Through the Bible with Les Feldick, Book 27

LESSON ONE * PART I

PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CARNAL BELIEVERS

I CORINTHIANS 4:3 - 6:11

As we pick up again in I Corinthians Chapter 4, we also begin book 27. You know all of this ministry started with a home Bible study in Iowa many years ago, and from that The Lord has just helped us to branch out where we can reach more and more folks with The Word. I never try to make argument with people, but I just teach The Word as I feel The Lord has revealed it to me. I'm just a layman; I do not attempt to talk in theological levels, but rather I try to teach The Word in a way that common people can comprehend it, and I believe we're accomplishing that given the response we're getting. Now let's review verse 1:

**I Corinthians 4:1**

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards (or managers) of the mysteries of God." We went through the mysteries in our last lesson and how these Pauline revelations are never referred to anywhere else in Scripture - not in the Old Testament, or the Four Gospels, and for the most part, not even in the Book of Acts. You find the mysteries only in the letters of Paul. Paul says in verse 2:

**I Corinthians 4:2-4**

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." So whatever we are in charge of, it can be business, or church activities, or whatever - if we're in charge we are responsible, and God expects us to be faithful.

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

Never lose sight of the fact that Corinth was a city that was saturated in paganism and all the gross immorality that went with it. They were so steeped in the things of the world. Even as Paul has garnered this little group of believers, remember they had just come out of this kind of background. So it stands to reason that they didn't all of a sudden become spiritual giants. They had a lot of problems, and in Chapter 7, verse 1 it's indicated that this congregation actually sent Paul (who is across the Aegean Sea
at Ephesus when he writes this letter) a whole series of questions, and so Paul is answering these questions they have asked one by one. And when you get that concept then this little letter of Corinthians just sort of opens up again. Remember back in Chapter 1, Paul had to deal with so many of them lifting him up as the only man to listen to. Others had separated themselves saying that they only listen to Peter, and others said they listen to Apollos. Those were things that divided this little congregation, but that wasn't their only problem. They also had a moral problem and problems with relationships within the church family. In fact the whole letter of Corinthians is dealing with a series of problems, and they had come to the Apostle Paul in the form of a letter asking, "How do we do this, how do we handle that?" So here he's defending his apostleship.

Remember back in Chapter 1 we stressed that some said, "No, we listen to Peter, you're just a fake, you're an impostor. Peter is the one that has the authority, he walked with Jesus for three years, you didn't." So Paul has to constantly defend his apostleship, and here's another little instance. See?

*I Corinthians 4:3a,4b,5a*

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment..." ....but he that judgeth me is the Lord." So Jesus Christ is the One that judgeth Paul, the One who sent him out to be the Apostle of the Gentiles in the first place. Verse 5a:

"Therefore (since no one can judge Paul except The Lord Who sent him) judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come,"

Believers will never receive their rewards until the end of time. The lost are not going to receive their just recompense until the end of their time. Why? You see, as you and I go through this life as believers, we are making impacts on people all around us. And what the final impact will really be, we won't know until The Lord, the Righteous Judge, will reveal at the last time. In other words, for you and I living today, if The Lord should tarry, and we go on through the valley of death, every person that we have touched in this life is going to still carry on in some way or another, and we don't know what they're going to accomplish.

I have to think of my own experience. I'm sure the people that were instrumental in my early Christian experience are long gone, but you see, the result of what they did in my life is still carrying on. It's the same way with a lost person, as he makes an impact on the world from his lostness, he too is going to be reaping rewards of people who are following in his or her footsteps. So this is what the apostle is trying to show
here, and that is, we are responsible only to The Lord, and until He comes this is where our responsibility lies. Now reading verse 5 again:

*I Corinthians 4:5*

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

Over and over I have defined this word *manifest* as you see it so often in Scripture - things being manifested, and here it is again in this verse. At the end of time when The Lord comes, then He will make manifest the counsels of the heart which is an area that only God can see. **And again that word `manifest' is being put under the spotlight.** And the microscope is a perfect example. When you turn on that bright light of the microscope that manifests everything clearly that is on that slide, and all of a sudden everything that was invisible is now visible. And that is what the word `manifest' almost every time depicts in Scripture. There is coming a time when that sharp light of God's knowledge is going to penetrate even into the very hearts of our being, and then every believer shall have praise of God.

This is what we are to live for. You know we're living in a time of materialism, and I suppose 90% of motivation among most of us is material advancement. We want it better than the last generation, we want our kids to have it better than we had it. But listen, we have our priorities wrong, the things that count the most as The Lord Jesus Himself put it in His earthly ministry.

*Mtthew 6:33*

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

There's nothing wrong with things in themselves; it's what people do with things in their schedule of priorities. We are to live and breathe so that we might have the praise of God. That's why He's left us here, to bring honor and glory to His name.

*I Corinthians 4:6*

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure (in a picture or type) transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."
Paul is having to deal with the problem, that within the congregation of Corinth some were getting all puffed up, and saying, "I'm the one who is most important in this congregation because I go by what Peter taught." And over here would be another that would say, "Oh, no I'm the one that is the leader of this congregation because I'm imitating the Apostle Paul." So you see how infantile they really were? They were still so carnal, and so he was dealing with the problem that you can't get puffed up and give someone the impression that you're better than they are, that you're more spiritually blessed, and all these things. Now verse 7, and here we come down to the whole practicality of our very existence.

I Corinthians 4:7a

"For who maketh thee to differ from another?..." ("from another" is in italic)

Actually it says who maketh you different, that's what it amounts to. I'll never forget that years ago (I was probably a teenager in our Church congregation up there in Northern Iowa) we had an old German immigrant who had become quite wealthy. I'll never take anything away from him because he was a tremendously hard worker. He had accumulated hundreds of acres, and he was known as one of the more wealthy people in the community. This gentleman always sat on the second row in our Sunday morning service, and the pastor evidently was preaching a sermon on this same order, "that we are nothing except what God let's us be." I'll never forget when he asked the old gentlemen, "Who gave you the ability to make all your money?" And the gentlemen said, "Nobody, I did it myself." But he was wrong. He couldn't have made a nickel, he could have never bought a quarter section without God ordaining it. And see this is where we all are. We are what we are by the Sovereign Grace of God, and this is what Paul is emphasizing to these Corinthians. "Don't you get puffed up that you're better than somebody else, because you're nothing except what God made you."

I Corinthians 4:7

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? (From Whom? From God. Everyone of us as believers are what we are, we have what we have, only by the Grace of God, and we can never get puffed up, and say, "Hey look what I've accomplished." We can't do that because we have accomplished nothing of ourselves.)now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

In other words the apostle is saying, "Why are you glorying over something that you didn't even have anything to do with." Do you see that? And every time we get an inkling that maybe I'm somebody special, knock that thought right down because we
are nothing except what God has let us become. And again all of that is based on His Grace. I don't deserve three meals a day, I don't deserve any of the good things of life, but I have them, Why? Because God's Grace has seen fit to permit it. Now verse 8:

_I Corinthians 4:8a_

"Now ye are full, now ye are rich,..."

Hey, I thought these believers were carnal. They are, they are not spiritually rich like the Ephesians. They still have a long way to go, but again this brings right back home this whole concept of Salvation, that the moment we're saved we have all of God as He can put Himself into us. We have everything so far as the fullness of the Holy Spirit from the very moment we believe. You don't have to work, and look for it, because that was all part of Salvation. Now, granted, God does leave within our realm of control how much of the fullness we're going to maintain (or are we going to let it empty out some). A cup of water is a good example. If I want to fill that cup of water with air, what do I do with my water? Pour it out. Now if I pour out a 1/2 of cup of water, how much of the cup is full of air? Half, and if I pour out 3/4 of a cup then 3/4 is air and 1/4 is water.

Now in an analogy this is a good way to explain the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The moment we're saved we're filled to the brim with the Holy Spirit. You just talk to someone who has been recently saved, and they are bubbling over, they are excited, they know what a tremendous thing has happened in their life. But we're still in this old world with all of it's allurements and all of it's temptations and desires of the flesh, so what happens? Pretty soon we start filling that cup up with air or the Pneuma, the Holy Spirit, or we start filling it with material things. Then the first thing you know our cup is full of the material isn't it? And what have we done with the Holy Spirit? We've almost cancelled Him out. Now He'll never leave, so don't get that idea, but we love His fullness. Now we come to a point then in our Christian experience, and here is where you have to get into The Word, and you have to be in fellowship with other believers. So then we finally come to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is not having the control in our lives that we want Him to have. We've got to do something about it, and remember all these things we saw in the Book of Romans do become a personal decision, because you're free.

Now if we want more of that fullness of the Holy Spirit back in our lives, what are we going to have to do with material that's in the cup? Pour it out, get rid of it, and if you want to be completely filled again get right down to the basics, get priority wise, and get to where the spiritual things means more than the material. Looking at verse 8 again Paul tells these carnal Christians:
I Corinthians 4:8,9

"Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." The Apostle is bringing them to the place where they could experience a greater joy of their Salvation, and the Apostle wants to be part of that. Because after all he was the one responsible for bringing them out of their paganistic lifestyle.

"For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last (I think Paul is including the Twelve back there in Jerusalem, himself, and probably Barnabas), as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."

Now I'm sure everyone of us have considered death at sometime in our Christian experience. And I know it's not for us to question God's Sovereignty, but we're human, and so we do, we ask why. Do you realize that all twelve of the apostles except maybe John who may have died a natural death, as he was in exile on the isle of Patmos, but all the others died a martyred death, everyone of them, a horrible death, and the Apostle Paul the same way. Beheaded at the hands of Nero. Let's go for a moment to II Corinthians, Chapter 11 and look at how Paul had to suffer. And as you read this passage inspired by the Holy Spirit (so this isn't Paul just simply expressing his own feelings of his own vision, this is Holy Spirit inspired) it's here for a purpose. And look what this man went through for the sole purpose of getting the Gospel out to the Gentile world. He was getting no compensation, he wasn't gaining any material wealth whatsoever. If Paul had wealth as a Jew and Pharisee he evidently just left it all behind, and that's what I think happened. I think at one time Saul of Tarsus was a wealthy religious Jew, but he chucked it all for the sake of being the apostle to the Gentiles.

II Corinthians 11:22,23a

"Are they Hebrews? so am I, Are they Israelites? so am I, Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool)..."

Do you remember what Paul said about the Gospel back there in Chapter 1 of I Corinthians?

I Corinthians 1:18a

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."
Here in II Corinthians Paul is saying that from the world he was a fool to have chucked all the power, prestige, and wealth that he had as a Jewish religious leader.

**II Corinthians 11:23-28**

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes (from the whip) above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. (Near death, and now here it comes in the next verse.) Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice (three) was I beaten with rods, (none of us know what that was like, it was inhuman.) once was I stoned, (that's when they dragged him out of the city of Lystra, and he was supposedly dead.) thrice (three) I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; (do you see that? And it was for the sake of the Gospel.) In journeyings often, (in his three missionary journeys the man must of been on foot day after day after day) in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, (the Jews were out to kill him constantly) in perils by the heathen, (the Romans are finally going to end up putting him to death.) in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, (he was human, he wasn't a superstar) in watchings often, in hunger (he couldn't stop and get a Big Mac along the way) and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." (Not sufficient clothing to keep him warm, and on top of the physical sufferings) Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

The man was constantly under pressure; as an example, the letters from the Corinthians with all their problems, and the Galatians he finds out they're trying to go back under the Law, and legalism. And he has to hurriedly sit down and write the six Chapters to the Galatians. So over and over the man is just constantly besieged with the care of Christianity, which is now just beginning to make itself known throughout the Roman Empire. I have to look at a situation like that. Would I keep going? Would you keep going? If you were just constantly suffering everyday of your life for the simple reason of getting the Gospel out to these pagan heathen who were so content to worship their gods of wood and stone. I mean I just can't help but wonder. I have to ask why did a man like Paul have to suffer to such extreme that we might get the Gospel? What kept him from giving up and going back home to Tarsus, and saying, "What's the use?" But he didn't, he kept on, and kept on until finally Rome itself put him to death.
LESSON ONE * PART II

PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CARNAL BELIEVERS

I CORINTHIANS 4:3 - 6:11

Now let's just get right back to I Corinthians 4 verse 10.

_I Corinthians 4:10_

"We are fools for Christ's sake, (and remember that's what the world thinks of us as believers. The foolishness of the preaching of the Cross.) but ye are wise (because they were believers) in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised."

They hadn't gone through the trials and tribulations, and persecutions that Paul had endured, although when we get to Chapter 7, I think he's telling these people they would soon come under the intense persecution the Roman Empire brought upon Christianity. And so even here I think the Apostle Paul is trying to prepare them for the time when they would literally have to die for their faith, and as Paul also would have to do in a few years after he wrote this letter.

_I Corinthians 4:11-13_

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; (Paul didn't have a nice big beautiful mansion to go home to after one of his missionary journeys.) And labour, working with our own hands: (we know from the Book of Acts that he worked as a tent maker with his hands.) being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: (or go along with it.) Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

Well that was one view, but as I pointed out so often, as Paul confronted the philosophers up there on Mars Hill at Athens with all their philosophizing, and they call Paul nothing but a babbler, but do you remember what I said about it? In reality it was the other way around. Paul was the one who really had the Words of Life, and Wisdom, and the philosophers had nothing but babble. Now it's the same way here. He was defamed because of what he was doing to promote The Gospel.

_I Corinthians 4:14_
"I write not these things to shame you, (in other words Paul is not saying, 'Unless you suffer like I've suffered you're not really believers.' There are some that have taken that approach, but we don't have to suffer indignation just to prove that we are a Christian. I know a preacher who was like that and it was like he intentionally did things to bring persecution on himself. But Paul is telling these believers that he's not telling them about these hardships to give them the idea that if they haven't suffered like he has then they're not a believer.) but as my beloved sons I warn you."

How does Paul use the word "sons" here of these pagan Corinthians? The same way he spoke of Timothy. What did he call Timothy? My son in the faith. Not physically; Timothy was clear up in a different part of the world from Paul, but yet he refers to him as his son in the faith, and that is what he is doing here. They were just like children of his because he was the one that brought them The Gospel, and Salvation power that was able to bring them out of paganism and idolatry. Now verse 15:

I Corinthians 4:15a

"For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers:..."

Well I've struggled with this verse some. It's kind of a tough one to see through, but I think what Paul is really saying by inspiration is that you can have all kinds of instructors, you can have Sunday School teacher after Sunday School teacher, and pastor after pastor, and television evangelist after television evangelist, but how many of those have had any real impact in bringing you to the place of Salvation? Probably only one or two people who really influence your life to the place where you became a child of God, and I think that's what Paul is driving at here.

I Corinthians 4:15b

"for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you (how?) through the gospel."

We haven't explained The Gospel in quite some time so let's look at The Gospel. We find The Gospel in I Corinthians 15:1-4. We'll get to this chapter in a few more months, and I always lay these out as the clearest definition of The Gospel of Salvation that you can find between these two covers. And if whatever you believe for your Salvation doesn't line up with these verses here then you had better take another look. Because here is the Gospel of Grace in all of it's simplicity and all of it's power.

I Corinthians 15:1,2b
Moreover, brethren, (Paul is writing to these same Corinthian believers) I declare unto you the gospel (The one and only Gospel) which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: By which also ye are saved,..."

I also like to use the words `made righteous' in the place of saved. Not only are we saved from hell's fire, but we have been declared righteous (made right with God) by imputation of God Himself. He has imputed to us His righteousness as a result of our believing The Gospel. We don't work for it or deserve it; it's all of God's Grace, and of course we appropriate it by faith.

**I Corinthians 15:2,3a**

"By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." And all I say to that is, you have to know what you believe. You don't just believe some empty gobbledygook, but rather know what you believe for Salvation. And here it comes. And remember Paul was the first one to enter that city of Corinth with this message of Salvation to deliver these pagans from idolatry.

"For (Paul says) I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,..."

He's defending his apostleship again here. Remember he didn't pick this up from the Twelve in Jerusalem, because they didn't have this Gospel, but rather he had received this Gospel from the ascended Lord in glory. That's why you can't find this Gospel in the Four Gospels. It's not back there, and couldn't be, because Christ hadn't died yet. Now here's The Gospel!

**I Corinthians 15:3,4**

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (Old Testament) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

Now back to Chapter 4 again. Whenever Paul makes reference to his bringing the Corinthians The Gospel that we just read, that's also what we must believe for our Salvation even today, and nothing else. **How that Christ died for our sins, how that He was buried, and how He arose again for our justification.** That's The Gospel, and notice there's nothing in there concerning a mandated baptism, there's no mandated joining something, there no mandated doing something, it is just simply believing it. And that is so hard for a lot of people to comprehend. Although I'll have to admit that our television response has become unbelievable of people who are beginning to see that it is this simple. In fact our next newsletter that we put out will have a couple of testimonies from people that have come out of spiritual darkness, and
into a Salvation experience because of this television program. And so we know that The Gospel still has that tremendous power to bring people out of the darkness. Now since Paul was the one that brought The Gospel to the Corinthians, and remember this is Holy Spirit inspired, I've had people become angry, and say, "Les where do you get that we should be followers of Paul." Look at verse 16.

I Corinthians 4:16

"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of (Jesus Christ. Is that what it says? No, but that's what most think it should say. But rather Paul says be ye followers of) me."

Now let me show you another one, and there are many throughout his Epistles, but the one I can remember the best is in Philippians Chapter 3. And this is a precious little letter just full of this believer's experience, and how in spite of adversities this man could write "rejoice evermore, I say rejoice," and that's the whole theme of Philippians. Let's look at verse 17: And remember here Paul is writing to the Church at Philippi.

Philippians 3:17

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."

