

We're covering a series entitled *Real Freedom*. Today is *Part 5*.

In this series we are focusing upon how God is leading us through a process that produces real freedom in our lives. We're going to jump right in where we left off in *Part 4*. That's in Romans 7. So if you want to turn over there, Romans 7, we'll go back and look at two or three of the verses there before we proceed on. Let's pick it up in verse 7.

**Romans 7:7.** He asked the question as he is going through discussing this subject about the law and about the commandments, and so forth. He says, **What shall we say then? Is the law sin?** He says, **God forbid! Otherwise, I would not know sin but by the law.** It's very difficult for the Protestant world to grasp and comprehend so many of the things written here in Romans because of their ideas and beliefs about the law being done away, so when they go through and read some of these things it's a bunch of gobbledygook, and so they have to fit it into how they think. They've got a job on their hands because they don't interpret, don't understand things properly at all. They don't understand God's plan. So being blessed, as we are, we're able to comprehend the things that Paul is explaining here, and that's a part of what we're discussing here.

He said, **I would not have known sin but by the law.** That's true for everyone. If it wasn't for the law, God revealing the law to us, and especially once we're called into the Church, he begins to give us understanding of not just the law but of the spiritual intent of it, but there are those things that we grasp and see that we couldn't before and so we come to understand sin. He goes on and explains some things in a deeper way here, in that respect, and I'll just wait for that I guess. It'd be better.

So he says, "I wouldn't know sin but by the law." So it's the law that helps us to understand sin. It helps us to see the difference between right and wrong, good and evil. Only God is the one that can give us law. It's not what man decides the law is, but it's what God specifically says.

He says, **I would not know lust (covetousness) except that the law had said, You shall not covet.** So it really comes down to even if you just look at the 10 Commandments by themselves and you go through each of the commandments, even there it has to do with an attitude toward God. So if you're being called, that's one thing, because if you're being called your mind is being opened up to things you could never see before, you're beginning to see things of the world that are wrong, holidays and so forth, and keeping of Sunday, and the like. Because God talks, shows us about the importance of the Sabbath, the seventh day, and we begin to understand that. We begin to see.

It comes down to whether we make a choice, a conviction begins to develop in our mind; this is what I want to do because this is what God says. That's an incredible thing to understand in the

very beginning. It all goes back to a relationship with God in our calling. Because I've known so many we have visited in times past - there used to be a time that headquarters in Pasadena would receive requests from people, information from people. They'd request a visit. The ministry would go out and visit prospective members and talk to them because it's not an open door policy in the Church. Never has been. It's a matter of determining whether someone is being drawn, being called. It doesn't take very long to figure that out, and then in a conversation with them to see what their commitment is, to see what their desire is, to see if they're at a point in time where they can be invited, because God is very protective of His people. He's very protective of the Church. And in that respect, there is a job within the ministry to watch over, to take care of, to protect as well. That's a part of what is passed along and God works through that process.

I think of different ones. I think of one especially, one time, that we visited up in Pennsylvania, and he might have lived over in the New York section, but we went and visited him, and his mind, he could have gotten up in a Spokesman's Club, answered topics, and put some in the Church to shame for all that he knew because of all the studying he'd done. But he had a problem and it was in his family. The rest of his family, their minds had not been opened, so he had to make a choice. Was he going to step out now that he's being invited, because obviously his mind was opened up; he couldn't understand all those things that he was able to speak back about, talk to us about, and as he did that and explained the understanding he did have it was very clear. So he was invited. He never showed up; never heard from him ever again. Because he expressed some things there about his family and how hard it was going to be for him to step out and do something like this without the rest of them.

Well, you know, God is the one who calls and He doesn't always call everyone within a family. He works in different ways for different purposes that try and test people and it's through that environment that something unique and specific can be developed within someone that can't be developed any other way.

Just like in construction, when you go out and work with various things in construction, because I think of the building of the temple and of the materials that are used, I think of the story of David and all the materials he got and prepared for Solomon to be able to build it, and you don't just pick out anything. You have a specific place in mind for something; you want it to be that which is going to be good in that area, of whatever that might be. I think of all the things that had been brought together for the building of the temple. We think of stones, as an example. So if you go out to a quarry and you pick out certain things, you have a specific thing for a specific area and you're going to prepare it, fashion, it, whatever that takes. If it be lumber, wood, you're going to do the same thing, but you're going to pick it out and then determine what is going to be able to do a specific function in the building.

God does that with people when He calls them. He has a purpose in mind for what a person is going to have the opportunity to be molded and fashioned into, where they can fit, where they can, because of the circumstances. God knows our circumstances in life and He knows what it

takes to mold and fashion certain things within us. And that goes far, far deeper than what we can begin to comprehend. We don't grasp the power and the might of God. We truly don't. God knows the mind. He knows the thinking in the mind. So if there is a place, then God can choose to draw someone, to call them, to give them that opportunity and then people have to make choices. Because that's not always set. That's not a set thing. People have choices to make as to what they're going to do and even in that sometimes God knows the battle they're going to have, but they still have a choice, free choice.

The same thing is true in cases like this, or cases about the law, or people that we've visited with in times past. They have a choice to make as to whether or not they're going to respond to God and be able to be molded and fashioned and placed within the temple. Because, again, just like that individual there, he had an opportunity to make a choice and he wouldn't do it so he couldn't proceed any farther. He couldn't come to one service because he'd made the choice not to come to a single service in the beginning, and because of that, then, whatever takes place in life, the door was shut. Sometimes it happens later on, various trials that people come to. But if he'd responded it's those very things that could have been used by God to help mold and fashion within him what was needed for the place that he was being chosen for.

So again, God knows because of things we go through in life and because what our battles are going to be, and because of the things that can be used to mold and fashion. He knows exactly what it's going to take to prepare us to be in a particular place. It's already pre-planned. It's already predetermined because the construction of that Temple has already been predetermined. It was predetermined for the 144,000. We can't comprehend that. 144,000 to be in the Temple, to be in a specific place within the Temple - we can't comprehend that mind that is able to do something like that and to prepare every individual to specifically serve in those places once they're given that mind, that life, and that power from Almighty God.

Not only that, it goes way beyond that because there is going to be a whole lot more done during the Millennium to prepare even more so for another period of time that's exceedingly important to God, the last hundred years. What an incredible thing, to think that there is a plan already in place, has been for a long, long time of all those that are going to have the opportunity during that period of time to be fit into specific places because there is an incredible work that God is looking forward to, when the vast majority of mankind who have lived over 6,000 years are able to be resurrected and there is already—I don't know how to put it any other way—an army of people, of beings, of those in the God Family who are there ready to serve and help in ways that we can't comprehend yet.

And candidly, a lot of that stuff is not going to be fully revealed to us until toward the end of that thousand years because the main work of the Church, of those that are alive at that time, in that last period of time, are going to be those who are preparing for that job...and throughout the Millennium, too, but even more so during that last hundred years preparing for the final hundred years.

So, incredible some of the things that Paul is saying here and the calling that is given to us, and once our minds begin to be opened and how we have to make choices of what we're going to do. But if it weren't for the law and God revealing the ability to see what the law is about, we wouldn't know sin and that's all Paul is saying here. It's a simple thing. We wouldn't know the ugliness of sin because we come to understand that the carnal mind is enmity against God, meaning it fights against God. What an incredible thing to understand about the human mind, that by nature the mind fights against God. Our nature wants our way. It's contrary to God's law. He's revealing something here that's awesome, in that respect, for anyone to understand. I think, what a horrible thing that the Protestant world, the Catholic Church, they don't grasp these things that are beautiful in their own way, because of what they've been taught.

Going on here, **verse 8—But sin taking opportunity...** It's kind of an awkward translation for what it's saying here, and it's really the best I've seen used here is a part of a translation in what some of the words mean - "gained advantage" is probably a better way of stating it for understanding what's being said here.

