

Washing of The Water by the Word III

Fred Coulter—February 12, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. Let's come to Ephesians 5 and let's see something very important. Let's see what all of this is to do and how that *the washing of the water by the Word*. We saw how the water is a type of Holy Spirit, the Word is the Word of God, and how that *by the washing of the water by the Word* we're going to see is one of the most important things in our

- changing
- growing
- overcoming
- developing the mind of Christ
- and the character of God

So let's go to Ephesians 5; here is the whole of what God wants us to do, right here. What is the most pleasing to God is we love Him and serve Him and keep His commandments. What is the whole purpose of it? What is the whole purpose of conversion? Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children."

That's quite a goal! That also ties in with Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." So you look at this sinful body and as long as we're in the flesh and we have the *law of sin and death* in us, it's a sinful body. We're going to do things that aren't right. We'll have little bloopers, big bloopers, and some catastrophic bloopers, but we can recover from it.

Ephesians 5:2: "And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us... [then we go back and we think about what Christ did to give up being God, to become a human being, so that He could save His creation. That's quite a thing and that's what the Passover's all about. We're coming closer to the Passover, like was mentioned earlier. We're two months from the Passover.] ...and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." Now then it warns:

- don't do certain things
- don't live like the world
- don't get involved in sexual promiscuity, etc.

Sometimes these sentences of Paul are so long, especially the first chapter. The first chapter in Greek is almost one sentence. Now he would flunk English classes, but it was perfect Greek.

Verse 22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord... [And that would solve an awful lot of problems, not all of them, but a

lot of them.] ...For the husband is *the* head of the wife, even as Christ *is the* Head of the Church; and He is *the* Savior of the body. For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything" (vs 22-24). This is how we are all to be subject to Christ, the same thing. So everybody's under authority. God's not picking on women, everybody's under authority.

Verse 25: "Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it." So, there is the reciprocity, you see. Both are incomplete and both need to come together and both need to do what God wants them to do; likewise, as we respond back to Christ.

Verse 26: "So that He might sanctify it... [sanctify it means *to make it Holy*] ...having cleansed it... [that shows a process] ...**with the washing of water by the Word**" (v 26). And as we've been seeing, that's how then we get our minds converted and changed and actually spiritually reconstructed with the

- Word of God
- Truth of God
- Spirit of God

And how then today we're going to see one of the things we need to do, as I have mentioned but we'll see it a little bit more today, you need to have God erase the sins from your mind. You need to pray and ask God, 'God, *with the washing of the water by the Word*, cleanse my mind. Help me to get rid of these thoughts. Help me to overcome *through the washing of the water by the Word.*'

Verse 27: "That He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious Church..." That's what God wants. It's not a matter of overbearing. It's not a matter of authority in that particular sense, but it's a matter of all of this based on the love of God.

And this then, is how we come back to v 1, "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children."

Verse 27...not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame." That all involves

- prayer
- repentance
- changing
- changing our thinking
- letting the Word of God being put in our mind

Let's see what else God does. This becomes very interesting as we put it together here. Let's come to Jeremiah 11:20—this shows how God operates all the time: “But, O LORD of hosts Who judges righteously...”

- with mercy
- with judgment
- with love
- with understanding

“...Who tries the heart and the mind... [Now here Jeremiah was suffering so many things, and he was really going through it. You talk about one man against the world. That was Jeremiah.] ...let me see Your vengeance on them. For to You I have committed my cause” (v 20). Now that's something—isn't it? *Yes!*

Now let's see the same thing in Psalm 7. So all of this is an ongoing process as

- we change
- we grow
- we repent
- we overcome
- have our minds cleansed

God has the mind so it can forget. But as I mentioned we need to be like the Apostle Paul. *He remembered the lesson, but didn't relive the past.*

Psalm 7:1: “O LORD my God, in You have I taken refuge; save me from all who pursue me and deliver me.... [Quite a thing! David had a lot of different problems. These here was when he was being chased.] ...Lest he tear my soul like a lion, ripping it in pieces, and there is no one to deliver. O LORD my God, if I have done this... [whatever it was] ...if there is iniquity in my hands, If I have rewarded evil to the one who was at peace with me, or if I have plundered my enemy without cause—Then let the enemy pursue my soul and take it...” (vs 1-5). So, here he was bargaining with God. I don't know whether I would be willing to bargain with God quite that way, but David was a man after God's heart so he could do that. We all have enough to overcome.

