As we begin this new book, let me remind each true believer that we’re all laborers together for our Lord. We are part of what Paul calls in I Corinthians 3:9 "...God’s building..." As we study I know there are countless millions who are so hung up on tradition, and they based their very eternal destination on some of these traditions. Tradition is something that has been passed down from generation to generation, and many never bother to check the Scripture to see if these traditions are really true for the Body of Christ believer. I just thank the Lord that over half of the New Testament was written by Paul for the Body of Christ, who gives us can’t miss instruction for eternal life.

Last lesson we left off in Ephesians chapter 4. Today we’ll pick up with verse 12. Remember that in verse 11, Paul leaves the Church with evangelists, pastors and teachers as we discussed in the last lesson. These are specially gifted men that God is going to provide for the Christian community. I think it also ties in with I Corinthians chapter 13, the love chapter. It’s almost the same kind of scenario, only we shake out off the superfluous things and we end up with the three things that in the end will abide. And what are they?

I Corinthians 13:13

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, (or love) these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Those are the things that remain with us even today. These three words in Paul’s epistles just keep popping up. Now all three may not be together all the time, but watch for those words. Now coming back to where we were in Ephesians chapter 4, and we have much the same thing. So forth of the various gifts and so forth, that people make so much ado over even today, they’ve more or less just fallen by the way side, but three of them remain. These three are as absolute as anything can be even today, and what are they? Evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Those are the three main criteria for any local group of believers. Now verse 12, and what’s the purpose of these three?

Ephesians 4:12
"For the perfecting of the saints, (notice Paul said to perfect the saints, not the lost. and what’s the purpose again?) for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

You know I’m always stressing that I think too much of Church activity is geared in the wrong direction, not that it’s all that bad, but so much Church activity is supposedly directed to lost people. Oh we’ve got to save the lost, most Churches will say, and I’m also concerned about the lost, but the best way to reach lost people is not wait for that poor preacher, or Sunday school teacher to do it all, but every ordinary believer should be in the position to open the Scriptures to lost people, and that’s what I think Paul is referring to here. Now look at it again in that light. All evangelists, pastors, and teachers are given for what purpose?

Ephesians 4:12

"For the perfecting (or maturing) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" This is where all Paul’s effort is being directed to the to edifying the believer. Now verse 13.

Ephesians 4:13a

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,..."

Now those of you who hear me teach over a period of time, know that I’m always stressing that there’s no use trying to go out and witness to people if you don’t know what you’re witnessing about. You have to know the subject, and you need to be able to show the lost the correct Scripture so they can see with their own eyes. If you ask an auto mechanic, or some other person in a specialized field about their profession, they show how professional they are real quick with their knowledge of the subject. But if you asked them something that’s out of their field, they would clam up, because they don’t know. Well it’s almost that ridiculous when we try to send people out to witness to the lost, when they know nothing about the Word of God. So the whole purpose in Paul’s writings is to edify the believer, and now let’s look and see what the believer is supposed to do.

II Corinthians 5:18

"And all things are of God, who hath (past tense) reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us (the believer) the ministry of reconciliation; 19. To wit, (that is to say) that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not
imputing their trespasses (sins) unto them; (they’re forgiven) and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

In other words, we’re to tell a lost world that because of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, He has already reconciled them, but they have to believe that beautiful Gospel. And how are they to believe it?

Romans 10:14

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher (or proclaimers?) Paul tells us someone must present this Gospel to them. Now finishing our thought with verse 20 of II Corinthians chapter 5.

II Corinthians 5:20a

"Now then we (as ordinary everyday believers) are ambassadors for Christ,..."

Now what’s an ambassador? He’s a representative of his home country, but he’s living in foreign territory, and everything that he does is being viewed by the foreigners. Everything that he says is being analyzed by the people in the country which he is serving. Now folks that’s exactly where you and I are. We are in foreign territory whether we know it or not. Everyday that we live we see it more and more, I mean the opposition is rising against Christianity. We’re in foreign territory! Paul tells us as believers our homeland, and citizenship is in heaven, and we’re to be ambassadors.

Now let me ask you something, would any president in his right mind send somebody to Japan to be an ambassador from my background, for example. Would he just send an ordinary dirt farmer over there to represent this country? Why I wouldn’t know how to even begin a conversation. So before we send an ambassador to a foreign nation by an appointment, usually of the president, and the congress has to OK it, what do you expect that person to have in his background? Everything that prepared him to be an ambassador. You wouldn’t send anyone over there with no education or background, but isn’t that exactly what we do with most Christians? We send them out into that world of wolves with no background, they have no knowledge of the Scripture, and as soon as the scoffer hits them with something, they absolutely melt, they don’t know what to say or where to find it.

This is why we have to teach the Word, this is why God has left evangelists, pastors, and teachers. The believing community has to be prepared to go out into the world and win the lost. We’re to have a heart for lost people, of course we are. God has a
heart for lost people, but you see too often we put the cart up in front of the horse, and
we wonder why it doesn’t work. Now come back to Ephesians, and look at verse 14,
again. Now remember what the theme here is. These evangelists, pastors, and teachers
have been given to the local Christian community, whether it’s a local Church, or a
Bible study group.

In about 1937 a great Bible teacher saw then already the apostasy that was coming
into some of the more liberal denominations, and even at that time he could see the
day if the Lord tarries where the only true Biblical study and teaching would be in
small Bible studies. And here as we close out this century, we’re seeing it. I know
there are still some good Churches, I know there’s still some good pastors, but if you
could hear my phone calls, and read our letters, you would be aghast at what’s coming
out some of the pulpits of America. It’s absolutely unbelievable, and people are just
up against it. They always ask, what can we do, where can we go and hear the Word,
because we can’t find it. Well this is to be expected here in this day and age as we
near the end time.

We may get to the place where the organized Church has to go through something like
the Church that was in China had to go through before the communists took over.
Watchman Nee was one of the great Bible study teachers in China, and not that I
agree with him 100% on theology, but he had a tremendous ministry establishing
small Bible study groups in the great apartment complexes of China’s huge cities.
Well when the communists took over China, the first thing they did was lock the door
on the organized Church. The only thing left for the believer then, and kept the
Christian community alive, was those little cells of home Bible study. So I never want
anyone to say, "You’re putting down the local Church!" No I never put down the local
Church if they are true to the Word. But oh my goodness, when I hear some of the
stuff coming in I can see a lot of these Churches are not true to the Word. Now finally
let’s look at verse 14 again.

Ephesians 4:14a

"That we henceforth (from the time that God has given us these gifted men who have
now been teaching us, that from henceforth we) be no more children, tossed to and
fro,..."

Now you know when I see a particular word in Scripture. I always think of 4 or 5
verses that will fit. Let’s look at one of them. Go back to I Peter chapter 2 for a
moment... Here in I Peter, this is almost the same kind of language we’re going to see
in Ephesians in a moment or two.

I Peter 2:1-2
Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

Now you see that’s exactly how every new believer has to begin. It makes no difference whether we’re 90 or 9 that’s beside the point, because the moment we’re saved we’re a babe in Christ, and we have to start with the milk of the Word. But looking at that verse again, Peter doesn’t say that’s where a new believer is supposed to stay. They are to desire the sincere milk of the Word with the idea of growing and getting beyond it.

The other verse that comes to mind is in I Corinthians chapter 3, and again we’re going to see babes mentioned but in a different light. Paul is telling these Corinthians that they have been believers long enough that they should be off the milk bottle, and should be partaking of the deeper things of Scripture, but they weren’t.

I Corinthians 3:1-3

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, (sometimes carnal can mean the unbeliever, but here it’s referring to the believer who is just simply immature) even as unto babes in Christ. (they had never gone beyond their infancy in their Christian experience) 2. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3. For ye are carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

Paul doesn’t say they weren’t believers, because they were, but they didn’t grow. Paul of course, was the master teacher, but nevertheless the problem was that these Corinthians believers did not grow up, but rather they stayed on the carnal level, and could never get to the place of partaking of the meat of the Word, or the strong things just like many Christians do today. Now back to Ephesians chapter 4. Paul reminds us that we’re not to stay as baby Christians.

Ephesians 4:14

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

Now you’ve heard me stress this word "deceive" over the last many years, and I’m going to keep on stressing it, until it’s all over. Because we’re being besieged with
deception like never before since Paul’s own day. And the Lord Himself warned about this.

Matthew 24:3-4

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? (remember in I Corinthians 1:22, Paul tells us the Jews required a sign) 4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you."

That’s one of the greatest signs that we’re nearing the end times. There is a flood of deception out there. There is a flood of people deceiving other people. Oh my goodness, when I hear of what’s out there on the internet, and how it’s just full of this deception. People call and write, and say, "What am I suppose to believe, as it all sounds good?" Well, I ask them if it lines up with the Scripture? And every time they answer No. So if anything doesn’t line up with Scripture, then forget it, and cast it aside, because it’s a deception, and we’re to be looking for it, and so aware of what the truth is that we can recognize the deception the minute it comes our way.

We should be so ingrained in the Word and Truth of God, that when we hear this garbage coming in from the other direction, we can immediately say, "Hey that’s garbage!" And there’s a lot of it out there. Now I never used that term, until I was down in a Haiti a few years back, and the fellow I was ministering with, who had a tremendous ministry down there said that exactly. He said, "Preachers and teachers bring in pure garbage to try to share with these people." But it’s no different here in our country. The air waves are full of it. So you just be aware, and anything you hear or read, just line it up with the Scriptures.

Now coming back to Ephesians chapter 4. So we’re not to remain as babes in Christ, because if we do remain that way, then the chances are good that babes in Christ, will be blown about with false doctrine. We are going to be subjected to deception, and so there’s only one remedy, and what is it? Grow up! Know what the Book says. This is the whole idea of the Book of Ephesians. We’re to get out of the simplistic areas of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John which was written primarily to the nation of Israel, and get into the deeper things written to the Church by Paul.

Paul’s letters are written for the Church Age believer and are deep. However the Books of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, and Thessalonians are about much deeper things than even what Paul’s other epistles are about. So we’re to get off the milk, and get into deep things so that when these deceptions come along, you won’t
be blown away by them. Now verse 15. Instead of being blown away with every wind of doctrine and the deception of ungodly men, as Jude calls them, we are to do the following.

_Ephesians 4:15_

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

Now I hope I’ve taught you well. Whenever you see the word "Truth" what is another word that you can put in place of it? Christ Himself! He is the Truth. Another word for the Truth is the Gospel found in I Corinthians 15:1-4. You know I’m beginning to see more and more people use those verses when they want to express the Gospel. Have you noticed it? So Truth, Christ, and Gospel are all three absolute Truth! So look at it that way in the text.

_Ephesians 4:15_

"But speaking the truth in love,..."

Not with the idea of causing a controversy, or argument, but rather in the spirit of love we are supposed to be sharing the Gospel with a lost world. We are to get so skilled with the Gospel and supporting Scriptures that when we get out into the work day world we’ll be able to share in a moment if the occasion arises.

I got a call from a gentlemen from Mississippi just before we left to come up here this morning. And he had been to the pharmacy to pick up a prescription, and had seen a young mother with a super hyperactive child who was taking a prescription for being hyperactive. The mother had told him the medication works, but leaves the child in depression. This gentlemen said he felt so bad because he didn’t have any advice for her. He said I couldn’t tell her to just turn it over to God, because here he is a believer and had his prescription in hand.

I said, "Did you share with her your knowledge of the Word and the power of prayer, and tell her that you would be passing out the prayer needs of that little fellow? Because I know that prayer works?" Jerry you know it works don’t you? My we’ve made many many prayer request across our classes in Oklahoma. Now I don’t believe in "healers" you know that, but I believe in the power of prayer. So we just need to learn to share with people how that God can meet our needs by simply making it an item of prayer, and we know that God can do it. Now He may not always answer the way we think He should, but He’s still a prayer-answering God. Now these are all the things that Paul is referring to here.
Ephesians 4:15a

"But speaking the truth in love,..."

Letting people know that Christ loves them, and that He died for them, and that He defeated all the powers of Satan and death when He arose from the dead.
Lesson One • Part II
Maturing in God’s Word - Ephesians 4:12-24

Now in our last lesson we were in verse 15, but didn’t get to finish the verse, so let’s look at it again as we start this lesson.

Ephesians 4:15a
"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up..."

Growing up is exactly what it says. We were talking previously about babes who had to start with the milk of the Word. But just like a child in ordinary physical life, you don’t want him to stay a three year old forever. Oh they’re sweet back there at three, but you still wouldn’t want them to stay there as a three year old, you want them to grow up. And it’s the same way spiritually, God intends that babes in Christ to begin this growth process and mature and grow up into Him, where we are totally dependent on Him, and what are the next three words in that verse?

Ephesians 4:15b
"...in all things,..."

Now you know most believers think that this is just for Sunday, but it isn’t. This is for seven days a week, this is for every circumstance of life. Our Christian experience is part and parcel of our everyday walk, whether it’s myself out in the boondocks in Southeastern Oklahoma, among the cattle, or whether it’s you in a big office full of computers, or whether you’re a professional person, that doesn’t make any difference. We are to be constantly growing up, in Christ, and let it permeate into every aspect of life, and we are to grow up into Him.

Ephesians 4:15b
"... which is the head, even Christ."

Again I must be careful that I don’t walk into a buzz saw of opposition, so I’m not going to set this in concrete. But have you ever realized that Paul never refers to us as sheep? Have you ever thought of that? Paul never refers to us believers as sheep or Christ as the shepherd. Now that wasn’t the case with the nation of Israel. Israel always had that analogy of the shepherd and His sheep. Psalm chapter 23, everyone knows that. Then you get into John’s gospel chapter 10, and what have you got? The good shepherd chapter.
But you see Paul never uses that terminology, and I think I can see why. **Instead Paul uses the analogy of Christ is the Head, and we’re the Body.** Now look at the difference between a shepherd and his sheep, and the head with all it’s central nervous system with the brain, and mind, and the body. What a difference! **That’s what I think Paul is trying to drive home to us, that we’re not just like a bunch of sheep, but rather we’re an intricate part of the Head who is in heaven.** That’s why God is just as anxious for us to get up there with Him, as we are to go. And I’m finding that believers today are getting more anxious all the time to get out of here. The world is going to say, "good riddance." But oh my, we’re anxious to get out of here, and He’s anxious for us to come.

Remember I pointed that out back in Ephesians chapter 1, that we are the *complement* which is the same word that was used back in Genesis when God brought Eve to Adam. She was to be his complement. In other words Adam was never complete until Eve was at his side. **Well the Bible gives the same inclination of Christ toward us, the Body, that He doesn’t even consider Himself complete until He has the complement in His presence, so everything is moving in that direction.**

_Ephesians 4:15b_

"...which is the head, even Christ:"

Let’s look at a few references then, of the Head. It’s a term that Paul and only Paul uses over and over, that we are the Body and He is the head. Of course the first one I trust most of you already know is found in I Corinthians chapter 12. We could look at so many references in this chapter because everything from verse 12 to the end of the chapter speaks of this analogy. The Body of Christ, the True Gentile Body, The True Church is only a Pauline doctrine. **No other portion of Scripture, - the four gospels, the Old Testament, the Book of Acts, Revelations,- none of it speak of the Body of Christ, and there’s a reason for that.**

_I Corinthian 12:12_

"*For as the body* (this human body) *is one, and hath many members,* (fingers, hands, toes, eyes, ears, and so forth) *and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*" (Or the implication is, the Body of Christ)

The Body of Christ is not just one person, the Body of Christ is not just one great evangelist, or some great Bible scholar, but rather the Body of Christ is every believer from the greatest to the least of all believers since Paul’s conversion, and we all function as one. Now verse 13, a verse we look at so often because it’s one of the most important verses in the Bible as it explains the only baptism that really counts.
I Corinthians 12:13

"For by one (Holy) Spirit, are we all baptized into one body,"

Not just those who have had a special revelation or seemingly are more elite in their faith than the rest of us, but rather every believer regardless of our station in life, or our station in our Spiritual maturity, we have all been baptized into this Body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13b-14

"...whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14. For the body is not one member, but many."

Now we won’t take time to read the rest of those verses, but I would like you to come on down to verse 27. This is the capstone of it all.

I Corinthians 12:27

"Now ye (as he writes to us) are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

In other words, the Body of Christ is a big Body we have been baptized into by the Holy Spirit, but, does God lose sight of when that happens. No way! God is aware of each and every one of us as an individual. He knows us by name, even though we’re in the composite whole, and this is the beauty of it all. We function as one, we all have the same kind of salvation, we all have the same hope of glory, we all have all these blessings that are spiritual, and yet we do not lose our individuality as we’re still a distinct person. Let’s also look at the Body of Christ in Ephesians chapter 1. Remember the Book of Ephesians is a positional Book, God placed us in the Body and being a member of the Body of Christ is a positional thing.

Ephesians 1:22-23a

"And hath put all things under his (Christ) feet, and gave him, to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body,..."

See that’s the way you have to read that to complete the thought. Don’t stop with just verse 22, which says that He gave all things to the Church. No, He gave it to the Church which is His Body, and that makes a big difference. Because normally people think of the Church as any building on the corner, regardless what the handle may be, it’s still a Church, but that’s not the Church that Paul’s talking about. He’s talking about the Church which is His Body, which hopefully most of these Churches sitting
on the corner will have some of their people in the Body at least. Then look at another one over in chapter 2 of this same Book. Let’s begin at verse 14.

_Ephesians 2:14_

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one,..." Who are the both? Jew and Gentile in the Body of Christ. Now hold your hand here as another verse just comes to mind in the Book of Romans, and this is what got Paul in trouble with his own Jewish people.

_Romans 3:9a_

"What then? are we better than they? (Jews) better than they? (Gentiles)

Now back before Paul came along, what would the answer have been? Absolutely! Because beginning with Israel’s experience in Egypt, what did God tell the Jews? I have put a division between you and the Egyptians, and never again will you be like the rest of the world around you. So they went through those 1500 years with that mentality, that they were a favored people, and they were. Don’t ever take that away from them, but now with Paul and the Age of Grace, they’ve lost that place of privilege, and now Paul can say, "there is no difference." Now read on.

_Romans 3:9_

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;"

In fact I put this way to one of my classes here in Oklahoma the other night. "Have you ever wondered why God, in the whole scheme of things, put the nation of Israel in that place of privilege? Well I think I’ve got the answer. To show that after 2000 years, beginning with Abraham, the Jews were in that place of privilege, they were under the covenant promises, and God dealt with them in miraculous ways. The Messiah came and walked in the midst of them. But after everything was said and done, were they any better than the pagan Gentiles around them? No. And that was the proof of the pudding. Even those that had all these special things going for them, in the final analysis, their old Adam was just as corrupt as ours is. Now that should tell us something shouldn’t it? We’re all the sons of Adam. Now come across the page in chapter 3 and let’s look at verse 21 and 22.

