

Welcome, everybody, to this seventh-day Sabbath.

We often find in today's world that books are written about self, improving self, finding self. The other day I started to watch a movie about somebody that was trying to find themselves, as if they're lost. Well, a lot of that is to do with the fact that they don't understand the purpose of life, and therefore, people find often that they don't fit in certain areas or don't fit into society or don't fit into their families. They're unsure of the purpose of life. They're unsure about themselves. They look at older people and they say, "Well, what's the purpose of it all? You just live and you die. You work all your life, you have family, and then you die. So what is it all about?" And often there has been movies and books written about self-help programs or helping self, trying to improve self, make self better.

Well, today's world is all about teaching people to protect self, to lift self up, to improve self. That's what many books are, self-help programs. The underlining word there is self-help. Well, in some political areas or in certain countries of political correctness or societies of political correctness everyone is about not offending somebody else and they're not allowed to use certain words. You normally use words like "white," "black," and here there was a program not long ago where people are ringing up and saying they were offended about being called a "woman" or a "man" or a "girl" or a "boy." For example, there was a group saying that they were no longer going to use the word "girl." A young girl rang up and said, "Well, what are we going to call it then? We can't call it "People's School," because it's not." It was an all-girl's school. There was no boy's allowed. So what are we going to call it? Just a school.

So people aren't allowed to say certain words. Another one that is often used is people will say, when somebody dies, they say they have "passed over," or they've "passed away." Now, what is it they've passed over? Passed over to what? Well, that's based on wrong beliefs because they've believed they've passed over to something else, when in actual fact they have died. They are dead and they've not "passed away"; they haven't gone away somewhere. No, they're dead in the ground. They're dead. They're waiting a resurrection. And of course, mankind doesn't know the truth; therefore, they can't answer these questions. But people are offended by the fact you say, "Ah, the person is dead," or "They've died." They would rather use terms that are softer or mellow. "Ah, they've 'passed over.'"

The title of today's sermon is *To Know Your "Self."*

Now, the difference here in this sermon is it's not one word. Because when most people write down "To Know Yourself," "yourself" is written as one word. Where this sermon is different. This sermon is not about political correctness. It's about a person that has been called by God. Your

self is two words. So the title is *To Know Your*—separate word—*"Self."* And "self" has two little brackets because this is about coming to know your selfishness. Two words: It's *To Know Your "Self,"* because we all have a "self." The Bible talks about it. It's called lust and desires, self, what makes up our human nature.

To know your self, to know our selfishness is what this is about, this calling is about. It's all designed to come to know who we are by nature. Now, the truth is we are selfish by design. A lot of people will say, "What do you mean, I'm selfish?" If you don't understand God's plan, if the world doesn't know God's plan, if it doesn't "see" God's plan they will always put "your self" as one word because they're looking for something, to know: "Well, why do I exist?" "What am I all about?" Well, once we're called and we receive God's holy spirit, God over time reveals our selves to ourselves, which is the selfishness that is in us, what we really are by nature. The purpose of life is to transform that thinking from one way of thinking - selfishness - to another way of thinking - giving, thinking like God, having love and mercy. There's a big gap, a big void here that has to be filled in. It's only through a calling that a person can begin to come to know who they really are.

Now, a lot of people would cringe at the fact that if we turned around and said, "Well, we're going to write a book and it's going to be about knowing or coming to 'see' your self." Now, what they would do is they'd say, "Ah, this is not motivating. This is not lifting me up." Because all of those self-help programs, much of it's based on pride. Not all of it; a lot of it is based on pride, coming to accept who you are and to walk around with your head held high knowing that you are something to somebody somewhere. That's what it's all about. Whereas this is different. God's word is about coming to know the selfishness, who we really are, and then to accept that, and then to walk humbly before God and before mankind because of the fact we know who we really are.

Well, who are we really? Well, we're called by God to be something. We're called by God at this point in time. Others haven't been called. We have. We've been called to take on the very mind of God for a purpose. We know the purpose of life. The purpose of life is to transform one's thinking from selfishness to love, to think like God so that at a point in time God in His great mercy and love for us will transform our mortal bodies to something different, to spirit, so that we can now live a true way of life, to really know who we are and what our real value is in Elohim. Incredible plan God has for us.

We, by design, are going to be all different colors. Whether we're black, yellow, white, or some other color in between, whether we're male or female (because they're the two genders that God has made), we by nature are motivated by the same thing. It's called self. The natural carnal mind, it's motivated by lusts.

Now, let's look at this topic about coming to know our self, our selfishness. We're going to look at that, but the reason is it's going to be very motivating. It's not a put down. It's not, "Ah, woe. I'm

just terrible by nature." Well, we know that and in knowing that we should take great encouragement. We should be motivated because we know who we are; we know the purpose of life. All of the rest of the world, if they're not called, they don't know it. No, "We'll run around and go on long walking trips or take on various things or join monastery's or join different clubs or read different books or self-help programs or get into psychology, trying to work out why do we think the way we think—all of those things—and look at motivations and intents, trying to, without God's spirit." Well, without God's spirit they cannot truly see their motive and intent, but with God's spirit we're going to see the difference. One is motivated by self, selfishness. The other is going to be motivated by the power of God's spirit which is motivated by love. Two clear choices here. Well, without God's spirit a person cannot "see" self. Absolutely impossible. They might see elements of their own selfishness, but it will be justified or put into a box called "psychology," and say, "Well, they did this because of 'this' and 'this and this,'" when the reality is everybody does something in life for two reasons. If you haven't got God's spirit everything that is done - and that is everything that is done - is because of their self, their selfishness, their motivation. They might look like they're doing certain things because they're being kind or generous or merciful, all those things, well, it doesn't make any difference. Deep down self is getting something back. Can't be seen, but it is there. It's truly there.

Well, once we have God's spirit God allows us to begin to see the self in us and once we start to see the self in us we start to see our motives and intent, that we do things because of our selfishness. It's like a mother's love, which is selfish by nature, because they love their own child differently than they love other people's children. Because it's natural.

Well, with God's spirit we begin to see this intent, this motive that is within us, and therefore, we recognize what we are, selfish by design, and that we don't want to be that way anymore. We want to have a different love, which is the love of God. That love of God is the same as the love of Jesus Christ that he died for all. So it didn't matter whether a person was of any different nationality or race or color, it makes no difference whether they're male or female. Makes no difference because God sacrificed for all. Jesus Christ sacrificed for all. No prejudice. No bias. Now, natural way of thinking is we are prejudice and we have biases, even though we don't recognize them, we don't see them, but we have them. Everybody has them, and because we know this, we shouldn't get depressed about it. We should be motivated by it because to come to know one's self, to come to know your self is an incredible gift from God. It has to be given from God.

Well, if we have this gift, this ability to see (because it's powered by God's holy spirit, we have the gift of God's holy spirit) this is an incredible blessing and we should grasp hold of this blessing because every time we "see" our self, the real self, we should be uplifted and encouraged by it because we are now in a position to change the way we think. We're now in a position to transform our thinking. This is an incredible gift, because mankind of and by himself cannot transform his thinking. He cannot transform from his selfish thinking to thinking like God. It's only

a gift from God, a calling, a baptism, a receipt of God's holy spirit that a person can begin this transformation of life. They can come to know the self.

We'll look at a scripture that clarifies this. **1 John 2:15-17—Do not love, do not desire, the world**, which is to do with the way of thinking, the natural way of thinking, of doing things, **or the things in the world**, which is about its society; it's about its behaviors. For example, the music and the things that go on behind the various aspects of music. Not all music is evil, but the majority of it is motivated by pride. There's a little pride behind the presenter giving it. I was watching a program the other day and I realized quickly that the person that was doing it was half-naked. You know, the breasts are out, the backsides out; it's just an incredible thing that's going on. It wasn't about the music; it was about the person and the performance and their hand movements and their gestures and their jerking of the body. Well, all of these things, well, they're all about the world.