Verse 5: “...yea, let him trample down my life upon the earth and lay my honor in the dust. Selah. Arise, O LORD, in Your anger; lift up Yourself against the rage of my enemies...” (vs 5-6). That's also something to remember: ***Let God fight your battles for you.*** Just let them be. Now there are certain things we need to do, but don't get in the middle of a battle. Turn them into God's hands. He'll take care of it. Because how many times you try and fight a situation and someone has done something and you get all involved in it and there's really nothing you can do about it—right? *Put them in God's hands!*

Verse 6: “...and awake for me at the judgment which You have commanded... [v 8]: ...The LORD shall judge the people; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to my integrity within me. O let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous, for the righteous God tries the hearts and reins” (vs 6, 8-9)—of both those who are seeking God and those who are not.

Now let's see how the Apostle Peter tells us how we are to cleanse; all of this is a cleansing:

- cleansing of the heart
 - cleansing of the mind
 - changing the way that we think
 - changing our whole approach
- and everything that we do.

1-Peter 1:14. Here again it tells us what our relationship with God is and what we need to be doing. “As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, as you did in *your* ignorance. But according as He Who has called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct.... [Now the only way that can be is by change of mind, ***by the washing of the water by the Word.***] ...For it is written, ‘You be Holy because I am Holy.... [Here is a series of tremendous promises that go with this.] ...And if you call upon the Father, Who judges... [righteously] ...according to each man's work without respect of persons, pass the time of your *life's* journey in *the* fear of God” (vs 14-17).

“Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers; But by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot... [We have—with the Word of God, God's Spirit—all the tools necessary to be perfected with the Spirit of God.] ...Who truly was foreknown before the foundation of *the* world, but was manifested in these last times for your sakes; *even for you* who through Him do believe in God, Who raised Him from *the* dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God” (vs 18-21). That's where we're continually looking, not to ourselves, not to our abilities, not to what we can do though we have put forth a maximum effort as we're led by the Holy Spirit of God.

“Having purified your lives by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, love one another fervently with a pure heart” (v 22). So there's the whole formula right here expressed in a little different way by the Apostle Paul. So it's the cleansing of the heart, the sanctifying of us by ***the washing of the water by the Word.***

Let's look at some of the things of cleansing and purifying and how that is. First of all, let's see from Matthew 23, what God said to the Pharisees and the scribes. So it's not a matter of what of you do on the outside. It's not a matter of what the impression is that people can look at you and see. That's fine, but what God is interested in is

- what is in your heart
- what is in your mind
- how are you thinking

Here's what Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees—read all of Matt. 23, that's a pretty heavy chapter. It would be like going today to an assembly of rabbis or Catholic priests and pointing out all their sins in a very powerful way. He was not tactful.

Matthew 23:25: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...” In doing the research for *Lord, What Should I Do?* and why churches are falling apart, the #1 thing was *hypocrisy*. Not a matter of a little fault, not a matter of something that was slightly misguided, but *hypocrisy*. They would say one thing and do another, same way in politics.

I came home the other day for lunch and Dolores said, ‘Did you hear about this Republican that just resigned for adultery with a woman? He was just elected.’ And I said, ‘No.’ Well, he was a hypocrite. He was married, pretended he wasn't, went online, worked out things to go with this woman. I guess John Boehner took him into the office and said, ‘Resign!’ You can't be hypocritical in your behavior.

Here's what the hypocrites do, v 25: “...For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess.” Sound like a lot of people we know? Someone sent me an article, Why is Bernie Madoff in prison? Then showed that what he did was nothing compared to what the Social Security dilemma is.

Verse 26: “Blind Pharisees!...” Remember what He said when He healed the man who was born blind and the Pharisees came and said when they understood He was speaking of them, they said, ‘Are we blind?’ And Jesus said, ‘If you were blind, you would be without sin. But you say that we see, but you don't.’ *Yes, indeed!*

“Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside... [That's with the *washing of the water by the Word* to cleanse *inside*.] ...cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean.... [Notice He tells them again]: ...Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the* outside, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness. Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men *to be* righteous,

but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (vs 26-28).

