

Our Oath to God, Pt. 4

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We are continuing with the sermon series entitled *Our Oath to God*. This is *Part 4*. This will complete the series today. Next Sabbath, we'll begin a new series that really is more focused upon baptism, that deals with this even more so, but I wanted to break it up a little bit. But this one here, *Our Oath to God, Part 4*, will be the last in this particular series.

Last Sabbath, we focused a lot on what God said about the covenant and the covenant He would make with His people, and the importance of the oath that binds it. Incredible how some of this flows, how it works together, but things that people don't often think about, and especially when you recognize when God gives an oath about something, a promise, it's absolute and the problem is with human beings and whether or not we keep our word, whether or not we keep our oath to God and what we said. And hopefully, it's helping people, especially within the Church, to come to understand even more so that that covenant is not something you mess around with, and the oath concerning that covenant and the importance of that, the seriousness of it, maybe is a better word. So, hopefully, we're taking it that way even more so.

But let's turn over to Deuteronomy 8. We're going to repeat what's been stated in the last two sermons because these are the things that need to be deeply embedded in our minds.

Deuteronomy 8:18—Now, you shall remember... Again, that word that just means "do not forget." "Don't forget." Because as human beings, if we're not focused on God the way we should be, it's very easy to start forgetting. That's what's happened to so many people, the majority of people who come into God's Church.

You think, "How is that possible you can start forgetting?" That's why God says to watch it, to be on guard. Incredible here, what some of this is talking about, what we have to digest and recognize what human beings are like and not taking it seriously, what they should, especially in this thing about thinking "How can you forget God's way of life? How could you forget certain things?" And the reality is, if you're not focused upon it, if you don't treasure it, and if you don't value it, you will begin to lose it. And so, that's what's happened to people. They begin to lose certain convictions toward certain truth, begin to wonder about, or don't even think about it.

Because it's a spiritual thing. That's the part we have to keep in our minds. It's a spiritual matter, and you have to stay close to God to hold on to that which is spiritual, or you will just begin to lose it. That's just a reality. That's why I've made those comments sometimes it seems like people are excited that someone at least kept the clean and unclean foods, and they won't eat pork. And you think, what's to be excited about that? That's not what the truth is about, just clean and unclean. But something like that, that's

physical, people will retain to a degree, and maybe won't eat it again, but you think, and throw everything else away. Sick minds of human beings. We have sick minds.

That's why God says He offers us healing. We can have our minds healed because we have huge problems. God calls us, and He helps us to begin seeing what this mind is really like. Selfish. We want things our way. We don't want anyone to tell us what to do. We don't want to have rules. We don't want to have laws. We want to do it our way because this is what everybody else is doing.

Now, you shall remember the Eternal your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth. And so, people generally, when they read something like this, they just think along physical lines. That's not what it's about at all. It's about the real wealth and the fact that everything belongs to God, and God's desire is to give it all to us. He helps us to get wealth. But more so, it's about a way of life, it's about that which is spiritual. It's about obedience to God's way of life.

...that He may establish His covenant. So, it's about this is what God's desire is, to establish a covenant within us, which is about writing His law in our hearts and our minds and our yielding to that and wanting that our self. We want to be at one with God. We want to be in unity with God and the mind of God, the being of God.

...that He may establish His covenant, which He gave oath... Not the word "swear" or "swore." It's a matter of giving oath **...to your fathers, as it is to this day.** So again, God gave His oath to us, and it's a matter of us keeping ours to Him.

Let's turn over now to Exodus 24, just four chapters away from when the law was given. **Exodus 24:1— Now, He said to Moses, Come up to the Eternal, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. Now, Moses alone shall come near the Eternal, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him.** Saying that Moses is the only one that is to come all the way up to be with God, to be worked with by God in this regard, and the others were to come a certain distance but no farther. And furthermore, there were others who weren't even to go with them. So again, it's just setting boundaries here of how God was going to work with them and what He was instructing them.

So again here, "Now, Moses alone shall come near to the Eternal." **Verse 3**, going on down here. **So, Moses came and told the people all the words of the Eternal and all the judgments.** So, all these things that were given to Moses, God working with him, for him then to give to Israel.