**But sin gained advantage** over him, in that respect, **because of the commandment.** In other words, he's starting to see something here that he didn't grasp before, he was oblivious to, as we all are. We were oblivious to what Sunday was, to Easter and Christmas and all those things, and what it was really doing in our lives. Then he says here, **But sin gained advantage because of the commandment.** In other words, "I didn't really understand. I didn't really grasp and now all of a sudden my mind is being opened up and I see things I couldn't see before; I couldn't understand God's law and the importance of what He was saying in it." Because a lot of people read the 10 Commandments and they don't get it. But when you're called you begin to see things you couldn't see in them before. That's all he's explaining.

So again, **But sin taking advantage** (gained advantage) **because of the commandment produced...** In other words, it says, **produced in me all manner of evil desire.** Well, it wasn't something mysterious that all of a sudden was producing something in his life that wasn't already there. Sin was always there but now he's coming to understand it and grasp it. That's what he's saying. So basically, "to reveal" might be a better way of saying it, **revealed in me all manner of evil desire.** "Didn't know that I had that in my being, in my mind." The more we grow the more we grasp that, the more we grow in God's Church.

I think of sermons that we've covered in the last many months where we focused in on various things. The reality is the more we grow the more we come to see the ugliness of self. Drama. Drama. Drama. We come to understand those things in a deeper way, of what human nature is like and how that it's the opposite of the way of peace. It truly is. It is the way of drama in life. Paul is explaining these things.

So, "it revealed in me all manner of evil desire." In other words, we couldn't see that desire before. We didn't understand and sometimes in God's Church it takes a long time to really come to grasp and address and admit and acknowledge "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the

pride of life” control us. We do not control it of and by ourselves. We can with God’s spirit. We can work to control it and fight it. It’s a matter of fighting it and bringing it under control and that’s the battle. It’s a battle that we have to be engaged in. It takes, as another expression that is given here by him, takes the whole armor of God. There is that armor that we can have, that we can put on, spiritual things, tools that we can use to fight and to keep in the fight. Because these things are just there in our nature, in our being, in a mind that fights against God, at enmity with God, against God.

What an incredible thing to understand, that our minds work that way. Even when we’re in the Church they still work that way, it’s just that now we have the ability to see it and to address it and to fight it, to learn about what our number 1, 2, and 3, and so forth are, so that we know what the battle is. Because if we don’t know those things, we’re not fighting what we should be fighting. If we don’t grasp what those things are in our life we’re kind of oblivious and walking around in the dark out in the courtyard, truly.

So here Paul is explaining a process where you can see them and you have to address them. ...so **it revealed all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.** In other words, apart from the law, without the law, not knowing the law before it’s not enough just to read through 10 Commandments and say you want to try to live by those things, or whatever people might try to do in the world. But they don’t really try to do that, obviously. Instead, in the Protestant world they say they’re done away with. But if you’re talking about Judaism, same sort of thing.

**For apart from the law sin was dead.** What does that mean, “Sin was dead”? Well, it means you were ignorant of it. You didn’t understand. You didn’t understand what sin really was. You didn’t understand you were even under the penalty of sin, which is death. So to us sin was dead, we were oblivious to it. We just lived how we wanted to live. That’s what we were like before God called us. It was still there, we just didn’t know it. So in his thinking he was just fully unaware. That’s all he’s explaining here.

**For I was alive**—it’s not “without” but it’s a word more, “apart from.” **I was alive apart from the law once;** in other words, carefree. That’s the way people live as a whole in many ways. You just kind of do what you want to do and you’re conscience doesn’t bother you. After a while it becomes worse and worse and worse where people hurt their minds by sin, by living in it. That’s why the age of technology today people are so into whatever they want to do, ever how they want to live, so haughty, so proud in life and no one is going to tell them what to do or how to do it. Everybody thinks they have the best way, the right thing to do in life. We live in a sick world.

I think, again, I can’t help but think about the time of Noah and what God addressed about the mind. The mind became so corrupt. Today the human mind of people is so corrupt. They don’t know that. They don’t know what a precious the mind is and how horrible it is that it can become so corrupted, so evil, so against anything that I think of what God says at the end-time. He goes out in the highways and byways, that there aren’t many people, even at that at this point in

time, that can be worked with in this world. Why? That's a reality. Because people, human nature, the world is so haughty and so proud.

Even to wake a scattered Church is not a simple thing. It's going to take some hard, hard things. We've gone through a lot of hard things in the scattered Church, but it's going to take a lot harder to help awaken people to a reality and to be able to begin to deal with some of that.

So he says, **I was alive apart from the law once... I was alive apart from the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived (was alive) and I died.** So it's just talking about something of the mind here in what he was able to come to grasp and understand.

So we had our own life, but the more we really come to understand what sin is and make choices in life, and we understand how important it is to honor and obey, and we want to do that, we want to live by God's law, then, again here, sin is going to be able to be seen more clearly.

That's why I've been going through and talking about people walking around out in the courtyard. They're oblivious to sin. They become so hardened in the mind sometimes to sin, to where something as simple and as basic as tithing, it can't shake someone. You think, what is wrong with the mind of someone playing in the Church as though they're in it that somehow can disobey something so "minor"? I mean in the sense of understanding. The Sardis Church grasped that, you know. Of all things you think, surely, surely everybody can see that clearly. The reality is, no, you can get to a point where it just doesn't shake someone. They can be totally oblivious. You think, how is that possible? It can happen with different of God's laws.

If you begin to treat the Sabbath in a wrong way, you begin to think in a wrong way just about the Sabbath or the holy days or tithing or whatever it might be, after a while the mind can become numb to what's true and right. Why? Well, because you cut yourself off from God's help.

So it goes on to say here, **but when the commandment came**, in other words, into this mind that we begin to understand it, and the more that it came into the mind to be able to see what God says we should and should not do in life, **sin was alive.** It's clearer to see. It's easier to see. He says, **and I died.** Well, what do you mean? Well, you understand that you're under a death penalty. That's why you're moved and motivated more and more to repent of sin more quickly, more often, because you see these things more clearly and you come to a deeper understanding that if you don't repent quickly in life when there's a disagreement, wrong feelings towards others, wrong things said toward others, and you don't work to bring those things into check quickly and repent of whatever it is in your life, your 1, 2, and 3, if you don't address those things quickly can damage the mind.

Because you have to address them quickly, you really do. You can't let things fester. You can't let them continue on. Because if you let certain things continue on what happens is you begin to damage this mind. You can begin to corrupt your own mind and begin to cut yourself off from

help. The only help that we can receive to address these things, it comes from God, and without His help we can't address these things.

**So sin revived (was alive) and I died.** Well, every time we sin we die. The more clearly we can understand God's law and God's way of life the more clearly we can see sin. That's a good thing. You want to be able to see sin. You don't want to begin to excuse it or not think of it as being as drastic a thing in your life to be addressed as quickly as it should be addressed. You can kind of put things off and make excuse for various things, whatever it is that happens in different people's lives.

**And the commandment, which is to life...** That's why I can't help but think of what it said in Deuteronomy, what God addresses: "This day I set before you life and death. Choose life." He gave the law, Deuteronomy, the second giving of the law, that's what it's about, that's what the name is about, and God went through again at the end of forty years reminding them of all the things that were given earlier on in time here, throughout the time in the wilderness in those forty years as far as God's law and things to do with the Levitical priesthood, and on and on it goes. Then the blessings and cursings, if you go through there, in the sense of blessings if you obey God, of things that happen in your life, can happen to your life if you do what is right. If you don't, then these are the kinds of things that are going to come upon you in life.

There are just laws out there that regulate human life, human relationships. It's like if someone cheats on someone you know what? There are laws that affect that relationship. You know what, you can depend upon, if it's in a marriage and somebody is cheating and lying you know what happens? You're going to do incredible damage to your marriage. So on and on it goes in various things in life that people do and they don't realize they're bringing curses. That's what we call cursings then. You're not going to be blessed. You're going to suffer because of it. Other people are going to suffer. Whatever sin you have in life you're going to suffer and others are going to suffer. But when you obey God, when you're living His way of life and your life through God's spirit becoming stronger in how you think toward others and your ability to deal with various things in life, then you can be blessed more. What a beautiful thing to be blessed because of obedience.