_Romans 3:21_
"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, (put in the spotlight.) being witnessed by the law and the prophets:"

I used the verse in a lesson or two back, how much Scripture is profitable? All! All Scripture is profitable. That takes you back to Genesis 1:1 and to the very last verse in Revelation chapter 22. It’s all profitable. So everything that I teach from Paul is not to be just lifted out and throw the rest of Scripture away, because it all rests on that which went before. So this is what Paul is now saying.

Romans 3:21b-22

"...being witnessed by the law and the prophets: 22. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:"

Don’t you love the way the verse ends? Boy I do! There is no difference now. The Jew with all his historical background doesn’t stand on any higher ground with God today than you or I do, because there is no difference. In today’s sports language we would say, "God has leveled the playing field." Isn’t that right? He leveled the playing field and we all end up as sinners because we were born of Adam. Now I haven’t had that on the board for a long time. I put it up there months and months ago - "We are not sinner because we sin, but rather we sin because we’re sinners" Now that levels the playing field. You and I can’t look down our nose at the poor alcoholic, and say, "Well if you would live like I live you wouldn’t have that trouble." No! That person is not a sinner because he’s an alcoholic, he has become an alcoholic because he has that old sin nature from Adam.

Everyone of us are on the same level area when God finds us in our sins, because we’re all children of Adam, and a lot of people don’t understand that. They think that some people are just naturally good enough that they’re going to make it, because they were never sinners. Hey I got news for them, the Bible makes it so plain that we’re all sinners until we’re saved. We normally like to put the whole human race into two categories. "Jews and Gentiles," but actually there’s three, and what are they? The Jew, the Gentile, and members of the Body of Christ. Those are the three classes of people on the earth today. Always remember as soon as we become a member of the Body of Christ we lose our ID so far as Jew and Gentile, because we’re all one in the Body, but outside the Body they still have their distinctiveness.

But oh listen, Paul says that when it comes to the matter of spiritual, and salvation, there is no difference. Now do you see why the Jew plagued Paul every step of the way? Hey they didn’t like that, and I can understand it. I mean, they were in that place of privilege, and then to all of a sudden have one little Jew pull that out
from under them. So they fought against that teaching tooth and toenail, and were always causing Paul most of his problems. Now let’s come back to Ephesians chapter 4.

_Ephesians 4:16a_

"*From whom* (that is from Christ who is the Head) the whole body fitly joined together and compacted..."

Like knitting the Body together. I’m sure you’ve seen these ladies who could really knit, in fact the last time we went to Israel, Charlotte from Indiana would be talking a mile a minute, but oh those needles would be going like crazy without missing a beat. Well what was her finished product? Something that was intricately woven together. Well that’s what God has been doing with you and I non-stop for the last 1900 + years. He’s been intricately weaving us into the Body of Christ. Now that’s quite a position isn’t it? Now reading on in verse 16.

_Ephesians 4:16b_

"...by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,...""

Now again, every part of our body has a unique function. As we get older the old arthritis begins to kick in. Those old joints begins to stiffen up, and I’ve told Iris that only if these old joints had a grease fitting so I could lubricate them. If I could just pump in a shot of grease, and just smooth everything out they would feel so much better. And under normal circumstances that is the function of the joints, and that’s the way the body functions.

Do you ever take for granted your tears? How long would your eyes last if there were no tears? Why, they’d get dry as powder, and you’d be out of luck, but what’s the purpose of these parts? To make everything in the body function. Well God does the same thing with you and I in the Body of Christ, we all have a unique function. A lot of people don’t realize that, and it can be in a million different little ways. Some can do it by prayer for others, some can do it by writing little notes of encouragement to others, some of you can exhort people to encourage them, to move on, and you could just go on and on. Those are all things that make the Body function, and we’re all part of that. Now reading on in verse 16.

_Ephesians 4:16b_
"... that which every joint supplieth, (and that’s the reference he’s making. Every part of our body function, the things that make it work are there, and it’s all) according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,..."

Now reading this casual like, this may get kind of boring, but don’t read it casually. Read it like we are now, that this is the impact of it. All the parts of the Body of Christ are functioning for it’s unique purpose.

_Ephesians 4:16b_

"...maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Now I don’t know, I hope I’m not twisting this out of context, but what do you suppose Paul is referring here to when he says, "increasing the body?" Well I personally think it’s soul winning. This is what He wants us to do. We are to be a testimony of God’s Grace, we are to being showing forth a product that the lost world should want, and we are to be reproducing. In fact let’s come back for a moment to Romans chapter 7. I suppose some people set out there, and say, "Some day that guy’s is going to want to find a verse and can’t find it." And I worry about that myself, but I think the Lord usually provides.

_Romans 7:4_

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, (that is to Christ) even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

In the original scheme of things, what was the purpose of marriage? Children. Now look at this verse, what is the true purpose of our being married to Christ? Offspring. "That we should bring forth fruit unto God." What’s the fruit? Lost people that we can win, and by doing that we cause the Body of Christ to grow. Those of us who are hoping for the Lord to come, I’ve always stressed, _how can we hasten the Lord’s coming? Soul winning! As soon as the Body of Christ is complete, whenever that is, it’s going to go home!_ So let’s get out and don’t miss a chance to witness, and win the lost, and fill up the Body of Christ. In fact another verse comes to mind to finish that thought. "Have I got time Sharon?" 30 seconds? That’s a long time in an NBA game so let’s try it. Romans 11:25

_Romans 11:25b_

"...that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."
The fulness of the Gentiles has not happened yet, but as soon as that last person is saved in this Church age, then that prophecy will also be complete.
Lesson One • Part III

Maturing in God’s Word - Ephesians 4:12-24

Now we’ll jump right back to where we left off in Ephesians chapter 4, and we’ll begin with verse 17. I’d like to mention the fact that we have two couples from Indiana with us today, we have the Roebkes and the Simpsons, and they didn’t know each other before they got to Tulsa. So hopefully they’ve made some new friends for down the road. We’ve also had folk in from other states over the years, and always feel free to join us when you can. Now back to our study.

Ephesians 4:17a

"This I say therefore, (and remember when Paul says therefore, he’s referring back to what he’s just covered.) and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth..."

Once we’ve come into the Body of Christ, we’re different, we’re totally different. Now, not that we’re to be odd balls. Oh it just gripes me when some Christians are just odd balls, that’s not what God wants. God doesn’t want somebody that the world would say, "If that’s being a Christian, then I’m glad I’m not one." The world should be able to look at us, and say, "I wish I had what they’ve got. I wish I had their joy and happiness, and their outlook on life." Always remember, when you come into certain positions, the world out there expects somebody to be worthy of that position, that’s just a given. Well it’s the same way here, when we come into our position as a member of the Body of Christ, it becomes a given that we’re to be different. And look what Paul says.

Ephesians 4:17b

"...walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." Now that word *walk* is a unique Pauline term. We saw that in chapter 2, and Paul is always referring to *walk*, and here it’s almost the same kind of description, but in a different setting.

Ephesians 2:2a

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world,..."

Now what does Paul mean by that? Their everyday life’s experience before believing the Gospel, and the course they *walked*. Now coming back to chapter 4, and verse 17 our *walk* now is as a member of the Body of Christ. Paul tells us not to *walk* as those pagan Gentiles do. Now when I’m studying Scripture I try to remember the
circumstances in which Paul lived and wrote. I guess it was never so graphically brought home to us as it was a couple of years ago when Iris and I visited Pompeii, some of you have probably been there. When you saw the proof of that corrupt city, the ungodliness and the wickedness that was evident even in the ruins.

So what must it have been like in it’s hay day? But that was the kind of a city into which Paul walked. He didn’t have the convenience of evangelists today. Most of them have help with all kind of publicity, they have the counselors ready, prayer warriors in place, but all Paul had was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul would come in pretty much alone into these pagan cities. Sometimes he’d have a companion such as Luke or Timothy, but he had the Gospel, and he proclaimed it.. He would bring these people out of that abject, pagan, immoral, lifestyle.

You know I feel so sorry for our young parents trying to raise kids in this culture of today, where they’re bombarded with these same kind of things as an incitement. And it was terrible in Paul’s day. Look what he says.

Ephesians 4:17

"This I say therefore, and testify in the lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." In other words, they had no comprehension of what God expects. They just lived according to the appetites of the flesh. Now verse 18, and in this verse is the other Gentiles that Paul is referring to.

Ephesians 4:18

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

Now immediately two verses just pop into my mind. The thought here is having their understanding darkened. So let’s go back to John’s gospel chapter 3

John 3:19

"And this is the condemnation, that light (reference to Jesus of Nazareth) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, (why?) because their deeds were evil."

They lived in the gutter. Oh they may have lived sumptuously, and there again Pompeii shows that. Some of the ruins of those beautiful homes, they must have been mansions, and yet as you went down the street there was evidence of the immorality, and corruption everywhere you went. So when we look at what’s going on in
America, and the Western world today, don’t think for a moment that this is the first time anything like this has happened. It’s always been this way, we’re just doing it in a grander scale I guess now. I remember telling my Sunday school class way back in the 1960’s when the favorite cliche at that time was, "the new morality." Do you remember that? It was the so called sexual licenses, and I use to tell my kids, "Hey wake up, there nothing new about that, it’s the same old immorality that has plagued the human race from day one." Now it’s the same way here in this verse.

John 3:19b-20

"...and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (look at the next verse) 20. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Now where did his lifestyle of evil deeds come from? Adam! All those evil deeds came from the fall of mankind, and evil has been with generation after generation since then. Now before we go to II Corinthians for a moment, first let’s come back to Ephesians chapter 4, and look at verse 18 again. I hope I’m not preaching to you, but rather teaching you.

Ephesians 4:18

"Having their understanding darkened (they loved walking in the dark, because their deeds were evil. But now what’s the next word in that verse?) alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Now for this we must go to II Corinthians chapter 4. Where do they get such stringent blindness that they can’t even see through it and recognize the light? Where does it come from? Well of course it originated from Adam, but who picked up the dominion of everything when Adam dropped it. Satan did. Now if you don’t think some of our Churches are in trouble, one of my class people told me a while back that one of their pastors was holding a Bible study, and that individual said, "he didn’t believe in Satan." Well no wonder we’re in trouble. If you can put Satan out of the picture, then he’s home free isn’t he? If you’re not going to recognize him, he has free reign. But oh the Scripture does recognize him.

II Corinthians 4:3-4

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (if they’re lost they’re in darkness. If they’re in darkness, they’re blind, and it’s just a vicious circle) 4. In whom (these that are lost) the god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of
them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Do you see how one feeds on the other. If you can keep people blind, they can’t see the light. If you can keep them from seeing the light, they’re going to stay blind, and the end will never meet, until the Lord moves in of course, and breaks this chain of blindness that is a blinder on the minds and hearts of lost people.

Now I’m going to read the next verse also. I’ve never had it happen, but I’ve been waiting for the time that some one will say, "Well Les, you make too much of the apostle Paul."

II Corinthians 4:5

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake."

So always remember that when I’m constantly emphasizing Paul’s apostleship it is only because Paul gives us the true view of the finished work of the cross, you don’t get it anywhere else. This is why I spend as much time as I do in the Pauline epistles. Now this coming Saturday, I’m going to have a whole day seminar in Minnesota, and I’m sure they would like for me to spend the whole day in the Book Revelations, and prophecy. And I like to teach prophecy, but listen, by the time prophecy is being fulfilled, hopefully we’re out of here if you’re a believer. So why should I spend all that time in something that I’m not even going to be here to witness.

I’m going to teach in Paul’s epistles, because this is where we needed it in the here and now. This is what we have to know today, this is what we have to know to tell people how to get ready so they won’t be here for the Book of Revelation. I tell you what, I sure don’t won’t to be here for that. I know the world scoffs at the Book of Revelation, because they can’t imagine that these things are going to happen, but they are. I’ve been teaching the Book of Exodus in one of my classes in Oklahoma, and all the plagues that happened there. People don’t scoff at that because there’s enough valid proof that those plagues happened, but I say, if you can believe the plagues in Egypt, you’d better believe the plagues in Revelation, because one is tied to the other.

We’re just going to keep teaching what Paul teaches because he is going to be constantly pointing us to the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord. Now back to Ephesians chapter 4, verse 19, and Paul is speaking of these people who are in darkness. He’s speaking of these people who the god of this world is keeping blind.
Ephesians 4:19

"Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

Now I just read in a magazine recently where a young man out in Seattle just became a multi-millionaire overnight nearly, by putting a pornography page up on the internet. He’s just reaping in the money. Alright, what about a young man like that, does God love him? Absolutely! Is the Gospel available to him? Absolutely! But do you think it’s very likely that he’ll ever see it? No. I mean, he is so blinded no doubt, by the chains of Satan, and all he’s got on his mind is more, more, more money, and the things that greed precipitates, because it’s greed that drives this stuff.

All right so in verse 19 they have gone beyond the feeling that would respond to the Gospel, because they are saturated with this immoral lifestyle, these immoral thoughts, and what have you, and all they can think about is working that which is unclean for the sake of satisfying their greed. I had a gentlemen in our Tulsa class tell me several years ago, it was his opinion that the human race is motivated almost entirely by one word. "Greed!" And you know he was completely correct. Now I love the capitalistic system, I love this freedom and all that, but you take greed out of it, and how long would it last? Oh it would die overnight, because it’s that constant push for more and more that keeps it going.

But that’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about those who are so saturated with the things of the this world especially the lower element as we’re seeing it take over our whole society tonight, and greed is the motivating power. Now verse 20.

Ephesians 4:20

"But ye have not so learned Christ;"

Speaking back to us as members of the Body. That’s not what we’ve learned Christ. We’re not in the Body of Christ to promote our greed. We’re not a Christian so we can have health and wealth, and my Bible doesn’t teach that. My goodness, you look back over the years of Christian history, How many millions suffered and died for their faith. They didn’t have health and wealth. Even today all around the world Christians are under tremendous persecution, we don’t hear much about it. There’s an organization up in Bartlesville, Oklahoma that puts out a monthly magazine, and they report on the persecution of Christians. It’s unreal the amount of persecution that’s going on against Christians right now as we speak today. There are places in almost every continent where they’re dying daily for their faith. These
Christians are not in it for greed, but rather they’re in it because they love the Word of Truth!

_Ephesians 4:21_

"If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:" (Now everybody knows that verse in John)

_John 14:6a_

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:..."

Of course He is, and again I come back to my use of the synonyms. Truth, Gospel, and Christ, all mean basically the same thing. If you know Christ you know the Gospel. If you know the Gospel you know Truth, and they just all fit together. So what Paul is saying here in verse 21 is, if you know the Gospel, if you’re a member of this Body of Christ, then you have Truth, and we have Truth that the world knows nothing of. Now in verse 22, Paul comes into a review of what he taught more explicitly in the Book of Romans.

_Ephesians 4:22a_

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation (manner of living) the old man,..."

Now the old man in Paul’s language is old Adam. The old Adam who is responsible for sin, it’s the old Adam who makes us sinners, and since the old Adam is functioning in a person, he’s constantly trying to satisfy that desire of the flesh in one way or another. But the believer is instructed to put that lifestyle out of your everyday thinking, and actions.

_Ephesians 4:22b_

"...which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"

Now corrupt isn’t a pretty word is it? And I want you to know it’s not a pretty word. If any of you have ever done any gardening, especially if you put out a patch of potatoes. When you dig up those new potatoes after the growing season, and you’re going through that nice fresh turned dirt, and picking up those new potatoes, invariably you’re going to stick your finger into something that will just about turn your stomach inside out. And what is it? That old seed potato that is now rotten, that old potato which is now corrupt. Now that’s what I think of when I see the
word "corrupt." It’s something that is repulsive, something that just turns your stomach, and something that you just want to push out of your mind. **Now listen, I think in the eyes of God that I can safely say, this is what our old Adamic nature boils down to. It is corrupt in His eyes, and is something that just turns Him off.**

Now God loves us, don’t get me wrong, but the old Adam is corrupt, and vile. The word shows us how bad it was back before the flood in Genesis. In fact let’s go back there and look at it for a moment in chapter 6. This chapter is introducing the flood, and what brought it on, and see, God is still looking on that kind of a world. My word, when I consider, and read some of these articles of the filth, and the corruption that’s permeating the whole world tonight, I have to wonder, how long can God put up with it. Well it was the same way back here in Genesis, and there came a day when He didn’t put up with it any longer, nor is He going to again.

**Genesis 6:5-7**

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (does that ring a bell? Hey we’re there!) 6. And it repented (or made the Lord sorry) that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." Now you come on down to verse 11, and we’ll pick up with the word "corrupt."

**Genesis 6:11-12**

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh has corrupted his way upon the earth."

There you have the word corrupt three times in 2 verses, and you know by now when God repeats something 2 or 3 times in a short period, what’s He doing? Emphasizing. It’s emphasis that the world leading up to the flood was rotten to the core. But I believe their technology at that time was also exploding. Why do you think Lot chose Sodom, rather than the highlands of Israel? Oh because it was thriving, it had an economy, it probably had a stock market above 11,000. They had an abundance of food, and an abundance of idleness, which gives you the whole picture now of our own society. This is where we are, and what did the Lord Himself attach to it? "As it was in the days of Noah, as it was in the days of Sodom, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man." Hey, we’re close to that time again. I don’t put dates on
it, but the more you see our slide down morality, and our technology, we’re getting so close it almost scares me. And in our closing seconds let’s look at verse 13.

**Genesis 6:13**

"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence..." And when you have corruption, you have violence!
Lesson One • Part IV

Maturing in God’s Word - Ephesians 4:12-24

Now as we teach we hope we don’t preach at you, but rather just give you an appetite to search the Scriptures and to study them. We know, according to our mail, that there are many that are doing just that. Let’s come back to where we left off in the last lesson, and I didn’t quite finish with verse 22 so let’s pick that verse up again.

Ephesians 4:22

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation (manner of living) the old man, (old Adam) which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts;"

We looked at that word corrupt in the last lesson, and found that it is that which is in complete opposition to God, and includes, violence, immorality, and dishonesty, and all the stuff that makes up the world of wickedness all around us. I think once in a while since the media and world around us is constantly ridiculing the fact that, God doesn’t always put up with men’s foolishness forever, and there is a day of judgment coming, I’m going to take you back, before we go any further, to Genesis 15. God has always promised that people would be judged all the way up through Scripture.