That's the way that human nature is. We need to be changed from within. What happens when you have a whole society that completely rejects the normal standards that God expects from the Ten Commandments? Well, we have the example of the Flood. Everyone's imagination was evil only from his youth up. Think what we're doing to some of the youth today. We're putting them on these computer games at what, age five? Some of them get so good that even their fathers can't compete against them.

But most of those computer games are what? *Very demonic!* What does it do to the mind? What does it do to the mind when you watch evil? When you think evil? When you practice evil? Your mind has to be cleansed and that's why we have *the washing of the water by the Word*.

Let's see how we get cleansed. Let's go to the book of Proverbs. As I've mentioned, the book of Proverbs is really a good study for getting things reoriented in your mind. Because it talks about right and wrong, good and evil and how you then can in your thinking be able to make judgments concerning things so that you're not getting yourself in trouble and you're not living contrary to the Word of God.

Here's part of the thing of the inward mind must be changed. Proverbs 26:24: “He who hates *and* disguises it with his lips stores up deceit within himself.” You build deceit! Why? *When you do that with hatred*—and we'll talk about different things we need to overcome—*you justify yourself* that you are right and you are building up deceit within.

“When he makes his voice gracious, do not believe him... [it's talking of a con man right here] ...for seven hateful things *are* in his heart. *He whose* hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be revealed before the congregation” (vs 25-26). In other words, it will come out.

This is why there's repentance, there's confession, and there is the cleansing of the mind. Proverbs 28:12: “When the righteous triumph, *there is* great glory; but when the wicked arise, men hide themselves. He who covers his sins shall not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes *them* shall have mercy” (vs 12-13).

- How do you establish your thoughts?
- How do you ‘bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ’?

As we're told we are to do!

- How do we let the *washing of the water by the Word* change us within and overcome these things?

What we need to do when we're reading this, we need to think about:

- the Holy Spirit
- the use of the Holy Spirit
- how we do this
- how our minds work
- what we need to do
- the things that still are problems in your life

Of course, we're always going to have problems as long as we're in the flesh, so none of us are without problems. Think about that and then pray about it. We're going to talk about some of the things that get people down and things that get stuck in their craw and things that they have a hard time letting go. So here's the basic approach we need to take.

Proverbs 16:1: "The preparations of the heart in man, but the answer of the tongue, are from the LORD." So He's given us the ability to do that. Here is the problem with the carnal deceitful mind. This is

- why we need the *Spirit of Truth* to lead us
- why we need the *Word of Truth* to guide us
- why we need *the cleansing by the washing of the water* by the Word

Verse 2: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes..." Everyone thinks he's right.

We have the 'Smokers Paradise' down below here where we meet. Every once in a while I see people going in. I see young healthy people going in/coming out, and if you would have walked up to them and said, 'Don't you know that this is going to kill you?' *Oh, well, I've been smoking three years and I don't have cancer.* Then you watch the old people go in and it's quite amazing. You can tell that they have been smoking for years, but they've gotta go in, they've gotta get their fix with the cigarettes. The difference between the youth going in and the older people going in, who have been smoking for years, is dramatic.

The youth, they look vibrant and young, no wrinkles, no grey hair. Now I didn't get my white hair from smoking; that just came upon me gradually for fifty years. But, even if they're slumped over, coughing, and you can tell that they're short of breath. I don't know if you've ever seen someone die from emphysema. It's a terrible, terrible thing! One day they were young, like the young ones going into the store, Smokers' Paradise, but now look at them. It's a terrible situation.

I remember going to visit someone in the hospital who had lung cancer and they had to put a tracheotomy here and they just couldn't quit smoking, just could not quit smoking. And so they would take the cigarette, stick it in the tracheotomy

and light it and smoke. That's the end of the 'smoker's paradise'; that's their paradise. I remember one time someone described to me what a smoker's lungs look like. The lungs are very delicate. Now they can repair, they can heal, if you catch it in time. But there are like little—I don't know how to describe it—but they clean the air, they take in oxygen, release carbon dioxide, and all of this is necessary for your health.