Most people think we're supposed to be following Jesus. Who is Paul following? Jesus Christ, and we're right at his heels. And so as we follow the teachings of Paul, Who are we following? Jesus Christ, but again not the Jesus of Nazareth, and the dusty roads of Palestine, but rather the "Crucified, Risen, Lord of glory is the One we follow." Secondly, if I were to follow Jesus as some people think we should, then I say, "Now wait a minute, when I get to the shore of Galilee, and He takes off on foot, what am I supposed to do? I can't walk on that water, Peter proved that. But Jesus did, and over and over He went through circumstances as the God-Man that I as a human can't comprehend, so how am I going to follow in those footsteps?" But listen, The Lord Jesus that Paul follows, I can follow in Paul's steps, because Paul was just as human as you and I. Paul hurt just as much when that whip fell on his bare back as it would hurt you and I. Paul got just as cold on those wind swept plains of Turkey as you and I would get, and if he could take it, then by God's Grace you and I can take it. Do you see what I'm driving at? While we're in Philippians look at verse 10, and this should be the prayer of every believer as we follow this Apostle.

Philippians 3:10
"That I may know him, (intimately on a person to person basis) and the power of his resurrection, (if you can't believe the resurrection then you have no Salvation, you have no power, you're destitute, because the very heart of The Gospel is, `That He Rose From The Dead.' They can claim reincarnation, but they know nothing of resurrection.) and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;" Now back to I Corinthians:

I Corinthians 4:16,17

"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me." Paul is the example, he was willing to suffer and die for the sake of the Cross.

"For this cause (because Paul is the leader of this whole concept of Christianity, the Body of Christ) have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, (spiritually) and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church."

Now even Timothy, when he comes, would remind the Corinthians of what Paul had done on their behalf in bringing them the knowledge of the crucified, and risen Christ. Do you see that? Now in verse 18 he's having to deal with some problems again. But Paul says in spite of all the things that they had going for them - they had the apostle himself as their spiritual father, they had his spiritual son Timothy, who's going to come and enhance the work. So they had all these things going for them. It was much like Israel back in the Old Testament. Do you realize how much Israel had going for them? And yet what did they do with it? They failed miserably over and over. Well the Corinthians are doing the same thing. They've had the strong preaching and teaching of the greatest Apostle that ever lived. They even had dear old Timothy come along and yet:

I Corinthians 4:18a

"Now some are puffed up,..."

Now when Paul speaks of being puffed up, what do you suppose is their main problem? Pride. I've heard sermon after sermon, and I imagine you have also. Pride is the one thing more than anything else that keeps people from Salvation. Because most people don't want to admit that they're a sinner. Pride stands in the way, they say, "I'm not that bad, in fact I'm pretty good." And they refuse to see what God says. God says:

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
And that's what we have to go by whether we feel like it or not, and it's that way in all the realms of faith. It doesn't matter how you and I feel about something, but rather what the Book says. And if the Book says it, then whether I feel like it or not that's what I have to go by. So Paul tells the believers at Corinth:

**I Corinthians 4:18**

"Now some of you are puffed up, as though I would not come to you."

Now don't forget Paul is across the Aegean Sea from Greece, over there in Western Turkey at Ephesus. He's probably about 150 - 200 miles from Corinth, and these believers are saying, "Oh Paul will never show up here again. He's not going to put forth the effort to take a ship and come across the Aegean and come and dress us down." So in so many words Paul is telling them that they're getting kind of cocky, you're getting puffed up, and you think I won't come to you, but I will, and when I get there I'm going to do some straightening out.

**I Corinthians 4:19**

"But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power."

See even the Corinthians were not that far from Athens, - only about 50 miles. So they were in easy communicating distance even in the ancient days. And all the philosophy, and the paganism of Athens was also indicative in Corinth. So these believers were used to hearing the philosophers with all their smooth talk and big words, and that still impresses people even today doesn't it. Oh they like to hear people who can use all this big "high falutin" language and what have you. That's what they call, "You have arrived." But Paul says that he's not going to come to them with a bunch of smooth talk. I'm not going to come to you with the big long words of the philosophers. But rather I'm going to come to you with, "Power." And that's the word that Paul uses over and over, "The wisdom and the power of God." That's what brought these people out of paganism. It's wasn't Paul's fast talking, or language, but the power of God when he preached the simple Gospel of Christ. And the Holy Spirit helped those people to understand that, yes, they were sinners for whom Christ died, and rose from the dead. Now verse 20.

**I Corinthians 4:20**

"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."
Now let me take you back to the first Chapter, as it's been a while since we were in I Corinthians Chapter 1, and then we'll go to Romans Chapter 1. These are verses that I like to use over and over because they are so simplistic, and yet they say everything that needs to be said.

**I Corinthians 1:18**

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish (lost people) foolishness; but unto us which are saved (or made righteous) it is the power of God."

I've had people ask me, "What does Someone that died 2000 years ago have to do with me today." And the answer is: **Everything!** And remember good works will never save anybody, good works do not have the power of God. Good works are something that we can do in the energy of the flesh. Now let's drop down to verses 21 through 25.

**I Corinthians 1:21-25**

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (Plus nothing, and people can't understand that. We're saved by believing The Gospel + nothing. Otherwise it becomes legalism, a works religion.) For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; (then the word I really wanted you to see is in the next verse) But unto them which are called, (into the Body) both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." But people don't like to admit that. Romans Chapter 1, verse 16. And remember we're still speaking of the power of God.

**Romans 1:16**

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; (that same Gospel we looked at in I Corinthians 15:1- 4) for it (The Gospel) is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;..." God is always looking for someone who has the faith to believe The Gospel that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Now come back to the last verse in I Corinthians Chapter 4.

**I Corinthians 4:21**

"What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, (with wrath and anger) or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"
Which one do you think Paul will come to them in? Well he will go in the spirit of love and meekness, because it just wasn't Paul's nature to go in there, and start taking harsh measures if he doesn't absolutely have to. So this letter is going to be, I think, preparatory to his coming to the congregation in Corinth so that he can appeal to them in love and meekness.
Now let's come right back to our study, and begin I Corinthians Chapter 5. We love to hear when you write and say that you study right along with us. That just thrills our hearts. As you know we never try to promote any particular group or ourselves, but we just want to help people to understand The Bible, because it's the greatest Book on earth. But you know there are so many that won't even attempt to read it because they say, "Well I can't understand it." But, oh yes you can, and the whole secret to understanding The Bible and having it come to life for you is this; pay attention to whom a particular Scripture is written to, and don't confuse Israel with the Church. God was careful in separating the two, and we should be also. And for the most part when God is speaking to the Church Age believer (that's you and I) He does this through the Apostle Paul's writings. A lot of the things that were applicable to Israel are not to the Church today.

But I always have to remind you that the things that God hated in the land of Israel He still hates today. God does not change. The God of Israel in Genesis is the still the same God that we deal with today, but He deals with us, the Church, under far different circumstances. We are now on resurrection ground, we are now being dealt with as people who are to believe for their Salvation that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, as recorded in I Corinthians 15:1-4, and not merely a Shekinah glory back there in the Temple in Jerusalem. We're not under a mandate to keep the Law and so forth. But nevertheless always remember that God has not changed in His attitude toward sin, and righteousness.

Now I think that we are ready for I Corinthians Chapter 5, and I might remind you that this is not a very pretty chapter. It's another one of those chapters that I'd just as soon skip over, and not have to comment on. But if we're taking this more or less chapter by chapter we have to deal with it. And here Paul writes to this same carnal congregation that we've been dealing with for a long time:

_I Corinthians 5:1_

"It is reported commonly (in other words this wasn't something that was being done in a corner, but rather this was something that was open, and the whole Corinthian congregation knew about it.) that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife."
In other words those pagan Gentiles wouldn't do what this couple is doing, and what is it? Probably a step-son and his step-mother are more or less living together as husband and wife, and it was a gross immoral situation even for Corinth, as immoral as that city was. And then here is the real point of condemnation from Paul.

*I Corinthians 5:2*

"And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you."

That is from the Church congregation, not to put him to death, but to remove him from fellowship. Now let's analyze these two verses. Here we have this instance of gross immorality within the confines of the local Corinthian Church, they all knew about it, and yet did it bother any of them? Evidently not, so Paul tells them that they're puffed up. I think the Scofield Bible has a very good footnote at the bottom of this page. Remember there are three segments to this congregation. They were those who liked the teaching of Peter, Apollos, and Paul, but we find none of them bothered by this act. You would think that one of these segments would be up in arms, and say, "We've got to do something about this. This is bringing reproach upon the name of Christ throughout the city of Corinth, because even the pagans know what is going on." It was something that wasn't being hidden. Now verse 3: We're going to find Paul is going to do something about, he's not going to let it slide.

*I Corinthians 5:3*

"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, (Paul says that although I'm not with you in body, but I am in the spirit, I) have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,"

Paul is telling them there is no room for argument, you have to deal with it. This is what we have to realize that even in our own society we are fast becoming not much better than Corinth. Isn't that right? Our whole moral fiber is just simply falling away. It is just simply rotting away from under, and these very same acts can take place in local churches, and no one thinks anything of it. I've had people call from various states that ask the question, "Well what are we supposed to do? This couple is living in sin, they are open about it, they walk in church as though nothing is amiss." Hey that's not the way it is supposed to be, and this is what Paul is having to deal with. If there is gross immorality, or a gross act of covetousness, and so forth, then the Church has to make a point of it. And you can't just turn your eyes, and say, "Oh well let them live, because it's a free country." Not in the realm of the Church it isn't supposed to be. So Paul is telling us the remedy. You have to take this couple, confront them with it as a Body of Believers. And then in verse 4 we find.
I Corinthians 5:4,5a

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, (you see this is a corporate thing now, it's the Church, The Body Of Christ, located in Corinth) and my spirit, (and naturally the Holy Spirit would be) with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh,..."

Now remember the flesh, soul, and spirit are not the same. So Paul is not demanding the destruction of this man's soul and spirit as a believer. Now this person is a believer, or they wouldn't be addressing him as such in the Corinthian letter. But they could turn such a person as this over to the power of Satan to destroy his physical life or flesh. And we know according to Job that this is in the power of Satan when God grants it to him. In the dealing with Job, we find Satan could go no further with Job than God permitted, and it's the same way here. Paul is saying in so many words: That if this couple will not clean up their act, and come away from their open sin, then turn them over to the power of Satan to destroy the flesh, to take their lives physically from them lest they keep on bringing reproach to the name of Christ. That does not mean that they're going to be annihilated spiritually. Let's look at that aspect as we continue:

I Corinthians 5:5b

"...that the spirit (of this individual) may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Now I know this is hard for a lot of people to comprehend, that people living in this kind of a sinful condition are still saved? Yes. That's what The Book says. But these kind of people if they're believers, aren't going to get away with it. It has to be dealt with by the Church, and God's going to deal with it. Now the Scripture says that even though God is going to take these kind of believers out of their physical existence, they won't lose their Salvation, and then he admonishes the believing community that we are never even to pray for the death of someone like this. We can find this in the little letter of I John. I hadn't intended to do this until we get to Chapter 11, but since we've gone this far with it we might as well go ahead. In I John Chapter 5 let's drop in at verse 16, and here he's dealing with pretty much the same kind of a situation. It may not have been as gross, but it was sin in the Church.

I John 5:16

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. (In other words, their sin isn't as gross as the sin we saw in the Book of Corinthians) There is a sin unto death:...."
In other words, in the life of a believer who goes into deep sin, open sin, God has mandated first and foremost a discipline action on the part of the Church to restore such a one to fellowship, and you find that in Galatians Chapter 6:1

**Galatians 6:1**

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

You see we're all human. Every human being is just as prone to fall into sin as the next one, but hopefully if we're spiritually taught, and have kept these things, this won't happen. But it can happen to anybody. John is delineating that there were some sins that would not cause God to take them out of their physical life. But some sins He will, and I've seen it happen, and I'm sure you have where a believer will refuse to come away from his sinful lifestyle. You can deal with them, and deal with them, and all of a sudden, "Bingo." Just a sudden heart attack, or sudden car accident, and they're gone. Well God takes them home lest they keep on bringing reproach to His Name. And that's exactly what John is dealing with, and so he says:

**I John 5:b**

"...There is a sin unto death: (a believer can come to that place where God will take his life. Now then look at the very last part of that verse) I do not say that he shall pray for it."

In other words no believer or Church Body ever has the right to pray for the death of an erring believer, because that is never permissible, that's in God's hand. Now let's look at verse 17.

**I John 5:17**

"All unrighteousness is sin: (whether that sin be a little one or a great one) and there is a sin not unto death."

Now what's implied here in verse 17? That some sins are gross enough that it will cause God to take that believer out ahead of time. Now let's come back to I Corinthians Chapter 5, and here's where we have it. This man is evidently committing a sin unto death if he does not repent of it, and turn around. If he's going to continue on living with his step-mother in a marital relationship, then God's going to take him out, and that's all there is to it. Now verse 5.

**I Corinthians 5:5,6**
"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit (soul) may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Now Paul comes back to the Corinthians as a congregation.

"Your glorying (remember the words `puffed up?') is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"

What has happened to the Church of today? Just exactly that. I remember years and years ago, we were visiting in a church and I heard a Sunday School teacher or preacher, say, "You know the Church has gotten into dire straits because as these various social sins came along, we would just say, `Well we can accommodate that,' and then here would come something a little more drastic, and we would say, `We're not going to cause a ruckus, we can accommodate, we can live with that.'" So over the years what has happened? All the gross sins of the world have now come into the Church, and the Church thinks nothing of it. Well I'm not going to stand here, and say that we can reverse that. I can understand that Church discipline today is almost an impossible thing. But I have to say what The Book says, and The Book says, "We have to deal with born again church members who are bringing reproach to the Name of Christ." We have to do whatever has to be done to bring them back, or bring them to the place where The Lord will take them home. And the lesson here in verse 6 is if you're going to leave a little leaven it isn't very long until it takes over the whole lump. You people who bake bread know that. You put in a little bit of yeast, and you can't keep part of the dough unleavened, it's all going to come under the effect of the yeast. Well Paul is using that analogy for the Church. If we allow open gross sin then it won't be long until the whole congregation will lose their testimony, and do you know what the world will say as they drive by? I don't live any worse than they do, I don't need Christianity. And then we wonder why we've lost our testimony, well that's the reason. Now verse 7. How were they to deal with it?

I Corinthians 5:7a

"Purge out therefore the old leaven,..."

Or that which is causing the whole lump to be leavened, purge it out. In fact, what do our Orthodox Jewish people do before Passover? Well, they go through the whole house from the basement to the attic, looking for leaven or yeast. What was the picture? Well it went all the way back to, of course, the Passover in Egypt. The very next day after Passover were the seven days of unleavened bread. They were now to be pictured as a nation whose sins had been atoned for or cleansed, and they were to picture that with the unleavened bread. Paul is bringing that same analogy into our teaching today. We have to look at sin in our individual lives. We have to look at sin in the life of the Church just like leaven in the bread of Egypt. Now reading on.
I Corinthians 5:7a

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened, (now what does it mean that we're unleavened? Well we've been forgiven, we've been cleansed, and so far as God is concerned we are without sin. But if we leave a little bit of leaven in our life, then it isn't too long until it begins to expand and expand, and then it will consume us.) For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"

I don't have to take you into the Scriptures because you know what happened; but what happened on the night of Passover in Egypt? The Israelites put the blood on the two side posts and the one at the top, and in your mind's eye you can picture the outline of the Cross, and I'm sure that's what God had on His mind. Alright, here is the beauty of it. These Jews who had been slaves now in Egypt had been told that if they would kill that sacrificial lamb, and then place the blood on the two door posts and lintel, and at the stroke of midnight as they would be in those little huts there in Egypt, the death angel was going to go over all the houses in Egypt and kill every first born male.

Now as the Israelites huddled together in those huts, were they in fear of the death angel? No, not if they were people of faith, because they had put the blood on the door, and they had absolutely nothing to fear. They didn't stand in those little huts quivering in their boots, they were secure knowing that the blood was on the door, and they were covered. Now Paul is bringing that all the way up to the Church age. That even as our Passover, when Christ died on that Roman Cross, and shed His blood for you and I, and when we come under that blood we are passed over from any judgment. Let me take you back to the little letter of I John again for a moment, and this time we will look at Chapter 2, and we'll begin with verse 1:

I John 2:1a

"My little children, (who's John writing to? Believers) these things write I unto you, that ye sin not...."

Now God never encourages the believer to sin, but God being Omnipotent, God being the Creator, God knows that we are going to sin, and some a little quicker than others, but we're going to sin. That old Adam is so powerful that even though we reckon him as being dead according to the Book of Romans, yet he pops up and gets his licks in, and we sin. Okay, but now read on in that verse.

I John 2:1b
"...And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, (Who?) Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Now can you imagine what happens up there in Heaven when a believer sins? Oh immediately our Advocate comes right to the Father, and says, "But Father, he's under the blood, and he's a believer; or she's under the blood." So Christ picks it up on our behalf. Now that's a glorious, glorious assurance that even when we sin we're still under the blood just like the nation of Israel was back there in Egypt. And nothing could touch those Israelites, the death angel couldn't touch them because they were under the blood. And you see this is where believers have to find themselves, and that's not license to sin. God's Grace is not license for us to do whatever we want to do. Just because we know that we have this promise and assurance that if we sin, we are still forgiven, we are still washed, but we now have to have that cleansing, and maybe in the next lesson we will come to the words, "you are washed," and then of course I'm going to take you to John's Gospel. But for now in this little letter let's look at verse 2, and we find that not only is Christ our Advocate, He is also our:

I John 2:2

"And he is the propitiation for our sins:..."

Now it's been a long time since we've dealt with that word in Romans Chapter 8, but for you who have been with us ever since we started, do you remember how I explained the word `propitiation'? Everything that you can possibly put together back there in the tabernacle, back there in the wilderness including the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant, the veil, the Ark of the shew-bread, the candlestick holder, the altar of incense. the brazen laver, the brazen altar, the sacrificial lamb, the fence around the tabernacle. Do you remember when I went through all that? Every single aspect of that tabernacle in it's composition, the gold, silver, and stone, and all the rest. Every one of them were a picture of the work Salvation that Christ accomplished at the Cross. And I call that whole work, "propitiation." Everything that you see in the tabernacle is the work of propitiation. And that included His work as High Priest, it included the shed blood of the sacrifice. it included His interceding for us back there in the Holy of Holies, and it's still appropriate even today. Oh, this tremendous work of propitiation.