Well, we're not to desire these things, which is not to love, not to desire them, not to want them in our thinking. "Do not love the world," and that is everything to do with the way that it operates, the political systems that it has, the music that it has, the way of living that is presented, all the lifestyles that are presented, all the material things that are presented as good, that are in actual fact doing us great damage. Well, we're not to love these or want them or desire them. "Or the things in the world," which is everything to do with what the society is based on, Satan's system, is presenting, which is mainly to do with sin.

We are not to love sin. We're not to desire or want the things of sin in the world. **If anyone loves**, which is anyone desires **the world**, which is to do with anyone who desires the sin, the temporary pleasure that is connected to these things, **the love (the agape) of the Father is not in him**, not in them. So it's two clear choices here: The natural mind of selfishness, the desires of the world - sin, darkness, temporary pleasures. If we love them and we want them and we desire them, which is fulfilling "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life," that's what's really going on; well, if that's the case, the love, which is the mind of God, the thinking of God the Father is not in us. We are selfish. We're operating in selfishness.

We have been called to overcome that selfishness, to overcome those desires. If we want those things, well, our minds will be in those things. We'll want them; we'll look at them as valuable when the reality is they have no value. The reality is sin has no value. We have to come to see that in our own minds, that sin, selfishness, has no value. It will destroy itself. It's destroying a person. Selfishness destroys a person's mind, a person's thinking. "But the love of God," the love of the Father, if it's dwelling in us, well, it's not destroying, it's leading to something. It's leading to life. It's leading to pleasures forevermore, true pleasures, the way of give instead of the way of get, as Mr. Armstrong used to say.

Verse 16—For all that is in the world, which is everything to do with the world's thinking—the **lust of the flesh**. Now, this is a great draw for the world. It's about satisfying the self, satisfying

the flesh, the pleasures that are associated to them. They're emotionally based. It's about a mind and an emotion that takes place within the mind. These pleasures, they want to be fulfilled, the desires of them. ...**the lust of the eyes**, which is in the way we think. It's in the thinking. Because the eye, of itself, is not evil. What enters the eye can be evil and we take it on board and it enters the eyes and it goes into the mind. Now, that's where the problem is. The eye of itself is not evil. It's the thinking that is evil. So these things enter the mind through the eyes, and therefore, it becomes a problem because it's what we do with what we have seen, what we do with the thoughts that we have.

And the next one ...**the pride of life**. Now, this is to do with pride in itself, fulfilling what we desire in our thinking. Physical action is done. We will then speak about it. We will lift ourselves up. So we take these things on board within our mind, and because we have a natural mind it wants to protect self - so we'll justify and defend. The pride of life - justification is the pride of life. The other aspect of pride is we will not be humble. We will think of ourselves as better. Because when you look at all these things that have gone on in the world and the self-help programs, it's really about pride. It's about lifting one's self up to be better than someone else, trying to fit into something.

When we come to see God's truth, when we understand the truth, we have a purpose in life. God has a purpose for us and we will fit perfectly, and it's a role of service. Whereas the role of pride is not about service, it's about getting for self, taking to self. Therefore, the pride of life is a big problem for all mankind. Whether we have money, generally to do with pride. It's, "Look at me! I gained it!" Or whether we have none, there's an element of pride in that too, because we then, because we're at this level of not having a lot of income, we generally because of our pride will look out and say, "Oh, look at them!" and condemn others that might have money, whether they've got it the right way or the wrong way. It's just another element of pride. Pride just doesn't come when a person has wealth; pride comes when a person can be poor too. We can have all these desires because of our pride, because of what we are, what we think we are, and what we've worked out for ourselves.

Well, these things, these three areas of pride that are mentioned here, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," **is not of the Father but is of the world**, because it's Satan's system, it's Satan's way of taking to self, which is going to destroy everything. In the end selfishness will destroy everything! Everything is going to be destroyed. Satan's way is to destroy. Well, we can see, because we have God's spirit, that these lusts and this pride that is in us will destroy everything because that's what Satan's system is about; it's about destruction. So we can see that we have these by nature. It's the way we are. God designed this for a purpose and that purpose is that we will fight against these things that are within us. They're just natural; they're in us. We've been called to enter into this battle, to come to know our self, the self within us, the selfishness within us.

And once we see it, we identify it, we understand its motive and intent is all based on pride,

therefore, we learn to fight against it. With the power of God's holy spirit we can overcome it, these various lusts, or desires that are in us. The definition of lust is: Lust is to desire or covet for selfish reasons. The area there that is most important is "selfish reasons." The reason we do things. The reason we like things the way we like them, generally, are based on our own selfishness.

Now, not every single thing in life is selfish. There are certain aspects of things like color. We may like various colors. Somebody might like wearing blue. Someone might like wearing green or browns or taupes, whatever color. Well, those things are fine to do as God has made color, that we see color. Well, those things are fine and they're not selfish by design. They're just who we are. We like certain things. We like certain foods that are clean. We, some people, like eating fish. Some people like eating meat. Well, there's nothing wrong with those things. So not every aspect, not every element of a decision making process is selfish by design.

But within us, if we're not careful, those things lead to pride because a person will then take that, that they like, they like a particular thing, like, "I like eating meat," for example, "and don't like eating fish." We have to be careful that we don't look down on those people or view other people that like eating fish as less than because that's the natural way of life; we tend to lift ourselves up because of our choices even though there is nothing wrong with those choices and anybody can like certain things. Some people like to just eat vegetables, for example, well, there's no right or wrong in that, it's just up to an individual choice and there's no sin involved, but there can be sin if we're not careful about the way we then view others from that perspective. "Well, I like eating vegetables, and all these people are meat eaters," or, "They eat fish." Or fish eaters look at people that eat meat and pull them down within their thinking. No, those things are not by nature evil. This is talking about something that is selfish because there's sin involved, and it's all to do with the way a person thinks.

God has called us to come to see our self, to know what our basic human nature is, what it really is. We've been called by God to do God's will and not our own. That's the problem within the natural mind. The natural mind is we want to do our own will. We want to fulfill the lusts and desires that are in us based and motivated by pride.

Wrong desires and lusts started within the angelic realm. The angelic realm was made with a mind that was different, and it was made with a mind that served God, served God's will and purpose. Mankind is different. We've been created differently. We've been created with these lust and desires that are in us by nature, all for the purpose of us overcoming them. God created mankind for the purpose of creating a family, a spirit family that is not motivated by lusts or wrong selfish desires because these desires can lead to sin because they're wrong. They're taking to self and it's motivated by pride. To enter Elohim a person must transform the way they think by the power of God's holy spirit.

1 John 2:17—just finishing this scripture off. **And the world is passing away...** Yes, it's all

temporary, and these pleasures that are with it and the lusts and the desires of it are all going to be passing away. ...and the lust of it; but he who does the will of the Father abides forever. They'll be given everlasting life. So the purpose of life is to overcome our selfishness, to identify it within ourselves, not in others, but within ourselves so that we can overcome self.

Romans 12:1—I beseech you, I urge you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you yield (present) your bodies a living sacrifice. Now, we're alive and we have to now sacrifice something. We have to sacrifice those desires. We've got to get rid of them. We've got to put them to death. Now, we're alive and we have these motivations, these thoughts, these aspects of pride, these aspects of various desires, of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes. Well, what is God doing to us? God is giving us the opportunity to choose to yield to Him and how do we do that? By putting to death these desires. So we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*. And do not be conformed to this world, which is all about this human reasoning, aspects of lusts and desires, and the pride of life, but be transformed, so we have to be changed. We've got to be changed to something by (how?) through the renewing of your mind. So it's all about our mind. It's the way we think because when you go back to our nature it's the way we think. When you look at lusts of the flesh, well, it's a way of thinking. It's what we think about. It's a desire that's within our thinking, that we desire something. Well, we've got to control it.