So, Moses came and told the people all the words of the Eternal and all the judgments. Then all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words which the Eternal has said we will do. So, they agreed. He gave oath to them of what He was going to grant them, what He was going to give them, what He wanted to establish with them, and then they agreed, "We will do it. We're going to follow this." Well, they didn't do too well. That's their whole history.

Verse 4—So, Moses wrote all the words of the Eternal. Now, he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Eternal. Moses was very moved by this and inspired to do these things and worked with by God to do these things for the Israelites, to be an example for them. But it wasn't in their hearts and their minds at all. But it was in Moses and a few others.

It goes on then in **verse 6—And Moses took half the blood and put it in a basin, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant...** So again here, it's about what had been written. First of all, it's based upon God's law, the Ten Commandments which He gave to them, and then all the other things, the judgments that began to come to them, to be given to them. So, everything is based upon God's law, and then all the law is based on one principle, and it's love, God's love. That can't be understood without God's spirit.

Then Moses took half the blood and put it in the basin, and . . . the blood he sprinkled on the altar. But he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said All that the Eternal has said we will do and be obedient. So, obvious here, a covenant, taking the oath that was there is about obedience to God. It's about God's way of life. It's about how we're supposed to live our lives, how we're supposed to, in time, think in the sense of being in agreement and unity.

So, Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said... So, this is symbolic of what God was going to accomplish and fulfill later on about the blood of Christ and things that were cleansed in that respect, through blood, to understand some of those things, of what was given. **This is the blood of the covenant which the Eternal has made with you according to all these words.** So, again here, just a history, a book of the covenant, the words, the way of life that we're supposed to live and be obedient to it.

Let's turn over to Deuteronomy 30. It's just basic things here, a follow-up to the law that was given. Moses going through the symbolism of those things, saying, "This is what we're to do. This is what we're to hold on to," in that respect, the book of the covenant, and they agreed to it all.

We agree to things at baptism that the majority of people never have kept. And obviously, that should be taken far more seriously than this was. They didn't have the ability to do what we do, or what people do once they're baptized. And yet, we go through the story of something done on a physical plane, we see how people lived, and yet this is something they were to be faithful to. They were to be faithful, and they agreed, "Whatever God has said, this is what we will do." They promised it.

And we come along, God calls people, draws people to this way of life, opens up the mind to comprehend it on a spiritual plane, and we do the exact same thing at baptism, before baptism, "Whatever God has said, we will do." We literally, in that respect, on a spiritual plane, are telling God our life is His, belongs to Him, and this is the life we're going to live. And then we learn all the things that we

have to learn, and we know that we can't do it on our own—Israel proved that—we need God's help. But our choice is this is what we want, this is what we're going to fight for, this is what we're going to hold on to and keep our word to God. Because God's made the way possible, it's just up to us to make those choices. Choice, choices, choices.

Deuteronomy 30:15. Now, this is the second giving of the law, so this is toward the end, then, of the forty years. And you go through the book of Deuteronomy, and literally, that's what it's talking about, the second giving of the law and the recording of it, everything that was written there, and they're being reminded of everything they did during that forty years, and they're being reminded of all the law and the statutes that God gave.

So, we get down to chapter 30 here, and it says, **Deuteronomy 30:15—Look, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.** Isn't that amazing? That's as simple as it gets. And to too many, that is too simplistic, and sometimes not really believed like it should be because that's what God does. When it comes to the covenant, this is what we have agreed to. It's either life and that which is good, evil or death, and that which is evil.

So, to not live God's way of life, to be selfish, is evil, especially when God's opened up our minds to understand it, to see it. And so, we have choices. Are we going to live it, are we going to seek to be obedient to God or not? And if we don't, the end result is exactly what He says, it's just death. And I think, why, especially in the Church, why have so many not grasped that, that when they come to that point in time, this is what is taking place? To leave, to make a different choice, it's choosing death before God and breaking one's promise, and breaking one's oath. It's not a small thing.