It goes without saying that when Israel, God’s covenant people, would go down the tube as we put it today, God would judge. Foreign nations come in and overrun them, or give them a king that would tax them to death. Sometimes they would be enslaved, and their young sons would be put into the armies and so forth. But when Israel would finally cry and cry, then of course God would bring them back out of it, bring them up to a high plain. They would be on the correct path for awhile and then down they would go again when they became disobedient. So God would not hesitate to judge that little nation when they needed to be judged.

In fact we find in the Book of Judges, a 400 year period of Israel’s history is nothing but a roller coaster ride. Up they’d go and down they’d go. They would no sooner get into a period of prosperity, and obedience to the Law and God, when they would become sensuous, and materialistic, and then down they’d go again. So you can see that God doesn’t always wink at man’s wickedness and put up with it. The first evidence of this is found in Genesis 15, where God is promising Abraham that his offspring, the nation of Israel, would one day be going down into Egypt into slavery and captivity.

Genesis 15:13a
"And he (God) said unto Abram, know of a surety (when God says it, you can bet on it) that thy seed (or offspring) shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs,...” Here God doesn’t name Egypt, but we know now from our side of the coin, that’s who he’s talking about.

Genesis 15:13b-16

"...and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: (and we know God did judge Egypt) and afterward shall they (the children of Israel) come out with great substance. 15. And thou (Abraham) shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. (Abraham lived to be 175) 16. But in the fourth generation they (the children of Israel who had been down in Egypt all these years) shall come hither again: (back to their promised land in Canaan. And why did God wait all those years to bring them back to Canaan) for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

In other words, God’s going to give those Canaanite tribes, at least a couple of hundred years to clean up their act, which was possible even for a pagan if he wanted to. But did they clean up their act? No, they kept going deeper and deeper into the gross immoralities, and the things that had plagued the human race. They had gone so far down that when Joshua was ready to bring the children of Israel into the Promise Land, from the east side of the Jordan, what did God instruct them to do? Kill every Canaanite in the land. Makes no difference whether it’s a new born infant or a person of many, many years, put them to death. Why would God say that? Because they were corrupt.

And if you put something good in with something corrupt, the corrupt doesn’t become good, but rather the good becomes corrupt! So God says to Caleb, "You’ve got to cleanse the land of them." Well it was God’s judgment on their wickedness. So all the way up through their history there comes points of time periodically when God says, "I’ve had enough."

The great next event before God judged the Canaanites was God’s judgment on mankind with Noah’s flood, and after the flood we find God judged Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis chapter 19. So God’s judgment fell on those people also. And God’s going to judge the world again, because the Bible is just screaming, "There is a judgment coming." Now I’m not saying when, but we know according to Daniel, Luke, Matthew 24, and Revelation and other Books, that day is coming. In fact on our way back to our study in Ephesians let’s stop for a moment in the Book of Luke, chapter 21. You know once as we make these little detours, I think, I’ve got to hurry up and get through this chapter or that chapter, and then I stop and think, no, this is a Bible study, and as you know by now we’re not on a fast track, so we’ll just study as
we go. But there is something here in Luke chapter 21 that I want to point out to you. Here Jesus is speaking during His earthly ministry.

*Luke 21:20-22*

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed (or encircled) with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21. Then let them which are in Judea flee to mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter therein to. 22. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Now a lot of people get misled here in Luke, and think that this is the Battle of Armageddon, when Jerusalem will be compassed, but it is not. **This is the prophecy that Titus and the Roman Army in 70 AD will destroy Jerusalem**, and it was awful. My, Josephus gives an account of it that is just unbelievable. Over a million Jews were slaughtered, unmercifully, when Titus finally overran the city of Jerusalem. Also you want to remember the pagans had no mercy, and the Romans of course became more infuriated than ever because of the Jews stiff resistance. One of the things that raised the ire of the Roman soldiers so much was when they were trying to scale the walls, the Jews would pour hot boiling water over them. Well that was enough to infuriate anybody. **But this passage here all happened in 70 AD.** What confuses readers so much, is the language here is much the same as in Matthew 24 which is all Tribulation and end time events. Now verse 23.

*Luke 21:23*

"But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people."

What is the controversy with the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel at that time? They had rejected their Messiah, and crucified Him! And after all the pleading, and after all the miracles, that Christ performed in the midst of these Jewish people who were so blind to whom He was, what was their cry? Let His blood be upon our children, and our children’s children. They didn’t know what they were saying did they?

But, oh listen, the wrath of God finally came in 70 AD, and the final push to get rid of the Jews that were left in Jerusalem and that region was at Messoda, when the Romans found out there were still some 900 Jews left that were holding out against Rome, those soldiers spared nothing as they tried to scale the walls at Messoda. And, you know the story of Messoda When the Romans finally got up there most the Jews had all committed suicide. But nevertheless the Jews of 70 AD came under the wrath
of God, again because of their national sins of unbelief concerning their Messiah. Now here in verse 24 Jesus is still speaking.

*Luke 21:24a*

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations:..." (as a result of this invasion by the Roman army.)

Now I hadn’t intended to teach Luke chapter 21, but right here is the clue that this is not the final battle of Armageddon, which will trigger the Lord’s return, as we find in Matthew chapter 24. Here in Luke, Israel is going to be led away into a dispersion into all nations, and they were in 70 AD, and we know that they were scattered into every nation under heaven.

I think in the opening remarks of his book, "The Source", James Michener said he had found Jews in every sovereign nation on the face of the earth. So when God said He would scatter them into every nation, He was literal. That dispersion has lasted now for almost 2000 years, but that’s not the part of the verse that we’re really looking for, as it’s in the last part of the verse.

*Luke 21:24b*

"...and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until (we don’t know the date, but there’s coming a day, month and year when) the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Now what’s that speaking about? The Gentiles cup of iniquity. Just like God said back in Genesis chapter 15 that the cup of iniquity for the Canaanites, was not yet full, and would need another 200 years to fill it, so also the times of the Gentiles at the end time. By the time the Tribulation has run it’s course, their cup will also come to the full. Again we’re getting closer and closer as we see the wickedness circumventing the globe. You know I love America, and I still maintain as awful as our country is getting, we are still head and shoulders above the rest of the world when it comes to our morality, and our knowledge of God. But the time is coming when the cup of iniquity for the Gentiles world will be full.

Of course I always tie that statement in with Romans 11:25. I usually like to picture this as a simultaneous filling. Over on one side you have the filling of this cup of iniquity on behalf of the Gentiles, but over on the other side you have the filling up of the Body of Christ, the True Church (that’s us). These two sides are almost filling up together, the finished line for both is only seven years apart. Now let’s look at
Romans 11:25, and don’t forget what our Lord said in Luke chapter 21 that we just looked at.

**Luke 21:24b**

"...and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." In other words God will have to bring his wrath upon the Gentile world – now the other side of the coin we find here in Romans.

**Romans 11:25**

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (or this secret) lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; (and here it is) that (spiritual) blindness in part(just for a time) is happened to Israel, until (there will be a day, month, and year) the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (the Body of Christ completed)

Those are two totally different concepts. In Luke it’s the cup of iniquity of the Gentile world. The deeper they go into sin, the fuller they’re getting their cup of iniquity. Over here in Romans we have the filling of the Body of Christ. Now for the last 1900 + years, people have been coming into the Body of Christ, and it’s getting closer and closer to it’s completion. **These two concepts will almost work in union. Of course the cup of iniquity of the Gentiles will go 7 years beyond the filling of the Body of Christ. But over the big picture, time wise that’s not much difference, so what we’re seeing today is that the Body of Christ is nearly complete, the cup of iniquity of the Gentile world is also nearly complete.** Now go to Ephesians 4 verse 24.

**Ephesians 4:24**

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Not a facade, not a counterfeit, but the real thing. Now back to Romans chapter 6, and let’s start with verse 5, and remember Paul always writes to the believer, He never writes to an unbeliever, he expects us to contact them.

**Romans 6:5-6**

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6. Knowing this, that our old man (the old Adam, that old sin nature that we’re born with) is crucified with him, that the body of sin (that influence of the old Adamic nature) might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
Romans 6:8

"Now if we be dead with Christ, (by our faith) we believe that we shall also live with him:"

If we identify with His death, burial, and resurrection, by faith, then God identifies us in that same set of circumstances. We have been crucified in the old Adam, we have now been given a new nature, and as He arose from the dead, we also arose from the dead. As He paid the sin penalty on our debt, God sees us literally on the cross, in the person of Christ. He saw us in the tomb in the person of Christ, He sees us in resurrection power in the person of Christ, and we appropriate all that by faith. We can’t put it in a box, we can’t lay it on a table and analyze it, but rather we take it by faith, and just simply believe it. I think we’re getting through to a lot of people that this is where it’s at. You just simply believe it, because we can’t always understand it. We can’t comprehend it, but we can believe it if we know that God has said it, and it’s true. On our way back to Ephesians let’s stop at II Corinthians 5 for a moment.

II Corinthians 5:14

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:"

By virtue of Adam’s fall, every human is spiritually dead when he’s born into the human family. This is why we’re sinners, we’re born sinners, we’re the sons of Adam. So consequently Christ died for the whole human race, because the whole human race was spiritually dead, and needed salvation. Now verse 15.

II Corinthians 5:15

"And that he did for all, that they which live (the believers) should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (There the Gospel again.)

Paul just pops our salvation Gospel in there all the time. We are what we are because we believe that Christ died for us and rose again. Now verse 16.

II Corinthians 5:16

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."
Now my own idea of this verse is, that Paul is referring to Christ and His earthly ministry. Paul knew all about Jesus of Nazareth, my goodness they were about the same age, and he walked contemporary with Jesus. We have nothing in Scripture that they ever confronted each other face to face, but old Saul of Tarsus knew who Jesus of Nazareth was, and Jesus knew who Saul was. So Paul says, "yet now henceforth on this side of the death, burial, and resurrection, we don’t know Him as still in the flesh."

Now you see that’s where most of Christendom is tonight. They’re still over there in Jesus’s earthly ministry, in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John on the other side of the cross. Now don’t get me wrong, there’s nothing wrong with studying His earthly ministry, but there’s no salvation in that. You don’t get saved by believing that Jesus ministered to the Pharisees. Many preachers and teachers spend most of their time there, how Jesus dealt with the Pharisee, and of course it’s commendable, and it’s something that we can learn, but it’s not where our salvation is found.

Our salvation is found in Paul’s writings on this side of the cross. Our salvation was one of the mysteries that was given to the apostle Paul for the Body of Christ. And that’s what Paul is saying here in this verse. "Since we’re on this side, I’m not going to be hanging on to Jesus and His ministry on that side of the cross." There are many preachers and teachers that don’t want to face up to His shed blood, don’t want to face up to His resurrection, but they’d much rather talk about Jesus walking on the water. I think most of them know nothing of the Jesus who died for their sins, was buried, and rose again, because if they did that would be their message.

But nevertheless this is what Paul is driving home, "Henceforth since His death, burial and resurrection we don’t spend all our time back there in His earthly ministry, and that’s exactly what he says in verse 16.

II Corinthians 5:16

"Wherefore henceforth know we know man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Is she kidding? We only have one minute left? Let’s read verse 17, that’s the verse I brought you here in the first place.

II Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: (creation) old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
Only God can create, and salvation is that miracle working power of the Creator Himself, and that’s why you can’t do it with good works, or Church membership. It has to be that creative work of the Creator Himself, who now declares us a member of the Body, a Child of God, one who has believed the Gospel.
Lesson Two • Part I

The Walk of the Believer - Ephesians 4:25–5:6

We’re finding that by the work of the Holy Spirit we’re getting people into the Book, and that’s one our main purposes. It’s so thrilling when people write or call and say that "for the first time they are studying their Bible and are understanding it." And of course the secret to accomplish that is to separate what Paul has shared with us concerning the Body of Christ. From Genesis chapter 12 to the end of Revelations you have basically God dealing with the nation of Israel. However right in the middle of the New Testament there are the Books written by Paul to us Gentiles in this day of Grace. So when you discover that secret, then the Bible will come alive, and you’ll be able to understand what is required for eternal life, and how to live the Christian life after salvation!

Now for starters today let’s begin where we left off in the last lesson and that would be Ephesians chapter 4, and verse 25. In the verses we have just studied, Paul has reminded us that as a result of our salvation, by believing the Gospel as found in I Corinthians 15:1-4, we have a new creation living within us which overcomes that old sin nature. When that happens then the new nature and the old nature are always battling each other, and it behooves us to feed the new nature with the things of the Spirit, because the old nature feeds on the things of the flesh.

We had that illustration as a beautiful picture when Noah first let the raven out of the ark, and it didn’t come back because it could feed on the old creation. But when Noah let the dove out, which is a picture of new life, the spirit life, the dove couldn’t feed on the old creation, and so it came back to the ark. Then I believe it was seven days later he let the dove out again, and it came back with an olive leaf which showed new life. Well it’s the same way today, once we become a believer we don’t feed on the old life we just came out of, but rather we feed on the things of the Spirit that enhance the new life.

Now I’ve been debating all the way up Tulsa whether I should do this or not, but I think in light of the fact that we have so many people constantly calling and writing, "Well what about all this trouble in Kosovo with regard to prophecy?" And the first thing I tell them is that we are not living in the time of prophecy being fulfilled, because that won’t happen until the last 7 years of Tribulation begins. But we are living in days where the end times are certainly coming to pass, not in fulfillment of prophecy, but to set the stage for prophecy which I feel will begin when the anti-Christ signs that 7 year treaty in the Middle East. Always remember that my definition of prophecy is when things are foretold within a time frame. So the
Church Age is not in a time frame, therefore no body knows when it will end, so consequently it’s not an area of true prophecy. But certainly things are happening that are setting the stage for when prophecy will kick in, and as I said, that begins when the anti-Christ signs his 7 year treaty.

I just read a couple of interesting things about the European situation. A gentlemen sent me an article from the news magazine call "Europe" which is strictly a magazine to report the events in Europe, and out of that I picked up something that I had totally missed, and if I missed it I feel a lot of other people also missed it. Beginning in the late 50’s and through the 60’s and 70’s, we had those original 10 nations of western Europe which for the longest time, the world referred to as the "Ten," then later on they became the common market, and European union, but the connotation was that it was the "Ten."

So when I taught end time events of prophecy in this *Through the Bible* study a few years back I naturally referred to the "Ten" then as what I thought was the revived Roman Empire. It fits so beautifully with Daniel and Revelation that I was very comfortable with that, and then all of a sudden the "Ten" expanded to eleven and twelve, thirteen, and fourteen. I just explained to my classes, well maybe it will go on up to fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen, but by the time the anti-Christ is ready appear on the scene, it’ll drop back to "Ten."

Well now I learn from this magazine "Europe" that there are two separate organizations in western Europe. One of them is the original "Ten." And for our television audience, I’ll put it on the board, the "Ten" ever since the 60’s is equal to the western European union, it is now referred to now as the W.E.U., but it’s still the "Ten." But the organization we’ve been hearing the most about lately is the European union without the Western on it. But within that European Union are the original "Ten," but it’s now up to nineteen nations. So I’m still on solid ground because the "Ten" are still intact, they are a separate organization from these nineteen nations, and so they can still be the revived Roman empire out of which the anti-Christ will come.

Well when we left Indiana last Sunday, somebody had given me the Sunday edition of the New York Times, and one of the front page articles was that the "Ten" was frantically getting their own military established so that the next time something comes up they won’t have to depend on the American military for their power. As I read that I couldn’t believe my eyes. So they have already set a time table to have a real Czar, a real chairman of the board who by sometime in the year 2000 will be in total control of their military, their security, and they hope to have as strong a military force as we now have with the United States involved as well. They want to be able to do what we’ve done in consort, they want to be able to do it themselves. So that just
tells me again that we’re getting so close to the time that out of that "Ten" nation complex which will be the real revived Roman empire, out of it will come then the anti-Christ.

So these are just little interesting items of tidbits and all I wanted to bring out of that is, Kosovo in itself, I don’t think, has a real implication on all this, but indirectly now, because of the Kosovo deal the western European union suddenly realized that they are inept militarily for such another fracas, so they’re going to have to really speed things up and get ready in case something else comes along and not have to depend on America. Always remember, there’s going to be three major areas of military power by the time we get to the Tribulation. That will be Western Europe, China, and Africa. I feel that Russia and the United States will somehow meet their demise and will no longer be a factor in the events of the Tribulation period.

Well that’s just something for you to chew on, but don’t worry about it, because as Church Age believers we won’t be here for any of the Tribulation. It’s so much more important to know what God wants us to know today, and how to live a full life. That’s another reason I spend so much time in Paul’s epistles, in which there is no prophecy, so we just continue to teach that which people need today. I’ll let the prophecy people take care of what’s going to happen after we’re gone. Now some of these things are appropriate because it tells us how close we are to the sudden coming of the anti-Christ, before which I feel we have to leave.

Now I suppose that takes care of half of this lesson, and so in the time we have left let’s pick up where we got to in the last lesson, and that would be in Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 25. Now I guess for a little quick review go all the way back to verse 12, where Paul has told us that God is leaving with the Church Age, three different kinds of men to carry on the work of the Body of Christ, and that was up there in verse 11 of this same chapter.

Ephesians 4"11b

"...and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;" Then the next verse told us the purpose for them being given.

Ephesians 4:12

"For the perfecting (or the maturing) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

Now I think I made the point when we taught those verses that there was no mention there concerning the lost. Was it that Paul wasn’t concerned about the lost? No, not at
all. **But when the Body of Christ is matured and edified they’re going to win the lost, and that’s the whole concept then of Paul’s teaching.** If we can prepare the members of the Body of Christ, and make them skilled in the use of Scriptures, we’re going to accomplish more on a one on one basis than any huge evangelistic rally could ever hope to do. I’m also hoping that people will just simply talk to their loved ones, their people at work, their neighbors and be prepared to share the Scriptures one on one, because people are hungry. But they don’t want to be approached by somebody that doesn’t know what they’re talking about, and that’s understandable, I wouldn’t either. I wouldn’t want to waste my time with someone who was trying to tell me about something, when I know he didn’t know anything about that subject. But if somebody approaches me with whatever subject it is, and he’s skilled at it, hey, I’ll listen and I think you would also.

Well it’s the same way with this Book, we’ve got to be skilled, and be ready as Paul says in another place, to share these things with those who ask, "**why we have such hope.**" So all the way through these intervening verses then he is preparing us for this out reach to those who have never yet understood. Now coming back to our text in verse 24 & 25.

