next time that happens to us we can respond in a Godly way.

So the intent of a person is of great importance to God.

Let's go back to **Genesis 9:8-16—Then God spoke to Noah and his sons with him, saying: As for Me (God), behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature (life) that is with you: the birds, the cattle (beasts), and every beast (every living thing) of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast (living life) of the earth.** Now, God's intent here is one of mercy, and it reveals it because of the way He is responding here. The flood has taken place, and the animals are to come out of the ark, and God is saying now, "I've established this agreement with you and your descendants, and every living life that comes off the ark."

Verse 11—Therefore, I establish My covenant with you, and this covenant is, **Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.** Now, this is an oath that is coming from God because it is something that He has established. "I establish My agreement with you," and the agreement was one that life would not be destroyed en masse by a flood. The whole earth would never be covered. Now, there are going to be floods where life is going to be lost, but here it is God is saying He's not going to cut off *all flesh*, but there will be floods and there will be destruction because of it, but God would never destroy all of the earth and all of the living life at that time by means of a flood.

Verse 12—And God said: This is the sign (token) of the agreement/of the covenant which I make between Me and you, so there's going to be, now, a sign that God has made this agreement, **and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud.** Now, it's interesting that God is saying, "*I set My rainbow...*" So every time we see a rainbow we should see that this is the agreement that God has made with mankind and with living life, because it is *God's* rainbow; He did it! So up until this time there were no rainbows in the sky. So this is something that God has now created for the benefit of mankind, to remind mankind of a promise (of an agreement) that He has with mankind.

Verse 13—I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. Now, every time we see it we shouldn't be thinking, "There's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow," which is the way that Satan has now taken things and twisted them, so that the average person now, when they see a rainbow, they think what? Selfishness. So rather than a sign of an agreement of God's great mercy for a mankind and for life, Satan has taken the sign that God has put in the sky, in the cloud, that He did for mankind for a benefit of mankind, for a relationship of a promise (of an agreement), Satan's taken it, twisted it so that mankind now would see this sign, or this token that *God* has done (because it's God's rainbow), but he's taken it and twisted it so that man thinks selfishly. Because when a man sees (man or woman, mankind sees) a rainbow (this is God's agreement), when he sees it, he thinks money. "There's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow." He thinks selfishly.

Now, he may look at it and say, "Wow, what a beautiful appearance that is in the sky," but he doesn't think, "This is the agreement of God." He doesn't think that way, because the education system has got rid of God's word, therefore, mankind, children don't understand, they do not "see" the beauty of the

rainbow—because it's spiritual. It's a promise of God. It reveals God, the glory of God. To be able to create this particular amount of colors in a rainbow, the reflection of light and the way that a rainbow is, which is a "bow," is just magnificent and it's wonderful! But mankind doesn't see it. He doesn't understand its spiritual intent.

Verse 14—It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; (verse 15) and I will remember, and it's "called to mind," I will call to mind My covenant. So God doesn't have to remember why He did it; He knows full well. But it is made for mankind. **I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.** So that is the promise. And this is when God allows this, because it is something that God has created, that when a rainbow appears because of the reflection of light against the mist or the light from the rain, it is a beautiful thing, and it is all there for a remembrance. And it's something that we should recall to mind, that it is an agreement between God and mankind.

Verse 16—The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. Then God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth. So this is an agreement that is something physical. But for us, brethren, it is also a sign of the mercy and the glory of God. So we can "see" this. We can see this agreement, and every time we see a rainbow we should remember the beauty and the glory and the magnificence of God, the Almighty God.

God has stood by His agreement not to destroy all mankind with a flood, and has provided a sign for us to see and remember His promise. The waters of the flood covered the earth, covered and got rid of those living sin. So the purpose of the flood was to destroy those in mercy. It was a sign of God's mercy because it was getting rid of sin, getting rid of those that were living sin, living in sin, choosing sin. God was going to continue His plan "of bringing many sons to glory," through eight humans. Because the eight that were on the ark were to come off and continue the creation of mankind through reproduction, and God would then have that potential "to bring many sons to glory." So this is God's plan. This is God's purpose. And the flood, just like Sodom and Gomorrah, is actually a sign of God's great mercy.