I John 2:2b

"...and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Now I read again the other day where a guy was promoting that Christ only died for the believer. Well he's probably got his scripture for it, but I can't go along with that,
because my Bible says, "That Christ died for everyone!" But not every one will be saved because not every one will appropriate it. But the potential is there. Now let's come back to I Corinthians Chapter 5.

**I Corinthians 5:8**

"Therefore let us keep the feast, (even as Israel did in a symbolic way back there in the wilderness) not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Now what do you suppose Paul is alluding to here? Remember we're still dealing with the sins of believers in that local congregation, but they weren't the only people who were falling far short, because evidently there was also malice, and other forms of wickedness in the congregation. And it was leaven that was permeating that little congregation. It's a wonder that it ever survived isn't it? Here was that little group of believers that was plagued with almost every sin that you could think of, and yet God didn't give up on them. God just kept them in a place of growing, and we know that Paul came to the place that one day I'm sure he was proud of the Corinthians.
LESSON ONE * PART IV

PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CARNAL BELIEVERS

I CORINTHIANS 4:3 - 6:11

Now back to where we left off in the last lesson, and we're still dealing with the problems that were besieging the Corinthian Church. They were believers, they were saved, and we're going to meet them in glory some day, but they had problems. As I mentioned a couple of lessons ago, Paul is addressing them in response to a letter they had written to him asking how they were supposed to deal with these things, and so consequently by Holy Spirit inspiration Paul is just unloading on them. And of course, the reason is the things that were a problem in Corinth in A.D. 60 are the same problems we have today. The human race doesn't change, and so we still have some of the same problems in our Churches and personal lives as the Corinthians did. Now we'll start with verse 9 and in these next few verses are some rather shocking statements.

I Corinthians 5:9,10

"I wrote unto you in an epistle (and evidently Paul wrote more than just these two letters to the Corinthians) not to company with fornicators:" (or immoral people.) Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world."

Do you know what that's saying? If you were to go through a whole week of life, and never rub elbows with someone who is immoral, or is in sort of a gross sin, you'd have to leave this world. Because it's impossible, and here we are in Oklahoma, and we like to think that we're in The Bible belt, but really we're no different than any place else. And those of you who work in large office complexes, or in a large production facilities, and you're rubbing elbows with the cross-section of our society then you are rubbing elbows with every one of these classes of people. There are the immoral, the covetous, the wicked, I mean they are the norm no matter where we live. So when Paul says not to have fellowship with immoral people, he said I'm not talking about the immoral people out there in the work place, but rather I'm talking about those who are immoral and members of your church. Just look at verse 10 again.

I Corinthians 5:10,11

"Yet not altogether with the fornicators (or immoral) of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world."

But
now the flip side) But now I have written unto you not to keep company, (don't have fellowship) if any man that is called a brother (claims to be a believer) be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

So with a fellow believer such as this you are not even to sit down and eat. Now I know this is strong language, but what was the purpose? To make that person feel that he is being set aside and left out. That he is no longer part of the Christian company. And what's the purpose? To bring him to his senses. Because after all, if a person has been genuinely saved even though he goes out into sin, and if The Lord hasn't yet taken him out, as we saw in the last lesson, way down deep this person is miserable. He can't be happy. Don't tell me that a sinning believer can be happy, they can't be because they know that they are doing wrong, and The Lord is dealing with them. And then if fellow believers began to shun them it's really going to come home. So this is the purpose of it all. It isn't to purposely be nasty or anything like that, but God has got a reason, that if you have a person that is an acquaintance believer and is acting like this, then ostracize him or her for a while, but let them know why. Because the Scripture has admonished us not to have fellowship with those kind of people who claim to be believers, and we're talking only about believers here. Now verse 12:

I Corinthians 5:12

"For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?..."

In other words, what's Paul saying? I have no authority to judge the lost world. Here we need to go back to Romans 8:6. We have to understand that this isn't just one little quirk of Scripture. This is a continuing doctrine throughout Paul letters on how to behave as a believer. I mean this is what it all boils down to, this is practical everyday living for you and I as believers.

Romans 8:6

"For to be carnally (or fleshly minded outside of Christ, outside of a Salvation experience) minded is death; (spiritual death. They will someday be eternally separated from God if they never step into Salvation) but to be spiritually minded (that is to have Salvation) is life and peace."

As we saw back in Romans 5 that to be justified by faith is to have the peace of God. Now verse 7.

Romans 8:7
"Because the carnal mind (the old sinful nature of lost people) is enmity (an enemy) against God: for it (the carnal mind) is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

And in that light you've heard me say it more than once, and you'll hear me say it again if The Lord tarries, "You cannot legislate Christian morality." You just can't do it. You can't force the unbelieving world to to live a Christian life. Forget it, because they're going to go their own way, they're going to do their own thing, and there's nothing we can do about it except pray for them I guess. Remember the lost are enemies of God, and are not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can they be.

Now verse 8:

**Romans 8:8**

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

Even if a person is good, if they have not experienced Salvation they cannot please God. Now coming back to I Corinthians we find Paul saying that he can't have anything to do with the unsaved world. Those immoral Corinthians I have nothing to do with them except preach them The Gospel of Salvation, that Jesus died for their sins, was buried, and rose again. And that's all we can do. All we can do is sow the seed, and we can't force anything, we can't push it down their throat, because it's something that only God can do. Now looking at verse 12 again.

**I Corinthians 5:12**

"For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? (Now Paul comes back to the believing community) do not ye judge them that are within?"

Now remember we stressed back in Romans that we're not to judge, and for the most part that's true. But when it comes to discipline within the believing community, and we are totally aware as the Corinthians were in Chapter 5 of a gross immoral sin, are we just to turn the other way, and say, "I can't judge!" No way. We are to take the bull by the horns, and we are to point out to that person that they are living in sin. Let me show you a verse in Galatians in Chapter 6, and as I said when I started teaching these letters of Paul, that it was a lot harder to keep people interested in practical Christian living, and doctrine than it is when I teach the Book of Genesis or Revelation. But this is so practical, this is what we need today regardless what happens down the road prophetically.

**Galatians 6:1**
"Brethren, (Paul is speaking to believers) if a man (or woman) be overtaken in a fault, (in other words a rather gross sin) ye which are spiritual, (in the Church leadership) restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

But you see the average attitude of the Church today when someone falls into a gross sin is they make light of it, they joke about it. Hey have you heard - But that should never be the mindset of the believer. If we hear of a Christian who has fallen into sin, it should just break our heart. We should be burdened and pray for that person, and as he instructs here if you're in a place of Church authority or leadership you should go to that person and do all that you can to restore them into fellowship. You don't condemn them, and say so be it. Then Paul says to do it in the spirit of meekness, and not with pride - like, this could never happen to me. Oh yes it could. Because he says next "lest thou also be tempted." and fall into the same trap. None of us are totally immune, and never forget that. And then verse 2:

*Galatians 6:2*

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Even these people who are having a time of living a good upright Christian life, bear their burdens, help them to overcome their weakness. Be an encouragement to them, because there's no need to be a Christian failure, there's no need to constantly live in sin, these people can overcome it. Now back to I Corinthians once again.

*I Corinthians 5:13*

"But them that are without (The unsaved) God judgeth. (That's His prerogative, and never ours. But coming back to the Church environment Paul says) Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

Now that is having dealt with them, after trying to get them to recognize their sin, and confess it, and get victory over it, and if they still refuse, and will not, then Paul says to put them aside until they come to their senses. Now we come into Chapter 6, and yet another problem. I mean it's almost discouraging in a way that this little church in Corinth of born again people brought out of paganism, had turned their backs on idols, and yet they were plagued with problems. But do you know why they're in this Book? Because we have some of the same problems today. And so this becomes tremendous lesson material for everyone of us, for every local congregation.

*I Corinthians 6:1*
"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, (a fellow believer) go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?"

In other words what's happening? Hey these Corinthians have gotten into a real wrangle with one of their fellow Church members. And instead of taking this matter before the local church body, or maybe to the pastor, and church leaders, the elders, deacons, or what ever you want to call them, where were they going? To the lawyers - to the courts. I was reading a quote I believe in one of Charles Stanley's book last night, that someone had come to him with a statement, "That whenever divorce comes into the picture, who are the only ones that really profit?" The lawyers. Everyone else gets hurt, everyone else comes into a place of devastation, but the lawyers walk away smiling. And Paul is saying here not to go to the world's lawyers and to the courts with your problems. Keep them if possible in the confines of the believers. Now of course there comes a point when you may have to go to the world's judicial system, and I dealt with that back in the Book of Romans. But when it came to mundane things among believers, Paul says, "Settle it within the confines of the local church." Now verse 2:

**I Corinthians 6:2a**

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?..."

What do you suppose that's talking about? The Millennium! This is where I get the idea that yes we're going to have places of responsibility when The Lord sets up His Kingdom. And we're going to have responsibility according to the faithfulness you've been in this sojourn here on the earth. And yes we're going to reign and rule with Christ just like it says in the Book of Romans. But here Paul sort of puts the frosting on the cake, and says, "Now look, get practiced up." That's what he's saying. Learn how to deal with problems with people because the day is coming when you will be doing it constantly. You're going to be ruling over the world, under Christ of course. And so we're going to have these places of responsibility, and here Paul says, "My land, why can't you deal with some of these problems within the local Church if one day you're going to rule the world?" Pretty practical isn't it? Now continuing on with verse 2:

**I Corinthians 6:2b**

"...and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"

Now do you know what Paul is saying? The world out there has none of the wisdom that God has imparted to every believer. You and I are unique in that regard, God has
imparted wisdom to the believer just by virtue of your being a saved person. You have more common horse sense than the greatest educated philosopher out there in the world, and Paul is driving that home. "Listen you have a wisdom that the world doesn't have. Now use it." Now verse 3:

I Corinthians 6:3

"Know ye not that we shall judge (judge here refers back to government or ruling) angels? (Angels are even going to be beneath us. What a position we have waiting for us someday when we reign and rule with Christ, and we're even going to be above the host of the angels as we reign and rule with Christ on that earthly Kingdom for that 1000 year millennium rule. Then if you have that kind of future) how much more things that pertain to this life?" It's really something isn't it? Hey believers we're somebody when God is in it, absolutely we are. Now verse 4:

I Corinthians 6:4

"If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church."

That flies in the face, doesn't it? Ordinarily who do we depend on to be the leaders of the church? Well the ones who are most looked up to, and maybe those who have a little more of the world's goods than the rest of us. But what does the Scripture say? "Hey use the person at the bottom of the totem pole, those that aren't esteemed as much as the rest, and verse 5:

I Corinthians 6:5

"I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? (Now we know that they didn't have a huge church, but listen they had a pretty good cross section of the society of Corinth who had become believers. But it appears no one was willing to use the wisdom that God had given them.) no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

Paul says, "They're there if you will just give them the opportunity." But Paul says, "You don't do that." Where are they going with their matters? They're going out into the city judges into the courts.

I Corinthians 6:6

"But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers."
How many times do we read accounts of this kind of doing in our daily paper? And it just becomes a shame to Christianity in general. So you see things haven't changed. It was no different in Corinth as it is in America today. Now verse 7:

*I Corinthians 6:7,8*

"Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, (Paul is condemning them for their short coming) because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."

Now in the next verse Paul is going to pick up a new theme, and we'll finish it today or we'll pick it up again in our next lesson. And Paul will be dealing with the whole concept of Christian marriage. And it's important to remember that Corinth was a city of pagans, and most generally in the pagan world there is no real sanctity in marriage. The marriage was just simply a place to have children, but so far as any fidelity, any integrity of the marriage relationship, there was none. There was a story in one of the major news magazines within the past year about the nation of Thailand, I believe it was. And of the rampant prostitution in that country. It was so rampant that the average Thai husband thought nothing of going to a house of prostitution, and this reporter was interviewing one of these young wives. And the question was, "Doesn't it bother you when your husband goes to one of these places?" And the wife said, "No, because it's a custom. Mama put up with it, Grandma put up with it, and so on.

Well the city of Corinth was no different, and these people had been saved from that kind of background. But just because they were saved from it didn't mean that it still didn't have that pull. Do you see that? So now then beginning with verse 9, Paul is going all the way through Chapter 7, and this is a Chapter I wish I could just leap over because I'm not a marriage counselor by any stretch of the imagination, but again it's such plain language that we're going to go ahead and deal with it. So beginning with verse 9 we find:

*I Corinthians 6:9a*

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?..."

Now you know we have groups that more or less in their doctrines maintain that somehow or other everybody is going to go to Heaven. That there is no such things as an eternal doom for the lost. Well that's not what The Book says. The Book says even from the pen of this Apostle, "That the unrighteous are not going to go to Heaven." They will go to the other place, hell. All right now continuing on with verse 9:
I Corinthians 6:9b,10

"...Be not deceived: (and here Paul lists them again. This old Book is right up front, it doesn't pull any punches, It tells it like it is, and what does it say?) neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Now that's what The Book says, it's plain as day, and now verse 11.

I Corinthians 6:11a

"And such were (past tense) some of you: (now that tells you exactly what some of the Corinthians believers had been. It tells you exactly where they had come from. They had been in that whole category of wickedness, at least some of them had.) but ye are washed,..."

From here I wanted to go to John's Gospel, and pick up this same theme about being washed in John Chapter 13, but we'll pick it up next time. Paul says that you are washed, what does that mean? You're clean even these Corinthians who had come out of an abject immoral life style, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of them had some of the sexually transmitted diseases that we have even today. But they're saved, they're washed, they're Heaven-bound. So looking at verse 11 again:

I Corinthians 6:11

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God."

Now it's the same way for people today. It doesn't matter how vile the background, when we've been justified, then we're "washed."
LESSON TWO * PART I

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

I CORINTHIANS 6:11 - 9:7

As we get ready to resume our study let me share with you a comment we received yesterday from one of our television viewers. She said in a letter that she even feels like she loves all the people in our studio audience, as it seems like she is part of us, and that's the way we want you to feel. We want you to be part of this ministry. Now let's get back into what this program is all about, and that is pretty much a verse by verse study of The Word. In our last lesson we got down to verse 11, but we will go back a couple of verses and start with verse 9.

We must always remember the background for Corinth. I can't emphasize it too much or too often. This was a unique situation. This was a unique congregation of believers unlike anything else that Paul experienced, because you see Corinth was such a bustling commercial city located between two sea ports. So you had people coming in from all over the then-known world, tremendous exchange of money, wealth, and culture, and all the rest of it. But the main thing you have to understand as you read Corinthians is that the city of Corinth was steeped in paganism, in pagan idolaters, and the worship of the Greek gods and goddesses. So with that kind of background, and such gross immorality, and we think it's getting bad in America, but listen we haven't quite reached yet the level of Corinth. Our country will probably get there before long at the rate we're sliding, (II Timothy 3:1-5) but as yet we are not as far down the tube as Corinth was, and so here is where Paul is now as he writes to these Corinthians believers, just recently converted out of that kind of a lifestyle, now look what he says in verse 9:

I Corinthians 6:9,10

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: (in other words don't think for a minute that just because God is a God of love, and God is gracious, and merciful, that He is going to let these kind of people into His Heaven short of their Salvation.) neither fornicators, (the grossly immoral people) nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

None of those will inherit the kingdom of God They are in the hands of Satan, and they are going to be where Satan will be for all eternity, but they don't have to be - look at the next verse.
I Corinthians 6:11

"And such (what's the next word?) were (past tense) some of you: but ye are washed, (in other words they had been cleansed of all their wickedness) but ye are sanctified, (they were now set apart for God's purposes) but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

And to comment on being justified, you remember when we studied in the Book of Romans it's that judicial act of God whereby He declares the sinner, "Just as if they had never sinned." In other words God cleanses, and justifies the idolater as though he had never fallen down before an idol. He justifies the drunkard just as though he had never taken a drink. He justifies the adulterer just as though they'd never committed adultery. Now this is the beauty of Salvation by Grace. So in verse 11 he tells us that we are washed. You know I'm always emphasizing so much of what Paul writes, but on this one just turn back to the Gospel of John, and here we find The Lord Jesus Himself uses the term with regard to the twelve disciples, or to the eleven, because Judas never was washed. So in John Chapter 13 we have Jesus washing the feet of the disciples, and we'll begin at verse 6, and this was just shortly before His crucifixion.

John 13:5-9

"After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, `Lord, doest thou wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said unto him, `What I do thou knowest not now; (remember scripture, and God dealing with men is a progressive thing. Peter didn't understand what Jesus was doing right then, but he would somewhere down the road.) but thou shalt know hereafter.' Peter saith unto him, `Thou shalt never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, `If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.' Simon Peter saith unto him, `Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.'"

In other words what's Peter saying? "Well if washing my feet can do this much then give me a bath. My what greater experience than to have The Lord of glory give you a total bath, and Peter wasn't the least bit shy about the matter. Now verse 10:

John 13:10,11

"Jesus saith to him, `He that is washed (past tense) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. (Now here the Lord is talking about the twelfth disciple which was Judas, which you pick up in the next verse.) For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.'"
So it wasn't indicating in verse 10 that Peter's Salvation wasn't complete, that it was,
but why then need the foot washing? Well as I have explained before, the main place
of bathing were the public baths. And after they had left the public bath with their
sandals on they had to go down those dusty trails and roads, and by the time they got
home, what condition were their feet in? They were again filthy. So did he have to go
back and get another bath? No he'd had his bodily bath, but he had to wash his feet.
Well the indication is then that's it's the same thing in our Christian experience. Once
we've been saved we're washed. See? Now let's come back to I Corinthians, and this is
what He's even telling these horrible Corinthians who had been in the most gross of
sins.