**Ephesians 4:24**

"**And that ye put on the new man,** (that new creation that happens the moment we’re saved) **which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**"

And since we now as believers have that new nature, what’s the next word? "**Wherefore...**" That means we’re going to be different than the world around us. Like I said in the last lesson, not oddball different, not peculiar, where the world says, "Oh I wouldn’t want to be like them, they’re a bunch of kooks." That’s not what God wants. But Paul’s converts, even in the midst of those idolatrous cities, weren’t something that made fools of themselves, but rather they were the kind of people that made such an impact on their pagan friends and relatives that this is the reason it turned the Roman Empire upside down. Now you know that would have never happened if those new believers would have acted so kooky and queer. But you see these believers knew what they believed, and what God had done for them, and of course that’s where we’re to be even today. Now verse 25. Because of what God has done in our lives we are to do the following.

**Ephesians 4:25**

"**Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another.**"
Now I had a bell rung when I read this verse, and said to myself, I’ve seen this before. As you know I spend quite a bit of time also in the Old Testament, and sure enough there is a verse in the Old Testament under Law that almost says the same thing. So even though we’re not under Law, yet many of the attributes of the Law are still applicable. Turn back with me to the Book of Zechariah chapter 8 and verse 16. And remember Zechariah is almost entirely prophecy, and yet as Zechariah wrote to the Jewish people, he says almost the same thing that Paul says to us.

*Zechariah 8:16*

"These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour;..."

Isn’t that something? That’s under the Law granted, but now flip back to where we were in Ephesians and what does Paul say? Almost the same thing, and we’re not under Law, but Grace, but the same God. That’s what I always try to stress, when I say, we’re not under Law but Grace. Yes all the things that God hated in the lives of Israel, He still hates to day. God hasn’t changed His mind about these things, but we’re under a different set of circumstances. Now Paul the apostle of Grace can tell us the same thing, but it isn’t under the heavy hand of the Law, but rather it’s under the freedom of Grace.

*Ephesians 4:25*

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."

And now then in everyday experiences especially in the household of faith we are constantly to be truthful with one another because after all we’re all in this together, we’re all in the same Body, and Building. Now verse 26.

*Ephesians 4:26a*

"Be ye angry, (that’s one of the human parts of our nature, and we’re going to get angry occasionally, but we don’t have to lose control of our anger. So the admonition is) to be angry, and sin not...."

Don’t let it become something of your nature that is uncontrollable. I personally don’t think that a believer can have uncontrollable temper tantrums. Now we can all get angry, but we certainly can and should control it. So if there’s something that basically wrong with a person, then I have to wonder if God had done a work of redemption. We have this certain amount of freedom that we can be upset by things,
but not to the place that it become sinful. or that it has an effect on our family and loved ones, and co-workers. And for goodness sake, if you want to keep your health then don’t take it to bed with you.

Ephesians 4:26b

"...let not the sun go down upon your wrath;"

There’s nothing that will ruin your health quicker than to have these bugs literally churn in your stomach with anger. You can get mean ulcers for being upset often. So always remember it’s ok to be angry, but don’t let it control your life, and don’t go to bed angry. Now verse 27, and if we don’t finish it in this lesson, then we will in the next. And as you look at this verse you might say, "Well there’s nothing there." But I tell you there’s a lot there. Se we’re to avoid lying and uncontrolled anger.

Ephesians 4:27

"Neither give place to the devil."

In general terms how much print does Paul give to Satan? Very little. He’ll just make a statement about Satan here and there, and we’re going to look at a couple of them here in a bit. Turn with me to II Corinthians chapter 4, verse 3. Now these aren’t the only two instances, but this is the way it usually pops up. The reason I want to take time to do this is because we see so much lately of where the so called Christian community is being admonished to war against Satan. We have to fight against Satan, we have to do things against Satan, but Paul doesn’t teach that. Paul recognizes his power, but he doesn’t spend long verses at a time telling us how to fight a war against Satan.

Now we’ll see this a little bit in Ephesians chapter 6, but all he does is let’s us know that he’s there. Paul’s emphasis is not Satan, but rather is the Christ of glory. And when Christ rules our life, and when He’s in control, Satan can’t touch us, and we don’t have to worry all that much about fighting against Satan if we center on Christ and His work of the cross. And I think for this reason Paul doesn’t give a lot of ink to Satan.

II Corinthians 4:3-4

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4. In whom (the lost of this world) the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
Now for goodness sakes who’s the god of this world? Well Satan is. See how subtle Paul puts this in here? He could have just came right out and said, "Satan had done it." But he doesn’t, but rather he gives him another term, "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." Now still in II Corinthians, turn over to chapter 11.

II Corinthians 11:13-14

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14. And no marvel; (don’t let this surprise you) for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

Do you see that? Oh he’s the god of this world back here in the earlier verses, and keeps people blind from the truth, but many times he blinds people with his light. And it’s a counterfeit light, and people are so gullible and will say, "Oh that must be the work of the Spirit." But you see it isn’t. but rather it’s the work of the evil spirit, it’s the work of Satan the counterfeit, the impostor, the deceitful individual. So keep these things in mind, "for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." Now look at verse 15.

II Corinthians 11:15a

"Therefore (since Satan can do this, and we know he does) it is no great thing if his ministers also (human being that he’s using) be transformed as the ministers of righteousness;..."

That’s what they try to tell people that they’re the ministers of righteousness, but Paul tells us they’re emissaries of Satan. So what do we have to know? The truth from the false! And the only way we can do that is just keep our nose in the Book, and when we do that then the Holy Spirit will certainly do His part to be able to keep us discerning truth from error.

I pointed out in Indiana the other day that you always want to remember, and I don’t care what it is, if you’re aiming a rifle at a target, how far do you have to miss to miss everything. Just a little bit. I was a marksman in the military, I could hit that bull’s eye at 500 yards when I was young, but one thing I know for sure, that if you’re off just a little bit on the windage or anything else you’re going to miss the whole target.

Well it’s the same way with Scripture, these people can come in, and they can come close, but so far as the end result is concerned, they can totally drive people into a lost eternity with their false teachings. I’ve noticed this over the years, I’ve listened to them on television and on the radio, and at the time you think, "this old boy
is right on." And then after you listen for a little while, there’s about 5 or 10% error and he takes you clear off into left field. Well there’s only one way you can avoid that, and that is to just keep in the Word, and be able to discern.
Lesson Two • Part II

The Walk of the Believer - Ephesians 4:25–5:6

Now let’s just pick right up where we left off in the last lesson, and that would be in Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 28. And verse 28 is going to send us right back to the Old Testament.

Ephesians 4:28a

"Let him that stole steal no more:..."

Well where do you get that? Exodus chapter 20, and let’s go back and look at it. That of course is the chapter of the Ten Commandments, and right there in verse 15 it says it as plain as day. I know you all know this but I want you to see it in Scripture.

Exodus 20:15

"Thou shalt not steal."

In other words, you have to respect the other persons property, so no one has the right to just simply abscond it and take off with it. It is one of the basic commandments of human society. Now again I always have to remind people that, yes the moral law is still the best system for society that you can find. In fact when we were studying in the Book of Exodus a few years ago, I think that I made the point that if society could keep the commandments we could send our legislature home. We could close up the court houses, we could just simply throw away the code books, because the Ten Commandments covers every aspect of society, and if society could keep them it would be all we’d need. But of course human nature being what it is, it takes all the above to even keep a semblance of sanity in our society today. Now let’s look at another one in Romans chapter 13, and here Paul says basically the same thing. Even though we as believers are not under Law, but rather under Grace, but yet these are fundamental even for a believer.

Romans 13:8b-9a

"...for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. (because under Grace, love is the power that makes us operate) 9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shall not steal,"

Now that’s as plain as day. We realize that Paul writes to the believer, and we don’t expect the unbelieving world to not steal, because they’re going to do it one way or
another. Whether it’s stealing from their boss’s time table, or cheating on their taxes, or any other way, people are bent to stealing, it’s part of the old nature. You can tell then from these words to Paul’s converts that they too had come out of society that thought nothing of stealing.

_Ephesians 4:28_

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

Now what’s the lesson? If those who have would give to those who need, they wouldn’t have to steal. I guess nothing irritates me more than when I read of some poor fellow that is poverty stricken, and he is caught sealing little or nothing, and yet he ends us in the state penitentiary. And that does happen. Now I think that’s awful, and I’m all for punishment, but I’m also for fair punishment. And when a poor person is caught stealing just to supply his daily needs, to put him away is ridiculous. But Paul is teaching us here for the community that has more than enough, they should be willing to give some to those who are in need.

You know as I read, especially the Jerusalem Post and some of these other periodicals, as much as I may disagree with Judaism, and much of the Jewish Old Testament religion, I always have to give the Jewish people credit for one thing in particular. You know what they are? They are tremendous philanthropists. They’ll give by the millions if they’ve got it, and they don’t do that with the same motivation that we give. But there’s something about their makeup that if they have it they give it. Well Paul is making that very point for us as believers, that if we have it, we should be willing to share it with those who need it, and keep them from being prompted to steal in order to survive. Now verse 29 I suppose is a little harder to define, but we’re going to keep moving along.

_Ephesians 4:29a_

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth,...’

Can you tell the world that? Why they’d laugh at you because for most of them that’s the only way they can talk. But for the believer this is not to be part and parcel of our conversation. We are not to have corrupt language as part of our daily experience. So Paul says, "let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth."

_Ephesians 4:29b_
"...but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Now all of this as we’ve been coming down through these verse, is to the believer to help us to be a vehicle to approach lost people. Always remember no believer is ever going to get to first base with an unbeliever if he’s got foul language, it just won’t fly, as even the unbeliever knows that much. So here again Paul is admonishing us as believers to watch our anger, not to steal, and to recognize the wiles of Satan, and to be a giver as the Lord has prospered us. See all this is just common sense. I’ve always said that Christianity is so logical in the everyday Christian life as Paul teaches it, and I guess that is why I enjoy teaching it so much. So we’re to minister Grace to the hearers, and now let’s move on to verse 30.

Ephesians 4:30

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Now I imagine that most of you know this, but maybe not. Do you know that the Bible never speaks of the Holy Spirit getting angry? There is no wrath of the Holy Spirit! There is no anger referred to by the Holy Spirit! This is the harshest word you can find in all of Scripture with regard to the response of the Holy Spirit, is to grieve Him. He will not get angry evidently. Now that’s something to think about, so when we go contrary to the Spirit’s leading, He’s not going to pour out His wrath on us for our disobedience, but rather He’s grieved, He’s hurt.

In fact I just told one of my little grandsons the other day, that while growing up I had such a love for my own dad that I wouldn’t do anything that would hurt him or grieve him. And I think that kept me out of a lot of places that if I’d have gone there I knew that this is where he wouldn’t want me to be, and I wouldn’t grieve my dad. Well you see this also what I told my little grandson, If you do something that will hurt your dad, then that same thing will also hurt me. So if you take that same analogy into our Spiritual life, the Holy Spirit doesn’t want to be hurt, and we’re not to grieve Him.

Now when it comes to Paul’s teaching of the Holy Spirit, there’s so many places I could take you I hardly know where to begin. But I think maybe I’ll go back to I Corinthians chapter 3. And as you remember when we taught the Book of Romans, for the first seven chapters, Paul hardly ever mentioned the Holy Spirit. Then all of a sudden from chapter 8 to the end of Romans he uses the Holy Spirit over and over. Then coming into his next letter of I Corinthians chapter 3, and verse 16 we find the following.
I Corinthians 3:16

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

Now it’s that same Spirit that he admonishes us in Ephesians that we’re not to grieve. In other words we should know without a shadow of doubt what is pleasing to the Spirit, and that is what we’re supposed to be prone to do, that which is pleasing to Him. Come on over to I Corinthians chapter 6, and we have another reference from the pen of the apostle regarding the indwelling Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 6:19a

"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,..."

The Holy Spirit was given the moment we believed the Gospel, and then Paul concludes that our body does not belong to us now, but rather Christ.

I Corinthians 6:19b

"...and ye are not your own?" Well Peter uses the same kind of language with regard to the blood of Christ.

I Peter 1:18a-19a

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold,...19. But with the precious blood of Christ,..."

So we’re reminded that since we’ve been bought with the blood of Christ, we are to respond by glorying God in our body. Now on the way back to Ephesians chapter 4, you can stop in chapter 1, and these references hopefully all fit together, that this is the same Spirit we are to be careful not to grieve. And that happens only when we go contrary to the revealed Word of God. We start out by speaking of Christ in verse 12.

Ephesians 1:13

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom (speaking of Christ) also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."
See how the Holy Spirit functions in the life of the believer? He indwells us, He motivates us, He directs us, He keeps us, and now another verse just comes to mind in the Book of Romans chapter 7.

**Romans 7:5**

"For when we were in the flesh, (before salvation) the motions (or the acts) of sins, which were by the law, (all the things that the Law condemned, the lost person activity) did work in our members (our physical body) to bring forth fruit unto death.

Now just hold that thought for a moment and skip across the page to Romans 6:23. These are all statements that are there to have an impact whether we’re lost or saved, as to how God and the Spirit works. Remember what Paul just said. "The things of the flesh, works, will bring forth their fruit unto death." Paul puts it just a little different in verse 23.

**Romans 6:23**

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now what a comparison in one verse. Lost people work, and work, and work their whole life time to earn what? Eternal death! We as believers on the other hand under Grace, we just sit there with open hands and what do we take free for nothing? Eternal Life! Isn’t that amazing? The lost person is working his head off just to go to a devil’s hell. And we as believers just stand here and take God’s eternal life as a free gift. That’s what it says. Everyone should be able to understand plain language. What are wages? That’s what you get for working. Isn’t that right?

**Romans 3:23a**

"For the wages of sin is death;..." Now I put it in plainer language, I know I do. You work yourself to death, eternal death.

**Romans 3:23b**

"...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now how much do you work for a gift? None! I’m not use to getting gifts, but when they come it’s usually a total surprise. Well that’s the way it’s supposed to be. It’s not anything that you’ve earn, or can say, "I’ve got that coming to me." So that’s what
eternal life is. Now let’s finish our thoughts in chapter 7. "So the work of sinful life brings forth fruit to death." Now for the believer look at verse 6, and it’s a whole different world.

**Romans 7:6**

"But now we are delivered from the law, (or thou shalt, and thou shalt not) that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

A lot of people just can’t understand when I teach, "You’re not under Law, but rather you’re under Grace!" Now to be under Grace doesn’t mean that we’re "Lawless." It means we’re not under the heavy hand of the Law, but we’re still responsible to God through the working of the Holy Spirit to basically do the same thing that the Law demands. The Holy Spirit will never turn around and say, "Ok you’re a believer now, and under Grace, you can steal if you want to. You can go ahead and covet if you want to." No way, that wouldn’t even be sensible would it?

But now instead of having the Law and all of it’s pressures to do and not to do, the Holy Spirit guides us just like a young mother teaching her little one to walk. Just simply guiding that young one and letting him take that next step, well that the same way the Holy Spirit works in the life of the believer. So looking at verse 6 again.

**Romans 7:6b**

"...that we should serve in newness of spirit, (through the leading and directing of the power of the Holy Spirit) and not in the oldness of the letter." (which was the Law). And oh, what a difference that makes. Now back to Ephesians but let’s stop again in chapter 1. We were there a while ago, but I got side tracked, and back in verse 13.

**Ephesians 1:13a**

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed,..."

I had a letter again the other day that asked, "Do I have to work and work and work, and pray and pray and pray through to receive the Holy Spirit?" I can’t find that in my Bible, because it’s not in here. You don’t do anything to receive the Holy Spirit except believe the Gospel. That’s one of the automatic fringe benefits, as soon as you believe the Gospel the Holy Spirit comes in automatically. And that’s what Paul is saying here. Do you see that?
Ephesians 1:13b

"...in whom also after that ye believed, (+ NOTHING) ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." And what is that Holy Spirit of promise? He’s God’s down payment.

Ephesians 1:14

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until (there’s coming a time, month, day and year, where we’ll experience) the redemption of the purchased possession, (which is our body) unto the praise of his glory."

Now remember our Soul and Spirit are already redeemed as soon as we believe. That’s a done deal! But the body is still in it’s old corrupt state, it’s still heading for death if the Lord doesn’t come in your life time. But remember it does die, and they lay it in the ground, yet it’s going to experience the day when it too will be redeemed when it’s resurrected. So this is what the Holy Spirit’s work is, to guarantee that even if we pass off the scene that God will one day resurrect this body, and as the Book of Philippians says shall change our vile body, that it may be like Christ’s glorious body.

Well the role of the Holy Spirit, I think is sometimes dangerously maligned, and sometimes taught falsely, and other times it’s neglected totally, and that’s just as bad. But rather we have to understand that the Holy Spirit has been part of our salvation, He’s indwelling us, and He is the one that reproves us, He is the One who takes the place of the Law. Now coming back to our text in Ephesians chapter 4, and looking at verse 30 again.

Ephesians 4:30

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Stop and think a moment, once we’re redeemed physically, and once we have that new body, well I’ll show you from Scripture, I should have taken you there a few moment ago when I was quoting it. This is a Bible study so let’s just search the Scriptures. We use these verses because they are so descriptive of what we’re looking for.

Philippians 3:20-21a
"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (at His coming, and when he does) 21. Who shall change our vile body, (this one we now have) that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,..."

Now I think too many times people don’t really understand the impact of the transfiguration. Do you remember that great event up there on the Mount of Transfiguration when Peter, James, and John were up there with the Lord, when all of a sudden right before their eyes, the Lord was transfigured. In other words, He became glory, personified. Then here comes Moses and Elijah into the midst, and the amazing thing here is that Peter, James, and John didn’t have to ask the Lord who they were, because they knew.

Well what does all that tell us? Well it’s going to be same way when we get to glory, everybody we see regardless when they lived, we’re going to know them. But the thing I wanted you to see here, is how that the Lord Himself was transfigured with all of His glory for just that moment of time so we can look through a little window of what it’ll be like to be fashioned like His glorious body. People will ask sometimes, "Will we wear clothes in eternity? Who cares, we’re going to be covered with that kind of glory, and if clothes are part of the deal that’s fine, but I do know we’re going to be fashioned like unto His glorious body.
Lesson Two • Part III

The Walk of the Believer - Ephesians 4:25–5:6

Now I like to remind everyone not to go by what I say, but learn to search the Scriptures and really see what they say. And I’m sure that you’ll find as I have that a lot of the time it doesn’t say what we think it says, or think it should say. You don’t have to be highly educated to understand the Scriptures. If you can read, then you’ve got all the education you need to comprehend this Book, because the Holy Spirit then becomes our tutor. The Holy Spirit can certainly show us things that no professor could ever hope to do. Now let’s come back to Ephesians chapter 4, we have a few more verses left in this chapter. I think we’re to start at verse 31.