Now, sexual behaviours or sexual thinking is one of these things that has to be overcome. We have to renew the way we think. Now, the difficulty has been for mankind, and still is to this point in time (but it will change in the Millennium), is that a man's thinking is polluted virtually very early. Because it's the way a man thinks towards a woman and the way that a man thinks towards a woman is about self-gratification. It's a lust of the flesh. He looks at women, generally, as objects, objects of pleasure. That's what the whole industry of the music industry and TV industry is about. It's about fulfilling this lust of the flesh because it's the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes because it enters the eyes, goes into the mind, and then a man has to deal with it. Well, God says we have to transform from that way of thinking; the way that a man looks at a woman has to be changed. He's not to look at them as objects, objects of service, objects of selfish satisfaction, because that's the vast majority of mankind.

Now, when you look at various religions, what do they do? A man looks at a woman as subservient, which is less than he is, therefore, women in general are oppressed by mankind because of the desires of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life because he lifts himself up in pride and he sees women as objects. He owns that object and he has certain reasons that she should do as she is told.

God desires us to transform the way we think, so this is a big challenge for this world, younger people. There was a program on TV the other day that was describing about the use of pornography on the internet. I was rather shocked to come to understand and to see that when they did all this research, that of course pornography is viewed by a certain group of people.

When she revealed it was mainly between 12 years of age and 18 years of age, that was the vast majority of people looking at pornography on the Internet. 12 to 18! It staggered me a little bit to realize at that age, that that's what's happening! The pollution, the corruption of the mind, the way that these young men are viewing women as objects of selfish satisfaction, it just staggered me to realize that that's the age group. The mind is being corrupted at such a young age that this is going to be an enormous thing to overcome. It's going to be very, very difficult for them to overcome because they are now leaning toward setting their minds in a way of viewing women as objects, objects of pleasure. They then have a view of women and the way that women should behave, even when they get married, that this is what a woman should do. This is the way she should behave.

Well, there's also an aspect that women are watching certain elements of pornography, and often that is to please the male, that that's the way they think they have to be to gain a husband or to satisfy a man. Well, these things are such pollutions that are in this world we should want nothing to do with the lusts of the world, the desires of the world and everything in it. Well, this is all part of it. What does God require of us? "And do not be conformed to this world," this way of thinking, this reasoning, the logic that goes on within natural minds. God says we shouldn't even be involved in any of this. We shouldn't have anything to do with it. We should desire something else. "But be transformed." How? "By the renewing of your mind," **that you may prove**, which is test this way of life because you're going to have to start to fight self, going to have to start to overcome self, going to have to start to say, "Ah, my eyes have to be turned away. This lust of the eyes, I've got to stop it. I've got to make a conscious choice, a conscious choice that I'm no longer going to look at things this way."

Now, it's not only to do with sexual objects. There's lots of other things where the wrong thinking enters the minds. For example, a person can be wrongly thinking about politics or governments or a political system. They're all pollutions of the mind because it all comes from mankind. And what are all the governments of this world? They're all the same. They're all based on "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." The main thing there is the pride of life because they're right in their own eyes. "This is the best system!" "I know what's best for you." "I can govern you." "I can help you." That's what they're thinking, and it's all about themselves, their image. They're going to promote themselves and when we look forward, all of that's going. Every aspect of that's going. It's all going because voting is going. It is no longer going to be people standing up to say, "Oh, I'll do the job! I want this job and I'm going to run and promote my name and put my name up on billboards all over the place and promote myself and my party, the way that I think. I conform to all the party rules and I do all that because I'm guaranteed an income and when I retire I get all my superannuation. I get all these benefits." That's the motivation why a lot of people do it. There may be some that have entered politics for a right reason in their thinking in the beginning, that they wanted to help because of certain biases they may have or certain understandings they may have, that they want to help, but it doesn't take long for them to fall into the trap of human nature, that the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the

pride of life takes over. All of those systems are wrong. They all have to go because they all came from a thinking, a way of thinking based on natural thinking, based on selfishness.

Well, God says that we have to now change that and we've got to live another way of life. We have to live God's way of life and prove to ourselves that this will bring happiness. The other ways don't, all those other political systems. In the future there won't be people putting up their hand and people won't be able to choose who is over them, who is governing them, because there's going to be Jesus Christ and 144,000. That's who's ruling and people are either going to have to accept the rule of government or not. It will be their choice. They can choose. Well, there's an outcome for accepting God's way of life and government, proving to themselves by living this way of life, it'll bring peace and happiness. And if not, well, it will lead to death. It's pretty straight forward. It's reasonably black and white because we have to transform the way we think.

A lot of this is about us choosing to transform the way we think. **...renewing your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.** We have to now change the way we think. We've got to change our intent. A person must have God's holy spirit to change their intent because we have to move from one intent, self-satisfaction, to another intent, satisfying others. And that's what sacrificing is about. When it goes back to, "a living sacrifice," what are we sacrificing? We have to learn to sacrifice the desires of our flesh, the desires of our mind, and we have to sacrifice the pride of life. We have to start putting these things to death. Then when we do we are going to see this transformation take place. It's going to be done because we are renewing our mind by the power of God's holy spirit and without God's holy spirit it's absolutely impossible to be done. We, brethren, have been called to overcome our lusts, our natural lusts, to overcome the natural desires that are within us and to take on the very mind of Christ, which is a way of sacrificing to the benefit of others. That's what we have been called to do. Now, the world hasn't. The world is trapped and it's going to continue to spiral down in its selfishness until the return of Jesus Christ because that's what man is doing, that's what man has chosen to do and we have to now choose another way of life. We have to choose now to transform our thinking. It is a personal choice and it is a battle, but we have to battle. That is the purpose of being called into the Body of Christ, the Church of God at this time, to overcome our selfishness, to overcome our self.

Philippians 3:17—Brethren, join in following my example, this is Paul writing to the Philippians, **and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern,** for an example. Paul is now saying to them, "Well, if you want to look at way to live, well, follow us because we are following Christ. If you follow us we're the example and don't look at others because they're not walking in as a way of life, they're not fighting against their selfishness. We are. We're fighting. This is the way you live. We're Sabbath keepers and we do all these other things." Well, "Follow Paul as Paul followed Christ," is what he's saying.

For many walk, this is talking about others no, **For many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping...** Because, why? Because they entered the way of life, this

overcoming of the desires that are within us, but they've given up on it. They've given in to their own choices. They have chosen to give into their own lusts and desires. Well, Paul now is saying, he's talking about this, but it's upsetting to see that people are walking away from what God has to offer. **...that they are the enemies of the death of Christ**, because of what Christ did for us; he has paid the penalty for sin.

Now, when we look at sin, sin is the transgression of God's law and that is because we give into those lusts and desires and the pride of life. We give into it. Well, that's sin. When we give into those things it is sin. Well, Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for us: "The wages of sin is death." Now, Paul goes back and refers to, **those whose end is destruction**, because of their selfishness, because they're not in a state of repentance. They are no longer fighting their lusts, their desires, and their pride. They're no longer doing it because they are now selfish. They are not fighting themselves or their self. They're no longer doing that.