So if you don't smoke, you're going to be fine. You won't get any of the diseases that they get from smoking, but now you have something even worse: marijuana. And that THC not only goes into the lungs, it goes into the mind and it messes up the mind, sometimes permanently because it affects the synapse between the nerves where the electricity of your brain is supposed to cross from cell to cell, and they burn them up, sometimes permanently. Other times they can recover from it.

But 'every way of a man is clean in his own eyes.' You think you're right. You can use many examples. What about the kamikaze pilots? They were 'right' in doing what they were doing. What about those who commit murder? They always have an excuse as to why they did it. I remember watching a case of one man. He killed his wife and three children, planned the whole thing, disappeared; they couldn't find him. He changed his name. He was supposed to be a church-goer and all of this sort of thing. He killed them so they could go to heaven immediately. So he knew he was 'right.' So he had absolutely no remorse.

He moved from the east coast to Colorado and they finally caught him. What's this one that they have? *Most Wanted!* What they did, they were able from his picture to reconstruct his whole face and head what he would like at his age. They put that out on *The Most Wanted* and they got a lot of calls. One of them was right on. And here the man went out there, reestablished his life, going to church, married again. 'Every way of a man is clean **in his own eyes**, but the Lord weighs the spirit.'

This is the key: Are you having trouble overcoming? Having trouble getting rid of evil thoughts or bitterness or guilt or worry or resentment? Verse 3: "Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established." That is the key to ***the washing of the water by the Word.*** "Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established." So what you do is you take this verse when you're praying, you get on your knees and say, 'Oh, God, I need your help, please. Help me to establish my thoughts.' Commit your works to Him, your thoughts to Him. There it is right there.

Let's see how this works as described in the New Testament. We have our part to do. God has His part to do. We have the effort that we have to put forth. God gives us of His Spirit and His Word and this is why you have heard it said, how many times—prayer and study—right? *Yes, indeed!* That's how it works. As long as we're in the flesh, we have things to overcome and this is what the Apostle Paul is talking about. And we have thoughts that need to be

- washed
- changed
- overcome
- replaced

When we do that, then our works will be established, committed to God, and then our thoughts will also be established.

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh." In other words, it's simple this way: You cannot overcome human nature with human nature. You may be able to make some adjustments where you don't do quite as bad as you used to do, but you never can overcome human nature with human nature. It takes the Spirit of God.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare... [Because our warfare is what? *Against Satan the devil and against human nature—correct?*] ...are not carnal... [That is, they are not physical.] ...but mighty through God... [The strength comes from God.] ...to *the* overthrowing of strongholds."

Some of the things in the mind are *strongholds* that really have to be overcome. I can't imagine what it would be like for say someone who is a Catholic priest and gave the mass for how many years. He'd have a lot to overcome, but even that can be overcome. Look at what the Apostle Paul had to overcome.

"...mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds.... [the strongest hold that is on us is our carnal mind] ...Casting down *vain* imaginations... [It's all in the mind—is it not? And how many battles and difficulties do we go through in our minds that are what? *Imaginations!* Shadow boxing, mental boxing, thinking through different things: reliving them, laying awake at night, daydreaming, whatever.] ...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [And that's what happens. Sin is there to exalt itself against God.] ...and bringing into captivity... [Showing we must have the control. This doesn't come easy. This comes through *the washing of the water by the Word.*] ...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.... [Showing a life-long process. "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your

obedience has been fulfilled" (vs 4-6). So there is the formula for the washing of the water by the Word.

Now, let's look at some other Scriptures that we need to look at to see then how we can do it in a practical way. Here's how we do it. Let me tell you one that Job said that he had that he did. When he was accused, 'Well, Job, you're not telling us the truth. You're probably out there committing adultery, or something like that, looking at the beautiful women, something like that.' And he said, 'No, I don't do that.' He said, 'I made a covenant with my eyes.' In other words, he made a covenant with himself to turn away from doing evil. Now that's what we have to do. What if it surprises you on the television? *You have a remote, hit the button!*

Proverbs 16:17: "The way of the upright *is* to turn away from evil... [Turn away from it. Where do you turn away from it first? *In the mind!*] ...he who keeps his way preserves his soul." That's a great proverb there.