And even to today we're living in a society where a good percentage of America has
had at least some exposure to the Scriptures. They have probably been to Sunday
School when they were kids. A lot of denominations put their children through
catechism and so forth, and this at least is exposing them to some of the things of The
Bible. But these Corinthians had none. They knew absolutely nothing of the things of
God. They knew nothing of Adam or Abraham, or Moses and the Law, they were
pagan, they were idol worshipers. When we were in Corinth we came to this out-
cropping that must have been at least 200 feet high, it was almost a sheer cliff, and
right at the top of this out-cropping is this temple to the goddess. And I asked the
guide how in the world did they get the building material from down here to up there?
Slave labor, many, many hours of hard work, not to build some beautiful library,
campus, or place of education, but rather a temple to a female goddess. Imagine, but
you see that's all they lived for. Whatever they could work, and sweat, and do to
somehow appease their gods and goddesses. Now this wasn't just Corinth, it was the
whole ancient world. Now then along with the worship of these goddesses (and that
was even worse than the worship of the male gods), was gross immorality, and I've
pointed this out ever since we've been in the Book of Corinthians. This gross
immorality was just part and parcel of their everyday experience, they didn't know
any different. And it wasn't just the common people, it was all the way to the top.
Now coming back to Chapter 6 we find Paul telling the Corinthians:

*1 Corinthians 6:11*

"And such were some of you: but (now) ye are washed,..."

Now just like the eleven disciples, they had their Salvation, they were washed of their
sins, and iniquities, and so were these Corinthians. So what does it all boil down to?
Just like Paul said in Romans, *"That where sin abounds, what is always greater?"
God Grace!* That is if the individual wants to partake of it. Now then Paul says at the
end of that verse:
**I Corinthians 6:11b**

"...but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Now here again is the working of the Three Persons of the Godhead. God the Father in Heaven looks down on sinful men. And the Holy Spirit in turn convicts sinful men of the finished work of God the Son, and so the whole Triune God comes in and washes these kinds of people of which you and I are no different. We might not have been steeped in idolatry, or practicing gross immorality, but the potential was there. My heart was born just as wicked as these Corinthians, and so was yours, but as a result of the Grace of God, and the finished Work of the Cross, and our faith in it, we too have been washed, sanctified, and justified. Verse 12, and this may throw a curve at people.

**I Corinthians 6:12**

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

Now what is Paul saying? Is Paul saying, I can go ahead and steal? Is Paul saying I can go ahead and commit adultery? Or covet? No. What Paul is really saying is that he is no longer under that demanding burden of the Law, but is now under Grace. Now let's go back and compare some Scripture, and the first one we will go to is Romans 6:14, and this is where we get it the most clear.

**Romans 6:14**

"For sin (or that old adamic nature) shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Now if you're not under the Law then it doesn't have any effect on you. And that's what he means back in verse 12 when Paul says: "All things are lawful unto me,..." because I'm not under the Law. Now a thought just comes to mind of another Scripture in Romans Chapter 7, and let's look at verses 5 & 6:

**Romans 7:5,6**

"For when we were in the flesh, (we were like those Corinthians) the motions of sins, which were by the law, (all the things that the Law was revealing) did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that
Now what's Paul saying? That we're no longer under those demands of the Ten Commandments of Moses, but rather we are now under the control of the Holy Spirit. Now let's be logical. Will the Holy Spirit ever lead a believer to do something contrary to the Law? No, of course not. The Holy Spirit will never lead someone into adultery, or idolatry, or stealing, now that's just logical isn't it? But without that burden of the Law, and the fear of breaking it, we now have Grace, and the Holy Spirit is the One Who leads us, and guides us, and directs us so that we keep the Law, but it's under a whole set of different circumstances. And that's exactly what Paul is talking about here in I Corinthians when he says:

*I Corinthians 6:12a*

"All things are lawful unto me..."

Paul is not under that burden of Law per se, he is free from that, but he's not going to take advantage of it, and make license of it, because the Holy Spirit is now controlling every part of his life, and so it should be with us believers. Now in verse 13 we're going to come into something that we're going to cover a little more in detail, I think, when we get over to Chapter 8, but here in this verse Paul brings out one of the physical aspects of everyday life, and that is:

*I Corinthians 6:13a*

"Meats for the belly, (or food for the stomach) and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them...."

In other words, those are part of our temporal existence. We can't go a day hardly without food, we get hungry, and that's the way God intended it, but the day is coming when that won't be true. When we get our new resurrected body we're not going to have to eat three meals a day. I think for those of us who love to eat The Lord is going to have the pleasure of eating, otherwise He wouldn't have eaten in His resurrected body there on the shores of Galilee. And you know that He ate fish that morning, and I imagine like me He had some bread. But anyway the resurrected body is not going to need food, and demand it day after day. So this is part of our temporal existence. Now in the rest of verse 13 Paul goes on into another area of everyday life, and that's sexuality.

*I Corinthians 6:13b,14*
"Now the body is not for fornication, (The body was not created for man to live in immorality) but for the Lord: and the Lord for the body." The body was created for the Lord, and The Lord for the body, it's a two way street. Now verse 14:

"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power."

Now here's just one little introduction to resurrection which is going to come full-blast when we get to Chapter 15. When we get to that chapter we will see more on resurrection than any other place in The Bible. But you see here Paul is just sort of whetting our appetite, he's giving us just an inkling of that which is yet to come.

I Corinthians 6:15a

"Know ye not..."

You know what he's saying? Well how did these believers know? Well Paul was with these people long enough to lay out all these Biblical principals of morality, and spiritual things. Now granted he wasn't with them long. If it hadn't been for the miraculous working power of God, Christianity would have never gotten off the ground. It was just an impossible set of odds, because these Corinthians were all so steeped in idolatry, and the Jews were just as steeped in their Judaism that, had it not been a miracle, Christianity would have never survived. Paul was never in any one place very long. Now I can see the Jewish Church at Jerusalem prospering to a certain degree because the disciples continued on with that ministry teaching the Jews only, and they stayed there for many years. But every place that Paul established a church it was only for a short time. I think Antioch was the longest and that was only about 1 1/2 years. At Thessalonica it was just for about 2 or 3 weeks, and then he moved on, so how in the world did those new believers fresh out of paganism make it? Well I can't understand it, except that it was the miraculous power of God that Christianity was now to take off and start permeating the whole Roman empire.

I Corinthians 6:15

"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? (remember Paul is talking to believers) shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the member an harlot? God forbid."

Now you see we think this is horrible language. Why has The Bible got this in here for? Hey this was their whole lifestyle. Remember when those 1000 prostitute goddesses of Corinth would leave their temple at night they would in turn go out into the street, and the men of that city were confronted with that every night of the week, and so this is why The Bible is so explicit. It was so rampant, and it didn't stop there.
Their immorality went to the very depths, and we're seeing it happen in our own country today. Our society is getting closer and closer to that of Corinth, so this letter is becoming more appropriate for our society with each passing day. Now verse 16:

**I Corinthians 6:16**

"What? know ye not that he which is joined (that is sexually) to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."

Well where does Paul get this? Let's go back to the Book of Genesis, Chapter 2 for a moment and I'll show you.

**Genesis 2:21-24**

"And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man, And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.'"

Now in our present day weddings the kids like to have two candles burning, and at the end of the service they snuff the two, and light the one. Well that's the whole concept, but you see they take it so lightly. In a recent poll over 50% of young married couples expected their marriage to end up in divorce within the first year or two. Now this is shocking, and I know it is, but these marriages don't last. They go into the marriage with absolutely no commitment, and do you know why they do it? The Church has failed to teach our young people, as they no longer understand these Biblical principals of marriages, sex, kids, and all the rest. It's completely unknown to them so consequently they can enter into this marriage relationship with no commitment, or no moral foundation, no anchor. No wonder we're in trouble.

But you see the Biblical concept has never changed from the Garden of Eden to this day, and that is "God intended for one man married for life to one woman," and if death interrupted it, as we'll be seeing over in Chapter 7, then yes they were free to remarry. Now remember even the taunters of Jesus' day brought up the subject of divorce. They said,"Well Moses granted a writing of divorcement. How about that?" Well what was Jesus' answer? "Granted because of your sin, Moses granted writing of divorce, but in the beginning it was not so." In the beginning when God laid out the format for marriage and family it was one man for one woman until death do them part. Now come back to I Corinthians Chapter 6.
I Corinthians 6:16

"What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot (prostitute) is one body?..."

So you become one with that prostitute. That's some sobering thinking isn't it? So consequently Paul says:

I Corinthians 6:18

"Flee fornication." (Immorality)
LESSON TWO * PART II

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

I CORINTHIANS 6:11 - 9:7

Now back to where we left off at the end of the last lesson where Paul has just been almost crying at the question, "Don't you know that you have no right, as a believer, as a child of God, as a member of the Body of Christ, to be unioned with a harlot." Now that doesn't necessarily limit that to a professional prostitute, because anytime you go outside of God's bounds for sexual actions it becomes the same thing. Now verse 17:

I Corinthians 6:17

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

Now again I always have to clarify that when Paul teaches that Christ is the Groom, and we are the Bride, and there is that marriage relationship. I hope that most people understand that that is merely a positional term. It certainly is not a sexual term because that's going to all pass off the scene. Let's look at Romans Chapter 7 for a moment where Paul uses that marriage relationship analogy there also. Even as he writes this to the Corinthians he also says to the Romans:

Romans 7:4a

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; (In other words by the Work of the Cross we are now under Grace, and not under law) that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead,..."

The concept here is that as soon as we become a child of God we are literally brought into union with Christ just like a husband and wife in the marriage relationship. And you find this concept all through Paul's writings as he always writes to the Church, the Body of Christ, that's you and I as believers. Now let's look at one more in the Book of Ephesians Chapter 5, and verse 22, this is a series of verses that we have used over the years, but here again the marriage relationship is likened to our relationship spiritually with Christ.

Ephesians 5:22,23a
"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, (not like a slave master over his slaves, but what is again the comparison?) even as Christ is the head of the church;...."

My, what a comparison. And I always have to remind people in order for Christ to become the Head of you and I as members of the Body of Christ, what did He have to do? He had to die, and suffer for us. Praise God the power of the resurrection overcame that death, but nevertheless He suffered and died for us as members of the Body. Now what does that tell a husband that he should be ready to do? The same thing. We should be ready to die for our wives if necessary. Verse 23 again:

**Ephesians 5:23,24a**

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body, Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ,...."

And here is where I always teach that you can't find anywhere that Christ is the King of the Church. It's just not scripturally right to refer to Him as our King, and I know most people do. He is not our King, He is the Head of the Body. A King rules over his subjects, and we're not Christ's subjects. We're joint-heirs with Him. We're in a whole different position than the servant of a King. Now granted Christ is still going to come and be King of Kings and Lord of Lords absolutely, but The Book says, as members of the Body we're going to be reigning and ruling not under Him, but where? With Him. See what a difference that makes. Now verse 25:

**Ephesians 5:25**

"Husbands, love your wives, (that's a command) even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it:" 

Now of course when Paul uses that term "Church" he's not talking about that building on the corner, or some denomination that says, "They're the only ones that will be in heaven." (and there are some of those), but rather he's talking about that universal compilation of believers who have been brought into the Body of Christ by a work of the Holy Spirit. And then that Body of Christ is in union with Him, and is joint-heirs with Him as well. Now let's come back to I Corinthians again, and verse 18. Since we are now in union with Christ then we are to be just as careful about our fidelity to Him as the husband and the wife should be to each other. This is the whole moral principal now of Biblical teaching, and here it is:

**I Corinthians 6:18**
"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without (outside) the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

Now what's Paul trying to scream at these Corinthians? Well I don't care what your past lifestyle has been, I don't care if you did take all this immoral activity for granted, now as a child of God you are on totally different territory. You are now a totally different person, and when you begin to involve yourself with immoral activities you are literally adulterating your position with Christ. Is that plain enough? I hope so, because this is exactly what the picture is. The believer has absolutely no business involving himself in extra-marital relationships. The marriage and family relationship is holy, it's sanctified, and God has ordained it that way. You know that's why I quit goose hunting long, long, ago when I found that that geese are monogamous. In other words a goose only has one mate for life, and if you shoot it's mate it goes through the rest of it's life alone, and I just couldn't be a part of that anymore. If wild geese can be monogamous then why in the world can't intelligent human beings? Well Paul is going to deal with that in the next chapter. Looking at the last part of verse 18 again we find:

I Corinthians 6:18b

"but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

I used to teach teen-agers in Sunday School class years ago, and would use the illustration of fire. Fire under control is one of the greatest things that God has given mankind. It warms our homes, and there's nothing nicer than a good glowing fireplace or wood heater on a cold winter blustery day. Steel is another good example. How much steel would we ever produce without fire? None. In so much of our everyday life, fire under control is an absolute necessity, it is a blessing of God, but turn fire loose in a wildfire situation, and what have you got? Devastation, and tragedy, and destruction, and you name it. My what fire can do when it's wild. Now that's what sex is for the human race. Under the controls that God mandated it's just as glorious as that fire in the fireplace. But you turn it loose as the world has done today, and what has it become? It's a tragedy. Ruined lives, ruined families, ruined marriages, and all because of misappropriating this gift from God that we call sex.

I Corinthians 6:19

"What? know ye not that your body (this body of flesh and blood in which we live) is the temple (or the dwelling place) of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, (he's there because of an act of God) and ye are not your own?"
Why aren't you your own? Because you have been bought with a price. Now let's turn to I Peter, Chapter 1, and verse 18 to follow this up. I know some people don't think I know anything but Paul, but here's one from Peter.

**I Peter 1:18**

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;"

Remember Peter is a Jew writing to Jews, and so he's talking about all the traditions of Judaism, and all the Old Testament economy. And he says, "You weren't purchased with that."

**I Peter 1:19**

"But (you were) with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;"

So what was the price of our redemption? The **blood of Christ**, and you don't hear that much any more do you? We have been bought with the blood of Christ, and you just can't bypass that, you can't go around it, under it, or over it. It's one of the basic tenants of Scripture, and how many times have we used it here in our study. We'll look at it again as we start back to I Corinthians. Let's stop in the Book of Hebrews Chapter 9 for a moment because I don't want anyone to think that I've dreamed this up.

**Hebrews 9:22**

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; (that goes back of course to the Old Testament sacrifices, but the last half of the verse is what we're looking for, and were we are today.) and without shedding of blood is no remission."

There is no forgiveness of sin without the shed blood of Christ. Now you know when we were back in the Old Testament I made comment to the fact that the word "atonement" was a misnomer. Those animal sacrifices never brought about atonement even though it was called the Day of Atonement. They couldn't because it took the blood of Christ to fulfill the atoning work, and so we are now atoned, and we're redeemed, and we're brought with a price "The blood of Christ." Now reading verse 20 again in I Corinthians Chapter 6:

**I Corinthians 6:20**
"For ye are brought with a price: therefore (and you know I always say what's it there for? Well it's there for since we've been bought with a price, the blood of Christ) glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

In other words, in this body of flesh in which we live, everything we do in this body should be to the glory of God. And what's Paul driving at? If you're going to be hobnobbing with the prostitutes, or with the immoral, then you do not glorify God in your body. It's bringing reproach upon Him. Do you see that? Now all of that is an introduction to Chapter 7. And like I said, here's a chapter that I wish I could just skip over, because I'm not a marriage counselor, but here Paul is dealing with the nitty gritty of the marriage relationship. And the reason that he's having to deal with this is because these Corinthians had written him a letter of questions. And these questions were plaguing these Corinthian believers, and remember they had just come out of paganism. They were ignorant of how Christians should behave on several different matters. But here they were congregating in a small church, with lots of questions, and no Bible. They had some of the Old Testament of course, but none of the New Testament. And here Paul is answering these questions one by one.

I Corinthians 7:1

"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman."

So the question must have been, "Is it right for men and women to marry?" And you might ask the question, "How in the world could they come up with a question like that?" Well you must again realize the situation. You know I've always taught from day one that when you read a portion of scripture the first thing you determine is who wrote it, and to whom was it written, and the third part is, what are the circumstances. Well here we have Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, writing to the congregation in the wicked city of Corinth who have come out of abject immoral, idolatrous background, and they are all hung up on this marriage relationship that now is Biblical compared to what it is in paganism. Now you want to remember that in paganism under idolatry, the marriage relationship didn't amount to that much. It was really just a place to propagate the family, but so far as any moral integrity, or fidelity of the marriage relationship, the pagans knew nothing of that.

And so now they are going off the deep end. "Is it right for us to marry?" Now don't misinterpret the last half of verse 1 when Paul says that it is good for a man not to touch a woman. He's not saying that they shouldn't get involved and get married. But he is saying in the light of these verses in Chapter 6 that as believers now men as well as women, have to be careful in their contact with people of the opposite sex in their everyday experience. And when Paul says, "That it's good for a man not to
touch a woman," and if I understand the Greek at all, what he's talking about is that a man should not get physically involved with a woman to excite the sexual sense. He is certainly not bringing in the shaking of the hands with women. Even in the early Church they granted the "Holy Kiss" where they would embrace much like our middle easterners still do, and that also caused problems in the early Church, and so that was finally pushed out the back door.

So Paul is answering their questions, "It is not good for a man to touch a woman, not to embrace her, or get involved with her enough to excite the basic instinct of her or him." But he is not saying that they can't get married. And I know that a lot of people take this verse to mean that Paul is anti-marriage. No, he is not anti-marriage. In fact before we go any further let me show you some verses to back that up. Let's go to the Book of Hebrews for a moment. We've already seen what God said back there in Genesis concerning the marriage relationship, and that they were to replenish the earth, they were to have children, and they were to enjoy the marriage relationship. Now look what Paul writes in the Book of Hebrews, Chapter 13, and verse 4. And he's not going to utterly contradict this with his statement in I Corinthians Chapter 7, so you have to put the two of them together.

*Hebrews 13:4a*

"Marriage (As we understand it) is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled:...."

Now you know we've come mercifully away from Victorianism, which was the extreme in the other direction. Sex in Victorianism, was such a dirty word that it couldn't be mentioned in public, and it was almost taboo except for the purpose of child bearing. Well that certainly wasn't right, but now on the other hand we've gone too far the other way. Now completing verse 4 we find the other side of the coin opposite marriage being honourable, and the bed undefiled.