Now man, if you were to say to people, "Well, the flood was all for the purpose of saving the spirit for another day," people would just look at you and laugh and say, "What do you mean?" They cannot see the mercy of God in Sodom and Gomorrah. They cannot see the mercy of God in the flood. They just can't see it. But we, brethren, because these things are spiritual in nature, we understand that both of these events are signs of God's great mercy. By destroying people that are sinning God is showing mercy, because He can save their spirit for another day, which is that Hundred-Year period, where sin will be reduced... where sin will be reduced *because* Satan and the demons are removed. Therefore, the temptation, the broadcasting will have stopped, and therefore, that tempting, that *active* tempting will have ceased. Mankind's minds will be free from temptation.

Although the natural carnal mind will still yield to its selfishness, the broadcasting of sin, the transmitting of sin will not be there, and that will make life easier. So God's plan was one of saving the spirit for another day.

At the time of our water baptism we established and entered into an agreement with God. So here we see a flood and we see, now, a rainbow being established because of God's great mercy—and it's an agreement that God had made with mankind. Well, that water baptism when we were baptized, when we were immersed, we came into an agreement with God. We entered this agreement. Our water baptism is the covering of our personal sin by full immersion (which is symbolic), then we are to receive the power to walk anew.

Now, this whole process of repentance, baptism, and the receiving of God's holy spirit is the beginning of the creation of Elohim, it's the *beginning* "of bringing many sons to glory," because it requires a calling. The only way to enter into Elohim, to come to be a "son of God" is through repentance, and then it requires this water baptism, which is the covering of our personal sin, this full immersion, which is a symbolic gesture of the covering of sin. We want to die, we want to bury the old self so that we can walk anew, but the only way to walk anew is to walk with the power of God's holy spirit, otherwise, we'd be walking with the natural carnal mind of selfishness.

The point is, will we stand by our agreement? Now, there have been many that have made this agreement and have not stood by it, where God has stood by His agreements, because God can't sin. God made an agreement with mankind never to flood *all* of the earth, never destroy *all* of life, and His agreement is a sign (which is the rainbow). Well, we have a sign of our agreement, and that was baptism. Baptism was the sign of our agreement.

So let's review the main points of that agreement that we took and look at the signs that we can establish that we are walking *in* that agreement. This agreement reveals our intent. So when we were baptized, our intent was to walk before God in spirit and truth. That's what we agreed to. That was our motive, otherwise, we wouldn't have done it. So through this calling, through us being given a portion of God's holy spirit that comes to us to be able to grant us the gift of repentance, then we see, yes, we were wrong. Now we are agreeing to come into an agreement with God that we will walk in God's ways.

So what is it that we have agreed to? Well, let's have a look at some of the points. So, at baptism, what was it that we agreed to? We had stated that we wanted to repent of sin and turn to obeying God's commandments, especially that of keeping God's Sabbaths. We agreed with God that we were sinners, transgressors of the law. So that's what we agreed with God. That's what we said we were. We had agreed that we were now going to start to obey God's laws, the Ten Commandments, in spirit and truth, especially the starting by keeping God's Sabbath.

Now, the importance of that is without God's Sabbath we cannot be transforming, because on the Sabbath God actually provides more of His spirit so that we can see spiritual matters, and therefore, hearing the sermon on the Sabbath is essential. Because it is by the sermon that God is speaking to us in our minds. Now, we've agreed with God that we were sinners, we were transgressors of the law, and we want to repent of that. We want to be cleansed of all sin up until that point.

Another point was we believe that this is God's true Church, the Church of God—PKG is God's true Church. We agreed with God that He has established one true Church in which He works. We agreed that Jesus Christ was appointed to be our Savior, our High Priest, Head of the Church, and our soon coming King. So these are things that we agreed. With God in our agreement to walk anew, we had already declared before God, because of our baptism, this is what we had said, we believe this is God's true Church. We believe this is where God is working! We believe that God has established *one* true

Church and the true Church is where God's spirit dwells, where God dwells, where God dwells in His people. This is where God works! Now, at baptism that's what we agreed to.