That's why it says here, "The commandment, which is to life!" If you live it, if you seek to live it, if you seek to fight against the carnal human nature, and you want to do those things, you understand this is what's good about life, everything that He gives as far as 10 Commandments and the spirit of those things, relationships, relationships toward God and His Son and relationships toward one another on a spiritual plane, so it is to life, and not just to making life richer and better in our physical life, but it leads to that which is a greater life. So the commandment is to life.

He said, **and the commandment which is to life I found to be unto death.** Why? Because he wasn't living like he should have been. The commandment shows how to be blessed to have full life, but if you're not living that and not striving to live that and you're not being brought to

repentance or able to come to repentance you have one thing over your head and that's the death penalty. Something that is very hard sometimes when people are called into God's Church, to understand that's a real thing, the death penalty. There is only one who can pay for it, and he did. Only one. And when we accept that in our life, I'll tell you what, you have promised something mighty to God. You've told God, "My life is Yours. It's Yours. Mold and fashion me according to Your will and help me to yield to that process." That's life, and it's beautiful, and God will bless mightily.

And if we don't do that, wow, what happens? Well, tens of thousands become scattered, asleep, some leave, go back to Christmas and Easter and decking a Christmas tree with lights and tinsel and bulbs, and putting gifts underneath it thinking, "Oh, how nice it is now to be able to do this for our children and for our grandchildren." They don't understand what they've done. They don't see it.

I think of the scriptures that talk about if you turn against this way of life, you know, pig and what it does, to go back to eating it. You think, blech, you know. Dog eating its own vomit, as an example. You think, what a horrible thing can happen to the human mind.

**For sin gained advantage**, again here, **because of the commandment**. It becomes stronger. The more you see what is true and what God desires to live for the right reasons the uglier sin should be, to go against that. We come to understand those things.

So again, **it gained advantage because of the commandment, deceived (seduced) me**, as the word is here, **and by it slew me**. "Now I understand. I'm dead if I sin. I have this over me if I sin." So if I sin and I don't want sin in my life then I'm moved and motivated to want to repent more quickly and to agree with God, "I am wrong. You are right. You're always right! Show me where I'm wrong always, and help me come to repentance. Help me to be able to repent." Those are the kinds of cries we should cry out to God, and to understand if we don't it's over with unless God have mercy out upon us at some point later on.

The only thing is sometimes people can go so far, so damage the mind. I think of some who will never be resurrected in the Great White Throne. They went too far. Some even before the time of Noah just because of the mind carnally with never having had the opportunity to come to a point in time to receive God's spirit in their life. God doesn't owe it to anybody. That's a reality.

For those in the Church who have done such things, who have had knowledge of the truth? There are individuals, ministers, different ones who have known. And to turn against that? What a horrible thing to so damage the mind, that when God comes along, if He were to tell them, in essence, "This is what you've done. This is the way. This is what you should have walked in. Now do you want to?" they wouldn't choose it. They might do it out of constraint because they don't want to die. They might do it for the wrong motivation, but not because it's really in the mind, in the heart. So they're just not going to be given the opportunity because God already knows the mind. I hope that makes sense.

So he goes on to say, **Therefore, the law is holy.** What a beautiful thing! I think of the Protestant world. How can you say it's done away with when everything that's being said here by Paul, he's explaining how good it is, that it reveals what sin is, all the law that God has given. **The law is holy, it's from God, and the commandment holy.** Not done away with! What a dumb, dumb, dumb thing to say. Totally ignorant. But they can't help it. They can't help it. ...**and the commandment holy, just, righteous, just, and good.**

Then he asks the question, **So is that which is good been made death unto me?** Does that make something wrong with the law? Not at all. That's not what it is. That's not something wrong with the law. He's just explaining this. **God forbid! But sin, so that it might be recognized as sin, has been working death in me by that which is good...** He's just revealing here there are choices to make. We have choices to make. It helps to reveal to us as God's spirit works in our minds to help us to learn and to see how ugly sin is and to be able to see what good is and to be able to make that choice, do I agree with what is good? You know, the more you come into unity, harmony, a oneness, if you will, with God you're coming into a greater agreement that this is right and this is good and this is what I want, this is what I choose for my life. I want this because it's right, because it's good and what it produces is all good.

...**has been working death in me by that which is good.** So again, we come to understand that yeah, if we sin, and we understand that we do sin, we sin regularly because we're not righteous. We're far from it. We have a carnality in our mind, in our being, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life" that can never leave as long as you're in this physical body. It's always there! That's what Paul explains in Romans here, it's always there. We have choices to make as to how to attain to real freedom from that, to no longer be under the bondage of that. Because that's a bondage. We're being brought out of bondage. It's a process. We're not out of it yet.

...**by that which is good, so that sin by/through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.** Again, what's that mean? Well, it means the more you can see, the more that's revealed through a process of God working in the mind the more you can grow on a spiritual plane, to truly see the law and God's way of life, especially on a spirit plane, not just a physical one but a spirit plane as well, to understand what's happening in the mind, that it all starts there - the intent, the thinking, the thoughts that produce everything that happens in action in life. It all starts in the mind. If we can see those things, what an awesome thing. Sin becomes uglier. That's what he's talking about here, so that sin can be seen for what it really is, exceedingly sinful, to where you loathe it and hate it more and more.

If you like it, you're not going to fight it. If you like something simple [i.e. smoking] it's a small thing. Now, it's a powerful thing in human life, you know, it really is, but a lot of other things are too. Pulls, thinking that's there on a carnal mind. That's just something that we can see on a physical plane. Are you going to quit doing it because it's obnoxious to people around you?

I think of when going out of a building. You can't smoke in the building but you can go outside and do it, so what do you do? You stand right at the door for people who come in and out who don't

like that garbage and that swill, which I don't, I loathe the smell, I'd far rather see firewood burning next door there in a big pile and that coming by in a huge cloud and I have to walk through that cloud rather than walking through the smoke cloud of tobacco. To me it stinks. I hear there's another kind of thing that smells a little like a skunk. I still can't figure it out. I've never been able to pick that out. People tell me, "Have you smelled that?" No, what is that? It's marijuana. I haven't been around it enough to know what it is.

So again here, the closer you seek to draw to God the more ugly sin becomes. He's just saying it in another way. The uglier sin is and the more we should learn to hate it. Because I've said long ago to people and talking about you're not going to quit this until you learn to hate it. You're not even going to try until you come to hate it. Because if you can't fight something as small as that you can't fight the bigger things at all. You can't deal with the things that are truly spiritual in life. That isn't spiritual, it's just physical. In many respects it does become spiritual in the sense of thinking about love toward neighbor and so forth, and others and the stench and the smell and so forth. But that's a small thing compared to other things, compared to things where people fight with one another, compared to things where people say ugly things to one another. That's far more serious in life than sitting out here smoking something. People don't even think about that, the ugliness.

That's why, to me a beautiful thing. That's why we've gone through the series about drama, drama, drama. Let's squeeze a little llama and see what comes out because that's just what it is. That's what comes out in your life, you know, all around you. Somebody needs a big shovel to come around behind cleaning it up because it stinks and we want to get rid of it fast and flush it down the toilet, whatever it takes, because that's what it is. But people don't see it that way sometimes. If you see it for what it is, if you see how ugly it is, you won't want it to be around you. You won't want it to be a part of your life. You will fight harder that it doesn't come out of you, that squeezing the llama. You don't want it to come out of you.

See, I'm sick of drama. I loathe drama! I don't want any drama. It's tough for me to even listen to any drama, but I have to listen to drama sometimes. I hear certain things and I think, "Don't you see what you're doing? Don't you grasp how you're hurting your life and others around? Don't you understand what you're doing to your relationships by this?" You know, you're just dumping on them. That's what drama is like. It's like, "Oh, I don't just want to have it myself, I want to dump it on you! I want you to live a part of my drama too! It's my life!" No, God is our life.