*Hebrews 13:4b*

"... but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

God is not going to wink at that. They're not going to get away with it, and they're going to face up with it some day. The Great White Throne Judgment is waiting for the lost, and they're going to come up before God with all this on their record. Now if you will come back again to I Corinthians Chapter 7 again.

*I Corinthians 7:2*
"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, (or falling into the trap of immoral activity) let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

Now we have to be careful. Is the sole reason for getting married, not to be tempted to go out and be promiscuous? Well of course not, but it does have that redeeming effect, that if I have my wife, and she has me, then we're not tempted then to go out into the world, and be promiscuous with those we have no business being with. And so this is what Paul is saying. Also I've got to bring you back to that situation at Corinth with all their rampant prostitution, and for a young man it was a constant temptation. So Paul says, "rather than being tempted with that, have your own wife."

Now verse 3:

I Corinthians 7:3

"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: (we're living in a day where you see so much wife beating, and wife abuse. Well why is that? Well again it's because these people have not been taught plain, simple Biblical principals. And that is that a husband is to treat his wife as something that he would die for, and not as something that he can beat around the house. That was not God's intention of the marriage relationship.) and likewise also the wife unto the husband."

I had a letter recently asking why God condoned slavery? Why did He ever permit it to happen? Well, when you analyze the greatest period of time of human history, what percentage of the people were actually educated enough to carry on and be an entrepreneur, or be a good enough business person to make a good living. Not very many. The vast majority was totally illiterate, were totally incapable of decision making, and we saw that in Russia, after 70 years of communism. So under those kinds of circumstances a benevolent master was the best thing those people could have.

I think that most of you are aware that when slavery was holding forth in the South, there were masters like that. And those slaves loved them, didn't they? They had it better than they could have ever hoped to have it out there on their own. But you see man has totally again adulterated God's purposes, and instead of masters being benevolent they became bestial, and less than merciful, and then slavery became awful, and God never intended it to be that way. Well it's the same way here. The husband and wife relationship, if it's as God intended to be, should be a happy situation 365 days a year. There is absolutely no reason for husband and wives to be on a constant battle ground. I can say from experience, Iris and I have been married for 43 years and I think our kids will tell you that they have never heard us raise our voice at one another. It's not because we're so perfect, but rather because we know that The Lord is in control of our home. And this is way He wants it.
LESSON TWO * PART III

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

I CORINTHIANS 6:11 - 9:7

Now to pick up where we left off in the last lesson, and that will be in I Corinthians 7:4. Remember in dealing with these circumstances the situations are probably a lot different than many of us are confronted with, and yet as our society is crumbling, and as we are falling more and more into a social fabric that Corinth was, then this Chapter 7 is probably more appropriate than most of us would like to admit. Now as we start with verse 4 we find Paul dealing with the relationship between the husband and the wife he says:

**I Corinthians 7:4**

"The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife."

So where does that put us? Well it puts us on equal ground, and in the marriage relationship it is fifty-fifty. Iris and I have often said it's more like eighty-twenty from both sides, but that still boils down to a fifty-fifty relationship. Now what Paul is talking about here is the satisfaction of the sexual needs of both parties of the marriage union. And that is picked up then in verse 5, and since it's a fifty-fifty situation the husband is to be aware of the needs of the wife, and the wife is to be aware of the needs of the husband, consequently:

**I Corinthians 7:5**

"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, (I think Paul is warning here never to use sex as a lever against your spouse. In other words don't withhold sex in order to gain an advantage. Now granted other things can enter in like emotional stress or physical impairment, but all things being normal, don't withhold consent for very long so) that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

Do you see what we're all up against? The sex drive is powerful, there's no doubt about it, and God put it there for a purpose. But we're not to abuse it anymore than we do anything else, and so if there is a consent between the two to refrain for a period of time then that's all well and good, but don't overdo it. Always remember Satan is always there to tempt one or the other to go outside the marriage relationship. Now verse 6.
I Corinthians 7:6,7

"But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. (Then in verse 7, Paul says something that throws a curve at a lot of people) For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."

Now we know that once Paul began his apostolic ministry, from all Scriptural indications he was alone. But my whole premise is that he had at one time been married, and had children. I'm going to take you back for the reference to Acts Chapter 26 where we see a very revealing part of Paul that too many people ignore. Most of those people think that Paul was a bachelor, and never married, and consequently he had a thing against women, and marriage. No he didn't. But Paul was certainly alone at the time he starts his ministry as an apostle. But here in Acts we find Paul rehearsing his past life when he was active in Judaism, and a Pharisee. And he was persecuting the believers in Jerusalem who had become followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and he was trying to stamp them out because he thought he was doing God a favor. And you pick that up in Acts 26:9, and here Paul is telling these people about his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Acts 26:9,10

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (as a religious fanatic) Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice (vote) against them."

Who was the ruling body of Jews that would have been voting what to do with these believers? The Sanhedrin. Now here is where I maintain that Paul was married. If I understand the Jewish Old Testament economy, a person could not be a member of the Sanhedrin unless he was married, and had children. And the purpose was how could you judge in the area of families and relationships if you've never had the experience. Now let's bring that into the New Testament into I Timothy Chapter 3, and here Paul carries it right on into the leadership of the Church with the same situation. How could leaders of the Church lead intelligently, and from experience if they've never had the responsibility of being a husband and a father.

And here is where I always point out that no matter what denomination you're from, or what you think of the Apostle Paul, where do you get the reasons for your Church government and organization. Well you get it from Paul, and here we have the qualifications for a Pastor or Bishop, and the Deacons.
I Timothy 3:1-4

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, (pastor) he desireth a good work. A bishop (pastor) must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, (can't be an alcoholic) no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

You come on down to the deacons, and it's the same thing. So this whole process of leadership in the realm of the spirit demanded that Paul was married, and had children. What happened to them we don't know. I think, and I may be as wrong as wrong can be, but I think that after his conversion on the road to Damascus, that just totally upset his whole apple cart of life so to speak. And he turned his back on that well paying position as a member of the Sanhedrin, as a member of the Pharisees, and you know in Galatians Paul says:

Galatians 1:14a

"And profited in the Jews religion..."

In other words, I think Paul was making big money as one of the religious leaders of Israel. And he turned his back on all that, and I think his wife and kids rebelled at the very thought of it, and she probably left him. Like I say, that's my thought, but the Scriptures don't tell us what happened to Paul's wife. But whatever, I have to feel that at one time Paul was married, and had children, but something happened to them because from the time we pick up the Apostle Paul in the Book of Acts, he is alone. He doesn't call himself a widower, or a bachelor, we just know that he doesn't have a wife or family. Now then coming back to I Corinthians Chapter 7 it's that single state then that Paul is referring to when he says:

I Corinthians 7:7a

"For I would that all men were even as I myself...."

Now there had to be a reason for the man to say that, because he certainly wasn't putting the kibosh on marriage and family. But all through Paul's letters, what was he expecting to happen at any moment? The Lord to come, and on top of that I think by the Sovereign Grace of God, Paul had a little bit of foreview of the horrible persecution that was going to come upon the Christians. Now then if all of a sudden persecution was to fall, how much easier it would be for people to be single. That stands to reason where a poor little wife wouldn't have to suffer the consequences of
her husband being taken away in the middle of the night. Or having children suddenly kidnapped away from them, and not knowing what happened to them. It would be better to just be alone, face persecution, face death, and have it over with. And so I think both of these things have to be brought into our understanding of what Paul is teaching here. That number 1, The Lord's coming (he thought) was at hand. Paul says that throughout all his letters, and of course it didn't happen. So he tempers these relationships with that in view, plus the inkling of the horrible persecution that would be coming across the Roman Empire. So take all that into consideration. Now verse 8:

*I Corinthians 7:8*

"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I."

Again he's telling even the women that it would be better if they remain single, than to get involved again and go through the trauma of losing their husband to the forces of persecution. But in the next verse he's going to give them an out.

*I Corinthians 7:9*

"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."

Now what's he talking about? Well if they cannot control their sexual desires, and it gets to the place that they are tempted to commit adultery to do that, then Paul says you're better off getting married. That comes right back to what he says in verse 2.

*I Corinthians 7:2*

"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

Now we come down to verse 10, and this is difficult, and I know a lot of people don't like to face this head on, but we have to because it's in The Book. But I'm going to temper it somewhat by assuring people that even though we are guilty of the sin of adultery by virtue of remarriage and so forth, yet every sin is forgivable. There is nothing that The Lord will not forgive, but again I think society as a whole and especially the Christian community has to understand how God looks at these things. And that's what we have to go by. How does God look at it? Not what society thinks, not what our denomination thinks, but what does God say? And again, the problem with our whole attitude toward marriage among our young people is because they have not been taught what God says about this marriage relationship. Now verse 10:
I Corinthians 7:10-16

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, (so this is The Word of God) Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, (still in paganism) and if he be pleased to dwell with her, (who is now a believer) let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, (who is a believer) and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: (who is a believer) else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. (Paul says 'let the unbelieving spouse go if that's the way they want it.') A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, (Who is a believer) whether thou shalt save thy husband? (who is lost) or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

Now we know that we can't save our spouse and the spouse can't save us, so what's Paul talking about? Well let me bring you back again to Peter's little epistle in I Peter Chapter 3. Here, especially in the city of Corinth, and this is the only letter where Paul deals with these things, and so consequently I have to feel that the Ephesians weren't under this kind of situation, nor the Philippians, or the Colossians. Maybe to a degree they were, but not like they were here in Corinth. It was just beyond comprehension, and everyone of these converts of Paul had been in idolatry. So if they were married then naturally they both were, so if one of them is saved and comes out of idolatry, and becomes a believing Christian then here we have in the home this division, as one is still in idolatry, and the other a believer. How were they going to handle it? The same would be for missionaries who minister to people who have more than one wife in the family. We're so immune to all these things, we've been so protected in our American society, but these things were real to these people. Now look what Peter says here.

I Peter 3:1

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; (sounds like Paul doesn't it?) that, if any obey not the word, (they're not a believer) they (the husbands) also may without the word (without preaching at them, without dragging them to church, without bringing them under the television ministry, without saying a word, that lost husband may) be won by the conversation (or manner of living) of the wives," Now verse 2:

I Peter 3:2-4
"While they behold your chaste conversation (manner of living) coupled with fear, (a reverence fear, rather than being scared to death) Whose adorning (speaking of the Godly, believing wife) let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; (but rather let her win the husband by) but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, (that born again spirit within that believing woman) even the ornament of a meek and quite spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Now what is Peter admonishing the believing wife to do? Listen, don't nag that unbelieving husband, don't preach at him, don't try to drag him to church because that's not going to work. So what does the wife do first and foremost? She lives an exemplary Christian life in front of him.

I remember when I was teaching up in Iowa, and I had a Saturday night teenager class, and we would have 45 or 50 kids that would come in every Saturday night for Bible teaching. One of the neighbors of the host home wanted to know, "what in the world is going on in your house on Saturday night?" So Gladys the host, said, "well we have a Bible study for young people." The neighbor lady wanted to know if there was a chance that she could come and sit off in the corner someplace, and listen and watch, and naturally there wasn't a problem with that. So this lady, who was a doctor's wife, had a lovely home, but her husband was something else. And they don't mind me telling this story on them, as they share it with everyone now. But anyway, she came to that class on Saturday nights over a few weeks time, and Mary Beth was gloriously saved.

Well it wasn't but a few weeks after that, and Iris and I were attending a wedding where she was also, and she met us out in the lobby of the church, and she started to weep - I mean weep. I said what in the world is the problem. And she said, "My husband John." I said, "Yeah, I've heard about John." You see John had more than one mistress, and his wife knew it, and as a result of her Salvation he became her number one burden. And so I took out my Bible and showed her these verses here in I Peter, and I told her that this wasn't going to be easy, but my Bible tells me that if you can do it, then God will do it. Well she said, "I'm willing to try." So I told her just to do what she knew John likes. If he loves a good T-Bone steak have one ready when he comes in. If he likes hot apple pie, have one ready for him. Well to make a long story short, do you know how long it took to win John? 4 months. And old John told the story himself.

John said, " I was in my office one Sunday morning, and had just seen my last patient, and I was in a hurry to get out to the country club. I was just going to spend the day boozing it up with my buddies. Before I could get out of my clinic, The Lord just came on me with such conviction that my wife was such a far better person than I
could ever hope to be, that right there in my office I dropped to my knees and said `Lord, I'm a sinner, save me, and The Lord did.'" And this man has now been a Church leader almost ever since. He is a living example of what a believing wife can do without saying a word.

Most women get the idea that they're going to drag their husband to church, and get everybody trying to collar him, and that's not the way to do it according to my Bible. I've also seen it the other way around. In one instance the husband came to the class first and was saved, and got a burden for his wife to be saved, but she wanted nothing to do with The Word of God when he tried to read it to her. But he just kept living the example, and finally one day The Lord in His Sovereign Grace caused a friend of hers, who was a believer, to just stop in for coffee one morning, and in the process of having a cup of coffee, led this lady to The Lord. And they are still living the exemplary Christian life together today. So I know this works. So back to I Corinthians, and this is all Paul is saying, that if a wife or husband finds themselves still in a marriage relationship with a rank pagan unbeliever, to just hang in there. Don't break up the marriage if at all possible, but live the example so that the day will come when they will open their heart to The Gospel (Ref. I Corinthians 15:1-4) and then you can have a happy marriage relationship, a happy home, and of course the children will more than likely follow suit.
LESSON TWO * PART IV

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

I CORINTHIANS 6:11 - 9:7

We're going to skip forward to I Corinthians Chapter 8, and we are going to deal with yet another problem that was holding the Corinthian Church at bay. They just didn't know how to cope with meat in the market place or maybe at the table, of someone who had invited them to dinner, if that meat had been offered at a pagan temple. Now granted, in our society today we don't have to face this particular thing, but still I think it's appropriate for us to study it for a little bit because we have other things that we can liken to this problem they had.

I Corinthians 8:1

"Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

Now of course when we get to Chapter 13 we're going to study the love chapter, and remember love is the very foundation of our whole Christian faith. Love is what prompted Christ to go to the Cross, love is what prompted Him to save us if we simply believe The Gospel. (Ref: I Corinthians 15:1-4) And then the other side of the coin is, love is the predominating factor in the life of the believer, whether it's in our marriage relationship, whether it's with our children, or neighbors. It all boils down to how much do we love them.

You know I was hit with that during the past week or so. I was reading one of the famous authors, and he was bringing this out, and the thought came to me that maybe that was one of my shortcomings. I just don't love the unlovely as much as I should, I can't help it, and I recognize it as a shortfall, and I have to confess it. When people do things that are so contrary to the Scriptures, and the good of the community, and the good of society, it irks me, and I'm not afraid to admit it. But what we always have to understand is, "We hate the sin, but we love the sinner."

I got that taught to me years and years ago when I sold a man up north all of my fat cattle I had been feeding. This man was a very devout religious man. He would go to weekend retreats, but oh, he had language that was terrible. I can't repeat all that he said, but one day he was telling me that his little five-year-old had come in crying because the kids down the street were picking on him, because he was a different religion than they were. So he says, "I sat the little fellow on my lap, and said now look son, you don't have to like the little so-and-sos, but you're supposed to love them..."
for God's sake." And you know that was a lesson, and I've never forgotten it. There
are people up and down the highways and byways of our life that we don't have to
necessarily like, and we certainly don't like the things that they do, but we're still
supposed to love them for Christ's sake, because He died for them. And that's just a
practical every day illustration. Now verse 2:

*I Corinthians 8:2*

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought
to know."

In other words, when we think we have learned it all, we're just getting started. There
is no way we can exalt the things of God.

*I Corinthians 8:3*

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him."

When we love The Lord Who first loved us, don't you think for a moment that God
doesn't know you and I on a first name basis. Absolutely He does. We're not just a
number of millions, He knows us on a first name basis, He knows all about us. He
knows our needs even before we ask. Now here comes the problem in verse 4.

*I Corinthians 8:4-7a*

"As concerning therefore (don't lose sight of the motivation of love) the eating of
those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in
the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are
called gods, (small `g`) whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and
lords man,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we
in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (In other
words He is the Creator of us all.) Howbeit there is not in every man that
knowledge:..."

Even these Corinthian believers who were babes in Christ did not have the full
comprehension of Who and what God really is. And I dare say there are lots of
believers today that are in the same boat. They're saved, they're still babes in Christ,
and no comprehension of Who God really is. For us who have been Christians for a
long time it is beyond us. I've said it before and I'll say it again, except for my faith in
The Word, and don't think for a moment that I don't believe it, yet from the human
side, I just can't comprehend that the One who created the universe, that the One who
created man, and brought him up out of the dust, and breathed into him the breath of
life, that same One went to that Roman Cross, and suffered at the hands mankind so that He could have me and you in eternity with Him. Now that's beyond me. That is beyond me, why, and how the Creator did all that just for the Salvation of mankind, but He did. Some of these Corinthians although they were saved, still didn't have the comprehension of our God in comparison to the powerless (for the most part) gods of idols. Reading on:

I Corinthians 8:7

"Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto the hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak (still young believers) is defiled.

What does Paul mean? For these weak, young in the faith believers, knowing where that meat had gone before it got to their table, they had some reservations about eating it. Now again I guess I'll have to explain - whenever you're under a pagan society remember the only way these pagan religious leaders can keep their people under control is to have them saturated with superstition. And you all know what superstition is? You're scared to death to make a move in the wrong direction for fear that the powers that be will come down on you. Now this was the whole idea of pagan religion. They had their people steeped in superstition, and they were scared to death of the power of their god, and they knew all too well the powers of the demons in the air around them.