We agreed that Jesus Christ was appointed to be our Savior, and that's why we receive baptism, for the forgiveness of our sins, because of the death of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ *is* our High Priest, that He *is* the Mediator for us before God. We believe that Jesus Christ has been appointed as the Head of God's Church, and we believe that Jesus Christ is our soon coming King.

Now, these are all things that we committed to when we were baptised. We desired to be forgiven of sin and to receive the impregnation of God's holy spirit, to be begotten. We agreed that water baptism was an outward sign of the covering of our personal sins to that point in time. All sin was covered, forgiven by God.

Now, isn't that a beautiful thing to receive and to remember? This is the agreement that we had made. This is our understanding that we had, and we still have. But there are many that have chosen to forget this agreement, to break this agreement that we've just been through.

We know that all sin was forgiven to that point in time, and therefore, we needed to walk anew, and we needed God's holy spirit from that point. Because if we sinned after baptism there'd need to be a process of forgiveness, and that can only happen through the power of God's holy spirit to give us access to God (through the power of God's holy spirit), so that we could confess our sins, so that we could be forgiven as we forgive others. We agreed that by the laying on of hands of a true minister of God that God would provide a portion of His holy spirit which would empower us to walk a new way of life, God's way of thinking, to walk "the Way." The way that Saul was persecuting, well, this is the way we walk, and we can only walk it by the power of the portion of God's holy spirit which lives and dwells in us, because it empowers us to walk a new way of life, which is the way, the ways of Gods. We agreed that we could be forgiven of all future sin based on our repentance before God in spirit and truth.

Well, that's the agreement that we have made, brethren, and it's important to often go back and just recommit to that agreement. And we do that at Passover. The annual Passover is a recommitment of the agreement that we made at baptism. We commit our life to God, to serve God in humility, to serve and to sacrifice, to serve mankind in spirit, which is an attitude. Our intent is to serve God. Our intent is to sacrifice the self to the benefit of others. So that is often something that we need to reflect on and to look at and examine. And each Passover we recommit to it, but during the year we should take a little bit of time, "What is my agreement? What is my agreement with God?" We can go back over and look at what our agreement was, which we've just done.

We've looked at this agreement that we believe this is God's true Church, that we believe that Jesus Christ *is* our Savior, our High Priest, and that this *is* God's true Church, Jesus Christ is the head of God's true Church and He is our soon coming King. We've committed to live the way of God, which is to live the way of Christ, the way Christ lived, and therefore, we are to check and monitor our motive and our intent, the why we do what we do.

Romans 6:1. This is basically the baptism chapter, or it's referred to as the baptism chapter, because it is about water baptism and the purpose of baptism.

Romans 6:1—What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace, now, that word is "favor, mercy, or forgiveness" may abound? What it's really saying is, "more sin so that more mercy can be given?" So what he's saying is, "What shall we say then? Shall we say this? Shall we continue in sin? Shall we just do more and more and more sin so that more and more mercy from God can be given, more forgiveness then can be given?" That's the question that's asked.

Verse 2—Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin, because "the wages of sin is death" and we know what it does, it's destruction and it causes hurt and pain to others and to ourselves, **live any longer in it?** So that's the question. So, "Certainly not!" We shouldn't continue to sin because of what it does. It destroys. It hurts. It hurts us and it hurts others; therefore, we shouldn't live any longer in it! **Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** So this is the outward sign of what we did at baptism.

Verse 4—Therefore, we who were buried with Him through baptism into death, which is what we did, which was this outward sign. So when we were plunged under the water (when we were immersed in the water and covered), it was a sign of our willingness to die the same as Jesus Christ did, which is the death of Jesus Christ. We were baptized into His death. **...that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.** So as Jesus Christ was resurrected back to spirit to be in Elohim, the first of the firstfruits—He was resurrected from the dead by the glory of God the Father, because it was God that did it—we should then walk a new way of life. So when we're resurrected, when we come up out of the water, when we raise up out of the water, we are to then to walk anew. And of course, we can't do it by ourselves. We can't do it by ourselves because we are still the same person. We need the power of God to do it. We need God's power living and dwelling in us.