I have set before you life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the Eternal, your God. So, what a horrible thing, it's, in one respect, thinking of human nature, that it has to be commanded to love God. And even within the Church, that we'd have to think about that in those terms, we're commanded to love God. Well, basically, that's what we chose at baptism: we love God in the sense that we love this way of life, we want to live it, we see it's right, just, and good, and we make that choice.

...to love the Eternal your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Eternal your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. Now, again, for us, we can't just read this on a physical plane, like the Israelites. They were just looking at something physical to receive, a promised land. Ours takes on a whole new meaning because it's on a spiritual plane. And yet, it includes physical things. It includes the entirety of the universe. But the basis of it is God's way of life, is the truth, is all that God gives to us and all that we're going to receive as a result of it – eternal life or everlasting life, if you will.

But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, in other words, you'll not listen any longer, **and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them...** So, we've gone through this throughout this

sermon series already, to understand what this is talking about, that just a matter of turning to self and doing things our way is a god that we're setting up, ourselves. That's what Joe Tkach did. That's what Lucifer did. He established himself as god. He didn't follow God's way, didn't want God's way; he wanted his own way. Anyway, we have to get to the point in our lives where we hate and where we loathe that wrong thinking so that we don't do it.

I declare to you today that you will surely perish. So again, it's this matter of life and death, good and evil. Which do we choose? So, if it's not God's way of life and it's evil, then it's as simple as the end of it is death.

You will not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go. Now again, this is a spiritual matter. It isn't a physical one. It's about what it pictures. It's about what God offers us in a promised land, if you will, and what we desire to have. It's from baptism to everlasting life. It's from baptism, begotten of God, to a point where we're actually born into Elohim—that's what this is about—to where our days are prolonged – everlasting life.

You will not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. Something that if they don't obey it, they don't live it, that's what's going to take place.

Verse 19—I call heaven and earth as witness today against you, that I have set before you life and death. Over and over and over again, God tells them it's just a choice. It's either one or the other, and the choice is yours. **...life and death, blessing and cursing.** Should be a no-brainer, but it isn't when it comes to human nature.

Therefore, choose life so that both you and your descendants may live. It doesn't say they will, but to have, that they may, your desire, the opportunities they're going to have, the ability to learn things, to see things, to grasp things that they wouldn't be able to if they're just in this world. So again here, and hopefully in time that things will happen in their life, that those things will be able to be brought back into remembrance if that's the case. So, it's about the blessing of being that much closer to God and the favor that God gives and helps for those who have the opportunity when it comes their way.

Therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live, that you may love the Eternal your God, that you may obey His voice. It's all about whether or not we come to a point where we really do love God, whether we really love this way of life, or whether we just see it as dos and don'ts. I've known far too many over the time being a minister in the Church, where it wasn't a matter of loving God's way of life; there are too many things that had to do with restrictions and lack of agreement and rules. That's how sometimes things begin to be seen. "I don't want to do it that way." It can be about matters of the Church, simple matters, little things, makeup, on and on it goes.

...so that you may love the Eternal your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the

Eternal swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, to Jacob, to give them. So again, it's about a spiritual matter. It's about spiritual things. It's not just receiving things on a physical plane.

Let's turn over, back over here now to one more chapter over, Deuteronomy 31. So, this is bringing us to the point of the next sermon we go into, the next sermon series. It's to understand more deeply the seriousness of the matter of baptism and the covenant agreement we made with God, and to remind everyone, in that respect, of the importance of what we did and how we did it, and then not take it lightly. Because I still marvel, there are still going to be people who leave before this is done, people who can't hold on to, who will start forgetting (if they haven't already started the process – and in some cases, I know that's already happened). Because it doesn't happen overnight, it happens over a period of time.

For one, I hate to see it be just a cycle of life that continues on and on and on, but it's going to be all the way to the end of the Last Great Day, and that's the worst of all. Incredible! And the reality is you can't do this for anyone else. You've got to choose it for yourself and yourself alone. You can't give this to anyone. You can't make them choose it. You can't make them want it.