Ephesians 4:31

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:"

Now you see those are all earmarks of the unregenerate individual, and Paul is always making that comparison, not that you and I as believers will be perfect, and occasionally slip into these things, but they’re not to become a daily lifestyle. I never like anyone to get the impression that just because we’re believers, we’re suddenly perfect or will ever be perfect in this life, as we can’t be. We’re still in the body of flesh, we’re still in a world that just saturates us with the things of the world, but the goal of every believer is to attain to these things as we grow in our Christian knowledge. So here again Paul makes that a comparison with what we came out of. Now just back up a few pages and you’ll see what I’m driving at in chapter 2.

Ephesians 2:1-2

"And you hath he quickened, (or made alive) who were (past tense) dead in trespasses and sins; 2. Wherein (in that old life) time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, (that’s Satan) the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"

Do you see how Paul subtly brings in old Satan without actually blatantly using him all the time? Satan is the one whom the world marches to, and now verse 3.

Ephesians 2:3

"Among whom also we all (came out of that kind of background. Oh we may not have actively participated in it. We may have been raised in homes where these kind
of things were not part of our lifestyle, but the potential was there.) had our conversation (or manner of living) in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Then Paul tells us in I Thessalonians 5:9 that we’ve not been appointed to wrath.

_I Thessalonians 5:9_

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

So there’s that constant comparison between the believer and the unbeliever. In fact let’s look at another one in the Book of Galatians, chapter 5. When we become a believer and the Holy Spirit begins to influence our thinking, and our activities we put away former things.

_Galatians 5:18_

"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

Now remember that doesn’t make us lawless. The Spirit will do what the Law couldn’t do. Then Paul comes back and shows us the lifestyle of the lost person or unbeliever.

_Galatians 5:19-21_

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies. 21. Envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

We are to absolutely have no part of those things. Now coming back to Ephesians chapter 4 for a moment again. So Paul tells us that we are no longer to let any of these things to be a daily habit with us, but rather we are regenerated, our whole "want to" is changed, and the things that are appealing to the world, to us of course become almost anathema. Now verse 32

_Ephesians 4:32_

"And be ye kind one to another,..."
Now love begets love, doesn’t it? Love changes everything, because it’s that attitude of love that immediately puts into practice the keeping of the commandments, love will never let us covet, love will never let us steal, love will never let us commit adultery, because love changes everything. Well so does the new life. The new life changes everything, and so as a result of that we are to be kind one to another.

_Ephesians 4:32b_

"...tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath (already) forgiven you."

God has already forgiven you, and what’s past is done! And when God finishes it, it’s done completely. Now let’s go back and see what it was like under the Law. Now here’s another graphic difference between Law and Grace. Look in Matthew chapter 6, and we’ll begin with verse 8. Now I maintain that this prayer is a complete misnomer. That should have never been called the Lord’s Prayer, but rather it’s the Disciples Prayer. The Lord’s Prayer is in John chapter 17, that’s what He prayed, but here He’s teaching the twelve disciples what to pray for the nation of Israel. So it’s the Disciples’ Prayer, remember that. Jesus is speaking here in His earthly ministry.

_Matthew 6:8_

"Be not ye therefore like unto them: (the unbelieving world all around them) for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Oh, that tells us something doesn’t it? Does that mean we don’t have to pray? No. The Lord went right on and told them how to pray. So even today people will call and write and say, "If God knows everything, if God is Sovereign and everything is going to be as He pre-planned it, then why pray?" Have you heard that? Yeah, you have. Well I tell people this, even in God’s foreknowledge of everything, do you know what He also factored into the formula? Your prayers. Now you chew on that for a week or two. So praying does enter into the whole sphere of things. Prayer does change things, not that we change God’s mind, but all of that is factored in to the fact that we are to pray. So here is how the disciples, under Law, were to pray.

_Matthew 6:9-10a_

"After this manner therefore pray ye: (and I think this part is appropriate for everyone. We still approach the Father, and we recognize and revere who He is) Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10. Thy kingdom come...."
You know we still think the Kingdom is coming, but not as they thought it was going to come. See, they thought it should have come while Christ was there, and that’s why He presented Himself as their Messiah, and King, and the Kingdom was also in the offer. But we look forward to the time when Christ will come and set up His Kingdom, and we’ll be ruling and reigning with Him over that 1000 year Kingdom rule, and it’s a lot closer than most think.

Matthew 6:11

"Give us this day our daily bread."

This is also a reasonable request. But here in verse 12 is where there is such a graphic difference between Law and Grace. Always remember Jesus’ earthly teachings were all under Law. I stress that everywhere I go. Never once did Jesus tell the twelve disciples or any of His followers to stop Temple worship, did He? No! Did He ever tell any of those Jews that they were no longer under the Law? Quite the opposite was His answers. He told the rich young ruler who had asked how he might receive eternal life the following.

Matthew 19:16-17

"And, behold one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17. And he (Jesus) said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

Now that’s plain as day isn’t it? In another place he heals the lepers, and Jesus told them, "Go show yourself to the priest." Why? Because that was the Jewish Law that they were under. One with leprosy could not go back into society until the priest at the temple had recognized the absence of their leprosy, and were pronounced free to enter back into society. So always remember everything that Jesus taught was in accordance with the Law of Moses. Never did He tell them that they weren’t under the Law, so just go ahead and forget it.

And that of course was where Paul got into trouble with the Jews of his day, when he started preaching to his congregations and writing in his letters that they were no longer under the Law, but rather under Grace. And that’s where I get into trouble also. Oh not real trouble, but people sure do raise their eyebrows, as they say, "Where do you get all this stuff?" It’s as plain as day, as here are some good examples. Under Law from the Lord’s own lips we read.

Matthew 6:12
"And forgive us our debts, (or sins or trespasses. When?) as we forgive our debtors." Do you see how plain that is? In other words, according to the Law and Jesus’ teachings "before His followers could receive forgiveness, what did they have to do first?

Matthew 6:15

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

They couldn’t expect forgiveness until they forgave. Now you see preachers and teachers are still trying to pull that into the Age of Grace, and say, "Well you can’t have salvation until you go to your neighbor that you’ve wronged and asked him to forgive you, and you forgive him." But that’s not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that under Grace the following.

Ephesians 4:32

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, (why?) even as God for Christ’s sake hath (already) forgiven you."

Now let me show you another one. Turn over to the right a few pages to the Book of Colossians chapter 2, verse 13. Now this is all Grace, and that doesn’t mean that we take advantage of it. It doesn’t mean that we completely throw all these other things to the wind, but here is where we must understand the difference between Law and Grace. Under Law there was no forgiveness until you forgave first. But now under Grace look what Paul says.

Colossians 2:13

"And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he (God up in verse 12) quickened (or made you alive) together with him having (past tensed) forgiven you all trespasses;"

Do you see how God has forgiven us first? Now as a result of this new found relationship with God, what does He expect us to do with people that we now need to forgive? Now you’d better forgive them, because if God forgave me, who am I to say, that I can’t forgive my neighbor. Do you see how logical again that is? Now there’s another one here in Colossians chapter 3, and it’s also verse 13. It’s the same kind of language we’ve been dealing with. Here in a matter of 3 or 4 pages in your New Testament you have the same premise, and when you’ve got something repeated 2 or 3 time in a chapter or two it’s there for emphasis.
Colossians 3:13

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, (already) so also do ye."

Christ has already forgiven you, it’s done! So if that be the case, then why in the world can’t you forgive your neighbor? God expects you to! God forgave you by Grace, and Faith + Nothing!

Sovereign Grace, that’s why God can forgive, and we looked at that a few lessons ago in Exodus chapter 33 God is Sovereign Grace, and I know that’s beyond human comprehension. God could have just as well zapped the nation of Israel, when they were down there at the golden calf incident with their nude dancing around that idol, and with all their immoral activity. Moses came down that mountain and hears all this music and dancing, and he was so distraught that he threw the Ten Commandants down and broke them, but you see, God is far more gracious than Moses ever hoped to be.

Oh yeah there were some Israelites that suffered as a result of that incident, but by and large, God didn’t destroy the nation, He could have, He had every right in the world, He’d already done so much for them. He brought them out of that paganism, brought them through the Red Sea, brought them down around Mount Sinai, His pillar of cloud by day, and fire by night, He provided all their needs, and then they turn around and as soon as old Moses is gone for a few days they have Aaron make the golden calf, and they begin all their horrific activity around it. Moses couldn’t handle it, but look what God says in verse 18 and 19. Now this is just shortly after this golden calf experience. And I guess we need to pick up the conversation in verse 17

Exodus 33:17-18

"And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. 18. And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

That’s always human isn’t it? We’re never quite satisfied. It was enough for Moses to be in this place of privilege, but now he wants a little bit more. "Show me thy glory" he says. Now verse 19.

Exodus 33:19

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; (now here comes the Sovereign Grace of God, and if
you don’t get anything else in our teachings today, remember this. This is God’s Sovereign Grace!) and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."

Can anyone argue with Him? No way. Why? He’s Sovereign, He’s the Creator of the universe. I suppose way deep down Moses almost thought, "God why don’t you destroy them? They are just bent on sinning, they’re worthless, I can’t do anything with them." I think Moses kind of expected God to simply annihilate that whole nation one of these times. But God had to show Moses, "Listen Moses, you don’t know my heart of Grace! You don’t understand that I Am Sovereign, and I will show Grace and mercy to whom I please!

It’s the same way today. My goodness we can think of people who have been awful. They’ve been enemies of society, but will God save them? Sure He will in a moment. Why? Because of His Sovereign Grace. Now if it were left up to us we’d probably say, "Hey that person isn’t deserving of God’s Grace, he deserves death, he deserves to be wiped off the scene." But God says, and thinks differently. God says, "I died for that person." And He did. God died for that person just as much as He did for you and me, and God’s Sovereign Grace can reach down and save that individual just as He saved us, so always remember that. Now back to Ephesians again. Because of the Grace of God, Paul can now write, "That we can forgive our neighbor and family members, and we should do this because God has already forgiven us." So the lesson is if God forgave you, then why can’t you also forgive. Always remember that’s the vast chasm between Law and Grace." Now the next verse in our study.

_Ephesians 5:1_

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;"

Now I love that term in Scripture, and I don’t know why. I have now for quite a few years. There’s another one I love even back in I John and it reads much the same way.

_I John 2:1a_

"My little children,..."

Those words are beautiful. Now John at this time was up in years no doubt, and it’s the same John that was one of the twelve, and he’s writing to those believers of his time, and says, "My little children." Now do you know what I call that? That’s a statement of endearment, and we all appreciate it I think. You’re not normal if you don’t appreciate the love of family and friends and so forth.
**I John 2:1a**

"*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not...*" Can’t you almost feel the heart of the old apostle? He didn’t want his believers to fall into sin and paganism. Then John goes on to say.

**I John 2:1b**

"...And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

But the point I wanted you to see is the same terminology that Paul uses, "*as dear children*" Now back to Ephesians chapter 5. We are as believers, members of the family of God, and as children we are to walk differently.

**Ephesians 5:2a**

"*And walk in love,...*"

Remember a lesson or two back I told you as a young person growing up one of the things that motivated me as much as anything to behave myself was my love for my dad. I mean we were together from the time I was able to walk until almost the day he died, as we worked side by side his whole life time, and I loved him. And yet I regret it, but we were from that kind of a German background where we didn’t show that love openly. Even to this day I’m not a hugger, because I didn’t grow up in that kind of a family. We never touched or kissed each other, but my goodness, dad and I loved each other and I wouldn’t do anything that would have hurt him.

All right, now this is to be our attitude toward the Lord. He has loved us so much that He suffered and died for us, and we’re to love Him in return with all our being. So Paul says, "*Here’s your motivation as dear children, walk in love.*" Now remember back in chapter 2, verse 2 Paul uses the same terminology, only then we were in the world before salvation.

**Ephesians 2:1b-2a**

"...who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world..." But now as believers we’re to walk according to the leading of the Spirit of God.
Lesson Two • Part IV

The Walk of the Believer - Ephesians 4:25–5:6

Now at this time I would like to commend our television audience, because I really thought that I would have a hard time keeping interest in these Church letters, because everybody likes prophecy today. But we’re getting so many such good comments on these lessons in Galatians and Ephesians and so forth, and I’m so glad to see so much interest in Paul’s teachings. Now let’s come back to where we left off in the last lesson, and that would be verse 2 of Ephesians chapter 5, but again let’s begin with verse 1.

Ephesians 5:1-2

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; (it’s just like a child who loves his parents, and the parent love his children, and this should be the relationship) 2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (or aroma)

Such as an incense or maybe a perfume or that which would come from flowers. That was what His offering and sacrifice was to God in reality. Even though the cross was a horrible place to look at physically, and the suffering that He went through, but you see the end result was the salvation of countless numbers of sinful people. It won’t be as many souls I guess as we would like to think, but nevertheless that work of the cross is having it’s fruition in the salvation of multitudes throughout the last 2000 years. So it becomes then a sweet aroma to God because of what Christ has done. Now you know I always like to use as many Scriptures as I can, so let’s go on over to the Book of Philippians chapter 2. And this passage fits so perfectly as we walk as dear children, then naturally it has to be a mental thing, as everything we do starts in the mind. So now Paul instructs us to how this all has to work.

Philippians 2:5-6

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (do you see how close that brings unto Him? I mean we get to the place that we think as He thinks. Now speaking of Christ)6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:"  

Now that sounds likes a play on words of some sort, but what it really meant was, that Christ did not feel or think that He was robbing something from the Godhead because He was God! Now verse 7.
Philippians 2:7

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, (or bond slave) and was made in the likeness of men;"

Now you remember a few months back when we were studying in the unsearchable riches of Christ? Remember I tried to get people to think in these terms, but it’s beyond human comprehension to think that the Eternal, Sovereign, Creator of the universe lowered Himself to such a place that He went the way of the cross. It’s beyond thinking, but we can only take it by faith.

Philippians 2:8

"And being found in fashion as a man, (Christ had all the attributes of a man although He was still God) he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Christ humbled Himself and permitted the Romans and Jews do what they did. Oh goodness, have you ever stopped to think that as they were laying him on that wooden cross, He could have zapped the whole caboodle of them, couldn’t He? Then there wouldn’t be anything left except He Himself, but He didn’t. Why? Love! Love kept Him on the cross, and so He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death on that cross.

You know the Romans crucified Jews by the thousands. I read one time, that there were 2000 Jews hanging on crosses along one of the Roman roads all at one time, so it wasn’t just the death by crucifixion that made it so extraordinary, but that in His death, He took upon Himself all the sin of humanity. That’s what makes his death so unique as Paul speaks of it here, "even the death of the cross." It wasn’t the matter of fact that He was crucified, as bad as that was, but that all the sins of the whole human race from Adam until the last person that will be zapped at the end of the Kingdom Age. All their sins were laid on Christ!

Now you see that could have never even been a thought in our mind had He been anything less than the Creator God. If He’d been anything less than the all powerful, Sovereign God, He could have never taken all the sins of the world on Himself, but He did, and we have to take that by faith. If Christ didn’t do that, then we might as well fold this book up and go home, but He did, and we can believe it. Now let’s come back to Ephesians chapter 5 again.

So we’re to walk as a result of that. Since He has paid the sin debt, and He has now declared us "a child of God," not by anything we have done, but rather what He has
done. Now there’s a lot of Churchy things that a person can do after salvation such as joining the local Church, being baptized, and so forth, and I’m not against any of that, but there are multitudes that are doing that for their salvation, and are ignoring this finished work of the cross, and believing in it for their eternal destination. Do you think God’s pleased when people ignore the work of the cross? Heavens no He’s not pleased. When He’s done everything that needs to be done, and then people get the idea that if I just join the Church, then I’ll make it? Man I’ve got to be blunt, they’re not going to make it. I don’t care what Church it is, whether it’s mine, or yours, or anybody else’s. But rather we have to come back and recognize that it was that death of the cross that made it possible for God to make us His dear children. And consequently since He loved us first, that love is to be returned, and we are to walk the walk that He wants us to walk. And then as Paul does so often, shows us the other side of the coin.

**Ephesians 5:3**

"But fornication, (that is sexual immorality in all it’s rankest form) and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints;"

Now Paul doesn’t go through all the long list like he did in Ephesians chapter 2 or Galatians chapter 4, or Romans chapter 3. Oh it’s a horrible list, but he does name some of the key ones, and among them is covetousness. Now that reminds me of Romans chapter 7, so let’s look at it for a moment. A lot of people have problems with this chapter in Romans because they can’t quite figure out what Paul’s talking about. Whether he’s talking about a lost person, or about a believer who has all these problems, but the one thing I want you to see here is here in verse 7.

**Romans 7:7**

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? (is the law in itself evil?) God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, (or my old Adamic nature, which is really what sin is. He said I wouldn’t have ever known about my old Adam) but by the law: for I had not known lust, (or desire) except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Now over the years I’ve always taught that you can hardly commit a single sin against God without coveting first? That’s why Paul will constantly refers to coveting, because it is the bench mark for everything else. Now it’s the same way back here in the Book of Ephesians.

**Ephesians 5:3**
"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, (desires that are not good) Let it not be once named among you as becometh saints;"

Then Paul goes on and lists some more of these terrible sins. Oh my as we look at those listed we can see the bag is full isn’t it?

Ephesians 5:4

"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: (or normal) but rather (use your breath to) giving of thanks."

Now I’ve had people come to me with this verse and say, "You mean it’s not right for us to tell a joke, and have a good laugh?" No that’s not what that verse means. Man, nobody appreciates a good laugh any more than I do. There’s nothing wrong with a good laugh, it’s healthy for you. My goodness David had all kinds of opportunity to rejoice, and Paul says in Philippians to rejoice, we don’t have to walk around with a long face. We don’t have to walk around like death has just been warmed over on us. But when it comes to foolishness, and the filthy thinking of the world, then, no, we’re not to have it because it just doesn’t fit.

But rather we are to use our breath and tongue to give thanks. Let’s look at that for a moment in chapter 4 of the Book of Philippians. This is one of the best two verses on prayer in the whole Bible. When people today call or write about prayer this is the first place that I take them. These are absolutely the best verses on prayer.

Philippians 4:6a

"Be careful (or worry) for nothing;..."

You’ve seen these little wall plaques that say, "why worry when you can pray." Well there’s more to that than meets the eye. We’re not supposed to worry. Now we can be concerned. I think everyone of us have concerns, and we have that right to have those concerns, but we’re not to fret and worry.

Philippians 4:6b

"... but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving..."

It doesn’t do you any good to petition God if you forget to thank Him for it in advance as you pray.. Thanking God is the criteria, that’s the modus operandi for prayer. Make it with thanksgiving.
"...let your requests be made known unto God...."