We are to bury the old self. We are now servants of God, not servants of self. So this is that real transformation that's taking place. We've now changed from being a servant of self, which is selfishness, we are now servants of God which is now sacrificing the self to the benefit of others. We walk a new person, no longer selfish, and we do that by serving God in spirit (which is intent, the intent of why we do it)—we serve God in spirit. Intent is righteousness, which is God's spirit in us, God's thinking in us—and truth. We do it the way God tells us to do it. We choose to live a new way, which is to live the way God has revealed. We live the way God has revealed by the power of His holy spirit. Because God is the one who reveals *how* we are to worship Him and what we should think and the way we should live.

We walk in the spirit of the law. We walk in repentance. And that's the basis of this sermon, *Motive and Intent*, because to walk in repentance is to walk in considering and checking and monitoring and adjusting and changing our motives and intent, the why we do what we do. Because the natural carnal mind does things for pride and selfishness. God's holy spirit does things for the glory of God, to *live* God's way, to live God's thinking out to the benefit of others.

So we are to walk in repentance, which is this continual monitoring of selfishness, the monitoring of our thinking, our words and our actions. So we walk in the spirit of the law. We look at our intent, why we do what we do. We look at the beauty of the law and the *reasoning's* behind it. Because God made the law for a purpose, and that was "to bring many sons to glory," ...to bring many sons to glory. Because this is the way to live, this is the way to check and monitor our own self, to see whether it *is* in tune with God's way.

Verse 5—For if we had been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His resurrection*, and we know that from 1 Corinthians 15, "raised in the glory of His character." So this is our purpose in life. We want to walk anew now by the power of God's holy spirit, all for some point in time that we will be raised "in the likeness of His resurrection." We'll be given spirit life. It'll be "a son to glory," which is God's purpose. That is God's intent. Well, our motive is (our intent is) to be with God the Father and Jesus Christ for life-everlasting.

Verse 6—knowing this, that our old man was impaled (put to death) **with *Him*,** as Jesus Christ was impaled to a pole, well, we too, we do it every day, we're impaling ourselves every day, **that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves/servants of sin,** no longer controlled by sin because we're going to "get that needle and jump it out of the groove," we're going to jump it out of the groove, because the groove is sin. Because the natural carnal mind is in a groove. It responds a particular way, and it's always the same way based on selfishness. Well, we don't want to be controlled like that. We don't want that needle to be in that groove; we want to jump it out. And we can only jump it out by considering the jumping out, by considering the need to change, the need to take it out of that groove, which is all about considering why we do what we do.

We are coming out of the control of Egypt, out from the bondage of selfishness. We will no longer *practice sin*. Now that's an interesting point, because in the selfishness we practice sin. That's what we do; we just think sin. We just practice it. We just do it. Well, we no longer practice it. Doesn't mean to say that we won't sin. It just means to say that we've set our mind not to practice it, not to be that way. We don't want to be selfish. So now and again when we *are* selfish we can monitor it, we can check it, and we can look at why we did that, and then we can set our minds, set our will not to do it that way in the future. And over time, we change, we *transform* our thinking...we transform our thinking.

Verse 7—For he who has died (by baptism) **has been freed** (cleared) **from sin.** So the penalty has been paid. So, "he who has died," which is us, brethren. Once we have been baptized, we are freed, we are cleared from the penalty of sin—"the wages of sin is death"—because it's been paid for us by the death of Jesus Christ. **Now if we died with/in Christ, we believe that we shall also live in/with Christ,** Christ's thinking, which is God's thinking *in us*, because we're going to have the same mind. The real reason for Passover is now revealed, because of the death of Jesus Christ, which is the ability now to have Jesus Christ and God the Father live *in us*. So "if Christ died, we believe that we shall also live *in Him*," we are in unity *with* God because of God's thinking. We are at-one with God. And now *that*, Christ died so that we could have life, life living *in us*, spirit life – not only in the future, but now. We can have an aspect of God's life (God's thinking, Logos), living and dwelling in us *now* all for the purpose that one day we will be given *everlasting* life...everlasting *spirit* life in Elohim, "a son to glory."