Here's how God works with us. Again showing the way that man's heart is, Proverbs 21:2: "Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes, but the LORD ponders the hearts. To do righteousness and justice *is* more pleasing to the LORD than sacrifice" (vs 2-3). So there it is!

Conversion, retaining the Holy Spirit, growing in grace and knowledge, are all the substance and the things of overcoming. Today we've got a lot of distractions going on. So we need to be able to know how to fight against that. This is a central key combined with the other Scriptures there:

- Proverbs 16:3: "Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established."

Combine that with

- 2-Corinthians 10:5: "...bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ."

Combine that with

- ***the washing of the water by the Word***

Combine that with

- having the commandments and laws written in our hearts and in our minds

And it actually changes our brains *physically*. They know that thinking builds the brain. And your brain still is growing, if you don't have things like Alzheimer's, it's still growing and in use by actively using your brain until very, very old age.

They have this one ad. It shows this librarian. Remember the ad with the librarian. She's in England and she's a very fastidious gal and she rides her bicycle going to work. When she's going down the street it shows her going down the street with some books in the basket on her bicycle and

when she's making a left-hand turn she puts her hand out; that shows she was very fastidious, really took care of herself. But as she got older and older she improved even more and she was able to do things, even like hang gliding and tennis, and things like this. But the whole thrust of it is, is that if you keep your mind active and you keep doing, and you live right, your body and your mind are going to respond.

Proverbs 4:20: "My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart" (vs 20-21). And there you can put Heb.10:16, writing in our hearts and in our minds.

Now here is what it is. This works together with the Holy Spirit of God, which is called what? *The Spirit of Life! The Spirit of Truth!* "For they are life to those who find them, and health to all your flesh" (v 22). When you are upset, angry, worrying, bitter, resentful, and all of those things, it affects your health. They now know that they can actually measure how your brain puts out toxic hormones with evil thoughts. Quite a thing!

The book of Proverbs has been right all along, v 23: "Above all **guard the door of your mind**... [It could also be heart, but mind.] **...with diligence**..." That is the whole central thing

- with conversion
- with behavior
- with changing
- with growing
- with overcoming

—through *the washing of the water by the Word*. ...for out of it *are* the issues of life" (v 23). For us, that's sure true with eternal life—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*

"Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious lips put far from you. Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be* established" (vs 24-26).

So now we have with Proverbs 16:3: "Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established." Here we have it here, watch where you're going, 'guard the door of your mind and all your ways will be established.' And how are we to go? What did Jesus say? *'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'* and 'none come to the Father except through Me.'

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Let's also see some other things, what we need to do. This involves prayer. This involves yielding to God. Let's come to 1-John 1:

- here's what we do

- here's how we do it
- here's a promise

You have trouble—what was that movie, *Music Man*—'There's trouble in River City.' At that time they had a terrible evil pool table down there. That shows you how times have changed.

Here's the key: our fellowship with God is the key to all of this. That is the *spiritual power* that comes from God. 1-John 1:6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth." If you're lying to yourself and every way is right in your eyes, *you're deceiving yourself*. What does it say about the heart? *'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it.'*

Conversion is a miracle, because it's taking you from that aspect of living to the way that the carnal mind is to having your mind perfected through the Spirit of God. And there are things that we need to do as we're led of the Holy Spirit and through prayer and through study, all of it combined together.

It's just like a perfect recipe for a perfect whatever you're going to make. You've got to have all the ingredients in it. You how the brownie was first made? *They forgot to put in the baking powder!* And so rather than admit a mistake, they just said, 'Well, this is a brownie,' and put some frosting on it. Spiritually speaking we need all the parts of the Word of God and the Spirit of God put together. So here's how we start.

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin." So that's how we have our hearts cleansed. *'Purify your hearts, you double-minded.'*

And this is true repentance. This is through confession to God. Not the priest. Oh, by the way, I got an article. Boy, they've got a really slick thing now. Dolores told me about it. She saw it on the news and someone sent me a news article about it. Did you know that you can have your sins forgiven on your iPhone? *You can dial up your local padre; probably even see him!* You have two-way pictures. *'Father, I confess my sins.'* 'What are they, my son?' *'Well, I did this and did that and did the other.'* 'Okay, you do twenty hail Mary's and thirty Our Fathers and send in \$5.00 to the parish and your sins are forgiven.' *'Okay, thanks, Father, until next time.'* No, that's not the way it's going to be. You're not going to connect with God on your iPhone. You connect with God on your knees and praying to Him! He hears you. And also another side that they

have already discovered which is this: When people pray, a certain spot in their brain is activated.