...whose end is the destruction, whose god is their belly, because they've given in to lusts of the flesh, their desires. They're taking on things to satisfy self. They're satisfying themselves because of their selfishness. That's what they have chosen. **...and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things**. There's the problem because now what they're doing is they have "set their mind." They have chosen to now follow the world. They've "set their mind on earthly things," physical things, temporary pleasure of sin, self-satisfaction, selfish-ness. The self is dominating. Well, they've set their mind on earthly things. **For our citizenship is in heaven...** That's where God is holding it. There's a promise that we will be part of Elohim if we endure to the end, if we fight our selfishness. Now, this is the motivating and encouraging thing here. "Our citizenship," what we're looking forward to, "is in heaven." It's being held for us, **from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**. We look for the return of Jesus Christ. Our reward is being held for us. It's waiting for us. God has it and we wait for Jesus Christ so that He will give it to the 144,000, those that are remaining alive at this time for the return of Jesus Christ. Others will live into the Millennium.

Verse 21—who, talking about Jesus Christ, **will transform** (change) **our lowly body** (physical) **that it may be conformed to his glorious body**, to a spirit body. This is an incredible thing that we are waiting for. We're waiting for this day to take place. Now, for some it'll be at the return of Christ. For others it will be at the end of the thousand years. But this same promise is there. It's being held, our citizenship, where God desires us to be is part of His family. Well, it's being reserved for us. Well, we have to now continue to fight. We have to continue to transform our thinking so that what? So that our bodies will be transformed and "conformed to the image of his glorious body," to spirit being, **according to the working by which he** (Jesus Christ) **is able even to subdue all things to himself**, to bring everything into subjection.

Well, that's our choice. We have to demonstrate certain things. Now, the key to all of this is to demonstrate self-control because when we look at the word "self-control" we say it so quickly, but when you break it down we have to come to the point of "self" control. We have to learn to

control the selfishness in us. We are now to take control of our desires. That's the purpose of life. That's why we're in the Body of Christ, the Church of God. All the thinking that goes on within a natural mind, well, we've got to take control of it. That's our purpose, take control of our desires, take control of our lusts, take control of our pride. Well, this all boils down to the choice is ours, whether we want to do that or not is our choice.

Our choice has to be to overcome these desires. We want to overcome them. We want to conquer them. Well, in all of this we have to see the need to change. We can only see the need to change if we're called and that God is revealing our selves to ourselves. We see the selfishness. We see the comparison. We see the comparison. Now, when we see the comparison we see the way we think, and we think, "Oh boy, this is not good. This thinking is not right." Well, then we have to choose to sacrifice it. So it all comes down to this process. We then are given this calling, and in this calling we begin to see ourselves because God, by the power of His holy spirit, reveals to ourselves our self, our selfishness. We have to come to know our self, know your "self." Now, when we come to know it and see it, we then have to choose to overcome it. We have to make a conscious choice to say, "I don't want to be this way anymore," and we now choose to conquer self, to overcome it, to put it to death. We have to choose to sacrifice self.

Now, in all of this what comes out of it, is that we begin, by the power of God's holy spirit, because God does the works, God reveals those things, we now choose God's way of life. We don't want to be the way we are by nature. We realize what we are. We realize what we can be and we choose the end one; we want to be like God. We want to be love. We want to be merciful. We want to overcome selfishness. We don't like "self." We see the "self." We see how ugly it is and how much damage it does to ourselves, but also to others. We hurt others by nature. Now, that statement is very powerful, really. We hurt others by nature because we're natural. Because why? Because of these lusts, these desires, and the pride that's in us, we put others second. We don't put them first. We don't give up self to serve others. We do it by nature. We just take to self, and in doing that, we will hurt others by nature because that's the way we are. Well, God wants us to choose to sacrifice ourselves so we have to take control of our desires. We have to exercise self-control.

Let's have a look at **James 4:1**. Referring to people in the Church, James is saying here, **Where do wars (where do battles) and fights come from among you?** Amongst the brethren, why are there problems with the brethren? Why are people not exercising self-control? Why are people lifting themselves up in pride and trying to fulfill their own desires? It's really what it's saying. Well, where do they come from? Why is this happening? **Do they not come from your desires (your lusts) for pleasure (sin)?** Because of sin, because we're lifting ourselves up in one of those three areas, we're doing something wrong within our thinking. **...that war in your members?** That's where they come from. So this was a question that James has written to the Church. "Where do fights come from?" Where do battles, where do wrong attitudes come from between you? Why are you fighting amongst yourselves? "You are doing this because of your desires." You're

seeking the pleasure; your selfishness is getting in the way. "For your desires are taking over." Your desires are taking over and you are no longer battling self. You're no longer exercising self-control; self is now taking over.

"From your desires for pleasure," because of sin, "that war in your members." Yes, they try to dominate our thinking. It's natural that these things are there. Now, when we don't exercise self-control there is going to be problems. We're going to hurt others. We're hurting ourselves; we're going to hurt others as well. We're going to be pulling down others. We're going to be in disagreement with others. We're not going to be fulfilling the spirit of the law at all because of our selfishness.

Verse 2—You lust, you have these wrong desires, and do not have. So we want things. So it's saying, "You lust. You desire these things. They're wrong desires," and they're all to do with pride, generally, "and you have not." What's this about? Well, because we're asking amiss. We're asking for something physical or we're seeking something physical, selfishness and pride, and we don't have, we don't have God's spirit living and dwelling in us because we're not exercising self-control powered by God's spirit.

You murder, because we're saying things wrong, we are hating, we have ill will to others. **You covet**, which is to take to self, try to fulfill one of those desires, **and you cannot obtain**, because we want more than what God is allocating to us, for example. **You fight and war**, amongst yourselves. **Yet you do not have because you ask amiss.** We have the wrong attitude because we're not exercising self-control, because we're not fighting and sacrificing the natural man and woman that's in us. We are all the same. We are all the same. We all have these three main elements in life. They're all at different degrees, but we all have the pride of life. Everyone has the pride of life and we'll take the smallest thing to lift ourselves up to put others down. That's just natural! Well, they're the things we have to be fighting.

And why do wars and fights come amongst us, brethren? Why? Well, because of desires and lusts and pride. That's why because we're not exercising self-control. In other words, self is taking control of us because it's within our thinking.

James 3:1—My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. This is really referring to having opinions, having opinions about things where we become teachers or have teacheritus, which is something that is natural within us. We make ourselves a teacher by viewing our opinions or giving our views or bringing scripture into things. I've suffered this at various times in my life and I'm aware that it's a problem within me. It's to do with pride. It's about the pride of life and it's just something that's natural within all of us to certain degrees, of having opinions or views about things. If we're not careful it can hurt others. Others see it before we see it ourselves. Well, these are things that we have to be battling. We have to be, first of all, aware of it, and once we're aware of it, well, then we can start to work on it. And is it resolved in a matter of days or weeks? No. It can take years. It's

taken years for me and it's going to keep going, I would say, the way that my mind is, that I know that I've got to take self-control of it. I've got to control the self. We have to be careful that pride doesn't get in the way and that we lift ourselves up with these views or opinions about how others should be or various things that go on with other people's lives that we think we have the solutions. Well, we might think we have the solutions. Well, that's not what it's about. So we're not to become teachers. We're not to have all these different views and opinions about things because we're lifting ourselves up in these areas.

For we all stumble. So everybody sins. Different degrees, everybody sins. **We all stumble in many things.** Those "many things" are "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." **For if anyone does not stumble in word,** now referring to something in particular, because, really, it all starts in the mind. When we think about things, and often things aren't said but we think certain things, well, we have to take control of that thinking. When we take control of that thinking and realize what it is, it's hurting others, it's hurting ourselves and it's not in unity with God, we will repent and conquer those things and we will gain self-control.