Verse 9—knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more, because He has everlasting spirit life. **Death no longer has dominion over Him,** because he can't die, because he is in Elohim.

Now God's intent and Christ's intent is revealed. **Verse 10—For *the death* that He died** (Christ), **He** (Christ) **died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives,** as a spirit being in Elohim, **He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin** (at baptism), **but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.** And that's by Passover, this ongoing repentance and God's spirit in us which gives us life. So we don't have life living and dwelling in us unless we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. And that's why sin is so dangerous. That's why sin is so ugly, because it cuts us off from the thinking of

God. Because we desire God's spirit to flow into us so that we can think like God, so that we can *choose* to *yield* to God's spirit and allow God to live out to the benefit of others. Because when we allow God's spirit to flow into us and we yield to it, it is God doing the work out to the benefit of others. It is God living *in us*.

Verse 12—Therefore, do not let (and therefore, it's a personal choice that is to be made), so, **therefore, do not let**, so it's *our* choice brethren. **...do not let sin reign/rule in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.** So don't yield to our selfish desires that work in our thinking. This outlines much about the natural carnal mind, because it is about these lusts, these desires that we have, which are all based on selfishness. And we know that in the book of John it goes through "the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life..." These things are all desires. These are motivations. These are intents that live *in us*, because that's the way we were made. And once seeing this, the beauty of it is recognizing it and accepting it.

In times past it's always been said, "We're always hearing how bad we are...you know, how bad we are." Well, it's true! The point being is that we are to recognize it and *agree* with it. And *that's* the point. Just listening to the fact that, yes, we're bad, yes, we have a natural carnal mind, and yes, we are selfish, well, that's good knowledge to have, but agreeing with it and accepting it is the point. Because the moment we agree with it, the moment we *accept* it, we then might do something about it, because we accept it, "That's the way I am!" Therefore, if we accept that we are that way that is fantastic, because that is the beginning of repentance. "I accept that I am selfish," now, this is the beginning of accepting it. *Then* we can move to begin to overcome it by the power of God's holy spirit. We see what we are and we don't want to be this way anymore, and that's the key to life. We do not want to be this way anymore; we want to fight against it. Our intent is to fight against ourselves.

Verse 12, again, Therefore, do not let sin reign/rule in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. So that's the key to life, not to obey, but to fight, to fight against the desires (these natural desires) the needle that is in this groove, this *habit* of responding, to fight against it.

Verse 13—And do not present your members, which is the mind, the thoughts, words, and actions, **as instruments of unrighteousness to sin;** we have a choice whether to yield to sin or not. Because it is our choice, whether we want to present our members as instruments of unrighteousness, which is to sin. That's our choice. But what we have chosen, what's our intent? What's our motive? **...but present yourselves to God as being alive,** because of the power of God's holy spirit, **from the dead, and your members** (our mind, our thoughts, our words, and our actions) **as instruments of righteousness,** which is God's thinking, **to God.** "Instruments of righteousness to God." We present our minds, our spirit, our intent to God as, "Yes, we are willing to yield to You. We are willing to yield to Your Logos, your words *in us*." Obedience to God's way is required.

So that's the choice that we have every day, and that's why we have to continually ask and think why are we doing it this way? Why are we responding this way? And when we do that, honestly "see" that we *are* selfish, and no big drama. Because often people can get depressed and say, "Oh, I'm selfish," and get all depressed. Well, that's not the point. The point is accepting that we *are* this way; this is the way we are made. Accept it. Acknowledge it. But now move with God's spirit to fight against it and to choose we do not want to be this way anymore.