I hope you see what I'm saying about this. It's a process that God is bringing us through to help us to learn. After, hopefully, going through that series we've come to see it because God's opened up more for us to see and understand it really is downright ugly. It's just ugly. It really stinks! Because it hurts. It brings curses. It doesn't bring blessings to life. It doesn't make you enjoy life. On the contrary, it can just mess up your mind, and cause your physical body even to hurt. Your mind, which can affect the rest of your body, can hurt, because of what you do to your own mind. It can hurt your digestion system. You can't sleep right at night so you don't get the right kind of

sleep so you don't feel good. So it can mess you up physically. Drama. Drama. Drama. We should hate it. That's why I hate it. I loathe it with all my being. I don't want any of it in my life, period. So if I see any of it I'm going to be fighting it. I hope you are too.

But, you see, this is what God is doing. He's revealing to us, then, we come to hate certain things we see. Just like selfishness. That's why I marvel how far God has brought us. He's brought us a long way. He really has. Because there are things that God has been working with in our lives within the Church in PKG and things that never had the opportunity to work with during Philadelphia or Laodicea; never to this level, to this degree. Never.

How blessed are we to be able to have the ability on a spiritual plane to be given what we've been given, to see what we can see, and then to make the choices that we're blessed to be able to make? I just marvel what God's molding in us. It's a beautiful thing.

**For we know that the law is spiritual.** It's not a matter of physical dos and don'ts. That's all the world can see, dos and don'ts. Well, I don't even want to get into that; take an hour for that.

**For we know that the law is spiritual,** it's based on the mind, thinking, spirit. There is a spirit essence in here that we are that's against God and there is that spirit impregnation that's from God Almighty, that He chooses to dwell in our thinking to give us help, to help us to think right, to help us to bring our mind into control to His way of life. He gives us the help to do that and so we pray about those things. A lot of that comes through asking for forgiveness of the things we see that are wrong and then to be given strength to do what is right, help to do what is right. God gives that! It's a beautiful thing when you're able to fight against certain things and you understand, you see, you know the strength that's being given to you.

**For we know that the law is spiritual,** but then he brings this one out, **but I am carnal,** I am physical. As long as I'm physical I'm going to have this carnality in me, but it doesn't have to have as great a control; the more you grow spiritually the less control that will have in your life and the more free you become, or the freer you become. Okay? Coming out of bondage, because that's what we're held under. God called us to bring us out of bondage.

That's why I love the days that are coming up us here quickly, Passover and Unleavened Bread, the blessing of coming out of spiritual Egypt. What an incredible blessing. Who wants to go back to that? But I think of the vast majority who have gone back to it. The overwhelming majority of people in the last 2,000 years have gone back into Egypt. They chose that. A choice. Not thinking that way; that just by the choices they did make did go back because that's what they wanted. They just didn't grasp it for what we see it is.

**For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold... sold, bondage....** That's what it's about. That's what he's expressing here. ...**under (into) sin.** Bondage! That's what God desires to bring us out of. That's why Joshua died. So that we could be in that process of coming out of sin and growing spiritually.

For that which I do, in other words, **That which I am doing or working in my life I...** It's not "allow not." It's not about allowing but about knowing or understanding. We don't understand a mind that sins. God gives us ability to begin to see certain things and it's not a matter we do it, we do things that are wrong, in that respect. But going on here he says, **For what I would do**, in other words, **what I want to do**. So that's a choice. What do we want to do? Sometimes people don't want to do what is right enough. In other words, they don't want it enough.

That's why I've made comment so often; you've got to want what God offers. You've got to want it so very much. You've got to have made a choice this is what I want. I don't want what I left. I don't want what I've been leaving.

I've been leaving it since I was 19, been leaving that since I was 19. I don't want it. I know what it's like and the battles ever since. But I rejoice in the growth and the spirit of God that brings us along the way and gives us what He does. That's beautiful. That's what I want. You've got to want this. You've got to cry out to God for it and you've got to let Him know, "I want this! I want to fight this. Help me to fight this and to continue to grow." You have to cry out to God. He doesn't just give it to you. You've got to want it because then you're willing to work for it. If you're not willing to work for it it's like, "Yeah, I want this... That's what I want." It's like, "Well, you really sound excited. You really look like you're into this. So I'm just going to give you whatever you want." Doesn't work that way. Doesn't work that way. The mind doesn't change that way. You've got to want it and you've got to fight for it and God will give you help. He'll give you help. He'll give you strength. He'll give you courage to stand up to whatever you got to stand up to in order to change, in order to grow.

So, "for what I would do." In other words, **What I want to do that I don't do; yet what I hate, that I do**. That's what we see in our lives so often. Not all the time. But he's showing here as far as human nature is concerned there are times you sin. That 1, 2, and 3, especially, whatever that is, you've got to be able to see it and you've got to know where the battle is. Yet even though you see those things sometimes you're going to fall flat on your face. Perhaps it's the use of the mouth and what comes out of it sometimes about others and how you think about others and so forth and so you got this certain battle here, whatever it might be, and you want to combat that and fight against that. Especially in God's Church more so than just in the world, but even there you want to fight it and do it the right way as God's given us understanding.

Whatever that might be you've got to ask for help because you understand there are things that you just wish weren't in your mind. How often wrong thinking just comes into the mind. Why? Because it's natural. It's like, "Get away, I don't want that," but there are things that happen. What I don't want in my mind sometimes comes into my mind. How you think about someone, what you say about someone, whatever it might be in life, you know, a reaction, a response to something: "Whoa, there it is again. I don't want to think that toward anyone." So you ask for help.

To misjudge? To judge in wrong ways? To not judge according to God's way? That's just normal human nature. We do it selfishly as a whole. To have prejudice? I loathe prejudice, want to get rid of every bit of it because that means then we're becoming more godlike in thinking. That's what the transformation is that's taking place in the mind. We can become more like God, more like His Son in our thinking.

**But I am carnal, sold under sin; For that which I want to do, that I do not do; yet what I hate, that I do.** So we find ourselves doing that. That's basically why we have to repent every day, as a whole, as human beings. If you really see the battle then there are things you realize you've got to repent of and anything that comes into the mind, and sometimes it's a matter of just saying, "Help me. Help me to get rid of all that's wrong in thinking." But so often as we grow and as we first are called there are bigger battles and it's a process of growth you go through then in life.

So whatever stage we're in God knows. Whatever stage we're in in our growth, wherever we are we find ourselves at times just falling flat on our face. Say something to someone, think about something, about something someone has said or done and we take offense to it and we hold on to a grudge or whatever toward someone, we can't forgive, we can't let go. Boy, if you see God's law, if you see God's law, that only God can forgive and that someone else has gone to pray to God for forgiveness, has been forgiven, if you're holding something against them who are you? Who am I? So you learn to hate that and after a while it's not a part of you. Because you hate it, it's just not a part of your thinking. When it pops its ugly head up, boy, you can address it quickly because you're growing.

**But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.** So we come to acknowledge, "I have sin in my life." Whenever it's there I repent." Or we should want that, think that way. "I repent and ask that the sacrifice of Joshua the Christ be able to be there for me, that I be able to be forgiven of my sin through him, because of what he did, so that God's spirit will continue to dwell in me," and we be able to dwell in God then because of that, in His mind, in His thinking.

**For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing.** Boy, if we could just see that. Of and by ourselves without God's spirit there is just nothing good in us. We're rotten to the core. Human nature is ugly. Who doesn't have selfishness? We all have some measure of selfishness in our life because we're carnal human beings, physical. It's a hard thing to come to understand those things because they're spirit in essence, in thinking. Only God can help us to see those things in ourselves. The more we can see those things the better life becomes, the richer life becomes, the less drama you have in your life. What a beautiful thing to not have as much drama in your life. To become more drama free is freedom. To become more drama free in your life, less sin in your life, boy, you talk about freedom. That's what it's about, real freedom. What a beautiful thing.

But we have to be able to acknowledge and understand these things, "In me, of and by myself, dwells no good thing." That's why I love it when Christ said there is only one that's good. There is only one who's good. That's God. The more of that mind you have in you, then that goodness, it's

not us, it's God's. It's God's. It's the mind of God, the being of God that sustains us, that gives us right thinking, that transformation that's taking place in the mind.

**...for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good I do not find.** In other words, this thing of Sarah and Hagar. Be careful. Be careful if you're trying to do it on your own, trying to work things out on your own. Guess it's really just more the understanding of the process there of what Abraham did, because that's a good example and how Paul started this whole story out in the book of Romans. He went back there and showed how they tried to bring about the promises of God. But there is only one way to bring about the promises of God and that's what we're talking about in this series here, how it's possible, what we have to go through, what we have to be able to see in ourselves.