Now we here in America have been blessed that we're not too plagued with demonism. Oh, we know it's coming, but so far Christianity, I think, has been strong enough that it's held the demon powers at bay. But you go into other areas of the world, and you'll find demonism rampant, and real. It was at Christ's time, as well in the time of Paul. And so these pagans understood demonic power. In Haiti their people know that voodooism has intrinsic power, it's Satanic power, but it's a power. Now these people in Corinth were so aware of the powers of the demons of the air that when they got ready to eat the meat, their superstitious mind said that if a demon was going to make entrance into his body the easiest way would be to get on that meat. So this was a big hang up.

Now in order to counteract that, these pagans would take their meat to their pagan priest, and the priest would put some kind of blessing on it that would keep the demons off their meat so they could eat it safely. Now all these things enter in, and a lot of times we don't understand. So here comes a believer now and his best friend's daughter is getting married, and he's going to be going through all the pagan rites of marriage, and he's invited to the wedding feast. Paul never tells these believers to stay away from that, they were free to go. But Paul says remember that even though your
friend who is an idolater, feels that the meat has to be blessed and sacrificed to a pagan god, you don't have to worry about it. Those idolatrous gods can't do anything to you because you are a believer. Go ahead, and eat the meat, and don't worry about it.

Okay, but over here on the other side of the table at that same wedding feast is a brand new Christian, and he hasn't grown to any maturity whatsoever. And he looks across the table and there sits the Christian that has been a believer for 12-18 months, and he's eating that meat. What do you suppose this new Christian thinks? How in the world can he sit there and eat meat that's been offered to an idol? Now then, what's Paul going to say? "Listen, if you are going to cause that young believer to stumble and have problems over this, then don't eat the meat."

Now again remember that when these pagans took their animals to be sacrificed in a pagan temple the priest would keep a certain portion of the meat for themselves much like the priests of Israel would. Then they would give the remaining part of the carcass back to the individual, and it was his to do with as he pleased. So if he wanted some cash in hand, what do you suppose he would do with the remaining meat? He would take it down to the butcher shop and sell it to the market. Now here comes unsuspecting people buying a chunk of that meat that had been sacrificed at the temple. These Christians knew this, so they had to write and ask Paul what they were to do, because most of the meat had already been offered to a pagan god.

I Corinthians 8:8

"But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse,"

It's plain as day isn't it? The Bible never demands that a believer be a vegetarian. I have to say that because I'm a cow man, and I like to sell beef, the more the better, but never in Scripture are we admonished not to eat meat. Paul says it doesn't make any difference whether you do or you don't.

I Corinthians 8:9-11

"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak." (And I've already covered that. Don't eat the meat if it's going to make a new believer stumble, or cause him problems.) For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge (those of you who are mature) shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" Are you going to cause him to stumble? Now verse 12:
I Corinthians 8:12

"But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

Paul says, "you don't have to worry about the believer who is grounded in the faith, and is mature, but consider the poor fellow who is still weak." And that's what we all need to take into consideration. Watch out for that weak brother, because The Lord knows where that weak person is. He also understands where the mature person is, and He knows they have the wherewithal for all to make it a level playing field. Now verse 13.

I Corinthians 8:13

"Wherefore, if meat (offered to idols) make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

And that's basically what Paul said back in Romans. If something that you feel you're mature enough in, and it's not going to hurt you, but it will bother the weak believer, then for his sake don't do it. That's a lesson that we can apply in so many areas of life today. I can probably do things that so far as The Lord and I are concerned, are perfectly legitimate. I have that liberty under Grace, but maybe there's somebody just down the road who would see me do that, and would take tremendous offense at my actions. It could be a believer or an unbeliever, and if they think what we're doing is wrong, then for their sake we just stop doing it.

I've made the statement over the years in my classes, "Do you realize that the unbelieving world is far more critical and judgmental of you and I as believers than God is?" Just think about that. Remember God has given us the guidelines in His Word, and we know that we have this amount of liberty that we are determined to do or not to do, as the Holy Spirit gives us guidance, and not by what our neighbors think. But we still have to take into consideration what is our neighbor's attitude lest we cause him never to become a believer. As we start Chapter 9 we see the Apostle Paul again having to defend his apostleship.

I Corinthians 9:1,2

"Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you;..."

How could Paul say that? Because he had seen them saved out of abject idolatry only because of his ministry. So he says, "you're the proof of the pudding, and if I were not
an Apostle then you would still be in your paganism." I've had people say to me, "Well who do you think you are? You're just a layman with no theological education, what business do you have standing up there teaching The Word?" And you know I probably would have questioned that myself years back, but do you know what I've got as proof of the pudding? Umpteen people who have been saved out of an especially sinful background. That's my proof that The Lord has honored what we're doing, by seeing so many people come out of darkness, and into the light of The Gospel. And that is what Paul is saying, "Hey, my apostleship is proven by you yourself, because I have led you out of dark idolatry." Now verse 3:

*I Corinthians 9:3-6*

"Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, `Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? (Peter) Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?'"

What was the big complaint against Paul? Well, from especially the Jewish community, that he wasn't one of the Twelve. They would say, "You didn't walk with Jesus three years like Peter did. You never had that experience of being with him day and night for three years, you've never even seen Him." But what could Paul say, "O yes I did. I saw the resurrected Lord," and he's going to point this out more clearly in a coming verse. But Paul was always being accused of not being what he claimed he was, because he did not have that three years of experience that the Twelve had. Well that is logical. But here he comes back, and says, "You are my proof of apostleship," It wasn't just Peter and the eleven that The Lord used. Besides Paul, He used Barnabas, but later on He will also use Silas, Timothy, Titus, and others. Now verse 7 - he's still dealing with his apostleship.

*I Corinthians 9:7*

"Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"

What is Paul going to start driving at? He's going to start showing from the Scriptures, the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, that a servant of God whether he be a pastor or teacher or an evangelist, is worthy of his labor. He's saying in verse 7 that when a nation calls a man into the armed forces, is he expected to buy his own necessities, and pay his own wages? Of course not. Who pays it? The government. Or he says, "If someone plants a vineyard, and puts all the work into getting that vineyard to produce, is he supposed to turn around and say, 'but I don't want to profit from it?'"
No. But what does a vineyard owner deserve? A return for his labor and capital. Now Paul takes it one step further. Are you going to feed a flock of sheep or goats, and not even partake of the milk they produce? Paul is trying to show that as an Apostle he deserves a certain compensation for his time, and expenses, but did Paul ever take that compensation? No he never took it, and it was for the simple reason that he didn't want anyone to ever point a finger at him and say, "Paul you're just doing this for the money."

Back when Paul was still in Judaism that was a factor as we will see in the Book of Galatians Chapter 1. And this was another reason that he was so adamant against taking any kind of pay or compensation for his work as an Apostle. Just because he had seen in his earlier life how it could corrupt him. And I guess my biggest fear, even in a ministry such as his, is taking money out. I think this was what was driving the Apostle Paul. Now verse 11:

*Galatians 1:11,12*

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." In other words when he saw Christ face to face, and The Lord revealed these doctrines of Grace to this Apostle. Now verse 13:

*Galatians 1:13,14a*

"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion (as a Pharisee, as a member of the Sanhedrin), how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited (now there's only one way that you profit, and how is that? Monetarily.) in the Jews' religion above many my equals..."

I've shared with my classes at least here in Oklahoma, when we go to Jerusalem we'll see the archaeological dig of the ancient house of Caiaphas the high priest, and it was sumptuous. Those people capitalized on their religious position and Paul did also while a member of that religion, and he says he did. And I think now that being a preacher in the Age of Grace Paul is going to do just the opposite. He is not going to let anyone accuse him of getting rich by his ministry. Oh listen we're seeing so much of that today. I remember when I was just a kid getting out of High School, and one of my best friends said, "I think I'll just go into the ministry, because it's pretty easy money." Well he certainly wasn't looking at it from a believer's standpoint. But this is what Paul is talking about in I Corinthians 9:7.
LESSON THREE * PART I

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS, A WARNING EXAMPLE

I CORINTHIANS 9:19 - 10:17

It's been a long time since I've put our timeline on the board, and sort of reviewed it, and for those of you who have been with us all the way from the Book of Genesis this will be old hat and a review for you. But I think for the benefit of our new listeners we'll just run by the timeline again, and show you where we've come from since we've started in Genesis. On the timeline I like to start with the creation of Adam, and remember all these dates are approximate because I don't set these things in concrete, but as near as chronology can ascertain, we find Adam coming on the scene in approximately 4004 B.C. then Noah's Flood was the next big event in Genesis Chapter 6 & 7, and that was about 1600 years after Adam, or about 2400 B.C.

And then there was another 200 years after the flood, or about 2200 B.C. when that whole new generation of folks, from Noah's son's offspring, come together at the Tower of Babel. And from the Tower of Babel until the call of Abram (Abraham) in 2000 B.C. in the city of Ur in Babylon, God promised him with the Abrahamic Covenant that out of him would come a nation of people. And through that little nation of people God is going to consummate His whole plan of redemption. Then about 500 years later we find Israel a nation, they have come out of Egypt under Moses, and they have received the Law, and that would be about 1500 B.C.

Then we have this whole period from Abraham until Christ comes in His earthly ministry where God is dealing mainly with the nation of Israel. There are exceptions of course, where He deals with Gentiles, but very few. And then once the Law comes in and they get the tabernacle, and the Temple then the whole make-up of our Old Testament is Israel under the Law, with the priesthood, and the Temple worship and all that. That was interspersed with the Babylonian captivity in 606 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. Then about 70 years later God made commandments through Cyrus the king of Persia to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple, and that was under the leadership of Ezra. So Ezra rebuilds the Temple, and a little remnant of Jews come back from Babylon, and begin to set the stage for the nation of Israel at the coming of Christ. Then a few years after Ezra had rebuilt the Temple, another Syrian king, by the name of Artaxerxes, gave commandment to Nehemiah to go back to Jerusalem, and rebuild the city wall, because you know a city wouldn't last long without the protection of a wall. So Nehemiah and some more of the Jews that came back with him then began to rebuild the wall.
Then we know from Daniel Chapter 9:24 that there would be 490 years of God's time table prophetically upon and fulfilled in the nation of Israel. This prophecy began from the date of the command for Nehemiah to go back and rebuild the wall. Then we also know from history and the dating of it, that from the time of that decree until Christ was crucified (Daniel 9:26) the prophecy had only included 483 years rather than the 490 that was prophesied. Which means that when God left off dealing with the nation of Israel early in the Book of Acts, the 7 years of that prophecy had not yet been accomplished, and so then Bible scholars began to realize that these 7 years were somewhere out in the future. We don't know when but we know that we've already come almost 2000 years and we feel we're getting close to that 7-year-period of time that we call the Tribulation, which belongs to that 490 years prophesied in Daniel.

Now we know that Israel rejected the Christ. Peter and the eleven continued to preach to the men of Israel in the Book of Acts. Some believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but for the most part the nation of Israel would not believe that Jesus was the Christ. And finally God saw that Israel was not going to believe and receive her King, so He raised up another little Jew, the Apostle Paul, and the first thing He made known was that He was going to send that man to the Gentiles. And of course from there that opened up the Age of Grace, the Church Age, and Paul immediately goes to Jews first, and then to the Gentiles. I feel that from the time that Paul started ministering to the Gentiles with The Gospel of Grace, as found in I Corinthians 15:1-4, we have this undetermined period of time, we don't know how long it will last, we only know that the Church Age has now come 1900 + years. And we know that the Church will have to be taken out of the way as we see in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 so that the 7-year-period of Tribulation can kick in, and God can pick up again where He left off with the nation of Israel, because that all belongs back in the prophetic program. Now then after the Tribulation, Christ will return, set up His Kingdom, and we who are Raptured will come back with Him, I think, to rule and reign with Him.

But back here in the Church Age is where we are now studying the writings of Paul chronologically. Paul does most of his ministry among the Gentiles, and establishing the Churches from about 40 A.D. until he ends up a prisoner in Rome in about 65 A.D. And in that period of time he not only establishes all these Churches throughout Asia Minor, and Greece, and Antioch in Syria, but from about 58 A.D. Paul starts writing his letters. Because the Churches have been established, and now they need doctrine, they need correction, they need instruction, and so the Holy Spirit is behind it all, and He begins to prompt the Apostle Paul to write these various letters. And in this letter of I Corinthians we find Paul dealing with the problems in this local Church. They had evidently written to him, and asked questions of how to deal with these different problems. And to show you what I mean just come back a few pages to
Chapter 7, and here he makes it so obvious that he is writing this letter in response to their inquiry.

_I Corinthians 7:1a_

"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me;..."

So all these things that he's been covering now were in response to the congregation's questions. And all their questions were resting on problems, and remember this Corinthian Church was the most carnal, and the least spiritual of all the Churches that Paul had anything to do with. Just compare the Corinthian letters to, say for example, Ephesians, Philippians, or Colossians, and it makes all the difference in the world. So we have to understand the setting. In fact, in all my years of teaching I've used various portions of I Corinthians, but I had never taught it verse by verse, and naturally now as I'm teaching it on television, I'm learning as much as you are. There is so much in here that I had just passed over, and thought that it wasn't important, but it's like T-Bone steak, spiritually! So I trust that you will continue to feed from this little letter even as we have.

Now getting back to our timeline, I want you to understand that we're in the Church Age, The Body of Christ, waiting until the Body is complete. We've explained that in earlier programs, that when the last person is saved, and the Body is complete, then The Lord will come and deliver us from this old sin-cursed world, and we'll be moving on into the eternal state. Now in I Corinthians Chapter 9, Paul is again having to defend his apostleship to these carnal believers at Corinth who are in a city of abject idolatry, horrible immorality, and with that kind of a background they have come out as believers. But naturally there is still that draw to go back into that old lifestyle, so consequently as Paul writes he has to constantly defend his apostleship and he tells these believers at Corinth that they are proof of his apostleship. They having been saved out of abject paganism as a result of his preaching are proof enough that he was an apostle. Now let's start with verse 19, and here Paul makes some kind of hard to comprehend statements.

_I Corinthians 9:19_

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more."

Now you see Paul had only driving desire and motivation, and what was that? To see lost people saved. He didn't care about material things, or comfort; all he wanted was lost people saved. Now reading verse 20. And this wasn't always easy for Paul.
I Corinthians 9:20

"And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, (remember back in the Book of Acts when he has been decrying Law, and legalism, and Temple worship, yet what does the man do? He takes a Jewish vow and goes back to the Temple in Jerusalem to fulfill it. Well this is hard to understand and put together when the very thing that he'd been preaching against, he's now practicing. In this verse is the answer to why he would do such a thing. He did all this in the hope) that I might gain the Jews; (spiritually) to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;"

And I think there he's probably referring to the more religious element of Judaism. Now even today in the nation of Israel, I'm almost afraid that the Jews will end up in civil war themselves because of the tremendous confrontations between the Jewish secular community (who have no time for the things of God, and nothing in the area of faith), and then on the other hand you have your Orthodox Jews who are so wrapped up in Judaism that they even lose touch with reality. I think it's the same way here. Paul had to approach the Jews that were not steeped in their religion and also approach those who were under the Law, and were practicing it. Remember how I made comment a few weeks ago that when we speak of the Law of Judaism at the time of Christ and of Paul, it wasn't the pure Law of Moses's day. This thing had been so watered down with man-made ideas that the Law of Paul in Christ's days was a whole set of over 600 rules and regulations. That was the Law that the Jews really attained to - the laws that the Rabbis had put together studying the various aspects of the Old Testament. So Paul says but to those who are under the Law, I became under the Law. Now, he says, in verse 21.

I Corinthians 9:21

"To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ.)....."

In other words, Paul never forsook the morality of the Law of God. He never went down and said, "Well I'm free from the Law and I can do as I please, so far as moral things are concerned." No way! Now verse 22:

I Corinthians 9:22

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, (for what purpose?) that I might by all means save some."
He knew he wouldn't gain the whole world. But if he could just win some. Now those of you who have contacted missionaries, just as we have had contact with missionaries over the years and there's one thing that every missionary learns real fast when they get into a foreign field. They have to live like the people amongst whom they are working. They cannot just all of a sudden come in and live with western culture and habits and food. They would never reach anybody. But they have to go into that foreign culture and begin to eat their foreign food.

I'll never forget when we had a missionary friend who brought back a tremendous movie that he had made himself. This was way back in the time of the old 8 mm movie, I think. But he was on a mission field in Indonesia among pretty much uncivilized people. The favorite food for those kids there that was equal to any American candy bar, was a big black beetle. And boy, those kids would chomp into that beetle and then they'd give the missionary one. You can imagine what that would do to a poor American. But he said if you wanted to gain them, you had to eat that beetle just as well as those kids did. And there were some things even more gross, but I won't pass them on because somebody in television may be having lunch while we're doing this. Nevertheless, this is the idea of mission work. You have to step in to the very same mold that those people are that you're trying to reach. And it began with Paul. So Paul says whenever he came to people who were spiritually weak, he understood their weakness. He didn't come in like some spiritual giant coming down on them and ridiculing them and criticizing them. He understood where they were. And regardless of what their status in life, Paul would identify and try to be on an equal footing with them. Now verse 23.

**I Corinthians 9:23**

"And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." All Paul had on his heart, was to see lost people saved. And then down to verse 24. He's almost shifting gears as he comes in to almost a whole different train of thought.

**I Corinthians 9:24**

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."

Now you remember Paul must have been a fan of the Olympics, because he refers to them so often in his writings for analogies, and that's what he's referring to here. When they had the Olympic ring, in Corinth it was the Isnian Games. They were the second greatest games in the Roman world after the Olympics. So, now he's coming back to this whole concept of the Olympic Races. When these men raced, what are they running for? Just for the fun of it? No! To win! To be number 1! And so he says
you do the same. You run your spiritual race that you may obtain. Not Salvation. He's been referring to the carnal Corinthians all the way since Chapter 1 as believers, as brethren. So he's not talking about running to gain their Salvation, but to gain rewards. Now read on.

**I Corinthians 9:25a**

"And every man that striveth for the mastery..."