He isn’t limiting your request. It can be anything as long as it’s in Godly reason of course, but let your requests be made known unto God. Here we can come, and ask with thanksgiving, **but God may say, No! He may say, no not right now, maybe later. He may say, Yes.** But regardless how He answers in verse 6, you’ve already got the answer in verse 7. We’ve got the answer to our prayers here in verse 7, and what is it?

**Philippians 4:7**

"*And the peace of God,* (no matter how God answers our request) **which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**"

Do you see why we don’t have to worry about anything? It’s because we have that peace of God, and that’s what keeps us. I know that’s beyond human understanding. I know we’re all human and we do worry and fret, and get overly concerned, and yet I think most of us have to admit that through all of our tight spots, we came through it with God’s help. Now that’s where we have it over on the world. God never promises us that we’re going to go through life without problems. We’re going to have just as many problems as many in the world around us, but what’s the difference? **We have God with us in our problems, we have Him to take us through and we can rest assure in that.**

Another Scripture comes to mind in Psalms chapter 37. Now this is from David even under the Law, but I can still go back and use it in application, and it’s a beautiful couple of verses. This passage fits right along this same line of thinking. The peace that passeth all understanding will keep our heart and minds through Christ Jesus. Now let’s look what David writes, and let’s start with verse 5. My what a promise.

**Psalms 37:5**

"**Commit thy way unto the LORD trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass**"

Maybe not in our timing, but in His. Isn’t that a promise? My I’ve gone through trying times myself, and I just about wear that verse out. But do you know what it means to commit something? It means you take it to God and leave it with Him. I think I’ve given this example before. Regardless what you think of the Post Office, I think most of you just go and drop your letter in the mail slot. Do you go home and for the next week fret and worry whether it got to it’s destination or not? No. Because as soon as
you dropped that letter, what did you do? You committed it to the Postal Service to take care of it. You don’t go home and lose sleep over worrying if the letter got there. Because you’re assuming that it will. You committed it, and you let it go at that. Now this is what verse 5 means.

_Psalms 37:5_

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

When you have a need, a problem, or concern, you simply commit it to the Lord. You take it to Him, and you leave it there, you don’t hang on to it. If you hang onto that letter, it never will get down into the mail, because you’ve still got it. But if you let it go then it’s committed. The other verse I like here in this chapter is verse 7.

_Psalms 37:7a_

"Rest in the LORD,..."

Do you know what it means to rest? It means to relax. Turn those concerns over to Him, don’t hang on to your problems. But rather "Rest in the Lord."

_Psalms 37:7b_

"...and wait patiently for him:

See, we’re in a society of instant gratification. Give it to me now Lord, I’m in a hurry! No we have to learn to "wait patiently for him."

_Psalms 37:7b_

"...fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

Boy we see that every day don’t we? We look at the young ungodly world around us, and all their prosperity, and wealth, and wonder, "Why?" Don’t worry about that, because those are things that are in God’s hand. But our responsibility is to commit our way unto the Lord, trust in Him and let Him bring it to pass in His own time. Some times it takes a lot longer than we think. It may take years, but God will do it in His own time. Now back to Ephesians chapter 5 for a few moments. Now verse 5, and again Paul comes back to the opposite side of the coin. Now in the next verse I can’t think that professing Christian would do this kind of a lifestyle, but if so then a
professing Christian better read some of these things. Remember we’re living in a society any more where these things are almost a norm.

**Ephesians 5:5**

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

Now that’s plain language isn’t it? How can people say, "Well don’t you think the Grace of God will be sufficient?" No not in this case. My Bible says, "They will not be in the Kingdom of Christ! In fact turn on over to the Book of Colossians chapter 1, verse 12 and 13. Now these are all the same words that Paul is using throughout his letters.

**Colossians 1:12-13**

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet (or prepared us) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13. Who (the Father) hath delivered us from the power of darkness, (where all these things take place constantly) and hath (already) translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:""

Now come back and compare that with Ephesians chapter 5.

**Ephesians 5:5**

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

There is no way they can, because the Scripture says they can’t. I don’t care how they shake it out, they will not be there. Now then verse 6.

**Ephesians 5:6**

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Now I’m not going to have enough time for this verse, I can see that already, but remember God is not pouring out His wrath today, the whole world is under His Grace, but His wrath is coming. His wrath is coming and it is sure! For a moment let’s turn to II Timothy chapter 2, and we’ll read verse 16 and 23 both. Now here again within a matter of a few pages in your New Testament you’ve got three times where we are to look out for deceitful, false teachings. And this false teaching is abounding.
My goodness like I told my folks in Indiana the other day, "You ought to hear some of our phone calls on Monday morning after they’ve been to Church the day before. It’s ridiculous what teachings are going on."

II Timothy 2:16a

"But shun (turn your back on) profane and vain babblings:..."

When I see the word babbling, do you remember back in the book of Acts when Paul came down to Athens and the big intellectual philosophers called what he had said-what? Babbling! Let’s hear what this old babbler has to say. But you know a few years ago Iris and I were on Mars hill, and you know I couldn’t help but smile, inwardly and well as outwardly. Here on that this big stone on the way up to Mars Hills is this beautiful bronze plaque. Not to Socrates, nor to Plato or Homer, but to the apostle Paul. So all the babblers have long been forgotten, but the Greek government or whoever did it put a huge plaque up to honor the apostle Paul. So Paul wasn’t the babbler, but rather they were. Well anyway we’re to shun profane and vain babblings.

II Timothy 2:16

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

It’s not going to bring you into more godliness. Now skip all the verses in between and now come down to verse 23. This verse is along that same line of thinking.

II Timothy 2:23

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes."

In other words don’t ask foolish questions over and over. I’ve told people umpteen times when they have a question, not to ask me who’s the third son of the second wife of King so and so back in the Old Testament. Because to me that is vain. There’s no need to get all hung up on some of these little details that are way back there in the Old Testament, they have nothing to do with us today, and yet some people can get so hung up on these things, when actually all they need to do is get down and see what Paul really teaches.
Now as we begin this lesson we’ll start with Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 7, and once again let me say, that we covet the prayers of each of you. As you know, we’re in a spiritual warfare, and it’s only as we lean upon the power of His Spirit that we can continue to hold forth the Word of God, which we trust we’re doing it in truth and verity. As we’ve come up through Paul’s epistles we’ve pretty much taken the Scripture verse by verse, as Paul is writing to you and I, Gentile believers, in this Age of Grace. And so since he’s writing directly to you and I, we cannot glibly pass over anything in his epistles. As we begin today rather than just jump in at verse 7, I’m going to go back again to verse 6 for an introduction to what we’re going to say next.

**Ephesians 5:6**

"Let no man deceive you with vain words:..."

Now you all know what the word *vain* means. It means that which is superfluous, it doesn’t make sense, it’s confusing, and Lord knows there’s so much of that out there today. So this is so appropriate, that we take this verse to heart. **We’re not to be deceived with words that are not appropriate, and not based on the Scriptures.** I’ve told you before that Monday morning is when our phone rings the most, and invariably it’s because they have questions of what they have heard on Sunday morning. Well when they come up with some of this goofy stuff the first thing I say is, did you look for it in your Bible? And if it’s not in there, then forget it. **If you can’t back it up with Scripture then it’s a deception, it’s a false teaching, and always remember Satan is the angel of light, and he can transform himself into that.** So we have to be so careful that we’re not taken in by vain, deceptive words. Now reading on.

**Ephesians 5:6**

"Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things (this mass of deception) cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

I think I mentioned in our last lesson that most of the unbelieving world scoffs at the idea that God will one day yet pour out His wrath and judgment upon Christ-rejecting-mankind. They think that’s just some figment of our imagination, but I’ve got news for them, *"It is coming!"* It may not be in my lifetime, although I think it will be, but
this I do know- *it's coming!* There will be a day when God will finally say, "ENOUGH!" When that day comes then His wrath will be poured out and a big portion of that wrath will be on those who have been deceiving the multitudes. Now then we can go into our next verse.

_Ephesians 5:7_

"*Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*"

In other words, God has given every believer enough knowledge of the Word that with just a little effort, and it doesn’t take a lot, but with just a little effort we can line these things up with the Word and see immediately that it’s false. And if it’s false we run from it, and this is what Paul is admonishing us to do. Let just use the example, *"If someone teaches you that you must do works for salvation, then that’s contrary to what Paul teaches the believer. So run from that kind of teaching. Paul teaches that salvation is a free gift we receive when we just simply believe the Gospel as outlined in I Corinthians 15:1-4."* Now verse 8.

Ephesians 5:8

*"For ye were sometimes (or at one time in) darkness but now are ye light in the Lord: (consequently since we have come out of darkness,) walk as children of light:"

Again you can just take that into any kind of an every day experience. It’s no fun to walk in the pitch dark, is it? Well it’s the same way spiritually, when people are walking in a spiritual darkness, they are in utter confusion, they just don’t know up from down. And this is where most of the world is walking tonight, _but you and I as believers don’t have that problem, we’re not walking in darkness._ We can walk with surety that we’re in the light and the light, as we’ll see in John 3 in a few minutes, is Jesus Christ.

_Ephesians 5:9_

"*(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all (things) goodness and righteousness and truth;)*"

Now who in the world can find fault with those three words? Who can find fault with _goodness?_ I don’t know who could. Who can find fault with _righteousness?_ Who in the world could find fault with _truth?_ The world is always looking for truth, but the only problem is they’re looking in the wrong places. See these are three words that are the epitome of the Christian experience, and so consequently, *"if we walk in the light, as John puts it in his little epistle, as He is in the light, then we have*
fellowship with Him, and in us there is no darkness at all." So as a result of our walking in the light we should be able to put forth goodness and righteousness, and truth, which no one should be able to find fault with. Now verse 10. Remember as we walk in the light, and as we are the epitome of goodness, righteousness, and truth, at the same time what are we doing?

_Ephesians 5:10_

"Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord."

We’re not proving what is acceptable unto society, or friends and relatives, but unto God. Now that’s what counts. Are we doing what is pleasing in His sight, or are we simply pleasing the world around us? Now verse 11. This is what people don’t like to hear.

_Ephesians 5:11_

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

Now we’re living in a day when even some of our politicians, and some of our more belligerent elements of Christianity thinks that we can literally turn the world around. They think we can just stop this slide down into more and more wickedness, down into more and more satanic power, and they try to give us the idea that we can reverse this trend. **But we can’t. Nor does the Scriptures say we will.** But what are we to do? We are to be in constant opposition to these forces. We are to stand like a dam in the river, and try to hold it back, but we’re not going to reverse the direction of that river. I just simply can’t find anything in Scripture that indicates that we are admonished to reverse the trend, it just won’t happen. But we can stand in opposition, and reprove these works of darkness, and that’s all God expects from the believer. Now to back me up on that let’s go to II Thessalonians chapter 2. We’ve used these Scriptures when we teach the coming of the anti-Christ, and so forth. Now this is the responsibility of every believer, in whatever time he has lived. Whether it was in Paul’s day, or whether it was a thousand years ago, or whether it’s today. This has been the proclivity of the truth believer.

_II Thessalonians 2:6_

"And now ye know what withholdeth (or holdeth back) that he (the anti-Christ up there in verse 4. There is this power that is holding back, that the anti-Christ) might be revealed in his time."
In other words, not ahead of time, and not behind time. So we become then a force under the power of the Holy Spirit to hold back these forces of iniquity that would literally prepare the world for the anti-Christ before his time. God isn’t going to let that happen so He uses the believers to reprove these works of darkness that are coming in as a flood. Now verse 7.

**II Thessalonians 2:7a**

"For the mystery of iniquity doeth already work:..."

I mean, this isn’t something that started in the 1900’s, or in the last thousand years, but rather this has been going on, I think, especially since the Tower of Babel when Nimrod caused people to fall into the trap of false gods, and satanically inspired mythology, and all these things. So this is where I think Paul is referring back to, although there was plenty of iniquity between Adam and the Tower of Babel. Always remember that all of the false religions that we’re up against today, and I don’t care what it is, whether it’s a huge religion, or a cult, or some little off shoot of something else, they all have their roots right back to the Tower of Babel, everyone of them, and have been working against God now for the last 4000 years, so it’s nothing new. Now back to the text.

**II Thessalonians 2:7**

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (or hinders) will let, (or hinder) until he be taken out of the way."

I’ve always felt that God here is referring to the work of the Holy Spirit, working through the believer. We are the ones that are to stand up and reprove, and hold back these forces of iniquity that would cover the world and make the anti-Christ’s appearance premature. We must slow the river of iniquity down, and that’s all we can do.

**II Thessalonians 2:8a**

"And then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed,..."

After we’re taken out of the way in the Rapture then the anti-Christ will be revealed, and when that happens it will be just like a dam being taken out of a river. Down stream there will be a flood like you can’t imagine, and it will be a flood of iniquity, and even though the first 3 1/2 years of that 7 are not going to be like the last 3 1/2 years, yet rest assured it’s going to be bad enough. Now verse 8 and then we’ll go back to the Book of Ephesians.
"And then (when that dam in the river, the Body of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, when it is taken out of the way) shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Now coming back to chapter 5 of Ephesians, and verse 11.

Ephesians 5:11

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

A dam in the river, we’re to hold it back, and that’s the best way I can explain it. Now that doesn’t mean that we have to go out and demonstrate, and do all these things that cause all kinds of problems in society, but we are to be that constant power of the Holy Spirit to admonish people to refrain from these things, and to be a reproving of these unfruitful works of darkness. Now verse 12.

Ephesians 5:12

"For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."

Now up until a few years ago most of this abject wickedness was kept secret, and we called it in the closet. But anymore it’s coming out in the open, there is no shame, there is no holding back and they have absolutely no conscience of what’s right and wrong. And so with that we have to move on to verse 13.

Ephesians 5:13

"But all things that are reproved (all of these things that the Bible declares are anti-God) are made manifest (are shown to be what it really is) by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."

Now when I come to that word "manifest" I always make the comparison of the little light under your microscope. I know every body hasn’t had a chance to look through a microscope, but any more I imagine that most have. And you know that when you put that slide under the lens you still don’t see anything until you turn of that power little light, and then you see things that you would never see otherwise. That’s what the Scripture I think means over and over when it uses the word "manifest." Now for a moment let’s come back to John’s gospel and see how Paul is in perfect accord with
even the gospel accounts of some of these things. Here in John chapter 3 we have Jesus speaking in His earthly ministry to Nicodemus. And, I always have to make people understand that **He was just more than the carpenter of Nazareth. He was the Creator God who knew the end from the beginning. He was the God of all power, He was the same most High God that Nebuchadnezzar came to recognize, but now as He has come in the form of the flesh, this same God speaks with that same authority that only God can have.** Now look what Jesus said in verse 19.

*John 3:19*

"And this is the condemnation, (this is why the human race is already condemned) **that light is come into the world,** (and even with the Light on the planet, walking there on the dusty roads of Israel) **and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."**

Is it stupid really? Like I’ve already said, there’s nothing more miserable than trying walk in pitch darkness. You stumble around, you don’t know where you’re going, and you don’t know what’s ahead of you, it’s just not a very happy experience to walk in total darkness. And yet mankind is stupid enough to rather walk in spiritual darkness, as to step into the Light.

Way back in one our earlier lessons, I used the example that I’m a rancher, and I’m down here in the mountains of Southeastern Oklahoma, and I have an abundance of rocks. Every once in a while on a hot summer day, I’ll just flip over one of those rocks to see what’s under it. It might be a snake, or spider, you never know what to expect. But you know what I’ve always noticed? When you turn that rock over on a real bright sunny Oklahoma day, those little creatures scurry for their little tunnels to get away from that light. They are accustomed to their darkness, and that’s what they prefer. **Well that is a good example that mankind also is. Just as soon as the Light of the Word of God hits them, they scatter like a covey of quail, because they don’t want the Light, they love their darkness.**

"Leave me alone" they say, "I’m happy in my miserable state," and that’s what they are, they’re miserable. My goodness, all you have to do is read the newspaper. Now I know it’s not the vast majority, but it’s too large a percentage that is in total misery. Most of the time they don’t even know it.

I don’t know whether I want to tell this or not because I love this state, and don’t want to bring a bad reflection on this state. But the other day in my "Daily Oklahoman" I happened to be going through the legal section, and there was a list of names in small print at least a foot long, of the divorces that had been filed that week in just one city. I look at that and think, "Look at all those couples that are going through the trauma
of divorce." I’ve visited with enough people from coast to coast that I’ve never yet talked to anybody that said divorce was a pleasant experience. But rather it’s a traumatic experience, and yet these multitudes are going through all of this because most are walking in darkness, and know not what it is to walk in the Light, and consequently they don’t even realize the source of so much of their unhappiness, and misery. Now coming back to the text in John chapter 3 let’s complete the thought.

**John 3:19b-20**

"...and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

That’s why they hate the Light. If they step into that Light then they suddenly see themselves as God sees them, and they don’t like that. So immediately they slip back into the darkness, just like my bugs under the rock. Now verse 21.

**John 3:21**

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest,..."

The ones that do come to the light are willing to let their deeds be seen, because the Light is now dealing with them. And remember that the Light of Scripture, the Lord Jesus Himself, does not deal with a person who wants salvation in His wrath and judgment, but instead He deals with the sinner in Grace and mercy, and compassion, and love. And he says, "You’re the one I’m looking for. I’ve loved you, I do love you, and I want you for myself," and all we have to do is step into the Light and we understand all that..

**John 3:21**

"But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, (that they can be seen for what they really are) that they are wrought in God."

Now of course the deeds that promoted from God Himself would be the good deeds as a result of our stepping into the Light! And a little further in John the Lord tells us, "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!" Now back to Ephesians for a quick wrap up of what we’ve been saying for last several minutes is in verse 13.

**Ephesians 5:13**
"But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."

So the whole secret for our Christian experience is that we rest on the knowledge that comes for the Light. And the Light of the world is Christ!
Lesson Three • Part II

The Light of Christ in Your Life

Ephesians 5:7-33

You know the most thrilling letters we receive are the ones that tell us that, "For the first time in my life I am reading my Bible and understanding it." What more could I ask for? If I can just get people to realize that this is not a closed Book, it’s not a dusty old Book, or a bunch of old fables told around a campfire, but rather this is the miraculous Word of God, and it fits so beautifully from cover to cover as it all just dovetails together, and you can understand it when you separate the Scriptures.

As you are probably realizing by now that if you don’t keep Paul’s little epistle, his teaching to the Gentile Body of Christ for our doctrine, separate from the teachings to the nation of Israel by the Old Testament prophets, Christ and His earthly ministry teachings, as we see in Matthew 15:24, and Romans 15:8, then you will never fully understand this tremendous Book.