So, "for to will is present with me." In other words, this is what I want; this is what I choose to do. But it has to be your choice. You have to want it. What an awesome thing to understand. "But to do what is good I don't find." Not in ourselves. It comes from God. The more you see that and the more you understand that what an incredible thing.

**For the good that I would do I don't do; but the evil which I don't want to do that I do.** We find ourselves in life wherever we are, perhaps conquer many, many things, and perhaps at a certain place spiritually in our lives, but it's always a matter of growing spiritually, growing more and more and more.

**Now, if I do what I don't want to do, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.** In other words, if you go ahead and do it it's because of who we are. We're carnal and it's going to happen, but it's not an excuse and you've got to be willing to fight. The uglier it is the more you should be willing to fight and cry out to God. This 1, 2, and 3, whatever they are, those had better be in your mind every day of your life so that you can be on guard, so that you can be praying to God for help in it. After a time, time goes on and you know what? They're not in the forefront as much anymore and you may have to re-examine and ask God for help, "Help me to know my 1, 2, and 3," and if they're still those and they're the biggest then thank God for the help He's giving you to come as far as you have and they're not popping up as much. What a beautiful thing as that takes place...because it takes place.

**Now, if I don't do what I want to do, it's no more I... sin that dwells in me. So then, I find a law, that evil is present with me...** Yeah, because we're carnal. We're not there yet and it's automatic. It's going to happen. That's why we have to choose to fight. **...evil is present with me, and the one who wills,** or in other words, and the one who wants to do good. I want to do good, but what do I find? There are still times you're just, "Stupid, stupid!" You smack yourself up on the side of the head, hopefully, and ask God, "Father, forgive me. It's there again. Help me. Help me fight. Help me to get rid of this in my mind, to be of Your mind."

**Verse 22** he says, **For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.** This is a great expression. I love this one. In other words, by choice, the inward man, in the thinking of the

mind, because of the impregnation of God's spirit I delight in the law of God. That's what I have chosen. I chose it before I was baptized. That's what brought me to baptism. When I was baptized that's it, "I am Yours." We're not free to do whatever we want. We made a choice. We're only free by what God gives to us spiritually in our lives in growing and conquering and overcoming, being made free by the power of His holy spirit.

**For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity.** Bondage! That's what we're talking about. There's this battle. If we can recognize it as that we're very blessed! Hello! We're carnal. "Oh, I'm just tired of hearing how bad I am." The only problem is with people like that, they're bad. We all are. They just won't acknowledge it because somehow they think they're better than that. Somehow they think they're better than what they're told their nature is like. "I'm tired of hearing I'm selfish." I'm not tired of it. Maybe you are, but I'm not. I know, I want to be reminded, my nature is selfish. And if I don't see that I don't recognize the big battle that I'm fighting.

We think we're better than what we are? Well, prayerfully God will humble us. It's not going to be an easy thing. Smack me down if that happens. Seriously! Whatever it takes. Whatever we have to go through so be it to change. Because what else is there? It's God's Family, eternal life, life in age lasting life in the God Family. If you want to look at choices out here, well, it's pretty simple. But it's not. You've got to want it. You've got to fight for it. You've got to recognize who you are, what you are, what your nature is like, and this is what all that Paul is going through and talking about. To me it's a beautiful thing.

If Paul hadn't written some of the things he's written here in Romans it'd been very hard to go through the different battles I've gone through in my life. I don't know that I could have in some ways unless God gave it to me some other way. Truly.

So a lot of people have gone before us to have this and then for God to reveal more about what's in the mind on a spirit plane is even more awesome, and that's just because of where we are in time and because of what's getting ready to take place. As soon as God says now is the time, My Kingdom is to be established, then we're at the pinnacle of 6,000 years of revelation, of truth, of ability to see and understand God's plan and purpose. He gives it to us on a spirit plane. It's beautiful. It's awesome.

**But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity, yes, into the bondage, to the law of sin which is in my members.** That's what it wants to do, and if you choose that's not what you want, then you've got to fight, you've got to cry out to God.

Oh, this is the one I love. This is the one that has helped me probably more than most in the sense of being able to see this and the ability to see reality and truth for what it is. **O wretched man that I am!** You know, we have to be able to see that. We have to have that in our minds.

That's something that Laodicea, it says, they couldn't see it in themselves. They couldn't understand that. There's a word that's used there that's this word here. I think it's the only two places they're used. But they came to a point in time where they were rich and increased with goods and haughty and proud and lifted up by what God had given to them and began to judge by what they thought they had. What a horrible thing. Lost sight of "O wretched man/woman that I am," see. Because that's what we are, and only God can save us. Only God can deliver us out of bondage and give us the ability to experience what real true freedom is all about.

I'm sorry, but I can't help but think of this thing of drama. To be able to see that, to be able to begin to be made free from something like that, it's an awesome thing. Because it makes life a lot richer, a lot better, a lot happier. People who live in drama are not happy. They're not happy. They're eaten up inside. It hurts them and it generally hurts those that they want to share it with because people like to share drama.

**O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death? ...or from the body of death.** That's what we are. But God has a plan of delivering us from it. The price has been paid; it's been purchased.

**I thank God—through Joshua the Christ our Lord!** That's how we are. That's the process. It starts with our Passover, the ability to be forgiven of sin. But you've got to see it. You've got to cry out for God to help you be delivered from it.

**So then, with the mind** - by choice, the inward man, the choice in the mind. **So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God.** That's what we choose, that's what we want. The more that we want it and the more we're convicted of that the more we'll cry out to God for help...the more we'll cry out for help every day. "Help me. I need Your help." We have to be able to see every day, "I need Your help today. I need your spirit. I want your spirit in my life to help me to fight the fight." Because if we lose sight of that we forget our nature, we forget how ugly sin is, we forget how damaging and destructive it is. But if you're on guard, wow, and you do that by God's help.

Again, **so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.** So that's what we do. If we yield to this, if we're not looking to God like we should, if we're not crying out for help like we should, you know, we're just going to be doing things that we shouldn't because we're going to be weaker. The strength comes from God.

**Romans 8:1—Therefore...** So it's going on with the story here, and this gets to the crux of so much of it. **Therefore, there is no condemnation...** The word in Greek literally means "penalty." **...to those who are in Joshua the Christ.** Because he paid for it. He paid the penalty for sin. That's what it's talking about here. So if we live this way, if we seek repentance, God forgives us, we're free. We're free every time we repent. You just let it go. It's gone.

**There is no condemnation (penalty) to those who are in Joshua the Christ who do not, see,** there's is more to the story because this tells what has to be happening, **who do not walk after** (according to) **the flesh...** That's a constant choice in our lives. Whether we're making it or not or just letting it happen is another matter. Sometimes we just let it happen. No, you can't. You're not on guard if you just let sin happen. You're not on guard. You're not crying out to God for help to be able to see the weakness, the 1, 2, and 3, and on it goes.

So again, if because of what we have, the opportunity for repentance, is what he's saying here, **through Joshua the Christ, who do not walk according to,** so this is a part of the story, **the flesh but after** (according to) **the spirit.** We want to be close to God. We want to do what is right and so if we're making those choices on a daily basis, "This is how I want to walk. This is how I want to think."

**For the law of the spirit of life,** power... That's why it talks about "the commandment is unto life." How? Because it's the mind of God. It's about the mind of God. It's about the spirit of what those laws are all about. It's about the spirit of the mind, of life. **For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Joshua,** so that life that was in him, that's in him for all time now that we can have as a part of our life through repentance, **has made me free—free—from the law of sin and death.** So again, this thing of the death penalty; the penalty for sin is death, and we're free from that. That's the price that's been paid. Incredible.

I think of Romans 6:3. It says, "The wages of sin is death"— we already went through that earlier in the series — "but the gift of God is eternal life." So again, this process it recognizes there. We understand what the payment for living selfishly is and we have to make choices constantly.