If anyone does not stumble in word, which means they've got control of their thinking - which is an incredible thing, because it can only be done by the power of God's holy spirit - **he is a perfect** (mature) **person.** They've mature spiritually. Doesn't mean to say they're not going to be sinning. They will. But they'll be using God's word as their guide and God's word will lead them to become mature spiritually where they will be exercising self-control. They'll be controlling their thinking. They'll be controlling their elements of pride. They'll have a level of humility. Doesn't mean to say they won't sin, because it says, "for we all stumble in many things," but if we don't stumble in words because we're getting control of self, this means we're showing spiritual maturity. **...able also to bridle the whole body,** because this level of self-control brings us into unity with God. We will come into unity with God's way of thinking because we're controlling self, the self that's in us that wants to dominate the way we think.

Verse 3—Indeed, we may put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Well, we understand that that's the way a horse is controlled. It goes in different directions because of this bit. When you pull on one side the horse feels the pressure and it will turn its head to that direction, and therefore, the whole body goes in one direction. Well, this is referring to something about our way of controlling self because we put this bit into the mouth of a horse and you turn it and it goes in one direction; it controls the direction it goes in.

Look also at ships. Although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned, which is the key here, the change of direction, **by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.** So something very small guides something that is large. It heads it in direction. Well, this is referring to the same for us. It starts in the mind and then it goes to what is said. So it starts in the mind so the mind can change the direction of a person. Well, that's what we've been called to do, change the direction from the natural carnal mind with its lusts and prides, to a new direction, God's direction, God's way of thinking.

Verse 5—Even so the tongue is a little member, it's such a small thing. It's only a physical little thing inside the mouth, but it's controlled by something else. It's controlled by the mind. It's the thinking. Well, this tongue **boasts great things**. Well, where does that come from? Comes from the mind! It comes from the mind because a person may say very little, but they can be thinking a lot. There are other people that say a lot and don't think a lot. It works both ways. But really, deep down it's the personality of the person; it's the thinking of a person. Well, here it is, "it boasts great things," because of pride, the pride of life.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! Well, we understand that, here in Australia in particular, bushfires, they start very small. Its one little match or one little cigarette bud or a bit of sun on the glass will start it up and it starts up and then all a minute it just starts and raises and all of a sudden it's a massive fire in the forest. Well, it all starts in the mind, the same thing, one little thought and if it's not governed or not controlled or not steered in the right direction, by the power of God's holy spirit, it will start a great fire. That fire will lead us out of a relationship with God and His people. It really does because we take things from the natural point of view, the natural perspective of things. That's how we view it by nature. Well, we have to be on guard all the time, that those lusts and desires and pride don't get in the way of God's holy spirit. That's a choice that we have to make. We have to choose to control our minds. It's a personal choice. It's something we have to do.

Verse 6—And the tongue is a fire, something small, a world of iniquity, a world of sin. **The tongue is so set among our members**, which is in the Church, **that it defiles the whole body**, because of various things that are said. It can go back to false doctrine. It can go back to criticism and pulling down others and just thought processes that all of a sudden are mentioned. A couple of words here and there that aren't in unity with God, that are not motivated by God's holy spirit. **...and sets on fire the course of nature; and is set on fire by hell** (by gehenna), because it leads to death. That's where it leads.

Verse 7—For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind, turned them into pets or trained them, like killer whales and dolphins and things like that. They've all been trained. They're being controlled—mainly because of food—but they can be controlled. **But no man can tame the tongue**, because it starts in the mind and it ends up coming out in the mouth. That's where it comes out, but it's things that are said. It means it's been thought of at some point in time; it's part of the person's thinking. It's only by God's holy spirit that a tongue can be tamed. "But no man," without God's holy spirit, "can tame the tongue." **It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison**. It pollutes. It hurts. It destroys because it's something that starts in the mind and it works up and at some point, "blech," out it comes, ill will. That's how ill will is. Ill will is a process of thinking.

Now, when you look at biases and prejudices, it all starts in the mind. It's just the way a person thinks. It can be thinking about a color. Now, I know people that have grown up where different races are together and it's a way of thinking, a pattern of thinking that starts up and all of a

sudden it'll come out in words or it'll come out in actions. We have God's holy spirit so that we can tame the tongue. It's the only way that it can be contained. The only way of exercising self-control is God's holy spirit.

Now, man has exercised self-control in various levels, but not on a spiritual level, because without God's spirit it can't contain anything on a spiritual level or control anything on a spiritual level, but people can control their weight. People have been able to control their bodies by exercise or control their minds on certain elements of things because of education. It's all to do with physical thinking rather than spiritual thinking. So, "no man can tame the tongue." You just can't because it's the way a person thinks. It's what's in them. It's the bias in them.

Someone that's a "Pollyanna," so to speak, viewing the world, it's because of the way they think. It's the way they've been brought up. It's what they are. It's their desires and their lusts and their pride that's in them and they view things through a certain eyes, which is all physical, but with God's holy spirit we can change this. We can change the fact that we can tame the tongue, and the tongue doesn't have to be "an unruly evil, full of deadly poison that pollutes," pollutes the body.

Verse 9—With it we bless our God, yes, through prayer and we praise God and thank God in humility for all the things He's done, a great mercy He's shown towards us. **With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men**, we gossip, we criticize, we pull down, **who have been made in the similitude of God**, "in the likeness of God." Well, in the Church, brethren, we need to be very, very careful about our thinking, and we need to be careful about our tongue. We need to control our tongue. We need to control our thinking first so that we can control our tongue.

Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. These things ought not to be so. It shouldn't be happening. With God's holy spirit we should be taking control of self. **Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter at the same opening?** No, it doesn't, therefore, why are we doing what we're doing in speaking against others or justifying our selfish ways. What are we doing? We can't be doing both. We have to be doing one or the other. We have to choose to overcome self.

Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives? No. Or a grapevine bear figs? No. Thus no spring can yield both salt water or fresh. It's either one or the other. We're either in agreement with God and conquering self or we're not in agreement with God and we're not conquering self; we're not overcoming self. We've been called to overcome self.

Proverbs 11:1. Just looking at this from the point of view of human nature, because we all have these things, and these are Proverbs that are outlining certain aspects of human nature, but they're much deeper in the sense of it's just not about things that are written here. Like this one here in **Proverbs 11:1—A false balance is an abomination to the LORD.** Well, that's just saying a

false balance. What's a false balance? Well, what would happen is there would be a scale and what they would do is say that something weighed, for example, 1 kilo, so it was false, so therefore, someone would put something on it, and they'd say, "Yep. That's 1 kilo." But in actual fact it wasn't. It was 1.1, for example. So therefore, it was a false balance. It wasn't giving a true reading. Well, this is all about intent. It's about deception. "Deception is an abomination to the Eternal." That's the issue, deception. Where does deception come from? It comes from within the mind. It starts in the mind. It's a desire. It's selfishness. It's taking to self. It's getting something. It's defrauding or deceiving somebody else. It's deception. Now, where does this deception come from? It's Satanic. Satan is the ultimate deceiver. He deceives. He deceives the natural mind.

The desires of the world are all a deception. It's all just a façade, really. It's all just false. When you look at what's going on in the pornography, what's going on in the internet, what's going on in advertising, the music program and the videos that are out there, well, it's all deception. They're saying, "This is what's important," because it's satisfying self. It's something you can take to self and get pleasure from sin. That is false. It's a deception. There's a temporary, temporary pleasure in sin, but it's not going to last because sin is going to be destroyed and everything associated with sin, so it's false. It's false. Sin is a deception. It's false. It's not going to lead to happiness. It's deceiving. So "a false balance," deceit, deception, "is an abomination to God." God does not deceive. Now, God has made us promises. God is not going to renege on those. He's not in it to deceive us, to kid us, or to fool us. God wants a family. God has promised us something, that if we exercise self-control, if we get control of self, and if we battle against those desires and the pride of life that we all have, God says if we endure to the end and if we conquer through the power of His holy spirit, He will give us life, which we've read.