But oh when you do see how Paul reveals from the mysteries that were given only to him that we’re saved by Faith + Nothing, how we’re baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ the moment we believe the Gospel as outlined in I Corinthians 15:1-4. And then how as believers we’re citizens of heaven, waiting for the Rapture of the Church so we can be caught up bodily to be with Christ, to go home with Him, and live with Him forever, then this Book becomes so exciting that we truly enjoy reading it.

Now in the last lesson we got as far as Ephesians chapter 5, verse 13, and we’re going to pick right up with verse 14. Remember all of this is Paul’s admonition to all of us in this Age of Grace, where we’re not under Law, we do not have a set of rules and regulations to guide us, but rather it’s a common sense approach. The Christian life is so practical, there’s nothing kooky about it, there’s nothing that should make people say, "Well I’d hate to be a Christian." because it is so practicable. Now I know that from the wicked area of the world they may think that we’re a little bit odd, but on the other hand I always have to make the point as we saw in verse 9 in our last lesson.

Ephesians 5:9

"(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.)"
Well who could argue with those three attributes? They’re what makes a society good, I don’t care where that society is. So again remember, Paul’s admonition to walking the Christian walk is not something silly, or something in general that the world would scoff at if they have any sense whatsoever of things that are good. Now in the last lesson we were talking about stepping in the Light of Christ who is the Light.

Ephesians 5:14

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Well there again, that’s a loaded verse. Who are the ones that are dead? Those that are still in their darkness, those who have still not stepped into the Light. And as one of the fellows just reminded me at break time, he had picked it up some where that the lost person is blind spiritually and doesn’t really know it. So it behooves us then as believers to let them know how blind they really are, and I like that concept. They just don’t know what they’re missing out on.

We see it everyday that people will call or write, "That for the first time they know what I’m talking about, their joy is just running over, and to have such freedom, that they’re not under some legalistic program anymore." This is all part and parcel of Paul’s teaching, that when we step into the Light, the Light manifests itself and we are set free then from our darkness. Now then verse 15.

Ephesians 5:15a

"See then that ye walk circumspectly,..."

Now a lot of people just gloss over some of these words without realizing, what’s he talking about? What does he mean to walk circumspectly? Well the word "circum" come from the word Circumference, and so what you’re really seeing here is a circle. I like to picture that you and I, as we walk in this world of darkness, wickedness, and iniquity, it’s just as if we are walking around them constantly, and they can see us from every side.

So Paul’s admonition then is, as we walk in the view of all the world around us they should be able to see nothing but a manifestation of the Light that we represent. Of course this is where so many professing believers fail. As we’ve said in past programs that the Lord is grieved, because His own people do not live a life that the world can look at without scornfully saying, "That’s the last thing I’d want to be." But we are to walk in such a way that they can say, "I wish I had what that person has. So we’re to walk circumspectly. And now what’s the next part of the verse?"
Ephesians 5:15b

"...not as fools, but as wise." Now we all have our own idea of the definition of a fool, but I always have to use the Scripture for the best definition. So let’s go back and look at it in Psalm chapter 14.

Psalms 14:1a

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God..." Now most Bibles will have the "There is" italicized, which means that it’s been added to hopefully clarify it, but in this case they didn’t do this verse any good at all by adding those two words. I like the way it read just by leaving it the way it was intended.

Psalms 14:1a

"The fool hath said in his heart, no, God...."

Not that there is no God, because I don’t think there’s a person alive that can honestly say that. Now there are some who try to claim they’re atheists, but way down deep inside of them, when the death angel comes knocking on their door, they’re suddenly going to realize too late, that there is a God, and that there is an eternity. So I don’t like to look at this verse in that light, but rather if you’ll put a comma after the word no, the fool says no to God. Do you see that? The fool says, No, God, I’m not going to do what you tell me, I’m not going to believe what you say. Now that’s a fool! Now as soon as you get the concept that the fool is the person who says no to God, he’s the man who is then destitute of faith.

So the definition of a fool then is actually a person who is destitute of faith, and we’ve had examples in the Scriptures of such people. Cain was the first one. The guy was destitute of faith, and consequently he didn’t bring the kind of sacrifice that God had told him to bring, because he didn’t believe what God had said, he rationalized. The next one we come to early on in Scripture is Ishmael. Ishmael was not a man of faith. He went and did just exactly opposite of what God, through his father Abraham had said, "Not to marry Canaanites," so he went and did it anyway. He showed the fact that he was destitute of faith because he said no to God.

Well the next one that’s a classic example of no faith is Esau. He was probably a nicer guy than his brother Jacob, but what was his problem? He had no faith! He couldn’t put an ounce of importance on anything God said, so consequently what happened to him? He became the epitome of a man with no faith. We also have the example of the nation of Israel when they were there at Kadesh Barnea, and God had told them, "The land of promise is ready for you, the land is flowing with milk and honey, it’s
productive. I’ll drive the Canaanites out of the land with hornets, you won’t even have to fight with them and lose a drop of blood, just go in and occupy the land." But you see the nation of Israel did not believe what God said. So what did they say? "No, we can’t take the land, because we would be like grasshoppers in their sight," and consequently because they couldn’t believe what God said, they missed the blessings of the land of milk and honey. Instead for 40 years ended up out there on that old barren dessert, and died like flies because they had no faith. And of course Hebrews chapter 3 teaches that.

Well, we see all this through Scripture where over and over that especially the nation of Israel had no faith. Also in the nation of Israel we find the Messiah came and presented Himself to be their King, and because they couldn’t believe a word that God said, through the Old Testament prophets, what was their attitude? "Nothing good can come out of the city of Nazareth." After His 3 years of performing miracles, signs and wonders, because of their unbelief as a nation of fools, if you please, what did they do? They crucified Him! So we see all through human history, that a person who refuses to believe the Word of God in actuality becomes a fool in God’s sight. He’s a man who says, "No to God!"

Now back to the Book of Ephesians chapter 5. So don’t walk as someone who doesn’t believe a thing that God says, but on the other hand we are supposed to walk as people of faith, knowing that this Word is true. I was thinking on the way up to Tulsa this morning that a few years ago at one of our gatherings, there was a fellow sitting in front of me as we were having coffee, that had a stencil on the back of his shirt that said, "Eternity! Have you thought about it?" That made such an impression on me, and I hope it did on the others that were there. Now think of that. How many people today even stop for 5 seconds, and consider eternity? It’s quite a thought isn’t it? Eternity is out there, and it’s not just a figment of our imagination, it is real, there is an eternity that is never ending. We have two choices in that matter. It can either be in God’s presence or it can be separation from God forever. So again, the fool says, "No God, there’s no eternity to concern myself about. I’m going to live it up here and now." But here in Ephesians Paul says, "Don’t be the fool."

Ephesians 5:15

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." (people of faith) Now reading on in the verse 16.

Ephesians 5:16

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."
Now Paul wrote that approximately 60 something AD. The world was just as evil then as it is now. The only difference was that there were fewer people on the earth at that time. But in the realm of the Roman Empire, I was just reading again the other night a series of biographies of something like 15 or 20 Romans emperors. Now this of course was Rome on the decline. These were just very short biographies of a paragraph or two long. Do you know that out of those 20 or so biographies, there were only two of those fellows that lived out a normal life span, and were buried in a normal old age? All the rest of them were murdered while they were in office. Emperor after Emperor was either poisoned, or killed one way or another, and died by a violent act except two.

Those that were with us a couple of years ago when we traced the steps of the apostle Paul, and at the time I wished I had never taken people to some of those places, but they all agreed that it was quite a lesson. Because it showed us the horror of the immorality that was rampant everywhere that the apostle Paul went. So don’t think that this is anything new. I remember back in the 70’s when we came out of the hippie movement of the 60’s and they were talking about the new morality? Well way back then I was telling my classes that it’s not a new morality, it’s the same old immorality that has plagued the human race from day one, nothing has changed. So when Paul says here in verse 16.

Ephesians 5:16

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Paul wasn’t looking ahead 2000 years and seeing our day per se. It was evil in his day. It was rotten and that’s why the Roman Empire fell. It was rotten to the core. Political corruption, economic corruption, moral corruption, and consequently the empire fell. We’re seeing basically the same thing here in western civilization. Don’t think for a moment that America is alone in their immorality. It’s just a fact that the days are evil. So we’re to redeem the time, buy it up, use it to the fullest extent. Now verse 17.

Ephesians 5:17

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

And there is only way that you will find the will of the Lord, and that’s get into the Book! When you get into the Book, then things began to happen. Now as you know I’m not a prosperity preacher. I don’t tell people, if you do this and do that, you’ll become a millionaire. In fact anything but. I had a gentlemen call one morning and told me that he’d been doing this, and now he was bankrupt. I told him, he deserved it, tough love, huh? But I told him I didn’t feel a bit sorry for him, because
there’s nothing in this Book that substantiates that kind of behavior. You’re to be prudent, you’re to be wise, you’re to use things according to the Scriptures. and not according to these ole buddies that’s out there giving you all this old hoopla that you can become rich giving to them. You’ll never find Paul in his teaching to us in this Age of Grace to do anything like that. You’re not going to tweak God’s nose, He’s not a Santa Claus. So we’re not to be unwise.

Ephesians 5:17

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Now this is all the same process of living under the Light, living according to the wise steps of a man of faith. Now verse 18.

Ephesians 5:18

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but (instead of using wine as the spirit) be filled with the (Holy) Spirit:"

Now I don’t know how many people stop to think of this; how many times have you driven through the city and you’ll see a sign over the liquor store that says, "spirits" Where do they get that? Alcohol is a spirit, it’s a mind bender. You know in the cattle business when they have auctions of their pure bred stock, they use to have about 5 o’clock in the afternoon, a cocktail hour. Do you know what they call it now? It’s an attitude adjustment time. That’s pretty coy isn’t it. Well I guess what they want to do is adjust the guy’s mind so he’s willing to spend a lot more than what he’d planned on spending. But the concept is the same here in the Scripture. We’re not to depend on the spirit of alcohol to effect our thinking, but the flip side is the Holy Spirit is whom we’re to depend on. The Holy Spirit becomes our mind adjuster, if you want to call it that, and He is the One who will lead us and direct us into all the things that God would have us to do. Now verse 19, I mean this is all in this same concept of the Christian walk. Is it to be a life of humdrum, or a life where you got your chin on your chest? No it’s a life of joy.

Ephesians 5:19

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

When I was looking at verse 19 last night preparing for today, I couldn’t help when I was reading this to think about the Haitian people we taught a couple of years ago. We’d start at 6:00 P.M. and for the first two hours it was sing, sing, sing. They would just lift the rafters, and although some of the songs were in languages we didn’t
understand, we understood the melody, and so we’d sing it in English, but it was an experience. Now you want to remember, those people are in abject poverty, they have absolutely nothing of this world’s goods. But boy when they started singing you’d never know they were lacking anything. **And that is to be the Christians behavior. Ours is to be a life of joy and happiness, and singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.** Now you know how King David responded more than once. My he just got exuberant, and there’s nothing wrong with that. Now verse 20, and this is still along this same line of thinking.

**Ephesians 5:20**

"*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:*"

Now after that verse I’ve got to turn to the Book of Philippians chapter 4, and verse 4. What’s the first word? Rejoice. Now that means exactly what it says. We’re not to be a people of chins on our chests and moping around thinking, "what a tough old world this is." No, but rather we’re to be in an attitude of rejoicing.

**Philippians 4:4**

"*Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*"

Now look what were the circumstances that Paul was in when he wrote this? Well he’s in prison in Rome, he’s under Roman guard, he’s got bands probably on both arms, and yet the man could write, "*Rejoice.*" Earlier in his ministry, he and Silas was down in the dungeon at Philippi, and they had just been scourged, which meant that their backs and torsos were like raw hamburger. Their feet were in stocks, rats and the like were running all over them you can be sure, and yet did Paul and Silas bemoan their condition? No, but rather they sang hymns. They sang those hymns so loud that all the prisoners took note of how these two men under their circumstances could still sing. So here in verse 4, Paul didn’t say this flippantly. Paul isn’t just all of a sudden writing from some great beautiful hotel room, and telling his poor people out there, "Hey rejoice" No, he’s in the worst of circumstances himself, and then he can say it twice in one verse. Now verse 5.

**Philippians 4:5**

"*Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*" Well if Paul thought the Lord was at hand then, how much closer is He today. But here’s the next verse that we came here to see.
Philippians 4:6a

"Be careful (or worry about nothing) for nothing; but in every thing (not just in some of the things of the Spirit, but in every thing that is important to us, God wants to hear it.) by prayer and supplication (now here’s the key) with thanksgiving..."

Most people today when they pray never think to thank Him. All most people do is ask, ask, ask. Well I can tell you right up front, those kind of prayers are not very apt to be answered. Every time we pray, we preclude it with thanksgiving. "Thank you Lord for what you’re going to do." And when it happens for goodness sakes, don’t forget to thank Him again.

Philippians 4:6b

"...let your requests be made known unto God."

How do we make our requests be made known unto God? We verbalize it. Do you see that? Now I know God can read our thoughts, don’t think for a minute that I don’t know that. But does God just expect us to think something, and then He takes it as our request? No. No, He expects us to verbalize these things, "Lord this is what I need. This is what someone else’s need is." We usually open our classes and our television programs with a time of prayer requests, and regardless what it is we know that God is concerned, but He expects us to verbalize these requests. Talk to Him about what concerns you. Then in verse 7 I always teach that this is the answer to every single prayer that you have uttered. If you are a true believer, every prayer that you utter is answered in verse 7. Then the direct request may be answered in the way you expect. But whether He says, "Yes, No, or Maybe later to your request in verse 6, He has already promised the response of verse 7, and what is that?

Philippians 4:7

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Now what does that mean? Regardless of what we’re praying for, whether it actually becomes a reality and is answered, that’s moot. But you know what’s important? THE PEACE WITH GOD! Even if we lose that loved one that we’re praying for, the peace with God puts us in a position to accept that, and to live with it. He may respond and answer exactly the way we hoped He would, but He is not bound to. But He is bound to give us that peace that passeth all understanding through Christ Jesus.
Lesson Three • Part III

The Light of Christ in Your Life

Ephesians 5:7-33

Now we’ll be turning to Ephesians chapter 5 again as we begin this lesson. In our last lesson we finished verses 19 and 20, but before we read verse 21, I think I’m going to go back up to verse 18, because all of this ties together so beautifully. After seeing how Paul tells us how to walk the Christian walk, and so forth in those verses up in 10, 11, and 12, then he comes to verse 18.

Ephesians 5:18

"And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; (don’t respond to the spirits of alcohol to mind bend your thinking) but be filled with the (Holy) Spirit:"

Of course that goes along with my concept that at salvation we get the fullness of the Holy Spirit. My we just get a whole fresh start, but just like anything else it kind of wears down, and then periodically we’ve got to be refilled. So according to Ephesians 4:5 and I Corinthians 12:13 there is one Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that happens the moment we’re saved, but after that you can have many fillings. I think it behooves us then to continue to be filled by the Spirit, which comes of course by the soaking up of the Scriptures, the study, prayer time, fellowship, and so forth, but we need that constant filling of the Holy Spirit.

Now then, when we’re filled with the Holy Spirit as you look at verse 19, it’s going to have an effect on our whole life style. It’s going to be a life of speaking of songs and hymns, and spiritual songs. Now that doesn’t mean we will never have bad times. Christians have just as many problems as the world around us. The difference is we have the Lord to take us through those times. Don’t ever accuse me teaching, that when you become a believer, you’re going to have a rose covered pathway, because it’s just not going to happen, but we do have the Lord to carry us through when it does happen.

And then in verse 20 in our closing remarks in the last lesson, that along with our rejoicing, and our happiness, we are to be constantly in an attitude of thanksgiving, and it’s all to be given to God though the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I’ve had people ask, "Are we still supposed to pray in Jesus name?" Absolutely. He is still interceding for us at the Father’s right hand, and so we pray to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Now in this same line of joyful Christian living, of all things what does Paul bring in? The marriage relationship, isn’t that amazing? **In other words, at the very heart of a Christian community is the family and the home.** And there’s a lot of talk lately about family in politics, but unfortunately they’re not using Paul’s approach to it, but rather they’re using the secular world, and the world view. But in this lesson today we’re going to look at the marriage relationship according to the Scriptures.

About a year or two ago, one of our major denominations made a statement concerning this very part of the marriage relationship "that the husband was to be the head of the wife," and remember the liberal press just about went into orbit. I remember all the feminist movements just about had a fit, and one lady said they had set equal rights back at least 30 years. **No, the Christian community is not setting anything back, but rather we’re exemplifying what the Scriptures says about the husband and wife relationship.**

I’ve said it as long as I’ve been teaching there has never been anything so instrumental in giving women their freedom, and their rights as Christianity has. You want to remember all the way back in human history, not just Israel, but in all of human history, the women were nothing. They couldn’t get an education, they couldn’t read, they couldn’t work math, they were kept ignorant purposely. Christianity is what opened the door for you. **I’ve said it over and over, don’t ever accuse Paul of being anti-feminist. He did more for the female gender than any other man of the human race.**

I had a lady call and said, "Les I used to hate the apostle Paul, I wouldn’t read any of his letters, in fact I didn’t even think it should be in the Bible. It was such a strong feeling that I also passed it on to my two married daughters. But thanks to you, I can now see the Scriptures completely differently. I see now that Paul is our apostle, and now I’ve got both my daughters convinced." Well praise the Lord that her eyes were opened. Here the apostle simply goes back to format that God intended. Oh it’s not what the sociologists think, or the psychologists say, or what the advice columns say, but what God says. Now don’t lose sight of this. In this whole format of being filled with the spirit, speaking and singing in songs, and making melody, giving thanks to God for everything, what does the next verse say?

**Ephesians 5:21**

"**Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.**"

Now you see we’re in a time when people don’t like to submit to anybody. We’re in the period of the big ego, the big number ONE. **But the scripture says, "that we are still to be submissive first and foremost to God. That’s an attitude of the**
Christian life. A verse just comes to mind in the Book of Psalms. I hadn’t intended to use this, but I referred someone to this a few days ago who was going through some trying times. They were almost despairing that God was even aware of them. So let’s look at Psalms 37:5 and I can pass this on to anybody that’s going through trying times, whatever the case may be. Even though it’s Old Testament, and David speaking it, yet God hasn’t changed.

I told someone early this morning that called that they were putting too much of your doctrine on the Old Testament, that Law. He said, "Well what am I supposed to do, throw it away?" No. You don’t throw the Old Testament away, it’s the same God, the only thing is He’s operating differently under Law than He does with us under Grace. But many things that David says are very appropriate for us in the Church Age, and this is one of them.