Isn't that an amazing thing? It's an individual thing. And that particular matter alone can test us as to whether or not we agree with God, whether or not we're in unity with God, that God is right, and that's what's best. No matter how much you love others, may love others, desire for them—and that's a good desire to have for anyone—but the reality is there is a lot of sorrow in this before this is all over with. Because you can't give it to anyone, and there are going to be people you love... You're going to experience it. Everybody has to experience this.

God has experienced this from the beginning, of those who don't love Him, of those who don't want Him, of those who want to do their own thing. It's just the way of human nature. That's why we're made this way. And then to come to a reality to realize when you have to go through this in your own thinking because of different ones who are making different choices or decisions, or things that you seem to think are unfair or whatever it might be in life, as far as the environment, sometimes, in the Church. Because this comes up a lot, and over the past many years, being in the Church.

And you realize, it's no, everybody has to make the choice, and we come to the point where literally it comes down to, do we really agree with God, or do we feel that this is kind of unfair? Because we want everyone to succeed. Those that you love, especially if it be family or whatever it might be (generally, that's the closest of relationships that anyone ever has), and the reality is you can't make their minds up for them. There are going to be those that you're going to receive hurt from. It's just a reality of life, and it's a hard one.

Deuteronomy 31:24—So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of the law in a book, when they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Eternal, saying, Take the book of the law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Eternal

your God. And we know that the literal Ten Commandments were in it, but on the side, this law and all that God had given to Moses to write, to record, Deuteronomy, as an example, the book of Deuteronomy, all that was recorded there.

And that's why, in that respect, you think of even the deep meaning of the fact that it's not just the ark of the covenant, because that is where the covenant is, that's what it's all about, what's written there, but it's the ark of the testimony as well. Incredible. Because the reality is, in many cases, large numbers are never going to choose it, never going to want it. That's the testimony. And so, even Moses gets into some of this as he goes along here, and he says certain things about a carnal, physical people, about their choices. That even comes up. So, we'll continue on here.

Take this book of the law and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Eternal your God that it may be there as a witness against you. Isn't that amazing? Because of what's written there and because of their choices, it's an actual witness, a testimony against them. Because they didn't want it, they don't want to live by it; they want their own way. God allows people to make those choices, even in the environment of the Church and people being baptized. Incredible.

For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. So, being out there with them for forty years he's reminding them of the journey they took and of everything that's written there, Deuteronomy, the second giving of the law, of trying to let them to be reminded of what it is they lived during that forty years and all that God gave them from the very beginning that they said, "We will do," that they didn't do. And so, he's bringing this up. This is a testimony against you because you didn't do it, you didn't choose it.

That's why I love what it says in Hebrews when it brings up the reality and it says, "If people died under the hand of two or three witnesses, how much worse..." when it's a matter of that which is spiritual and people don't choose God when they have the ability, when it's offered to them, and they then receive it and say, "I will." Even there, it's that much worse because they have the begetting of God's holy spirit and then turn against it.

I hope we're truly seeing here the depth of how important and serious this truly is before God. Everybody who has made those kinds of comments, "Yes, I accept, Joshua the Christ as my Lord and Master, my Passover, my High Priest and soon coming King." Oh yeah? Then why are you doing this? Why are you doing something different? Why are you holding on to different doctrine, different ideas now? Why are you leaving? Why are you throwing it all away?

So, what is just and what is right? And how do you remove, now, this death penalty? That's how serious it is. It's not a small thing.

Again here, as it stated, "that the book of the law...put it beside the ark of the covenant..." **For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious**

against the Eternal, then how much more after my death? That's pretty profound, what he said here. "If you've been this way when I've been here with you for forty years and we've gone through all that we have, what are you going to be like when I'm dead, when I'm gone, when I'm no longer here?" Well, God began to work through Joshua; we understand all that. But they had the same mind, and they did the same things. Amazing.

That's a carnal people. That's why this is so much worse, so much more condemning, if you will, when it's a spiritual people. They didn't have an ability to obey God's law. Everyone who's been impregnated with God's spirit has the ability to live by that law, to grow in understanding of it, to come into greater unity and oneness with Almighty God, to make those choices all along the way, to persevere in that all the way to the end because that's the commitment and that was the promise that everyone of us makes.