Jesus Christ will transform our mortal bodies to something else, to spirit. God will give us the gift of life, something that's been reserved for us in heaven. It's wanting to be given. Well, we have to exercise controlling of self. Therefore, there is no deception in God, therefore, what are we? We, by nature, have deception. Now, it comes out in many areas. This is talking about "a false balance is an abomination to God." Well, deceit is. Where is the biggest level of deceit? It's within our thinking. We deceive ourselves let alone deceive others. Now, how do we deceive others? We all deceive others by the image that we portray. We portray an image to others. That is deceit. Rather than being ourselves, who we really are, we are all selfish. We're all filled with pride. We need to start to fight ourselves. We need to control our selves. We need to control our thinking. We're not to be deceitful.

Now, we've been through a period where God in His mercy is cleaning out the courtyard and bringing everybody into the temple, those that are choosing to fight, those that are choosing to endure to the end, those that are making the choice to fight self, to control self. God is not going to allow deception or deceit in His Church so we have to start to fight our selves, to control our thinking so that we are in the temple of God, so that we're not portraying a false image. Now, we all have done it. Every single human has done it, got an image of themselves and they've

portrayed a falsehood. It's not who they really are. It's not what they really think. You can meet people and you can talk to them and you don't know what's going on in their head. They could be sitting there saying, "You're just an idiot. You're just 'this,' you're just 'that,'" and they'll be smiling, acting, going, "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah." Because it's deceit. It's not open and honest. It's not the real person.

Now, in that there is wisdom to be used about there are times to say things and there are times not to say things. There's always the case of having to be in unity with God.

We have to be careful that we're not deceiving ourselves, that we're not portraying as falsehood that's can be within us.

Verse 1, continuing, **but a just weight is His delight**. An honest person, someone that's sincere, someone that's honest, someone that's humble, this is a delight to God. So this one here is talking about just scales and balance, about someone who's trying to get for self, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. God delights in someone who's honest about what they really are. We admit it. Yes, we're all the same. We all have this because that's the way we've all been designed.

Well, God says He delights when we're honest about who we are to ourselves and we then set out to conquer self, the transformation as we read before, transforming the way we think. It's a marvelous thing, but it has to be done by the power of God's spirit.

Continuing on. That's one aspect now of what we see as human nature and how God views it. God says it's an abomination if we walk around in deception, but He is delighted with us when we are open and honest about who we are, when we admit we have those faults and that we fight them and we set out to control self, exercise self-control.

Verse 2—When pride, which is this arrogance in thinking, **When pride comes, then comes shame**, comes confusion. There won't be any peace. Why? Because we're now hurting others. When a person is filled with pride and has pride, which we all have to various degrees and various elements about various things. We all have it. We don't understand that we're actually hurting others because pride or arrogance is sin. Now, sin hurts others. Sin hurts our selves. Well, we have to repent of pride, and pride starts in the way we think. It starts young in children and they're brought up in families and it's all about pride. People will die for a name or their name or they'll die because of a race or a color, all sorts of things all connected to pride. Well, when we move into this area of pride, about opinions, for example, who we think we are, this pride comes into our thinking, this arrogance, then comes shame because it's a shame to us to have pride, to exercise pride. It's a shameful thing because it's sin. It's sin.

But with the humble, someone that doesn't have pride, who sees themselves as lowly, they see themselves as they really are, because God has to give humility, true humility. By the power of His holy spirit He'll give us the right eyes to see. Now, a humble person sees they have the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. They see it. They know it and they begin to

control their tongue. They then begin to control their thinking. They rely on God's word as their guide in life. They then become humble because it's a gift from God. **But with the humble is wisdom.** "With the humble is the thinking of God," because "wisdom" is God's thinking. God creates in the person, peace, because they accept who they are. They don't have to lift themselves up to be anything in this world. They don't want anything of the world. They want what God is offering, therefore, they have a level of humility. Now, the world will see it possibly as weakness or stupidity or foolishness or whatever, but it doesn't matter. Who cares what the world thinks?

God says we're not to be of the world or desire anything of the world or in the world or what the world has, which is all to do with sin and pride and those lusts and desires. We're not to want any of that. No, we are to want humility. We want to be able to see ourselves as we are. We want to acknowledge, "This is true. This is who I am, and this is what I am like." I'm like that. You're like that. All humans are like this. We have the gift of God that we see it. This is an incredible thing. We want to get rid of self! I want to get rid of it. I want to destroy it, but it raises itself back up. It comes back in the way of pride; it comes back with the way that I think, all of the years of thinking one way and having to overcome that. I know there's still a lot in me that thinks wrongly; I acknowledge that. I know that. I don't know what all those things are, haven't been revealed to me yet in some of those things. I'm sure if God revealed everything you'd probably want to pack it all in and say, "I can't do it."

Well, the reality is I can't do it. God has to do it for me. God has to help me in this because even though I have this desire not to say the wrong thing or not to be a teacheritus attitude or not to be in that type of thinking or not to have pride or not to have various lusts or desires, I don't want those things, but they're there because I'm natural because I'm a man. I'm a normal person. I'm just like you. I've got all those things by nature. It's the way I am. I am just so thankful that God has revealed that to me, about who I am. Because of the fact that God's revealed it I know that God has granted me a level of humility because I have the thinking of God about certain things. Not everything, of certain things I have them because God has given them to me. It hasn't been something I have done. Nothing I can say that I've found or anything like that. No, I understand fully that everything is to do with spiritual matters and in God's great mercy He has allowed it to me at this time, like He has to you at this time. What an incredible blessing!

Well, we have wisdom and we have humility, lowliness, because we know who we are. The world doesn't! We don't want what the world's got. We don't want what Satan is offering. We think that's all just garbage. We want out of that. We want a change of government. We want a change of government. We want this whole world done away with, its attitudes, and all the sin that's in it, but the unfortunate part is we can get caught up in these things, in various elements that we don't even fully recognize, and we have to continue to seek God's help to see these things and to fight self. That's the only way we're ever going to overcome self or exercise self-control, is by the power of God's holy spirit. Because of and by ourselves, we can't do it because the natural mind

hasn't got that capacity.

Verse 3—The integrity of the upright will guide them, because we have this level of integrity because of our faith, of what we believe. We believe God, therefore, the integrity we have, for example, might be to do with Sabbath keeping. There's a level of integrity. We will not work on the Sabbath. We will not earn a living on the Sabbath. We won't paint the house. We won't do the washing on the Sabbath. So there's a level of integrity because of God's holy spirit. We're faithful to God. **...but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them**, because of this disobedience. So one is obedience, faithfulness, or disobedience, unfaithful. So people will pollute the Sabbath. They will do the washing on the Sabbath. They will paint the house on the Sabbath. Well, that perversity of thinking, because that's what it is, a perversity of thinking, that sin will destroy them in the end unless they get control of their thinking, unless they get control of their self. They have to come to know their self. We have to come to know our self. You have to come to know your self. And when we do that we then have a choice to make, but the choice is ours. Led by God's holy spirit we can make choices, but we still can sin in all of that because of wrong choices. All of this boils down to an individual choice to endure, to overcome self.

Verse 4—Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, they're not going to be of any good. When God decides to intervene into this world's affairs and things start to go wrong, riches don't profit in that day. When we get into the last fifty days money will mean nothing. Wealth will mean nothing because they're going to have no value at all. So, "riches do not profit in the day of wrath." When God's wrath comes it's not going to mean anything. **But**, there's a difference, **righteousness delivers from death**. Having God's holy spirit, being a member of the Body of Christ, the Church of God is the place of safety. It's where God is. It's God living and dwelling in us, righteousness, because we're only righteous if God lives and dwells within us. That's what will deliver us from death. Not just physical, but spiritual. "Righteousness delivers us from spiritual death."