Then we have the Holy Spirit with us, which convey all these things to God and helps clean out all of the riff-raff that we have in our mind that doesn't need to go to God. And actually conveys it to God directly in a language that the Holy Spirit converts our thoughts to, to go to God. So we've got all the help in the world.

So here's what we do: "...cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (vs 7-8).

- "If we proclaim we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in darkness, we are lying to ourselves..."(v 6)
- "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us" (v 8)
- "...and we are not practicing the Truth" (v 6).

See how the deception takes us away? Here is the thing, 9: "If we confess our sins... [And what did Jesus say? 'All sin shall be forgiven the sons of men except the sin of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.' All sin against the Son will be forgiven. All blasphemy against the Son will be forgiven. All sin will be forgiven if what?] ...**If we confess our own sins...** [to God! That doesn't come by an iPhone. That comes by 'knee power' and yielding to God.] ...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Cleansing with *the washing of the water by the Word*. "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (v 10). I love John, because it's just like the Proverbs—right and wrong, good and evil. No middle ground here, just the truth. Proverbs there tells us what we need to do. This shows us how we do it.

Let's come to 2-Timothy 1 just to show us what God has given to us with His Spirit and how then we can bring every thought into captivity to Jesus Christ. 2-Timothy 1:7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear... [unto bondage again (Rom. 8).] ...but of power... [The power of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Word of God, the power of the Truth, the strength to change.] ...but **of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness.**" So that we can, through the Spirit of God, control our minds.

Let's see what we have to do. Come to Ephesians 4 and let's look how we need to examine our lives, see what we need to change, and ask God to cleanse us with *the washing of the water by the Word*. *The washing of the water by the Word* does this for us, concerning our past behavior and how

those thoughts and those ways can still come in and cause us problems.

Ephesians 4:22: "That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man... [That's something you do day-by-day, bit-by-bit.] ...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.... [It is a renewal, a changing that God does *within*. We're going to see, it's going to involve also forgiveness and forgetfulness. To ask God to forgive and to ask God to take the thoughts from us.] ...be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth" (vs 22-24).

So what God is doing with us, with *the washing of the water by the Word*: He is making us like Him; He is creating in us!

Eph. 4 tells us what *we are to do*. Ephesians 2:10 tells us *what God is doing*: "For we are His workmanship... [Anything that takes place to mold our minds and change our thought through the Spirit of God is the work of God. It's not what we can do, but only what God can do.] ...For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [Remember: 'Commit your works unto the Lord and your thoughts shall be established.' You having trouble bringing your thoughts into captivity? That's how to do it right here.] ...unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

Let's see how *we do it*. Ephesians 4:25: "Therefore, let each one put away lies... [Because the carnal mind is deceitful. And it's kind of an automatic response in order to protect the self. You lie before you even know what comes out of your mouth—right? *Even as little children*—right? *Yes!*] ...and speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another" (v 25).

Now then here's a real trick, v 26: "When you become angry, do not sin.... [There are Scriptures in the Proverbs which say, 'Don't keep company with an angry man or a furious man or man who rages, lest you become like him.'] ...**do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger.**" This is important, because there are a lot, a lot of things we need to do.

What starts the day? *Sundown*—right? *Don't drag in the problems into a new day!* And don't let the sun go down on your wrath or your anger or any of these things, because it's going to affect a very important of your life, which is sleep. You know what that's like. I know what that is like. I've spent nights tossing and turning, thinking and worrying. Sooner or later you get worn out. And sometimes you get so wound up in it you can't get your mind to

turn off. So that's why you have to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

I tried to make an acronym of things that we need to work on. It was a little difficult to do, but I'll tell you what I came up with. Now there are eight characteristics:

1. guilt

You have a guilt complex or you feel guilty because of something.

2. resentment
3. anger
4. bitterness

All of those things you can study in the Proverbs. Has a lot to do with how we think and react. So that makes the word G-R-A-B.