Now he's talking about the Olympic contestants, and when they trained in order to win the race, did they go clear over board and just eat, eat, eat, because it took energy to run? No. On the other hand did they starve their bodies so they wouldn't have to carry so much weight to the finish line? No. So what was the whole idea? Temperance! I wrote someone just the other day about being temperate in all things. The word temperate means in any area of life you maintain a balance. You don't go clear off either end, but base everything on The Word of God, and then you maintain a balance. Looking at verse 25 again, we find Paul saying that these runners train temperately in all of their intake of food and drink to enhance their body strength.

**I Corinthians 9:25**

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; (a reward) but we an incorruptible."

Paul says that we are running the spiritual race not for a crown of leaves and vines as these runners did, but we run for an incorruptible crown. One that will last for all eternity.

**I Corinthians 9:26**

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly;..."

I'm not going to run not really knowing what I'm after. Because Paul knew what the prize was as he teaches us in the Book of Philippines.

**Philippians 3:10**

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;" And what was the purpose? That he might win the prize. Now finishing verse 26:

**I Corinthians 9:26**
"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:'

Paul says that he's not going to just beat the air, he's not going to shadow box, but rather he is going to train himself spiritually to run this race of life that he might win the prize. Let's finish the chapter with verse 27. I might add that this last verse has been so misconstrued because of the term in the King James.

I Corinthians 9:27

"But I keep under my body, (Paul is going to keep everything under control) and bring it into subjection: (so that I can run the spiritual race) lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Now that doesn't mean that he would lose his Salvation, but it goes back to a term in the potter's house. If a potter would work a beautiful work on the wheel (we'll say it was a beautiful vase; and it was supposed to contain a liquid), but after finishing it and painting it beautifully the potter discovered a fine crack in it where it wouldn't hold water. Then, rather than just pitching the vase in the trash, the potter would sit this beautiful vase on the shelf for sale only as an ornament type vase. Now the term "a castaway" was too good to throw away, but it was no longer of any workable use. Now this is what Paul is talking about. You can't lose your Salvation if you ever had it, but oh that we might work and maintain our testimony so that we won't be put on the shelf as no longer usable, even though we may have all the outward appearance of being believers, but that we might also be functional. That we can do that which The Lord saved us to do.
LESSON THREE * PART II

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS, A WARNING EXAMPLE

I CORINTHIANS 9:19 - 10:17

Before we get back to our study, let me comment on the fact that if any of you want to make copies of our video tapes, or books to pass them on to others, feel free to do so. We're not in this for the money, but rather all we want to do is see lost people saved, and that's the only reason we're doing this. Many times I think, what in the world have I gotten into, because I'm still a full-time rancher with all that responsibility, but yet The Lord has given us this ministry, and so we have to use it for His glory. Now let's get back to our study.

We will begin in Chapter 10, and we have a lot of ground to cover in the next few verses. Because Paul here is going to go way back to the Book of Exodus, and we're going to follow him in just a moment. Paul tells us that he's going to add a lesson now to everything he has taught since Chapter 1. The whole purpose of Paul's letters is to teach us, not just some of the simple things, but even how all of these scriptures tie themselves together. And if there's anything I love to do it is tie the Old and New together, because they both fit so intrinsically.

I Corinthians 10:1,2

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers (And of course Paul is speaking as a Jew) were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;(In the parting of the Red Sea, as the children of Israel left Israel.) And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;"

I always have to stop here because most of people in this Age of the Church, as soon as they see the word `baptized' they think of water. Well even though they did have the Red Sea water parted, yet did they get wet? No. They walked through on dry ground. Well then, what's the baptism? Let's try to explain. The word `ecclesia' means `a called out assembly,' and was called the Church in the wilderness, but the nation of Israel was not baptized to become members of that ecclesia. Now let me show you what I'm talking about. Go back to the Book of Acts Chapter 7. And here Stephen is preaching this tremendous sermon to his Jewish religious leaders, and he's gone all the way back to Abraham. He's brought the Jewish history before them, and here beginning with verse 36, he's referring to their forefathers who came out of Egypt under Moses.

Acts 7:36
"He brought them out, (That is the nation of Israel) after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, (it's almost like it was in Christ's earthly ministry. Remember Jesus had to show wonders and signs to prove to the Jewish nation that it was God's doing, and here it's the same way with Moses.) and in the Red sea and in the wilderness forty years."

Now here Stephen is trying to prove to these leaders of Israel that Jesus was the Christ, so he continues on in verse:

**Acts 7:37,38**

"This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, (prophetically) A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. (In other words someone who would deliver Israel like Moses did.). This is He (Stephen says, speaking of Jesus of Nazareth) that was in the church (the ecclesia are that called-out assembly of the Children of Israel) in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: (the Law)"

Now when God called Israel out of Egypt, He brought them through a Red Sea experience which was a baptism, but without a drop of water. And they became a Church, but without any Church organization. Well it's a matter of definitions again. The Church here is a called-out assembly, it's not a New Testament Church. It's Israel - in the wilderness fresh out of Egypt. And they're also going to have a baptism that is not water baptism. Now coming back to I Corinthians for a moment. So they passed through the sea, and in that passing though the sea, going from one lifestyle of slavery under the heavy hand of the Egyptians to absolute freedom set aside as the people of God. What kind of a baptism was it? Well it sure wasn't water, but rather they were simply placed under Moses' leadership. They were placed under the Shekinah glory cloud that accompanied them, and it was called a baptism. So we must watch our definitions. Now in another place where baptism is used, and it never refers to water is when the disciples thought they could go and do whatever Jesus was going to do, and what did He tell them?

**Matthew 20:22**

"But Jesus answered and said, 'Ye know not what ye ask, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with...?"

Well what kind of a baptism was He talking about? His death, His suffering, He would be placed under all of that, and He knew the disciples couldn't do that. But He
called it a baptism. He was placed under all the ramifications of His crucifixion, His burial, and resurrection, and He called it a baptism. Here, Israel coming though the Red Sea under Moses' leadership, and the power of the Shekinah cloud, it's still called a baptism. And it merely meant that they were identifying with Moses and his leadership. Now let's move on to verse 3.

*I Corinthians 10:3,4*

"And did all eat the same spiritual meat: And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

Now let's back up a couple of pages to Chapter 5 here in I Corinthians, and here Paul refers to Christ as our passover.

*I Corinthians 5:7*

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. (That is, he's talking to believers) For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"

Now we'll see Paul pull that lesson in Exodus as the Israelites prepare to leave Egypt, not only a lesson for the Corinthians, but for us as well. But let's stop for a moment in the Book of Romans Chapter 15. Drop down to verse 4, and Paul is writing to the Christians at Rome.

*Romans 15:4a*

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime (back in the Old Testament) were written for our learning....."

All those things written back there in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, etc., were written to the Jew under the Law, yet it was for our learning. And how many people today just shut their eyes to the Old Testament and think they have nothing to do with that today. The Old Testament is just a bedrock for the New Testament. You can't understand the New unless you understand the Old. So, that's what Paul is saying here in verse 4, that all these things were written for our learning, not our doctrine. You're not going to find the plan of Salvation back in Exodus. You'll find a picture of it, but you won't find the Gospel (As we find it in I Corinthians 15:1-4) back in the Old Testament anywhere.

*Romans 15:4b*
".... that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

How in the world does understanding the Old Testament increase our hope? It makes it so much more believable. When you see how all this fits so beautifully, written thousands of years before by men totally unaware of the Church Age, and yet it all fits. **How could it if God hadn't been the Author of it. And so this is another one of the proof positives that this book is supernatural.** Now, let's go back to the Old Testament and see what we can put together here. Come all the way back to the Passover in Exodus Chapter 12. You've all known the story of the plagues in Egypt and how Israel was just being submerged in the suffering and the horrors of slavery under the Egyptian slave masters. And then finally Pharaoh told Moses not to ever come back and see him again.

**Exodus 10:28,29**

"And Pharaoh said unto him, `Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die.' And Moses said, `Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.'"

Then we come into Chapter 12 and God gives Moses and the nation of Israel the instructions for the Passover Lamb. They were to take it out (in verse 5 of Chapter 12) of the flock without blemish, a male, the first year, either from the sheep or the goats. And then in verse 6 they were to keep it penned up for three days until the 14th day of that month of April. And all of Israel was to have a Passover Lamb at their disposal. Now let's go to verse 7.

**Exodus 12:7**

"And they shall take of the blood, (of that Passover Lamb) and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it."

Now let's turn over to the same chapter and verse 12. I think in order to make this a little more graphic, the door of their little huts (they didn't have fancy homes there in Egypt) were to be struck with a piece of hyssop, which was like our rag weed, and the blood placed on the two door posts and on the lintel (or the head board). Now they didn't know it but we can see that that was the outline of the Cross and certainly that's what God had in mind. Now they were to take the blood of that lamb, strike it on the two door posts and on the lintel, as the word is used in the King James anyway, and now verse 12. What was the purpose? This was the last plague that was going to fall on Pharaoh's Egypt and you all know the plague of the death angel.

**Exodus 12:12** (This is God speaking)
"For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods (small \`g\') of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord."

Now let's look at verse 13 and here is where the lesson really comes home to you and I.

Exodus 12:13

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Now when we were teaching all of this years ago, back in Exodus, I made the point and I'm going to repeat it again. As those Jewish families stood in their little huddles, and they were to stand around the kitchen table with the Passover Lamb roasted and they were to partake of it to give them strength for their journey, this is the emphasis I've always said: when they knew that the blood was out there on the door posts, did they shake with fear all that night? No! Why? Because by faith they knew that the blood had kept them secure. They knew by faith, and that's the word, that with the blood on the door that the death angel would never strike them. They were safe and secure. They didn't have to shake in their boots. Now then, we're going to come back to Exodus in a little bit, but for now, let's go all the way back to Romans and look what Paul says there concerning the blood. And remember, he said in I Corinthians Chapter 9 that Christ was our Passover, and so if there's a Passover Lamb, there has to be blood, because that was the whole idea - the shedding of the lamb's blood, that it could be stricken on the door posts. Now look in Chapter 3 of Romans and this is our ground, doctrinally. This isn't just an example. This is the real thing. This is what we have to latch on to just like the Israelites in Egypt rested on the blood of that lamb on the door, this is what we have to rest on even as Gentiles in this Age of Grace. Starting with verse 23.

Romans 3:23

"For all (every human being) have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:" 

Every human being in his natural state is separated from God because he's fallen short. He can't meet God's standards. But we're not left with the dilemma of hopelessness. You move on into verse 24, that even though all have sinned,
"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption (or the buying back) that is in Christ Jesus."

Now remember, all of scripture is always teaching that whole idea of something that was owned and was lost. For example, the nation was God's Covenant people but because of the brother's sin, where did Joseph end up? Down in Egypt. While Joseph was down in Egypt and the other brethren were in rebellion, God lost his chosen people. He'd lost control of them. So what is He going to have to do? He's going to have to buy them back! And that's what the book of Exodus is all about. It's a book of redemption. And how did He buy them back? Through the blood of the Passover Lamb. Now, it's the same way with us today. God lost us when Adam fell. And so He's going to have the redeem us. How does He redeem us? With blood. It's the only thing that God can use to purchase mankind's redemption. Now let's look at verse 25:

**Romans 3:25**

"Whom (speaking of Christ Jesus in verse 24) God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,....."

You don't hear that much anymore do you? But there is only one way to experience the redemption of verse 24 and that is putting your faith in the blood of Christ. Now do you see why Paul took us back to the Passover night in Egypt? It's the same setting. Just as sure as that Jewish family in Egypt was safe and the death angel couldn't touch the first-born because of the blood out there on the door, so also for you and I who have had the blood of Christ applied, nothing can touch us! Nothing! Now, let's look at Romans Chapter 8. Let's go down to verse 37.

**Romans 8:37-39**

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that love us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Why? Because we're under the blood. And nobody, no power on earth or heaven, can take us from under that blood protection. As surely as the Israelites were saved in Egypt, we're saved today. What a beautiful security. We saw this even when we taught the flood, and God gave instructions to build that old ark. He was going to make it of wood and it was going to have to be up there in the raging sea for almost a year, so what did God instruct Noah to do to seal the ark so that it wouldn't leak? Use pitch, which was a tar. I pointed out back there in that lesson in Genesis the same Hebrew word for `pitch' was also the Hebrew word for atonement! It's the same
Hebrew word. So what did the pitch between the boards of that old ark really amount to? The sealing effect. It was the atoning effect. Just as sure as the blood seals out judgment and it can never touch us, the pitch sealed out the waters of the flood.

And so this is all the way through Scripture, that we are secure, not because of anything we do, or anything we deserve, but simply because we've placed our faith in the blood of Christ. Of course, it doesn't stop there because we also place our faith in His resurrection, in the fact that He arose from the dead. Now come back to Corinthians for just a moment. This is after they came out of Egypt, out of the Red Sea experience, and were separated unto God. They are out in the desert. And all these millions of people there. I'm so tickled whenever I read an article like the one in the Jerusalem Post here a while back. A writer used the same numbers that I've used for years concerning the Children of Israel coming out of Egypt, 3 - 7 million. That's unbelievable, I know it is, but that's how many it must have been. Here they were out in the desert and out there there is usually no water. And they got thirsty. Whatever livestock they had, that always raises questions for me too. Why were they hungry for meat when they had all those sheep, cattle and goats. And their livestock were getting thirsty and the Israelites were thirsty. And so what did they do? They come up to Moses, Let's go back to Exodus about Chapter 17, verse 2.

**Exodus 17:2-6**

"Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, (they were just irritating him. Almost screaming at him.) and said, 'Give us water that we may drink.' And Moses said unto them, 'Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?' And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, 'Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?' And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, 'What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.' And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, (remember back in Egypt it turned into blood) take in thine hand and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; (Horeb is the same as Mt. Sinai) and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.' And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel."

And how much water did they get? They got enough for all the Israelites and all their cattle and there was enough left over that the neighbors started fighting for it.
LESSON THREE * PART III

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS, A WARNING EXAMPLE

I CORINTHIANS 9:19 - 10:17

Let's go back to 1 Corinthians Chapter 10, and the whole idea here is that Paul is addressing these carnal believers at Corinth. And he's using everything at his disposal to teach them and to bring them to an understanding of his Gospel that was given him by the ascended, risen from the grave, Lord of glory: and how that Christ died for the sins of the world, that His blood was shed, and that He rose from the dead. And of course He has to constantly bring in all their behavioral problems, and they had them. They were constantly tempted to go back into idolatry, and immoral practices, plus all these other hang-ups that he has been addressing. So, as we saw in our last lesson, the Apostle Paul goes back to Israel's experience in the wilderness, and how that when they cried for water, Moses at God's instruction, struck the Rock, and out of the Rock came water, and Paul now makes it's plain in Chapter 10 that that Rock was Christ.

Now you want to remember that all through Scripture from the beginning of the Old Testament to the end of the New Testament, whenever there is a typical reference to "The Rock," that Rock is always Christ, and none other. So whether it's back in Exodus when the Rock is struck or in the Book of Numbers when Moses was supposed to have spoken to the Rock, but he struck it again instead, that Rock is still Christ. You come on up to the Book of Daniel in Chapter 2 when Daniel has the vision of that Rock cut out with hands, and it strikes the image on it's feet, that's the 2nd coming of Christ pictured as a smiting stone. Then, when you get to Matthew, of course, Peter made that tremendous profession of faith in Chapter 16.

Matthew 16:16-18

"And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' And Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, (a stone) and upon this rock (speaking of Himself, Christ) I will build my church; and the gates of hell, shall not prevail against it.'"

So remember throughout all Scripture, the Rock is always Christ in typical language. Now let's come on down to verse 5 in 1 Corinthians 10, and then we'll have to go back to the Book of Exodus again. Remember these Israelites that had come out of Egypt (and remember they all came through the Passover experience, and the Red Sea
experience) are all gathered around Mt. Sinai, and Moses had gone up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments and what took place below?

**I Corinthians 10:5**

"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Now in verse 6 we have a verse almost like the one we looked at in Romans' last lesson.

**I Corinthians 10:6,7**

"Now these things (that happened to Israel) were our examples, (that we can learn from, it is like an object lesson) to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.'"

Well let's go back Exodus and look at that account again, and we'll find that in Chapter 32. And this is just as applicable for us today as it was for Corinth in Paul's day, and just as applicable as when it happened back there in Exodus. Remember, I teach that we're not under Law, but rather under Grace. But the God of the Old Testament, the God of the Mosaic Law is the same God that we deal with today, and He has not changed! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Now this is what we must understand. **The things that God hated way back in Genesis, He still hates today.** The things that God admonished Israel not to do for their own good, he admonishes us today not to do for our own good. God hasn't changed, and the circumstances of the world haven't changed. In other words, the things that damaged the health of an individual back in Israel's early days are no different than they are today. Now let's look at the lesson, and we find that Moses had been up in the mountain now for almost 40 days dealing with Jehovah God. God has already written with His finger on the table of stones, the Ten Commandments. Joshua has joined Moses, and they are on the way down the mountain.

**Exodus 32:1-4**

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, 'Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; (they were used to that in Egypt) for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot (know) not what is become of him.' And Aaron said unto them, 'Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, (the idea of men wearing rings in their ears is not new) and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.' And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he
received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, (he worked at, he must have been a craftsman of some sort.) after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, 'These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.'"

Now we know that was a lie. That golden calf had nothing to do with bringing them through the Red Sea. Now in verse 5 we see Aaron building them an altar. You know I can never get over this man Aaron. He didn't even give them any argument, and we know that he should have preached them a sermon, but he just did whatever they wanted him to do. It looks to me like Aaron is part and parcel to this whole act. I hope I don't have Aaron confront me in eternity someday and say, "Hey what was the big idea that day down there in Oklahoma running me up one side and down the other." But nevertheless I can't figure the man out how he went right along with all this and actually helped them build an altar in verse 5.

Exodus 32:5

"And when Aaron saw it, (the calf) he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, 'Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.'"