Verse 5—The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way all right, because it's the way of life, it's the way they live, **but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them**, having God's faith, having God in us, having faithfulness, being faithful. **The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful, the disobedient, those who won't follow God's word, who won't choose to obey God, will be taken by their own lusts**, by their carnal mind. Their selfishness will take them and it will destroy them because these lusts destroy; they lead to death.

Revelation 2:7. We've been called to overcome self. Now, this overcoming self requires effort, requires choices. We will falter. We will err. We will stumble at all these different things, at all these efforts, but the beauty of all of it is that God has granted us the gift of repentance so that we "see" more of our self and we can go, "Ah, this is wrong. I've done it again." Or, "I've said it again." Or, "I've thought it again. I've been dwelling on this." Well, these things are important in the area of the fact that we see them so that we can repent, so that we choose every day that we don't want to be this way. We do not want this way of life. But in all of this God has given us

great opportunity to rejoice. This is not about a self-help program where we're going to be encouraged by pride. This is actually a program that God has got us on to be encouraged because of the promises if we do conquer self, if we establish a fight for the rest of our life and no matter when we stumble we repent and we continue on and we're motivated by what God is doing for us, because the motivation is that God in us is our motivation. It's an incredible thing that we've been given the opportunity to see our own nature. Mankind can't. They'll write thousands of books. There'll be psychology. There'll be all these manmade concepts about self-help programs and people will continue to go on trips to "find themselves" and all of that.

We have been given the opportunity to find our self. Incredible! And it starts with a calling. It all starts with a calling. A calling is the ability to find one's self. When we've found our self (the self in us), we then are given the opportunity to repent and change, which is this transformation of the mind, the way we think from one way of thinking (selfish) to another way of thinking (God's mind in us). Well, in all of this, God has made promises. We're going to go through these because they're very uplifting if we're willing to look at them to see what God is offering for the fact that if we choose to fight, to sacrifice self, to come to know one's self, if we're willing to recognize that and admit it there's a great rejoicing because of these promises of what God says He will do for us, which God is going to fulfill for 144,000 soon.

Revelation 2:7—He, any one of us, who has an ear, which means we're listening spiritually, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches. It can apply at any period of time, really. **To him who overcomes,** "To him who overcomes self, who fights self." We're willing to recognize our selfishness, everything that involves this selfishness to the spirit intent of it all because it is about the intent of what we do. "To him who overcomes," who recognizes it, admits it, and then continues to fight, to conquer, because "overcome" means "to conquer," we're conquering self. We haven't conquered all of it, but we're conquering it. "Overcomes," it's a continual action that we have to continue in. I (Jesus Christ) **will give to eat of the tree of life,** which is about God's spirit, **which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.** This is in Elohim. We're going to be given life and it's going to be God's spirit forever. Isn't this a marvelous promise? Never to sin again, never to have these lusts or desires that are wrong, never to have pride. Incredible things that are going to be promised to us, but we have to recognize that we've got these things now and we want to get rid of it because Christ here is promising that he is going to give us life, spirit life.

Revelation 2:11—He who has an ear, spiritually again, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches, which is to us called out ones. **He (or she), anybody who overcomes, anybody who conquers, shall not be hurt by the second death.** In other words, the second death, we know, is gehenna fire. We will be given eternal life not eternal death where they will die forever, in other words, have no life again. It's the lake of fire as Revelation 21:8 says. God says here if we are conquerors of self and we're battling and fighting self to the end we will not be given, we will not be hurt, by eternal death. We will not be hurt by the second death. What a great promise that is.

Revelation 2:17—He who has an ear, whether we're listening or not, let him hear what the
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spirit says to the Churches. To him who overcomes, him who overcomes self, lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, they're the things we have to be setting out to try to conquer, to recognize within ourselves and try to continue to conquer them and repent, by the power of God's holy spirit. **I will give some of the hidden manna to eat.** Now, we know the "hidden manna," as symbolically pointing to the Word of God, the mind of God. We'll be able to consume it. **And I will give him a white stone, and on the white stone a new name written which no one knows** (so there's no use trying to find it out), **except him who receives it.** Isn't that an incredible promise? It's something that is a mystery at this point in time because we don't really understand what that really means. The depth of it must be incredible. I'm sure that that one scripture alone is going to be revealed to the person who receives eternal life and this gift of God and what that really means. Incredible to be able to have God's mind, never to be able to sin, never to have any of those lusts or pride ever again. God has given us promises here that if we are willing to fight we'll be given God's mind, God's thinking, the Word of God, deeper understanding, all those things, and a special gift that only the person who receives it will understand what it's really all about. Incredible thing.

Revelation 2:25—But hold fast what you have till I come. So this is about hanging on to the truth. We have 57 Truths in God's word and within those truths more and more is being revealed, where we're to hold fast to those things because the natural carnal mind easily can wander off, start to challenge things, start to think of things because of the pride of life, lifting one's self up rather than remaining humble and teachable and thankful. Well, we have to hold fast to what we have. We are in a battle to conquer self, to come to know one's self. Once we know one's self we then know what we have to do. We have to overcome it. We have to control it. We have to exercise this self-control.

Well, we're to hold fast to the truth that's been given, **what you have till I come. And he who overcomes**, he who conquers self, **and keeps my works**, which is God's spirit living and dwelling in us, believing God, because we understand the works of God is to believe God. We have to believe God. Now, to believe God we believe the truth. We believe how truth enters the Church. That's the only way; there is no other way. It's only one way; it comes through an apostle to God's Church. That's how Jesus Christ works, how God the Father works. This is the structure. Well, "He who overcomes and keeps my works," believes what is given to the person, **till the end**, whether that's at the return of Christ or till a person's death, **to him I will give power over the nations.** Well, this promise, in the main, was directed towards the 144,000, but there is another aspect of this which is at the end of the thousand years. "I will give power over the nations," which is really talking about authority and rulership. It's in God's family, the Family of God.

He shall rule them with a rod of iron, referring to Jesus Christ, **as the shepherd, As the potter's vessel shall be broken to pieces**, which means all resistance will be put down. Things that are false now, the internet with its pornography, the TV programs that are deception, and all of the music that is perverted and the nudity and the movements, and all the things that are of Satan's

way, all of it will be shattered to pieces, "as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces." Everything will be put down. Anything that resists this new form of government, which is God's way, the Kingdom of God on this earth, shall be shattered.

As I also have received from my Father; (verse 28) and I will give him, this person who's overcoming and conquering self, the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches.

So there are promises that God is going to give to those that are willing to endure to the end, who are willing to continue to fight self.

Revelation 3:5—He who overcomes, he who conquers self, fights against their selfishness, shall be clothed in white garments, which is to do with righteousness, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life. In other words, they'll be given eternal life, **but I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches.** So we have to continue to watch self. We have to watch our thinking, watch our tongue, watch our thoughts, words, and actions, and continue to recognize the motivations that are behind what we do. Everything we do has a motivation. Every single thing we do has a motivation, has an intent. Well, we have to guard and watch it and examine it to make sure that its right with God, because there can be motivations and intents that are for God and obedient to God, which means we have God's holy spirit, therefore, that's what we're doing. But there are other motives and intents that are basically this fraud or deception or this false image or this justification or this teacheritus. All these things, there's a motivation behind them. Well, we have to come to understand them and to repent of them, to bring our thinking in line with God's.