Psalms 37:5

"Commit (that’s almost in the category of submit) thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; (remember there’s three words that means the same thing, Trust, Faith, and Believe,) and he shall bring it to pass." Now we don’t know when, we just rest in the fact that’s it’s in God’s hands, and we submit it into His care and keeping. Then you come down to verse 7, and what’s the first word?

Psalms 37:7a

"Rest in the LORD,..."

Once you’ve committed something to God, we can rest. I’ve used this illustration more than once. Say you’re taking a trip on an airplane, you find your seat, and get all squared away and take off. Do you start fretting and sweating and wondering, "is this plane going in the wrong direction?" Maybe some people do, but I think the average passenger sits down, picks up something to read, and you have totally committed your life and direction to the airline. And you just absolutely trust that they’re going to take you where you intended to go. Well it’s the same way in the spiritual, once we have committed to the Lord, then we know what direction we’re going, and we don’t have to wonder and worry. Now completing verse 7.

Psalms 37:7a

"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him:..."
But you see we’re not patient, we’re living in a time of instant gratification. I want it right now. But you see the Lord doesn’t move as fast as we think He should, but rest assured if we wait patiently, He’s going to bring it to pass.

_Psalms 37:7b_

"...fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

And isn’t that always a temptation? We see the ungodly prosper, they’re driving their big cars, and living in their huge homes, and we know that they’re ungodly. Don’t worry about it, living today will probably be the only heaven that they’ll have, their doom is waiting them. So don’t worry about that, and use those two verses when trying times come your way. Now come back with me to the Book of Ephesians. It’s the same way in the marriage relationship. We commit our marriage unto the hands of the Lord, and as the husband and wife in union commit that marriage to the Lord, then it follows that we’re going to follow God’s format. And God’s format was established back in the Garden of Eden. And here it is.

_Ephesians 5:22_

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, (not as some slave master, but like a husband) as unto the Lord."

There’s nothing wrong with being submissive to that kind of husband. 99.9% of women would just thrive in that kind of an environment, to be married to a man who treats her, even as the Lord treats him, and that’s the analogy all through here. Now verse 23. Why should the wife submit to the husband? Because of God’s decree.

_Ephesians 5:23_

"For the husband is the head of the wife, (and again look at the analogy) even as Christ is the head of the church: (the Body of Christ) and he is the saviour of the body."

Now in order to become the saviour of the Body of Christ, what did Christ have to do? He had to die! So what’s the admonition to you and I as husbands, men? We’ve got to be willing to die for our wives, and I think I could die for Iris, unless something drastically would happen I think I would die for her, because that’s what the Scripture demands. We are to love our wife with such a love that we’re willing to give up our life for her.
Now I’m going to take you back to the Old Testament, for the benefit of the women out in television, as well as here in the studio. How many women will say, "Well I’m not going to go by what my husband says, because he can make the dumbest decisions." Isn’t that right? Sure, we all do. You know I’ve made a couple of whammies myself, I really have. But Iris doesn’t constantly remind me of it, she could, but she’s a good wife. **Do you know what God has promised by our going back to the Old Testament? That in spite of our dumb moves, God works it out for His own good.**

So come back with me to Genesis chapter 12, I know I probably can’t finish this in this half hour program, so we’ll have to continue into the next lesson if that’s the case. Iris and I are going out to Pennsylvania next week for a seminar, and a lady called this morning and wanted to know what I was going to speak on. I told her that I would tell her as soon as I stood up before them and got started, that’s probably when I’ll know, and not until. Here in chapter 12, we’re dealing with Abram and Sarai before God gave them the name Abraham and Sarah. Abram has just been given the Abrahamic Covenant, so he’s on right standing with God, he’s a believer, he’s a man of faith, and no doubt Sarai is as well, because of what Peter says about these people. So here we’ve got two believers, and they’ve just begun their walk with the God after He had given them this tremendous covenant promise earlier in the chapter.

And as I tell people so often when I’m instrumental in leading them to the Lord, "Now in short order, you’re going to come through a time of testing." That happens every time to a new believer, God will test them. And all it does is just deepen their faith. Well here we have the same thing. Abraham has just now begun his walk on covenant ground and there’s famine in the land of promise.

Now I’m sure Abram has been instructed not to go down into Egypt, but yet he goes contrary to those instructions. Now for those of you who knows your Bible, Egypt is always a picture of what? The world. So he leaves the land of blessing, and land of promise, even though it’s being tested with famine, and drops down into Egypt, which was a lot like Washington DC is today. Egypt was at the very core of all the commerce, and economic activity and so forth, so it had all the lurement that the world even today has. So here Abram and his wife, and of course his nephew Lot is also still with him, can’t take the heat of the famine in Canaan, so down to the world they go. No doubt there’s plenty of food and grain there.

**Genesis 12:10-12**

"And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land. 11. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, (he’s on the border) that he said unto Sarai his
wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: (now this is a believing husband speaking to a believing wife) 12. Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife; (she is such a knock out, Pharaoh is going to want her in his harem) and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive."

You want to remember that the ancients had a moral code, and don’t think for a moment that they didn’t. They may have abrogated most of the time but they had a moral code. So Abraham knew his life wasn’t going to be for long, and he was thinking up a plan to stay alive. Now you’re going to see the thing that Abram did was the exact opposite of what Paul instructs us to do concerning our wives in this Age of Grace. Paul is teaching that Abraham should have been able to say, "Sarai, you’re beautiful, they’ll probably kill me, but for your sake, I’m willing to let them do it." But Abram chickened out. I mean he chickened out, and said, "Now Sarai, we’re not going to let them kill me for your sake. You just go ahead and tell them that you’re my sister, and they will spare my life." Now isn’t that something?

Now according to today’s thinking, the sociologists, the psychologists, and the feminists, they would say, "What should Sarai have done?" She should have wrapped him on the side of the head and said, "I’m not going to do such a thing. I’m not going to end up in some pagan king’s harem just for your sake." Isn’t that the thinking today? But you see Sarai didn’t respond that way. Sarai, obediently let them take her, and sure enough old Abram was right as they took her into the king’s harem. But you know what? The Almighty overruled. Even though Abram pulled a dumb stunt, God still overruled on behalf of Sarai. And I think the lesson for women today is, yes once in a while your husband is going to make a dumb move, but you know what we know? "God is going to intervene in such a way that the end result for both husband and wife will still be for our good."

Now let’s look at another one in chapter 20, and by now you’d think Abraham would have known better. He got kicked out of Egypt the first go around because of what he tried to do, and so now he’s back in that same border area of Gerar, a different king of course, and now verse 1, and this was a good many years later, his name has been changed from Abram to Abraham already.

**Genesis 2-1-2**

*And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. 2. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.*
Now you have to understand the pagan thinking of the ancients, and that was that they would kidnap beautiful women and bring them into the kings harem against their will. So Abraham instead of standing up and giving his life for Sarah lets them take her, and so she ends up in Abimelech’s harem, but God intervenes.

**Genesis 20:3**

"But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife."

And of course you know what the story goes on to say. Abimelech woke up and brought Sarah quickly back to Abraham. Then there’s one more occasion this happens, and we find Isaac pulls the same stunt with his beautiful wife Rebekah in chapter 26 of Genesis. Remember this is a whole generation later.

**Genesis 26:6-7**

"And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: 7. And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon."

Instead of saying, "That’s my wife and I’m ready to die for her", he says, "She’s my sister." In so many words Isaac is saying, "You can have her."

**Genesis 26:8-9**

"And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. 9. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her."

Well we know that the Lord intervened again, before anything happened, and spared both Abraham, and Isaac, and their wives.

Do you see now how women can rest on the promises of God that if you are submissive to your husband as Sarah and Rebekah were, even though your husband can make a stupid move, God by His intercessory power can take care of the situation. So don’t ever doubt that God can overcome every bad situation.
Lesson Three • Part IV

The Light of Christ in Your Life

Ephesians 5:7-33

As we start this last lesson, let me remind you that we do not promote any denomination. I maintain that this Book is for everybody, as no denomination has a corner on heaven or salvation. So we just simply teach the Word and we let the chips fall where they may. Not everyone likes where the chips falls, and sometimes we step on toes. One lady, as she left a class of mine, once said, "My toes are bleeding." I said, "Well come back next week and we’ll do it all over again. I can’t back off what the Book says, just to keep from hurting your feelings." We just try to lay out so plainly what the Bible really says, and what it doesn’t say.

In our last lesson we had gone back and looked at how Abraham and Isaac were both failures as husbands a couple of times, but God interceded, and took care of their wives in spite of their failures. I feel the same thing is appropriate today. When we’ve got a wife who submits to her husband, he may not always be right, he may at times stumble, yet if she plays her role as God intended it, He will make up the differences. Always remember that Paul is talking about the marriage relationship of believers. Now Lord knows that ungodly men cannot be given this kind of freedom and responsibility, because they would abuse it.

But we’re not talking about those kind of men. But rather we’re talking about believing men who know the Lord, who love the Lord, who, as we’ve seen in these previous verses, knows what it is to walk in the fullness of the Spirit. What is to walk in the life of rejoicing and happiness, knowing the Lord is the head of the husband, as the husband, in turn is the head of the wife. So always keep this in perspective. This is not given men a free reign to just simply lord it over the women. No way! Nothing in Scripture ever gives men that prerogative. But when it comes to the final analysis of decision making, and especially when it comes to disciplining the children, then the major responsibly falls on the father, as we’re going to see in our next lesson, in chapter 6. We know that’s a far cry from today where most of the discipline is left to the poor mother. Now verse 23.

Ephesians 5:23

"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."
Now always remember that the word "Church" does not mean that building on the corner. As I was thinking about these things last evening, I remember when Iris and I were first married. She was from Oklahoma and I was from up in Iowa, and her expression always was, "The Church house." "We’re going to go to the Church house." Yeah, I see you nodding your head. Well up North in Iowa, and for most people today, that’s almost an unknown term. Oh I used to ride herd on her for saying that, and would ask, where do you get that? Well she would say, "that’s what it is!" But I had never heard of such a thing, we just called it the Church. But you know what? She was right, it is the Church house, that building is not the Church.

That building is just brick and stone. The Church is made up of the true believers who meet in that Church house. So I was completely wrong on that one, but according to our culture this is the way we’ve come to look at it. **The Church is made up of the believing element, "the Body of Christ." and that’s the way Paul always uses the word Church.** The word in the Greek is "Ecclesia" and you can spell it with k’s or c’s, it doesn’t make any difference, and is always translated with one or two exceptions, as Church, but it should be defined as "A called out assembly."

So the called out assembly is the Body of Christ when Paul uses it, but it’s not that way in other passages. For example in Acts chapter 7 we find Stephen speaks of the Church which was in the wilderness. Well now it wasn’t a building with a steeple, you all know that. Neither was it a Church that practiced the Lord’s Supper, and had pastors, bishops, and deacons. But rather it was the children of Israel, recently come out of Egypt. So why in the world does the New Testament call them a Church? Well they were a called out assembly of people recently in Egypt and now around Mount Sinai, but for goodness sake they weren’t a Church as we think of the word Church. So when you see the word Church, this is why Paul almost always identifies it as **"The Church which is His Body,"** which makes a big difference from the word Church that’s maybe used elsewhere in Scripture.

**Ephesians 5:23b-24a**

"...even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24. Therefore as the church..."

This composite of believers around the whole world that makes up the True Body of Christ, whether we’re Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Catholics - that’s moot. If we’re born again and children of God, we are automatically in that Body of Christ, and that Body of Christ will be meeting in Church buildings. But always remember that not all people meeting in those Church buildings are in the Body of Christ. That depends of course how much of the "Truth" is promoted. **If the people in that particular building believe for their salvation that Jesus Christ died for their
sins, was buried and rose again, + Nothing, then these people are what are called "true believers, and are part of the Body of Christ!" Now completing verse 24 we find that this true Church,

**Ephesians 5:24b**

"...is subject unto Christ, so (in like manner then) let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

Do you see the analogy? Now goodness sakes Christ has never brow beat a member of the Body of Christ, has He? Christ has never made life miserable for a member of the Body. Christ has never made unfair demands on the Body, neither should a husband do that to his wife. Do you see that analogy? Now unless people think, "Well that’s just Paul talking," let’s turn to I Peter, and as amazing as it seems, Peter uses almost the same kind of language, so far as this marital relationship is concerned. My goodness these are two totally different apostles in their view of things, but when it comes to this marriage relationship under God, they can use the same language.

**I Peter 3:1a**

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands;..."  

Oh I can just hear the feminists, and the equal rights amendment people, because they don’t like this kind of language, but this is God’s format. Now the rest of this verse deals with a Christian wife with an unbelieving husband. She is unequally yoked, but look at these instructions for that particular circumstance.

**I Peter 3:1b**

"...that, if any (husband, they’re an unbeliever) obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation (manner of living, or the lifestyle) of the wives;"

My that’s quite a statement isn’t it? Do you know what Peter is saying? Listen believing wives don’t preach at your husband, don’t try and drag him to the Church house against his will, don’t nag him to get into the Book, but rather you practice the Christian walk so that he can’t help but be amazed at what an example of Christianity that wife really is. When that wife operates under those conditions, realizing that she’s doing it with God’s help, and that her whole desire is that her husband will come to a knowledge of salvation, God’s going to honor it. Now it may take longer or shorter, depending on the case, but sooner or later, God’s going to honor that wife’s testimony. I’ve seen it happen, and have already rehearsed it on the
program before, it was extreme, but in a matter of months that fellow, highly educated, tremendous income, and yet because of that Christian walk of the wife, he suddenly realized what a reprobate he really was. He’ll tell you himself, he told us at the time, "I just fell on my knees in my office, and said God I’m a sinner, I want the salvation that my wife has got." And this fellow became a real trophy of God’s Grace. He became active in a local Church, and went on from there. Now let’s read verse 2.

_I Peter 3:2_

"While they (the unsaved husband) **behold your chaste** (pure) **conversation** (manner of living) **coupled with fear.**"

Now that’s not the kind of fear we think of when we’re just scared to death. No this is a fear of respect, and reverence. Now here in verse 3 is how the wife is to actually have an impact on that unsaved husband.

_I Peter 3:3_

"**Whose adorning** (or beauty) **let it not be that outward adorning** (beauty) **of plaiting** (fixing) **the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;**"

Now listen. Here’s where some groups have taken the Scripture completely out of context, and say that you can’t fix your hair, you can’t look decent, you can’t wear jewelry, but that’s not what this verse says. All this verse says is, "if the woman is going to make an appeal to the man’s lost estate, instead of trying to do it with her outward attraction, do it with the inner, and that’s what Peter says in the next verse.

_I Peter 3:4_

"**But let it be the hidden man** (woman) **of the heart,** (let her salvation experience literally have an impact on that old boy who is out there lost.) **in that which is not corruptible,** (in the realm of the spirit) **even the ornament** (or dressing up) **of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.**"

Oh the Book of Proverbs chapter 31:10-31, says it even better than that, doesn’t it? It tells all she can do, and will do. Now verse 5.

_I Peter 3:5_

"**For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves,** (in the realm of the spirit) **being in subjection unto their own husbands:**"
We just saw in the last lesson how Sarah, and Rebekah in complete subjection to their husbands obeyed. But also remember that God, in spite of their husbands goofs, didn’t let anything blow up. Now verse 6.

*I Peter 3:6-7a*

"Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him lord: (that’s a small l, so it’s just simply a term of respect) whose daughters ye are (and of course Peter is writing to Jewish believers in particular) as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. 7. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel,..."

It doesn’t say, "equal vessel, but the weaker one. But oh listen, for the wife that has a husband that behaves himself as the Lord treats the Church, she doesn’t have to be afraid to admit that she’s the weaker vessel, but rather she’s to be most envied. Now reading on in verse 7.

*I Peter 3:7b-8a*

"...and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. 8. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren,..."

Now this goes on and stretches beyond the home, but it’s still so applicable to the husband and wife relationship. Now coming back to our text in Ephesians chapter 5. And so we have found that Paul and Peter agree on this subject of the husband and wife. And that’s natural because it’s Holy Spirit inspired, that the wife is to be submissive to the husband, but the husband is to love his wife.

*Ephesians 5:25a*

"Husbands, love your wives,..."

Now that’s a commandment! There are many people who think the only commandments in Scripture are the Ten. Oh no! The Scripture is just full of commandments. Paul has all kinds of them for us in this Church Age we’re in right now. Now they’re not under the same scenario as the Ten, but they’re still Scriptural admonitions. In another place Paul tells us, "to pray without ceasing," and in still another place he tells us, "to resist the devil." Now those are commandments that we should be doing.
And this commandments in Ephesians commands the husband to love his wife, and any time we husbands, myself included, get less than loving we have to immediately say, "Now wait a minute, God’s command is to love her." Whether you think you have reason to love her or not, the command of God is, "you love her." After all that’s why the Lord gave her to you.

Now I always point out, and this is to the chagrin of the men, and for the benefit of you women. "Men are commanded to love the wife, the wife is never commanded to love the husband." Now does that mean she’s free to just simply take off and leave him? No. Do you know what that means? That God has so constructed in the creation of the female, assuming that she’s normal, "that if she has a husband who loves her as much as Christ loves the Church, she is automatically going to love that man, and she doesn’t need anyone telling her how to do it."

Now you see this all goes back to the Garden of Eden in Genesis chapter 2, verses 23 and 24. This is where this whole format of the husband being the head of the woman began, and God never rescinded it. Never! It has been part and parcel of Scripture all the way up through human history, and it’s still valid today.

**Genesis 2:23-24**

"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. (Eve was in Adam) 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Now that’s the way it began. Even though Eve was in Adam at creation, yet it wasn’t until God presented her to the man as his wife that they took on the concept of the two becoming one. That’s where it really began, and Paul will refer to that here in Ephesians.

**Ephesians 5:25-26**

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

We’re already forgiven, but we’re in the old world and we’re going to be defiled occasionally by sin, and so we need that daily cleansing that only the Word can give us. It’s the only washing that Paul gives us. Now verse 27, Paul continues on with the spiritual.
Ephesians 5:27

"That he (Christ) might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And then in verse 28 Paul comes back to the physical aspect.

Ephesians 5:28

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

I mean everyone of us knows that. As soon as we are less than loving to our wives, we’re going to notice it. She’s not going to be as responsive. I’m not going to expect fresh made apple pie if I’ve been treating her like dirt. But oh my when I treat her right, then those are some of the things that I can expect. Now moving on.

Ephesians 5:29-33

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: 30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31. For this cause (because we’re one with Christ, and one with our wife) shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Now I’ve been teaching this for young and older people for I guess over twenty years, and I’ve always said that if we could practice this the divorce rate would drop to zero.