Deuteronomy 9:7—Remember! Do not forget how you provoked the Eternal your God to wrath in the wilderness. So, that was his hope, his desire, what he was saying. Well, anyway.

From the day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Eternal. That's happened a lot in the Church. Ever since I've been in it. Incredible! You look at something like this from the time that you were coming out of Egypt, when you were being called, when you were being able to be drawn out of captivity, slavery.

Because that's what human beings are under. They're under a kind of slavery, a captivity to that which they have no control over. They're not in control of their lives when it comes to righteousness, to what is just before God. Their captive to "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." That's what rules human beings, every human being. And only when we come into God's Church can we begin to enter into a battle to fight against "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." That's when things begin to turn, can turn.

But it's a battle. It requires that spirit strength from God because we can't do it on our own. No one can. And so, we look to God, we cry out to God on a daily basis, and we repent along the way because we realize we have to repent of the sin in order to have God's help. And so, we're motivated in those things. We want God. We want God's way of life. That was our choice from the beginning. And if we ever let up on that choice and begin to back away from that choice, then we are in serious trouble. And so, to think, people were being called out of Egypt.

...until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Eternal. And there has been rebellion in the Church for a long, long time. Because constantly and always being reminded of what it says, "many have been called, but few have chosen," because the majority go by the wayside by choice.

Also in Horeb, you provoked the Eternal to wrath, so that the Eternal was angry with you, to have destroyed you. So again, they're being reminded of a time here, and it was a test for Moses as well, but it was for his learning. God had no intention. God had a purpose and a plan of working through a nation

of people with twelve tribes. And so, when God had a conversation with Moses, just, it's like, "I'm going to destroy them all, and I'll build upon you now a great nation. You will receive the promises." It wasn't going to happen, and God knew full well it wasn't going to happen because that wasn't God's purpose in the first place. But it was for Moses and Moses' response, and God had worked with Moses to the point where Moses was able to respond as he should. Awesome!

If you don't know the story, go back and read it, because it's very moving in that regard, when you know what God is doing and why He's doing it.

So, they're being reminded of this. **...so that the Eternal was angry with you to have destroyed you. When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of the stone, the tablets of the covenant which the Eternal made with you, that I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.** Incredible. You realize the help he received from God. He's coming down and he's telling them about this and what took place and the relationship, the life people can have when they obey God and live God's way of life. And yet when this was given to them and they said, "We'll do it." It didn't take very long, and they didn't, and before they came back down, they were already partying and had made a molten calf, and they were worshiping it and saying, "The god who took us out of Egypt!" Human nature is a pretty tough nut to crack. But when I read something like that, we can understand that because they were very carnal and they didn't have help. And I think of all the people in the last two thousand years who had the ability, who received something that no human beings, as a whole, have ever received. As a whole, very few through six thousand years.

Verse 10—Then the Eternal delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them all the words which the Eternal had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. Then it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Eternal gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant. Very basic. Everything established upon ten commandments, how we're to live life.

Then the Eternal said to me, Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have acted corruptly. King James says, "Have corrupted themselves." So, it's about how they were acting, obviously, turning away from everything they'd been told and been given, and showing what takes place. It's in the mind. The mind can be deeply corrupted indeed, and that's what this is largely about.

...they have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. It doesn't take long. Doesn't take long in the Church sometimes. I've seen it happen over and over and over again. That's why we're to watch and be on guard. Those aren't just nice little words or phrases; they're choices of something to live by and to be fearful of not doing it that way.

They have made themselves a molded image. So again, we know the story of what took place.

But everyone who begins to backslide, who begins to forget certain ways that God put before them, forgets them sometimes by neglect, sometimes forgets them because they get to a point where they really don't want to do it, or just become weak and can't do it, can't see the importance of them anymore. For whatever process that someone follows, to happen on a spiritual plane is kind of mind-boggling, but it happens over and over again, and they end up making themselves, in the mind, some kind of image that isn't what God gave to them. So again, all who are baptized made the choice and the commitment, an oath to God.

Let's turn over to John 6. We understand that before baptism, God has to call; He has to begin drawing a person. That means He has to do something within the mind to open up the mind to be able to see certain things that otherwise just can't see.