Revelation 3:12— He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more. In other words, be part of Elohim, being part of the temple of God. **And I will write on him the name of my God, Elohim, and the name of the city of my God, Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write on him my new name.** He who has an ear, which means we have God's holy spirit to hear these things, **let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches.** Well, these things are all there for the purpose of encouragement, of motivation. People get to the point where they say, "I'm sick of hearing how bad I am." Well, the truth is, really deep down the truth is we are. That's the incredible thing. That's what we are by nature, but it's not something for depression or, you know, getting negative about it, because if we do, if we get negative and depressed about it its pride. Pride is there. No, we have to be encouraged by the fact that God has revealed this to us, that this is His purpose of life! How incredible, out of all of the people that have ever existed we know the purpose of life. The purpose of life is to transform our minds from one way of thinking to another so that God can give us life. What an incredible life we have!

We are nothing. We have nothing. We're not owed anything. We never existed. We are here now.

We are here now for a purpose. How great is God's love? How incredible is God that He would so mercifully, and calmly, and patiently work with us because He knows what we're like because He made us this way. But if we're in the battles and if we're continually striving to overcome, to conquer the selfishness in us God says He'll give us all of this. So the choice then becomes ours: What will we do with what we have, the knowledge we have?

Galatians 5:16—I say then, **Walk in the spirit**, which is referring to God's spirit, God's spirit that's in us, which is about our motive and intent, the way we think about things, why we do what we do, **and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh**, because God's spirit in us does the works. It's God. It's God; He has no lusts. He has no sin in him. So we have to make sure that we're fighting the natural carnal mind. So if we "walk in the spirit," in God's love, "you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh," these desires that are within us. The desire, the natural carnal mind, the desire to pull down, the desire to have ill will towards others, all these things that are in us, the desire to satisfy self, the pleasures of sin. Well, if we're walking with God's spirit, if that's our motive and intent and God is living and dwelling in us, we won't fulfill our natural lusts, our natural desires.

Verse 17—**For the flesh**, the natural mind, **wars against the spirit** (God's spirit), so there's this battle that is going on in the mind between two: selfishness (pride) against humility and God's spirit. **...and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another.** They don't go together. There's either one or the other. **...so that you do not do the things that you wish.** So even though we desire to do certain things, the desires within us (the natural ones) often win out because we give into them, because we choose to give in to them, which is natural. **But if you are led by the spirit**, God's holy spirit, because we're fighting and warring and conquering self on a continual basis, **you are not under the law.** You're no longer under the penalty of the law.

Now, people use this particular scripture to say the law is done away, you're no longer under the law. But it's not referring to the law itself. The law is good. As the Bible says, the law is good. The law is holy. It comes from God's mind, but we're no longer under the penalty of the law, "the wages of sin is death." Because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ we're no longer under the penalty because we have repentance. "But if you are led by the spirit," which means we're in a state of repentance, "you are no longer," or "you are not under the law," under the penalty of the law.

Now the works of the flesh, these are these desires that are natural within all of us. The world, we see, is fulfilling them at a rapid pace now. It's just incredible the evil that is in this world. The amount of programs that are promoting sexual things and promoting evil music, promoting things that are quite amazing, that mankind is going into a level of debauchery and hurting themselves and hurting others at an incredible rate. It's just incredible the speed that these things are happening. **Now the works of the flesh**, which we've been through, these various aspects of lusts and desires and pride, **are evident**, so they can be seen. How are they seen? **Which are: adultery**, now, this means wrong relationships, unlawful relationships. They're committing adultery in rapid places, which is to do with sexual immorality because adultery can be a relationship, an illegal relationship with false religion and they're committing adultery with

religions, false religions, because it's not of God but they're having this relationship, false relationship to it. ...**fornication**, which is an unlawful relationship. ...**uncleanness**, which is to do with being unclean. We know that something unclean is to do with sin, they're handling sin because clean and unclean foods, it's physical, but it has a spiritual component. One is clean, which is of God. One is unclean, which means it's polluted; it's of sin. It's of Satan's way.

So, **uncleanliness**, **licentiousness**, which is to do with morals, **idolatry**, false relationships. Lifting self up is one form of that. Putting something before God (anything before God) is idolatry. **Sorcery**, which can do with the use of mind-altering drugs because they're actually looking at other ways to trust in something else because "sorcery" really is "falsehood," which is trusting in something else, putting their trust in it. Like the stars, to go to stars and tarot reading and things like that, relying on another source rather than relying on God's holy spirit. Now, there are some drugs that are needed for the body to alter certain things so that the body will work well because our bodies are breaking down. But there are others, like marijuana or these other types of illicit drugs, which are generally considered illegal (which they're trying to legalize in a lot of places), but they're actually relying on something else, to get something else. So the mind wants to get a high, for example, or a satisfaction.

Excess alcohol can be like sorcery, relying on something else, going to something else which is altering the mind, the capacity to think clearly, the capacity to control one's self because alcohol alters the way a person thinks. Now, I want to say alcohol. There's a certain amount which is good for the body, as the Bible says. A bit of red wine is good for the body, but excess alcohol is bad for the body, and more than anything, it's bad for the mind because it reduces the capacity to control one's self. That's the problem. It's about self-control. Well, drugs, which alter the way a person thinks - they can't control themselves - or excess alcohol, for example, controls the mind. It can no longer fight self; therefore, it leads to what? It leads to sin. Because this is what this is all about, sin, because the works of the flesh are all about sin, natural.

...**hatred**, which is to do with anger or bad feelings or ill will, **contentions**, **jealousies**, **outbursts of wrath**, which is a lack of self-control. It's just anger. They're competing. They're fighting because, "My opinion is better than yours," or "I'm right, you're wrong!" It's just anger, lashing out at others, hurting others. ...**selfish ambition**, selfish ambitions because it's about taking to self, lifting one's self up, pride, **dissensions**, **heresies**, **envy**, **murders**, **drunkenness**, **revelries**, and **the like**, which is all of to do with sin and it's all to do with a lack of God's holy spirit, **of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things...** Now, this "practicing" means they're not fighting against it because we can do some of these things, but as long as we're repenting and fighting against them we're exercising controlling self, we're striving to conquer, striving to overcome, we're not practicing it because there's no effort involved. This is "those who practice," in other words, no level of self-control. There is no effort being put into fight. ...**such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God**. Pretty straight forward statement. No fighting of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. A person

cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. All the promises that we looked at before were all related to fighting against all of these things that go on in the mind.

We have to fight the works of the flesh, which are evident in all of these things. Now, we should be able to see all these things. We should be able to go through these things slowly and meditate and think on them. Things like "murder" where we think, "Oh, well, I'm not murdering." No, it's about ill will. Any ill will, any area where there is no love involved. "Drunkenness," well, we should understand these things. "Revelry's" where we're in wrong environments, we're placing ourselves in danger spiritually because of these environments. Well, we should know these and go through them, and we should know that if we are not involved in these things, well, that's good because God's spirit is changing the way we think. Because if we're involved in those things and we're not fighting them and we're not withdrawing ourselves from them, we're not conquering and overcoming them we will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Verse 22—But the fruit of the spirit, so here is the opposite. God's mind in us will produce something else, is **love**, which is right thinking, Godly thinking, **joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.** There is no penalty to be paid because God's spirit is active in our life. That last one is the key really. It's about self-control. It's about moderating self. Now, self-control can be moderation in certain things - moderation in food, moderation in alcohol, but it's also about controlling self, the lusts and desires and the pride that's in us by nature. They're the things we have to learn to control self.

So from this sermon I really hope that we go away with the view of we have to come to know our "self." We have to know your "self," because when we know our selves, when we know the selfishness in us and we begin to set out to fight and conquer it the promises of God are incredible. What an incredible plan God has for us if we will just exercise self-control.