**Romans 8:3—For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh...** So sometimes the Protestant world looks at this and they misuse these scriptures. "See, there's a problem with the law and that's why it was done away." No, give me a break! It's not a matter of that. It's talking about, it's making a contrast here, "In that it was weak through the flesh." There is nothing wrong with the law. He's already gone through and said the law is holy, just, and good. But it's the flesh. That's the problem. We can't live it. You can't live according to it. Forty years of testimony, the children of Israel living in the wilderness proved that even with the commandments that are there you can't live it. Their whole experience, their whole witness, their whole example is one of you can't live according to the law of God of and by yourself by your own choices, by your own ability.

**For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh...** Why? To pay the penalty. Because we sin and it's the only way to be forgiven of sin. **He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh...** In the likeness. He didn't sin. What an incredible thing to understand, the mind of God that was in him from the very beginning, something that in time we'll come to grasp more fully...so much more especially after we're changed, to understand what that fully means.

...God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and/for or on account of (because of) sin condemned sin in the flesh. In other words, this word having to do with this word "condemn" - "gave judgment against," because of how he lived and what he did condemned sin in the flesh. ...that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk after the flesh but after the spirit. So again, choices, choices, choices. That's all this is talking about. Choices. Choices. How do we want to walk? That's how this chapter started out. "There is no condemnation," no penalty, "to those who are in Joshua the Christ, who do not walk according to the flesh but after the spirit," or "according to the spirit."

That's a choice you have to make every day of your life. You going to do it on your own? You going to try to work things out on your own? Are you actually, because of neglect, because you're not putting first things first in your life, God's not first in your life, you're not crying out to God at different times of the day in your life? Because if that's not the thinking of the mind what are we doing? We're relying on self. Abraham and Sarah...Hagar, actually, Abraham and Hagar and trying to work out God's plan on your own. The reality is you're not thinking about the fact you need God. "I need God's help."

**For those who are after (according) to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh...** That's what happens in life. What a horrible thing. The more that we omit prayer, the more we omit a relationship with God, looking to God, seeking God's spirit in our life the easier it is to drift away from God. Where is our thinking? Do we think about God during the day? Do we pray to God at different times throughout the day?

**For those that are after the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.** That means omitting God. So we obviously set our minds on the things of the flesh every day because we're carnal, we're physical; we live in a physical world. You have to. This is talking about something different. It's making a contrast here between a way of thinking of whether or not God's in the picture in your life, or do physical things become more important to you?

**For those who are after the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh but those *who after the spirit*, according to the spirit, the things of the spirit.** So is God first? If He is then everything you're doing physically in your life is going to be geared toward God. You're sharing with God. You're thinking about God. Things you're doing, you're asking for God's help and favor in what you're doing, that you want to do it right, that you seek to be blessed in what you're striving to do as a part of His plan and purpose.

**For to be carnally minded is death...** So if we are omitting God, boy, look out, because it's heading in a different direction. I think of the vast number of people, since God began to work with this Body after Laodicea, who have come and gone. Several thousand. What do we have today? God's people, that which has gone through incredible trials, hardships, trying and testing, and have been fighting the fight to one degree or another. You have to keep fighting. The more you fight the more you'll be blessed.

**For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** That's what freedom is about, true freedom, real freedom. Life, a life of thinking toward God to where as you do things because you're looking to God, praying to God about various things, you know what you tend to do then, if you're really doing that? You'll tend to be more thankful. You'll be thanking God for things throughout the day as well because you see God helping you, blessing you, working with you in your life, and you're thanking God for blessing you and working with you in your life, giving you favor that things are going well, whatever it might be in life, whatever trials you might be going through and you see how God is blessing you through them. Because you're going to have trials. Do you see God's favor and God's help when you've asked Him for it?

**But to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** Sometimes if there is not peace, just a lot of drama, what happened to the peace? Where is the peace? Well, that's what you have to look at and repent of the things causing the drama because it shouldn't be there. You want to be free? There is a way to receive it.

I have to read this one here because every once in a while there are some that just so irritate me. The Living Bible says this about this verse: "But if the holy spirit controls your mind there is life and peace." That is so wrong. Because, see, that's what they think. The holy spirit doesn't control. There is another spirit that tries to control, an evil spirit. It comes from demons and Satan himself. They try to control. God gives freedom of choice. You have to want it. You have to ask for it. You have to cry out for it. You've got to really want God's spirit. You have to continually ask Him for it. There is a big difference, and it doesn't control you. On the contrary. I just wanted to throw that out there because that really irritates me.

**Verse 6 again, For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Verse 7—Because the carnal mind, or the minding of the flesh, if that's where your mind is—that's what it means in the Greek—is enmity against God.** Spoke that earlier. That's the way our human nature is, it fights against God. Do we recognize that? Do we recognize that our own selfish wants and desires, lust of the flesh, the lust of the mind, and the pride of life, you know, pride is an ugly thing? I'll tell you what, you don't want that in your life. You want to fight against that. If you start getting lifted up, getting a big head about various things in life, run from that as fast as you can because every once in a while it just pops itself up in our lives and in the Church. You don't want pride in your mind, in your thinking, because that's the opposite of what we're supposed to be like. We're to have a humble spirit before God and not to begin to think our way, our ideas, or whatever it is, are the best and we have the right answers and that others should make those choices and if they don't then...blah, blah, blah.

**But the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God.** How deeply do we believe that? It's just the carnal mind is not subject to God's law. It just doesn't want anyone telling it what to do. And not only that, but sometimes when someone comes along to correct or to say something, and especially sometimes it's so awkward when brother goes to brother (and if people really apply those things) it's just what somebody really wants to hear, the

possibility that they might have done something wrong, and then well, justification starts entering in why maybe... Sorry.

**Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** Does it mean here? No, if you're walking in the flesh. That's after the flesh. That's the context.

We're in the flesh. He called us in the flesh, okay. We're physical. We're to walk in the spirit. That's the difference. We're to look to God for help to fight against this.

**But you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you.** What a beautiful thing, to be able to have that life dwell in us. That's why you have to cry out for it continually. "I want it." If you want it to be continually in you you're going to be repenting of sin when it pops up its ugly head, and anything that comes in the mind or that we do that passes the mind that goes into our actions, words, whatever it might be.

**But you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he is not His.** Oh, wow. And what does that mean? Sin; sin hasn't been repented of. There's sin that hasn't been repented of, and because of that you're cut off and until you repent you're cut off and He's not dwelling there. I wish we'd seen that more clearly through the time of Philadelphia. If we'd seen that in Laodicea things wouldn't have turned out the way they did, but God let us experience things without certain ability to see and understand certain things so we would experience and be a witness of all time of what we're capable of doing even with God's spirit, what human beings are capable of even with God's spirit.

It's worse than anything the Israelites ever did. Worse than anything they ever did. They came across the Red Sea and they already started murmuring and complaining. There were times that thousands of them died because of their disobedience and their rotten attitude. Then we come along as a Church, a hundred and some thousand, and 97,000 baptized members, and it comes to a point in time somewhere in that level and have to be cut off, spewed out of God's mouth because God reveals everyone has gone asleep. Everyone has departed, in that respect, as to what they should be doing. Instead, dozing off. It can happen. You've got to be on guard.

**Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin.** Go down in that watery grave, you come back up; you're to walk in newness of life. You can continue to walk in that as long as you continue to repent, to picture that thing of baptism the rest of your life. Now every time you sin you can go before God and repent and He forgives. It's gone. It starts with baptism. Every time from then on you don't have to carry it with you anymore.

You don't have to carry around a big bag of rocks. If you want to, that's your choice. Drama. Drama. Drama. "Look at my rocks! Give me some help to pull this thing. I want to tell you some things, what I went through this week. Let me tell you what's going on in my life. Let me share

my drama with you so you can have a few of these rocks too.” I’m sorry, but that’s what we do as human beings.