So, I marvel just even going through and writing some of this book, of how many things, of how much that that is magnified in the mind when you see the world cannot see. It doesn't matter how clear something is, unless God is in it, unless God draws them and opens up the mind, they can't grasp the most simplistic of things on a spiritual plane. Maybe not the best way of saying that, but anyway, there are things that when it comes to God's spirit, that are clear, they're plain, they're simple. They really are.

So again, we understand that God begins to call us, and we make choices, then, decisions, what are we going to do. Are we going to pursue this? Do we want to pursue more truth? Are we interested to the point we feel drawn to learn more about the Sabbath and the Holy Days? That's kind of the thing that takes place in the mind. It's an amazing thing how we're drawn.

I love the word that's used there when it first starts happening. It's the word in the Greek language that means to "drag." Because sometimes, as God draws us and calls us, our human nature is pulling back. And yet God continues to work with us because He has a purpose to draw us to a point of baptism if we'll choose it, to give us that opportunity, or He wouldn't call us. So, He calls us to have such an opportunity, and then in time we either make that choice or not.

Because we've known many of people we visited whose minds have been opened up, and they never came to that point. They wouldn't make that choice.

I've mentioned this before, but it was so profound. I think it was to learn some of the lessons of it. I remember one family we visited, one individual, one man, that right down the line, there was so much he grasped and comprehended on a spiritual plane that he could have been invited into a Spokesman's Club and put many of the members to shame because of all that he was able to grasp, that God gave to him in the mind. But he couldn't make that choice within his own family to continue on. Lost it. Amazing!

So, the power that God gives to us when He begins to call us, when He begins to draw us, of His holy spirit, is a drastic change because now we have things in the mind that could never be understood, that

all of a sudden we're seeing. "Ah." I hope you hold on to those because they're awesome things, they truly are.

John 6:44, we know this well, **No one can come to Me unless/except the Father who sent Me draws them**. So, that's something we come to understand very early on in our calling, very early on within the Church, that you can't give this to anyone else because they have to be called. There is no sense in trying to talk someone into it. There is no sense in putting all the literature you have in front of them. Maybe you want to offer them something.

But it's been my experience that when you're called, you're so excited about what you've received, and it's so different from what the world grasps and comprehends, and you see the stark reality between traditional Christianity and what is true, that there is an excitement with that and you want to share it, you want others to see it. And if you make, not necessarily a mistake, but it doesn't go your way. You start telling different ones, especially in family and family members and relatives, and all of a sudden, a little bit later, you find out they're not really wanting to be around you very much. It seems like they're making excuses or whatever might be. You realize it's because they have to be drawn.

And this is it; they have to be drawn by God, by God's holy spirit. Otherwise, it's futility; they'll never be able to grasp it until it's God's time, until He offers it.

No one can come to Me except the Father who sent Me draws them; and I will raise him up in the last day. So, this is a profound statement in many ways because it's saying here that if a person is being drawn by God's spirit and you have the ability to make certain choices and you make them, and you become Christ's: "...who sent Me draws them; and then He says, 'I will raise him up at the last day.'"

As far as God's concerned, as far as Joshua is concerned, in this regard, of what was said here, you have it made. If you do what you're told, if you desire God's way of life, if you continue to pray and desire God's holy spirit, if you continue to repent, and you hold on, there'll come a time of a resurrection, a change, mortal to immortal.

So, we come to this point, God calls us, He draws us.

Let's turn over to 1 Timothy 6. No one else makes the choice at baptism but us. And this is what Paul is telling Timothy, and, well, I'll read this first: **1 Timothy 6:12—Fight the good fight of faith**. It is a fight. When it says, "Put on the whole armor," it says it for a reason. Because we are in a battle and it's a life-or-death battle for us, truly is. Not just talking about physical life, I'm talking about everlasting life.

Fight the good fight of faith. So, to hold on to the truth, to be able to live this way of life, it's a battle. **Lay hold on eternal life**. That's our choice. **...to which you were also called**. That's what God offered when He called us, to "lay hold of eternal life," and all that goes with it, of God's way of life.