Guilt: Put all guilt feelings on Christ, because He died for you. If it's something you have no control over, don't feel guilty because you are not the one who has done it. You know, fathers and mothers get guilty because their children do things and it's the children who have done it, not them. So don't take guilt on yourself.

Resentment: comes when you don't get your way or resentment comes when someone does something to you and you let it bug you.

Anger: is easy to come by, everybody has it.

But all of these things what I'm talking about, don't let it control your mind. Because God has given us the Spirit of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness and we can bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Bitterness: Same way with bitterness.

Right here in Eph. 4 he talks about a couple of these things, v 27: "Neither give place to the devil.... [all of these things then can lead to where Satan can take advantage of you with one of his fiery missiles] ...Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working *at* what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who had need. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth... [How's that for a challenge? *Yes!*] ...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption" (vs 27-30).

Now how do you *grieve* the Holy Spirit of God? *By not letting the Holy Spirit of God wash you with the washing of the water by the Word and not repenting, not going to God to control your mind!* So if you do all of these things, wouldn't it be nice to have all of these things lifted from you, whatever ones you have?

I remember talking to a person who was just overcome with emotion and grief, self-condemnation, and bitterness, and anger. So in praying for her, I just asked God to cast out the spirit or the attitude of those things. Then I also instructed her very similar to do right here.

Verse 31: "Let all bitterness... [So we can put resentment and bitterness together here.] ...Let all bitterness... [we can put resentment and bitterness together] ...and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice." How? *By the washing of the water by the Word!* So you might want to write this down: G-R-A-B:

1. guilt
2. resentment
3. anger
4. bitterness

Now there are a few more things that are left that we need to get rid of, too. So I had to work hard on this next word for an acronym with this, and it is: pity—self-pity—hatred, envy, and worry. So the acronym for this is P-H-E-W:

5. pity
6. hatred
7. envy
8. worry

GRAB-PHEW. That's the best I can do. Everybody wants an acronym to remember it. So I'm sitting there, it took me about 35-40 minutes to come up with that. It was almost like a word puzzle.

So take any of these that you might see in here and they might come and go periodically with you. But *ask God to help you and cleanse your mind!* There are some people who are just angry at others and even the sight of them sends them into a fit! Well, if that does it to you, how's the Holy Spirit working in your life? *Take it to God ask God to help you!* You can overcome it. You can overcome it with no problem. You may have to work at it. You may have to continually pray about it until it's gone. But God will take care of it for you.

Now, let's look at something that's important for us to do here. Let's see how prayer is involved with this—*prayer and forgiveness*. Not only forgiveness to you from God the Father and Jesus Christ, but *your* forgiveness to others. Remember what did Jesus say concerning our enemies. He says, 'Love your enemies. Pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you.' You can pray for them. Maybe God would convert them. Wouldn't that be amazing? If not, you can do the prayer, as I mentioned before, of the rabbi in *Fiddler on the Roof*. 'Rabbi, what is a prayer for the tsar?' *May God keep him far away from us!*

This has to do with the cursing of the fig tree. When they came by in the morning, Mark 11:20: “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, ‘Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith *from* God.... [Now in the Greek it’s a little more specific. It is: Have the faith *of* God. Well, it can only come from God.] ...For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, “Be taken away and be cast into the sea,” and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say” (v 20-23).

Now let me tell you something that is harder to move than a mountain—right there, that *carnal mind*. This is a greater challenge than moving a mountain. Now if we need a mountain moved, God will do it, but we need our minds converted more than moving mountains. Because just think how vain we would be if we moved mountains—moved that mountain, move this mountain, move the other mountain. No good!

Now here’s the point of what He’s making, v 24: “For this reason I say to you, all *the* things that you ask *when* you are praying, believe that you will receive *them*, and *they* shall be *given* to you.” We are not to pray to move mountains. We are to pray in faith the things that we need. And the thing we need is our minds cleansed with *the washing of the water by the Word*, God’s laws written in our hearts and in our minds, have our thoughts established according to the Word of God. Do not get carried away with GRAB-PHEW: with

- guilt
- resentment
- anger
- bitterness
- pity
- hatred
- envy
- worry

—ASK!