**And if Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life...the spirit is life because of righteousness.** In other words, that which God imputes to us. We’re not righteous. Boy, we are not righteous, but because God gives us the ability to see, to know the truth, to believe the truth, and because we believe it and strive to live by it, live by faith—that’s what faith is, living by what God has given us to believe—He accounts that to us for righteousness. But that means we’re repenting when we see sin. He just accounts that to us. He doesn’t account sin to us. You’re free. You’re free from sin. We should all be free of sin right now, unless you had some wrong thoughts in your mind in something I’ve said, toward me. Then you’re really in trouble. Yeah, it’s a constant battle as long as you’re fighting in it because you believe God.

Why do you repent? Because you believe God. Because you believe the importance of why Joshua did what he did so that God can continue to dwell in you and you believe that with all of your being. That’s why you’re motivated to repent constantly. That’s why every day you’re motivated to cry out to God, “I need help. I don’t want to live this day on my own. I want Your help. You know me. I want to be in agreement with You.” If you’re in agreement with God you know what? With His help of His spirit you’re not going to sin. But eventually you will. Might be ten minutes, twenty minutes, an hour, two hours, three hours, someplace in there and then you just repent again. And because you believe God and the importance of repenting on a regular basis and you see your carnal human nature, “O wretched man that I am,” boy, what a blessing to see that and to know that.

**Verse 11—But if the spirit of Him who raised up Joshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken, make alive, your mortal bodies.** What does that mean? Well, we can understand it has to do with something in the future too, but no, it’s right now too. You’ve got a problem when there is sin there - the death penalty. If you repent He’ll make you alive and He’ll dwell in you. It’s for right now, too. It pictures that which is future as well, but it’s for right now, too. **He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive) your mortal bodies by/because of His spirit that dwells in you.** So because of that spirit that can dwell in us and we’re not cut off from it, because we’re forgiven of sin, we’re alive. We’re able to see things on a spiritual plane that we otherwise can’t do.

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.** We gave our lives to God. We’re indebted to our elder brother. We’re indebted to God Almighty indeed and with that it should be a matter of just being thankful.

**For if you live after (according) to the flesh you will die; but if by (through) the spirit do put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.** So it’s a blessing we have, to fight against this, to put to death the deeds of the body and so we can live spiritually. And whatever our 1, 2, and 3 is, after a time they become less and less. They’re not as great in our life and as controlling in our life. We have been blessed by God’s spirit to have greater control because of His spirit over those

things that weaken us otherwise. Then sometimes God will lift up that lid and help us to see some other things that we really need to be working on, too. Something might rise up there to number two and number three, but you still got to fight who you are, what you are.

**So but if by (through) the spirit do put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.** So everyone listening today who wants this way of life, who is in agreement with all the truths that God has given, you're led by the spirit of God. There is no other way you can be here and be in agreement except that you are led by God's spirit, you are yielding to God's spirit.

But we can't let up on that. We have to cry out more, because you know what? The more that's given to us the more that's expected. We're to be growing more. We're to be preparing far more as time goes on here for the return of Joshua the Christ, whenever that is. And candidly, God is not revealing that at all. It just isn't there. I don't know. Don't have the foggiest idea.

I know there are certain things that have to fit into a timeframe. Still this year? Possibly so. Could still happen. God can alter certain things to happen at any point in time. Still during the Days of Unleavened Bread God can do certain things. Whatever. Even after that if God chooses to alter some things, so be it. We're not telling God how to do this. God's going to tell us. If some things have been altered in the sense of fitting into prophetic things the way He wants them to He'll reveal it to us then. If there is another year behind all this, so be it.

This world is in a mess. We were having some conversation before services here and I'll tell you, it is incredible to watch what's going on. It's incredible to see some of the things and some of the rhetoric that's going on out here. You know, Putin talking about, you know, if the U.S. wants another Cuba, Cuban crisis, bring it on. That's basically what he said, "Bring it on. Let's see you do that. Let's see you do it this time." That's basically what he's doing. That's what he's saying. I mean, there are some incredible things going on out here. Doesn't take a whole lot.

Some of the things going on in the Middle East? I'll tell you, it's a horrible powder keg. I hope we can see how much worse it is now than what it was, and that the stage has been set. I was reading some article here the other day. It was like certain ones have already chosen sides. Things going on between Pakistan and India. Yeah, surprise. I wonder who has taken whose side. It's all there. The handwriting is on the wall. It's just a matter of God's timing. On and on it goes.

**For as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God.** What a beautiful thing; God's children, free from sin, able to be freed from sin. Every day of your life, every time there's sin, it's behind you. No rocks. You don't have to drag rocks. No one in God's Church has to drag rocks. That's just a bad thing to do. It just weighs you down and you'll inevitably want help with that bag of rocks. You'll inevitably ask others to help carry them because you want to share with them. You don't want that.

**For you did not receive the spirit of—what?—bondage.** The opposite of freedom. The opposite of what God is offering us. **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the spirit of adoption.** What an incredible plan God has! I really feel for the world. I feel, especially if I think of the Protestant world that has certain things there that they see in a story, but they don't get what was said, they don't understand what is written. I feel for them because they don't understand why they're alive. They don't understand that God has a plan.

What an incredible thing that human beings don't grasp they have an opportunity in God's time to become a part of the God Family. They don't understand that. What an incredible thing to know and to understand God is offering us a means of being able to be in His family. That's what this is talking about. It's not a matter of a spirit of bondage. God wants to bring you out of that bondage and that which hurts, that which holds one down. He wants us to be free of those things, wants us to be free of the drama, drama, drama thing. He wants us to be free of all that. What a beautiful thing to have that kind of peace in the mind.

And he says, **but you have received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry, Abba, Father.** It's a beautiful thing to understand what motivates you to cry out to God, to pray to God, to have that kind of thinking and a mind toward God. Is He real? How real is He? How much do we want Him in our life? How much do we seek to share life with Him and seek for Him to share life with us? How often do we ask Him to share in our life? Do you pray in that vein sometimes, that whatever you're setting out to do that you ask God, "I want to share this with you. I want You to share this with me. You've shared. I want to share this." What an incredible thing. God wants to be a part of our life, to share in our life. Whatever you're doing, do with all your might, do well, seek to do what is right, seek God's help, walk with God.

**The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God...** It's not something the world can see. We can see it. We can know it. God's spirit, that spirit that's there, that we know is in our life. **...and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.** What does that mean? You think, what does it mean to be a joint-heir with Christ? Look at him. Look at what God's given. Look at what God's purpose is.

**...if indeed we suffer with *him*...** There is going to be some suffering. The more rocks we get rid of the less suffering there is. **...that we may be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** How much do we believe that? That really is a beautiful verse, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time." Whatever we go through in life, how can any of us say to God, "This is too much," or "You ask too much," whatever it might be.

**For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** So are we forward looking and keeping our eyes on the goal that is set before us and everything that God is offering to us and fighting for that? Well, we have to.

**For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.** Everything that God has created, it's looking to these things. It's beginning, it began, in essence, in an incredible way with His Son, but how much more now others that are getting ready. They don't know they're getting ready, but there are a few that are alive, but as a whole you think about this first great resurrection that's going to take place.

...**the creation, again, waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.** Finally, God's way brought to this earth. Confusion of religion shattered. False. Think of all the governments of the world and the inability of people to govern themselves and judge themselves and judge others and all the hypocrisy and the lying because of human nature. They can't help it. And finally, freed from all of that. One government that's righteous. One Church filled with truth. Nothing else. Everything else exposed.

**For the creation was made subject to vanity,** I love this, "was made subject to vanity." "Lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life." Empty. Produces only that which is empty. God created us this way for a purpose, so we could experience this carnality. That is one the most amazing things that God has revealed. It's really incredible what God's revealed to us in this about human life, why He made us physical, carnal, subject to vanity, that we would be selfish by nature. Adam and Eve very quickly turned to their selfishness, not to the life that God says is here, but to selfishness. Yielded to that because that's what they were made subject to. It has power and only by God's help can we be made free from that and achieve real freedom.

**The creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who has subjected it in hope.** So there is a hope we live by and Paul talks about that. ...**because the creation itself will also be delivered from the bondage of corruption.** We hold on to that. "Bondage of corruption," that's what we are, that's what's in our lives, and we're being delivered from that, coming out of Egypt, spiritual Egypt. ...**into the glorious liberty,** and the word literally means in the Greek language "freedom"; **into the glorious freedom of the children of God.** That's when we're finally fully, completely free. We're not there yet. But we love freedom, real freedom.