...and have confessed... New King James says, “professed,” but it’s about what we live or profess, if you will, because of what we believe. So, our lives reflect that, what we profess, what we believe, how we think, and this is how this word is being used here.

...to which you were also called and have confessed (professed). In other words, you’ve responded to it. So, he’s telling Timothy, “You are living this way of life, you’re living by the truth, and your life reflects it.” That’s what he’s saying, “You’ve professed this in your life. It’s very evident.” **...the good profession** that comes from God. You’re able to do it because of God.

...the good profession, in the presence of many witnesses. So, he’s saying here, “Many people have seen you and come into your life or been around you in your life, and they see what you believe, they see how you live. They see your example.”

I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Joshua the Christ, who witnessed the good profession before Pontius Pilate. He’s saying here He stood His ground, and He talked to Pilate in the way that He did because of what He believed because of what was in Him. “He professed a good profession,” if you will, “and you’re doing that, you’re following suit.”

So, we all are to do this, obviously. By how we live, it should reflect here what we believe. It’s God’s way of life, and God is first. It’s simple. It’s basic. And so, he’s saying, “This is what Joshua did before Pilate.”

Verse 14—that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless unto the Lord Joshua the Christ’s appearing... “unto that,” I should say, **our Lord Joshua the Christ’s appearing, which He will manifest in His own time.** So again here, they didn’t know when certain things would take place, and so it’s bringing this into the picture here, that there will be the time that these things will come, Christ’s appearing in itself. But they had no comprehension it wouldn’t happen in their time.

...who alone has immortality. Let me back up here **...which He will manifest in His own time; the blessed and only ruler...** Some of these things are such bad translations. **...the blessed and only ruler,** not the word “**the**” at all, “**who is**” is the actual wording here, **the only ruler who is King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality.**

...who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, which no one has seen or whom no one has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen. So again here, he’s reminding Timothy of something that happened to him, that he was called by God, and telling him in essence here, of that which he was encouraging him to do, to continue in this, and giving, just giving him encouragement, which he goes on to do in 2 Timothy 1 that we’re going to next here.

But in this chapter here, again here, just laying the groundwork that this is what we live, this is how we’re to live, this is what Joshua lived, and we’re to hold on to that with all of our being and continue on keeping our eyes focused on what it’s all about, Christ’s appearing, His coming, the time of the resurrection, the firstfruits.

2 Timothy 1:6. To read through some of these things, should always be in awe that we have such opportunity, blessings before us, and be humbled by even this knowledge of a calling that God has given to us.

2 Timothy 1:6—Therefore, I remind you... So, Paul addressing Timothy here again, **to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.** This for him was likely twofold in what he was telling him because it's likely he was the one in that regard who ordained him because he travelled with him and so forth. But before that, and when it all began, it first begins, this primarily happens at baptism. That's when a laying on of hands occurs. It's the most important because without that growth, then everything else can't follow.

And so, Timothy's life began with something, and to stir up God's spirit that was within him, and also because of ordination later on. But you can't have one without the other, so it goes back to and has its beginning in the calling, the choice to be baptized, entering into that oath, and the laying on of hands and receiving the impregnation of God's holy spirit. A very humbling thing to grasp and comprehend, candidly.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. This ought to mean so much more to us today because of what we see in the world around us, when you see such insanity, and you would like to see a little bit more of soundmindedness in human beings. But how much more with God's spirit, of the kind of mind we could have of a sound mind because we know what this is all about. We can see something they can't grasp. We understand why these things are happening. They don't. They don't comprehend it. So, how blessed are you? Awesome!

Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings of the gospel according to the power of God. So, he's saying here that when you go out, you're going to suffer. And candidly, we all do. Everyone has to experience this, what it's like to suffer to live this way of life. Because it's not received by everyone, and things happen within families, things happen on jobs, and on and on it goes. And so, it's just a part of life.

Verse 9—who has saved us and called us with a holy calling. Because God did it. **...not according to our works.** What an incredible thing to understand.