Now think about that. Here he was mixing the worship of this idol and calling it a feast day of Jehovah. Now we think that's terrible don't we? And it is, but you know what? They're doing the same thing today. I learned years ago that you can have some ultra-liberal preacher or theologian, and he can talk about resurrection, but he doesn't mean what we mean. He's talking about something totally different, and so much of the terminology of New Testament Christianity, they can use the same words, but it's not the same definition. And so what do they do? They use Christian language, they refer to being led by the Holy Spirit, and to me it's almost blasphemy, but they do it. Now that's exactly what Aaron is doing, he's taking the worship of this golden calf, pagan to the core, and then he says, "Tomorrow we'll call it a feast day of the LORD." Now verse 6. Now here is where the Apostle Paul is quoting from.

Exodus 32:6

"And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

Here they've had the proof of the Almighty God in fire on the mountain, the pillar of fire at night as they came out of Egypt, that pillar of a cloud during the day to give them shade from the sun, water from the Rock, and yet they can go right down into the depths of idolatry, and worship a stupid golden calf. A dead thing with no life - but again it was an emotional thing. It appealed to their emotion, do you see what they did? With that calf in the center of the camp, they sat down to eat, and drink, and rose
up to play, it was the practice of the satisfaction of the flesh. In verse 7, God has to move Moses out of the mountain experience a little bit to see about the children of Israel.

**Exodus 32:7**

"And the LORD said unto Moses, 'Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:'"

Someone else didn't come in and corrupt them, they did it of their own volition. They asked for it. You know, so often even in our own present time, people who are guilty of things that are anti-scriptural will try to take the whole idea, "Well I couldn't help it, I'm a victim of circumstance." No they aren't. They are people of choice, and they make choices, and you can't get away from that. It was the same way here. These children of Israel were a people of choice, they didn't have to have that stupid calf. God was going to take care of them. Now we're not going to read all these verses so come on over to verse 17 and we'll begin again.

**Exodus 32:17-21**

"And when Joshua heard the noise of the people (remember there were millions of them) as they shouted, he said unto Moses, 'There is a noise of war in camp. (Joshua thought the people were being attacked, and were screaming and yelling, running for their lives, but Moses said ) ... It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.' And it came to pass as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing and Moses's anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. And Moses said unto Aaron, 'What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?'"

In other words I imagine Moses thought, "these people must have literally threatened Aaron with his life. Either you build us a god or we'll kill you." The Book doesn't say that but, Moses is implying that the people put pressure on Aaron to bring all this about. And again I can't understand Aaron. Look at his answer. Remember in the previous verses it says he took a graving tool and the gold and made the golden calf, but look what he says.

**Exodus 32:22-24**
"And Aaron said, `Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, `Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot (know) not what is become of him.' And I said unto them, `Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: (this next statement is shocking) then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.'"

Now if it would have happened that way then I could see where Israel thought there was something supernatural going on, but that wasn't the way it was. He melted the gold down and crafted it with a graving tool, and made it, but he tells Moses this story. It's unreal isn't it? Now you know often people will look at the Scripture, and this story, and think, "Why does God see fit to put something so ridiculous in His Word." I'll tell you why. To show us the bare human nature. All of these things that we think are so awful in the Old Testament, the instances of adultery, and drunkenness, and all the horrible things that make up human experiences. Why? To show us what man is really made of. Because whether it was 4000 years ago, or 10 years ago or today, man has not changed one iota, nor has God.

Now let's look at verse 25. And remember it wasn't just a casual worshiping with native folk dancing and so forth, but how were these people dancing? Naked! Immoral! So what had they done? They had taken that golden calf worship, and put it down on the same level of all other idolaters, and I've taught that as long as I've been teaching. Because when you go into abject pagan idolatry or mythology you always have rank immorality. And the reason for that is it's satanically controlled.

Exodus 32:25

"And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:) Well anyway you know what happened there.

Exodus 32:35

"And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

We know from Scripture that there were 23,000 put to death through the plague because of this very event. Now coming back to I Corinthians again, see how Paul uses this not only to shake the Corinthians up and bring them out of their temptations to go back into these things, but for us as well. We're no different than they were. We're not a bit different than the Corinthian believers, and unless we come away from a babe in Christ's situation, and begin to mature through Bible study, we're not going to be any different.
I Corinthians 10:8

"Neither let us commit fornication, (or sexual immorality) as some of them committed, (and remember it was part of that worship of the golden calf) and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Remember these Corinthians knew all about that kind of worship, and it was a real temptation to some of them; they lived in the very midst of it, they bumped up against these immoral priestesses everyday. And it was a constant warning to flee from those things. See? Now verse 9.

I Corinthians 10:9

"Neither let us tempt (test) Christ, as some of them also tempted, (tested) and were destroyed of serpents."

Do you remember the setting? As a result of Israel's sin, God sent poison serpents out amongst the camp, and the little rascals would bite the Israelites, and it would kill those who were bitten. And that got their attention real fast. So now they had to run to Moses and say, "Do something about this." Then Moses has to go to God for instruction. And what does God say? You put up a brazen serpent up on a pole, and tell the children of Israel when they get bitten by one of these snakes they can look at the brazen serpent and be healed. And remember brass always speaks of judgment in The Bible. Well that of course was another foreview of the work of Christ, when He took our sins on whom God's judgment fell then of course we are healed of our sin problem in what we call forgiveness, and Salvation, and justification, and all the rest. Now verse 10:

I Corinthians 10:10

"Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."

And again that's a reference of their wilderness experience. They were constantly getting into trouble. Now verse 11, and here we have a repetition. And when you see repetition remember it's there for a distinct purpose.

I Corinthians 10:11

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. We're suppose to learn
from their mistakes. Now then verse 12. Here is a verse that I think is so applicable for every one of us.

**I Corinthians 10:12**

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Everyone of us are candidates for falling as Israel did. None of us can get puffed up, and say, "Well that would never happen to me." Oh yes it can. Let me show you another verse, and this one is found in Galatians Chapter 6 as Paul is writing to those churches up there in Asia Minor in the area that was called Galatia. And if this isn't so appropriate for us today.

**Galatians 6:1**

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, (especially the leaders of the Church) restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, (not in the spirit of arrogance and pride) considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

So it could happen to anyone, and we have to be on guard constantly. Let's come back to I Corinthians Chapter 10 again, and look at verse 13. What a promise we find here.

**I Corinthians 10:13**

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: (we're not the only ones that are going to experience this. Everybody does by virtue of our living in this world, and even though we're not faithful Who is?) but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted (or tested) above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

I was reading a Greek author, and his definition in the Greek here `a way to escape' was really the picture of an army entrapped in a canyon of sort. And when it looked like there was no possible way to escape the commander finds another little canyon off to the side, that he can let his army escape into. And that's the picture here. We can find ourselves seemingly entrapped in a temptation, and we think, "Oh no, what am I going to do, there is no escape." But there is, and God will reveal it to us at the appropriate time. When we start the next lesson we're going to show what the temptations are that are common to every man, woman, boy and girl living on this old planet earth. They're the same for every individual, and of course The Lord Jesus Himself faced them all. He knows because He has been there.
LESSON THREE * PART IV

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS, A WARNING EXAMPLE

I CORINTHIANS 9:19 - 10:17

Let's begin in I Corinthians Chapter 10. Remember what kind of city Corinth was, and here comes the Apostle Paul preaching The Gospel that we'll be teaching in a few weeks in Chapter 15 (how that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again according to the Scriptures). That's The Gospel that saves you if you believe it for your Salvation, and it was the only Gospel that Paul knew. And out of that came pagans - multitudes of them to believe that Gospel, and as it says in the Book of Acts, Paul turned the Roman empire upside down with this message. Now to these Corinthians who are plagued with all these temptations, and problems, and testings, Paul says in verse 13:

I Corinthians 10:13

"There hath no temptation (or testing) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Let's look at Hebrews Chapter 4 for a moment. Remember, as believers we are going to face temptations everyday. We'll never leave temptations until we leave this life, but we do have these promises, and this is what we have to learn to hang onto.

Hebrews 4:14-16

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, (remember when Christ presented His own blood as we studied back in John 20, fulfilling the priesthood of Melchisedec the High Priest of all.) Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. (Because we have someone who is constantly aware of our moment by moment existence.) For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched (now that's the negative - let's read it from the positive approach) For we have a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; (why?) but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Where we fail, He didn't. Now since He was sinless, and perfect (but since He tasted every situation that we have to come up against), oh look at the invitation in the next verse.

Hebrews 4:16
"Let us therefore come boldly (we don't have to shrink to come into the presence of God. We can come right into the throne room at any time, day or night.) unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

The door is always open. Often you'll read of new executives, presidents, or football coaches, saying they have an "open door policy." That means their employees or players can come into their office anytime. But they're not the beginners of that. God instituted it, The Lord has an open door policy. All right so what are the points in which he was tested like we are? Well we need to start with I John Chapter 2, verse 15. Most of you have seen this before, but I'm realizing that the more you repeat something the more likely you will remember it. Now verse 15:

I John 2:15-17

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (our priorities are upside down). For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (and here's why we shouldn't get taken up in the world) And the world (this whole world system) passeth away (and when it leaves the desires for it will also pass away), and the lust thereof, but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever."

How many times have you heard me say, "Young people, why gamble your eternity for 15 or 20 years of the fast lane here? It's not worth it." I have to tell people, "Look at the lives of some of our famous people - entertainers and such. They are living high on the hog, but for how long? Just a few years! And then the flush of beauty wears off and they're just cast away and are no longer important; and how many of them end up committing suicide? How many end up in the Betty Ford facility for alcohol treatment?" Well, this just says it all. The things of this world pass just like a blade of grass that comes up in the morning and you cut it off in the afternoon. But, he says, the things that are eternal are going to last forever. Now, let's go back to Genesis. Poor old Eve is going to be the first to face these areas of temptation that are common to all men. And as John listed them, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

Those are the three areas of temptation that every human being is going to have to face almost everyday. Eve was the first, back in Genesis Chapter 3 and starting at verse 6. Satan has already approached her and is holding this conversation and tantalizing her and, after all, there was something more to be gained if she would listen to him and eat of this forbidden tree. Remember Eve has already got it pretty good. I've always said she had the best husband that was ever made! The guy was sinless, perfect. What more could you ask for? They were living in all the beauty of
paradise. They had no sickness, no death, no disease, no insects, no thorns. But she wasn't satisfied. And Satan detected that and so he comes and tells her that there's something better.

**Genesis 3:6**

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, (in other words, it was beautiful appearing fruit. It wasn't an apple. I think it was some form of a grape-type fruit. It just appealed to the eye) **and a tree to be desired to make one wise,** (there's the pride aspect. She had everything else, but now if she could be just as wise as God, that appealed to her pride), **so she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat,** (now she wouldn't have eaten if she was stuffed full like after a Thanksgiving meal, so what must she have been? Hungry! And so the natural appetite was in high gear.) **and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The eye says, "Have you ever seen anything so beautiful to eat?" And then Satan, on top of that, says she would be wise as God - and those are the three areas that mankind is still confronted with. The lust of the eye, the pride of life and the lust of the flesh. The words `lust of the flesh' doesn't always mean that (we can desire a lot of things in a proper amount and they are certainly good for us). Now when Jesus told Paul that he had tasted every temptation as was common to man, we see them in the temptations back in Matthew where He's been out in the wilderness those 40 days fasting and it was a perfect setup for the temptations. And sure enough, the Devil comes along, realizing that He's been out there in the desert and that He's hungry.

**Matthew 4:3,4**

"And when the tempter came to him, he said, `If (that's a strong word isn't it?) thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.'" Well, if he's hungry, what does the thought of bread do? It just sends those taste buds crazy. And so now he is to be tempted with this whole concept of satisfying his hunger. And so what does Jesus answer? Look in verse 4.

"But he answered and said, `It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'"

Now what's the lesson? In spite of our physical appetites, whatever they are, what do we have to temper them with? The spiritual things that are far more important. I've tried to stress, not only to my own kids, but to other people and myself and my wife, that we have to keep our priorities straight. So many people mean well, but they've got their priorities upside down. And when that happens you're headed for trouble. So now, Jesus is saying, "**Listen Satan, there is something more important than**
feeding the physical. The most important is to feed on the spiritual." Now in verse 
5 Satan doesn't give up. He comes back and takes Him up in the holy city and puts 
him on the pinnacle of the Temple with all of the Temple crowds down below. And 
remember the Temple pinnacle wasn't as high as some of our skyscrapers today, so it 
was no problem seeing someone up there on the pinnacle of the Temple. That was 
easily within eyesight.

**Matthew 4:5,6**

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on the pinnacle of the 
temple, And saith unto him, `If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is 
written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall 
bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.'"

We've already seen the first temptation, the lust of the flesh - hunger. The next one is 
the lust of the eye, whether ours or someone else's. In this case, it's someone else's, 
because what is Satan setting? A great showmanship event! I can just see him like a 
Madison Avenue advertiser. "Now look, If we could just send you sailing off the tip 
of this temple, and then at the last moment have angels just sweep down and pick you 
up and spare you from hitting the ground, look what it would do to that crowd of 
people! Can you imagine it." What a show that would have been. And old Satan says, 
"Just imagine, if you could do that, what we could do to those people down there on 
the Temple pavement." Let's see what Jesus said:

**Matthew 4:7**

"Jesus said unto him, `It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'"

He is saying, "I'm not going to do it. I don't care what you tempt me with." That's the 
second one and now comes the third one, which was the pride of life. Now I don't 
suppose anybody really can understand this next temptation except politicians, or 
maybe military commanders. Someone who can get to the place of controlling 
massive numbers of people. Power just literally grabs them. That is what true pride is 
all about - to get control over other people. That's why some of your notorious 
emperors have come, such as Napoleon, Stalin, Hitler, or whatever. They get so power 
hungry because they can control massive numbers of people. Now let's look what 
Satan does to Jesus.

**Matthew 4:8**

"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all 
the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;"
Jesus and Satan are both spiritual. Even though Christ is here in the flesh, He's here in the spiritual. And so from the spiritual concept, Satan could let Jesus look all the way back to Nebuchadnezzar and maybe all the way back to David's great kingdom and could show him forward and all the great empires that would yet be coming down through human history. He says to Jesus, "Just think, if you'll fall down and worship me, you can have control over all these nations. They'll be bowing at your feet because they are yours." Quite a temptation wasn't it? But isn't it amazing, Satan must not have known, and I think there's a lot of things that Satan doesn't know, that one day these same nations will be under Christ's rule when He rules and reigns. And they're going to come as a result of His Sovereignty.

But you see, Satan is naive enough to offer them to Jesus if He would fall down and worship him. Now you see, the whole idea of all of this is to show you and I that Satan is doing the same thing to us. He is constantly bombarding us with desires of the flesh. He is constantly bombarding us with things that appeal to the eye. If he didn't, television would die overnight, because the only thing that keeps television going is the commercials. Now they are coming up with the infomercials. In fact, they are squeezing me off the air in a couple of places because these half hour infomercials can generate much more income than a little ministry like ours. But you see, it's appealing to people seeing these things and they say, "I want it!" And then the next great temptation is to get to the place of permanence and power over people whether it's a small or great number.

These are the three areas, as I've taught for 20 years, that every human being is faced with. Whether we are a believer or nonbeliever. That's beside the point. There are still the three categories of temptation. But what's our hope? Now come back to I Corinthians again. This is our hope, our comfort, that even though before the day is over I'm going to be confronted with something within these three areas and The Lord is going to show me that way of escape. Now we have to look for it. God isn't going to put that way of escape smack dab in front of us. Here again, we become people of choice. And when we're confronted with a temptation and we know it's about to get us, we look for that way of escape, because God has provided it for us.

_I Corinthians 10:14_

"Wherefore, (because of that ability to find a way of escape) my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

Now don't sit up and say, "Well, that doesn't appeal to us. We don't worship idols today." Oh no? You know, I imagine that most idols in America today sit in that little part of the house we call the garage, isn't that right? That automobile simply becomes their idol. I was showing somebody my cattle awhile back, and I'm proud of them, I
love them. And the guy says, "Hey, Les, they're not your idol are they?" Well, they could be! Absolutely they could be! And the same way with any of you, whatever it may be. It may be your garden, your kids, your grandkids, your business, your job. And so Paul's admonition is to look out and don't let something become your idol, but in everything put The Lord first and foremost. Let's look at verse 15. And in spite of the fact that these Corinthians were carnal, they still had a lot of problems living the Christian life, how does he approach them? As what kind of people? Wise men!

*I Corinthians 10:15*

"I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

Fair enough? And it's just as applicable to us today as it was to the Corinthians then. Now let's go on to verse 16, and again, the best way I can put this is that he shifts gears. One commentary I read said Paul doesn't write the book of Corinthians with a real continuity. I'm beginning to see it. All of a sudden he's talking about something and then boom! He's off on another thought. Well, the Holy Spirit is doing it for a purpose, I know. But here is a good example. Here he has just been talking about resisting temptations and fleeing from idolatry and all these things. Then all of a sudden in verse 16 he takes us to The Lord's communion table.

*I Corinthians 10:16*

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? (The Lord's table) The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Where is the first instance of presenting the cup, the wine, the grape juice, or whatever your particular church uses, and the broken bread? The Lord's upper room experience! And He said, "Take this cup and this is My blood which will be shed for you." He hadn't died yet so this was still future. You see, what I've always stressed to people when you look at those verses back there in the Four Gospels, is that even though Jesus did those two things, did He give any explanation? Did He institute it as something that somebody was supposed to do? No! It's just dropped like a hot potato. You don't see anything more of that cup and bread. Now, of course the first instance was way back when Abraham met Melchisedec, when it says they brought Melchisedec bread and wine. So you see, way back there we already had a picture of The Lord's table. But when Jesus talked about it in the Matthew account, He merely said:

*Matthew 26:28*
"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." He gave no explanation. There was no criteria for how to process it until here. Now Paul tells us what it's all about and how it is to be practiced in the local church.

I Corinthians 10:17

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

You remember in Jesus' earthly ministry and He told them that unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you cannot partake with me? What did many of His followers do? They about up-chucked and they left. They could not comprehend eating His flesh and drinking His blood. But you see, they were ignorant. That's not what Jesus was talking about it. He was talking about a spiritual communion of His shed blood and His broken body.