See, the world offers a different kind of freedom. Different countries offer a different kind of freedom, what they call freedom. It's not freedom. It is in a physical work to a certain extent, and if you're on the wrong side of it you're going to suffer more, but it's not real freedom at all. Many die for it, for what they think is freedom, and then they're forgotten. What a horrible life compared to what God offers us. There is no comparison.

**Verse 22—For we know that the creation groans and labors together in pain until now. And not only that, but we have the firstfruits of the spirit...** This is primarily in times past and now there is a difference in God's Church today because it's a matter that some are going to be of the firstfruits, others are going to continue on and become the next great harvest.

**...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting the adoption...** That's the way our lives are. We know what it's like, this human life, the suffering. When we see our human nature, we understand the ugliness of it and we see it in the world. The more you grow, the more you see self, the more you're aware of what's around you and the uglier it is, truly, and the more you want the world to be delivered from it, not just self.

**... eagerly waiting the adoption, the redemption, which means the redemption (payment for our release), of our body. For we were saved in hope.** It hasn't happened yet. I think of those in the last 6,000 years who have hope and it's not there yet, the fulfillment of it. **...but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one hope if he already sees it? But if we hope for what we do not see then we eagerly await for it with patience.** So we grow in patience. Patience is an important thing that we exercise, that we have as a part of our life. There is that which is unique that's molded and fashioned within us because of that, because of that experience.

Think of God. Talk about patience. He just works everything out to absolute perfection and beauty. Awesome! Because that's what it's about.

**Likewise the spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we should, but the spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which we cannot express.** Awesome! Have you ever felt like that? Pray, but you, sometimes you go through certain things, you don't really understand it all, you don't really grasp it all but you're asking God for help to deal with whatever it might be.

**And He who searches the heart,** God knows what's in us. That's what it's saying here. We don't understand it all. We can't see it all, but we keep striving to do what's right, we keep striving to follow wherever God leads us though we don't see or understand various things that we might go through at times. But we learn from it.

**And He who searches the heart knows what is the mind of the spirit.** God knows what's here and He works with that. He wants to mold and fashion that and transform it. **...because it makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.** What other hands would you want to be in in life? What other life would you want to have?

**Verse 28,** these are getting into some awesome things here now, what it has to say. **For we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.** If you love God, if you're learning to love God more and more and you're a part of God working with your life and molding and fashioning, it's all working to what's good. You might go through some really hard times, but it's all working to what's good, even when you go through great suffering.

**...to those who are the called according to His purpose.** How blessed are we? **For whom he did foreknow He also did...** They use the word "predestinate" and there's a false concept in Christianity about predestination, that everything is already planned out, it doesn't matter what happens you're going to make a certain choice. Baloney! You have choices and God lets us have

those choices because that's the only way we can be molded and fashioned and become a part of His family, is through that process.

**So, were called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow,** in other words, not individually. That's not what it's talking about. He had a plan. He foreknew His Son, but he wasn't around yet. He hadn't been born through Mary, not even when man was first created; had to wait 4,000 years before he came on the scene, but it was predetermined before anything was ever created. So was the 144,000 and so was the rest of the Family of God. Things we can't grasp and comprehend. The size of the earth. The population of the earth. That which God was going to mold and fashion and offer an opportunity to, and give opportunity to vast numbers of more who could become a part.

**And we know that all things work together for good to those who are the called of God according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He also predetermined *to be conformed to the image of His Son.*** So God made a way because everything was going to be molded after that fashion of who His Son would be, who he would become. ...**that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predetermine, those He also called;** to have 144,000 there has to be a calling and different ones have to be molded and fashioned over 6,000 years, as God has done, for this to be accomplished, and then on it goes into the next thousand years and then beyond that.

**...and whom He called, these He also justified.** How? Through His Son. Through the process of repentance of sin. On and on it goes. **...and whom He justified, them He also glorified.** Now and in the future. We are glorified now. You have God in you. You have the impregnation of God's spirit in your mind. You talk about being glorified, above that which is in the physical creation itself, a transformation of the mind, that which is being made to become more like God so that it can be changed at a moment in time is an awesome thing, and it's of God. It is of the mind of God and the being of God. Your ability to come into atonement, oneness, if you will, with God is a matter of being glorified. We need to grasp what's been given to us and that life that we're blessed to live and live in us and we in it, in God and His Son.

**So what shall we say of these things? If God *be* for us, who,** it's not a matter of *can be*, but in one respect it is, **but who is against us?** What does it matter? We understand in a physical world and having God's spirit in us what's going to be against us. Everything else. Because it's not in agreement with God. It doesn't love what you love. It doesn't embrace what you embrace. That's why things are bonkers and nuts and fruity and strange ideas. And "Oh, you want off when? October? Why don't you take off when everybody else wants to take off?" You know? "And you can't come in on Friday sunset? What is that? Friday sunset? You will say no to coming in if we need you on Friday evening?" Yes. "You are wacky." On and on it goes.

"You don't let your children go out and look for eggs around trees? You won't let them participate?" "You don't put up a tree and you say you believe in Christ? What is wrong with you?" They can't help it.

**Verse 32—He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered him up,** means “handed him over as payment.” That’s what it’s about. ...**for all of us, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?** Real freedom. That’s what it’s about.

**Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? *It is God who justifies.*** So that’s where courage comes in. Who cares what others think. We understand. I wish they didn’t. You know, who doesn’t want to be liked by others, but the reality is that can only go so far so you can be kind to your neighbor, good to others around you, and try to be a right light and a right example and so many are going to respond to that in a good way, but sometimes the more they get to know what you believe the less the friendship. Even in family, in relatives you’re kind of ostracized, cut off from the world, aren’t you, in that respect? That’s just a part of the process.

**Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? *It is God who justifies.* Who is it who condemns? *It is Christ who died, and further is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*** Our life is God’s and we know that others can’t understand it. We live by courage. We ask God for the courage to stand up, to live what we need to before others around us, because one day, it talks about a time when they are going to have everything come back into memory about their relationship with you and what was said or thought about you and it talks about glorifying God in the day of visitation, when God calls them.

**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation?** Whatever you go through? A lot of people have left because things weren’t easy, things got hard, and they couldn’t understand “How can this be happening if this is God’s Church?” “How could we be scattered all over the place if this is God’s Church?” “If this is God’s Church, how could that happen?” So people just gave up because they knew that Easter and Christmas was wrong so they couldn’t go back to that and they didn’t believe this anymore so they’re just kind of... almost atheistic, without God, just don’t believe anything. Life is now and that’s it.

**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution? These things have happened through time. ...or famine or nakedness, physical or spiritual, or danger, or sword?** Only by the grace of God, by the mercy of God and by our crying out to God for deliverance, crying out for help, can we continue to go on and be led by God’s spirit.

**As it is written: For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all things we are more than conquerors...** That word is about overcoming, the ability to overcome, to be changed, to make it through this. ...**we are conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded...** Are you persuaded? How convicted are you? I know there’s a lot of conviction here today compared to five years ago, compared to ten years ago, compared to fifteen years ago, if you were around at that time.

**For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, whatever it is, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come...** How can you have that kind of confidence? Because God’s almighty and your life is His and you’re at peace with that and you know what that means.

Powerful! ...nor height nor depth, nor any other created, is what it's saying, shall be able to separate us from the love of God. It's all a matter of choices and what we want, the agape of God which is in Christ Joshua our Lord. What an awesome freedom that God offers us.

So, hopefully as a result of going through this series, I hope it helped those who struggle sometimes with weaknesses and hardships of life in the sense of the carnality of the mind and the slipping of life when you allow sin, have allowed sin or sin comes along and manifests itself... and it happens. You have to keep fighting, and keep fighting that number 1 or that number 2, and it just seems like "Will it ever end?" Well, you keep repenting until it does. Every time you do you don't have to carry it. Be free!

I've known of so many in God's Church, even over the past several months, who are weighted down sometimes because of this inability of thinking, which has to come from God, of just being thankful. He doesn't hold it against you. You're free.