I've felt sorry in times past for those who didn't grasp and didn't see, when they began to think that they did this, that they found the Church, that they found out about the Sabbath, and so, when they saw the Church had the Sabbath, they went to it. Not realizing, no, God had to give you those things to draw you into it in the first place to be able to see and comprehend things about the Holy Days and on and on it goes. But when people think that they have done it, you know, I don't know that I've ever seen anyone like that ever make it, ever come through it.

“Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works.” So, it’s just by God’s choice, and He chose me, He chose you, gave us something, placed something before us that so very, very, very few in six thousand years have ever had. And if that isn’t a humbling thing to think about and to be humbled by, and yet to be in awe of, I don’t know what can be.

...not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace. Grace is a matter of something that God chooses when to love, when to call people, when to begin loving them, to give them His love (because He’s not giving that to the world), to begin giving them an opportunity to be forgiven of sin and not be under the bondage of it, to begin having this mind healed, where we don’t have the kind of torment and the kind of drama that people in the world have. Because we can deal with it. With God, we can deal with those things and put them in their proper category.

God’s truth, God’s way of life, God’s plan and purpose supersedes everything. And so, we don’t get caught up in those things like the world does, like people do. We realize what it’s all about. It’s about selfishness. And they can’t help it, but it doesn’t have to hurt us and drag us down and get us caught up in it as well. We can deal with it, basically, like water off a duck’s back, and realize their time will come; they’ll be given the opportunity. That’s why we don’t get caught up in drama, should not get caught up in drama. We need to be careful of drama.

So again here, **not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Joshua the Christ before time began.** Again, every time I read stuff like this, and I hope it does with you as well, not just words that we read, but of something that has incredible meaning. To think back, to understand all this was planned and purposed before anything in creation started. That shows the greatness of Almighty God in ways that our human minds can’t even begin to comprehend.

...that has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Joshua the Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. So, I guess it’s because of writing some of the book here some of these things are even more profound to me than ever before, truly. Because you think of the first four thousand years of what happened, and very few worked with over that period of time. And then the Church began and then to think how the Church has responded over that period of time, and yet God’s drawn and worked with people and prepared them. We’re right at getting, if we’re not almost there, we’re awfully close, 144,000, exact number. Incredible, the power of God.

So, things like this ought to move us deeply to realize what God has been doing, how long these things have been planned and purposed, and that we have a part in it. Truly.

...but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Joshua the Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. To just grasp the awesomeness of what happened when Christ came after four thousand years of human life on this earth is astounding. It truly is. If we can grasp what was taking place at that time, an incredible change, a time of progressive

revelation that was so powerful, God waiting so long to bring us to that point in time, and then the past two thousand years. Awesome! The more in awe we are of these things, the more we treasure them, the more we recognize the greatness of Almighty God, the easier it is to hold on to this way of life, I'll tell you, and to love God.

Hebrews 9:11—But Christ came as High Priest of good things to come, with a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands. It's spiritual – speaking of what God is building. ...**that is, not of this creation.** So, there is a creation that is from God and what He's building. Awesome!

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, He entered into the Most Holy Place once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption. So again here, just to think of the process of what's pictured in Atonement. It's awesome, things that are talked about here. Two thousand years, the Day of Atonement. He went into the tabernacle, the Holies of Holies, and He wasn't going to come out until everything had been taken care of for His Family in the sense of all that were going to be a part of 144,000, and then He would come out again.

Verse 13—For if the blood of bulls and goats and ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without spot to God? And we follow the same course, receiving that in our life. ... **cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?** So, why are we baptized? That's why. It's to have self cleansed. That's what we told God when we came to that point in time: we wanted to be forgiven of our sins. It was either true or it wasn't.

It truly boggles my mind that anyone could ever turn against the Church, that anyone could ever turn away from the Church. Choices, choices.

And for this reason, He is the mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

And so, what an awesome thing to understand that we have a new covenant. To understand the process. No one could live by the old because no one can keep the law without God's spirit. And then God revealing the time of how that's going to be accomplished through Joshua, through a process of being able to be forgiven of sin, that we're able to have a real relationship with God, and not just that, but actually God dwelling in us through the impregnation of the holy spirit. Awesome!