Verse 14—For sin shall not have dominion/control over you, for you are not under the law, you're not under the penalty of sin because of repentance. So we're no longer under this penalty because we are fighting against what we are, and therefore, the penalty of sin (which is death) is no longer on us because we are fighting against it, and we go to God and God will forgive us so we don't have to pay the death penalty. So we're no longer under the penalty of the law, which is death, **but under grace.** We're under mercy from God because of *His* forgiveness. Isn't that an incredible picture?!

So what is the sign that we are still in agreement with God? That's a good question, really. What is the sign that we are in agreement with God. Remember that agreement that we made at baptism? Well, what are the signs that we're still in that agreement?

These are the signs that we are still honoring our commitment to God. Now, God has honored His commitment to us. He is honoring His commitment to forgive us as long as we forgive others. All of these spiritual gifts that He has given us, the calling that He has given (He has called us for a purpose), we were baptized for a purpose, and we receive God's holy spirit for a purpose.

So what is the sign that we are honoring that commitment that we made on the day that we were immersed, the day that we were baptized, on the day we received God's holy spirit? We now have the power of God living and dwelling in us to allow us to have this relationship with God and this relationship with one another.

Well, these are the signs that we are still honoring our agreement with God.

1. We are always in a state of personal repentance before God.

So we are always continually monitoring and checking our thoughts, our words, and our actions. So we're monitoring them. We're seeing *why* we are doing what we are doing. We're looking at our intent. We're examining ourselves to say, "Well, why did I do it this way? Why did I respond that way?" And we're beginning to see, "Well, I did it because of my selfishness. I'm doing it. I'm justifying. I'm doing these things because I'm protecting myself." And therefore, if we are doing that we are actually still in this agreement with God, we're honoring this agreement, because that's what we set out to do. We set out to transform our thinking. We set out, because of the power of God's holy spirit, to agree with God. And therefore, if we are in this state of repentance, we are still in agreement with God, and that is one of the signs.

2. We are working within our thinking to transform the way we think from our way of selfishness to God's way of love.

So this is an active thing that we're doing. We're continually working.

3. We are in true fellowship with God and His people.

Now, when people leave the Body of Christ, the Church of God, they leave fellowship with God. They are breaking the agreement they made at baptism. And that's a sad thing. But this is the history of mankind, that God, when He makes an agreement, He keeps it. He is God. He is all-mighty. And His word is His word. His oath or His promise is His promise, and He will do it. He will not renege on that promise that He has made. The promises of Abraham, the promises of salvation to mankind that is being offered. And

what God has done in providing all of that, He will honor those. But mankind, because of the weak, selfish, human nature that we have, we don't always honor our commitment.

Well, when we leave true fellowship with God and with His people, we are breaking the agreement that we made at baptism. So a sign that we are keeping our agreement that we made at baptism is that we will be in fellowship with God on the Sabbath and Holy Days and during the week through prayer, and we will be in fellowship with His people. We will be in unity of doctrine. We will be able to talk to each other through inspired speaking because we're using God's holy spirit to guide our lives; therefore, we're going to be in fellowship, we're going to be in unity with God, and therefore, unity with His people who have God's thinking placed into their mind. And they too are transforming, just as we are.

4. We believe God and Christ. We believe the truth placed into God's true Church.

So this is another sign that we are still in agreement with God. Because at baptism we agreed that this is God's true Church, and we believe God, what God places in the Church through Jesus Christ, therefore, when the truth comes into the Church we believe God, we believe the truth. And the moment we no longer believe the truth that God places in the Church, we no longer believe God, we no longer believe Jesus Christ, therefore, we have fallen out of agreement. We are now *disagreeing* with God.

So they are four signs of whether or not we are still in an agreement with God, which we made at baptism. And God willing we will examine those commitments and re-examine them just to ensure and to re-establish that we desire, we intend to dwell in unity, to be in agreement with God, because that's the commitment we made.

So with that, brethren, we will finish *Part 4* of the sermon series *Motive and Intent*. □