Then He tells us something else, which is important. This is essential concerning prayer and our relationship with God in carrying through with *the washing of the water by the Word*.

Verse 25: “But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone... [Now that’s very inclusive—isn’t it?] ...anything against anyone, forgive...” (v 25). When that came up again later on, Peter asked Jesus, ‘If my brother sin against me, how often should I forgive him, seven times?’ Jesus said, ‘No, not until seven times, but to seven times seventy.’ 490! This is why you’ve heard me say

many times, and always remember this, *as long as there is life, there is hope* regardless of what a person has gone through. As long as there is life, there is hope. God can reach down if they’re willing to repent and call them. But the first step in all of that is coming to the absolute knowledge and conclusion and conviction and shame that your life has been a mess and only God can straighten it out.

Now concerning others—forgive! Now if Jesus can be on the cross and say, ‘Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do,’ were not those the enemies? *Yes!* Here’s the reason, 25: “...so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses....’ [We all want to have our sins forgiven. Now that’s the bargain that Jesus said.] ...For if you do not forgive... [And we can put in there, neither will your forget. *The lack of forgiving displays a remembering of.*] ...For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who *is* in heaven forgive you your offenses” (vs 25-26).

Matthew 18:35 says: “...if each *of* you does not forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart.” So that’s important. That comes with *the washing of the water by the Word*, too.

What if you have something that is very difficult for you to forgive and it’s very difficult for you to say, ‘Oh, Father, forgive this. It’s a terrible situation.’ Then you have to pray and ask God to help you to have the understanding of why you need to forgive. Then you need to take it one step further. You need to take it one step further.

Not only do you need to forgive, you need to forget. But—learn the lesson. Right after saying here in Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” That’s the goal of *the washing of the water by the Word*.

Philippians 3:1: “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. Indeed, for me to write the same things to you is not troublesome, but for you *it is* safe. Beware of dogs... [That’s just like saying, ‘*Guard the door of your mind.*’] ...beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.... [That’s the circumcision party.] ...For we are the circumcision...” (vs 1-3). We have had our hearts circumcised through the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God. And our hearts and our minds are to be changed and converted. That is something that is an ongoing process all the time.

“For we are the circumcision, who serve God in *the* spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in *the* flesh... [All of the things from GRAB-PHEW are trusting in the thoughts of the flesh, the carnal mind—right? *Yes!*] ...Though I might also have *reason* to trust in *the* flesh. If any other thinks he has *cause* to trust in *the* flesh, I have

much more... [So he relates some of them. Then we will see how he considers those things.] ...Circumcised on *the* eighth day... [Right on time, by a rabbi.] ...of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee; With respect to zeal, persecuting the church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless” (vs 3-6). Commended by the high priest for his good diligent work.

“Yet the things that were gain to me... [Notice how he puts the perspective in this. You can tell by what he said here that he learned the lesson of every one of these things, but he wasn’t reliving them.] ...Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ” (v 7). That’s what baptism is all about. You die in that watery grave, commit yourself in the covenant relationship with God.

Verse 8: “...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung... [That’s how he looked at them. The Greek word there is ‘skubalon.’] ...that I may gain Christ And may be found in Him... [This is the goal. This is how we need to look at things.] ...not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith” (v 8-9). That He’s writing in our hearts and our minds, His laws and His commandments in the Spirit, so we obey in the Spirit.

“That I may know Him... [Notice what he’s reaching to. That way you’re not stuck in the trap of all of these carnal reactions. You’re continually reaching toward what God wants in everything.] ...That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (v 10). Now that’s quite a statement—isn’t it? He understood what that was when he was persecuting and causing the Christians to be killed at his command.

“If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (v 11). *That is the goal!* Our growth and overcoming between now and then is the important thing. Things in this world, we could use, they are fine, they are good. God wants us to have them and use them, but *not have that between us and God*. Always have your mind on the resurrection.

Like I said in one of the Church at Home (and Randy did a good job on this) that when you are at your worst when you first get up in the morning and you have your bad breath and your hair is all messed up and you look in the mirror and you see more wrinkles, and all of this sort of thing. I said, **‘Remember, God loves you.’** So what he did, he put a camera in his bathroom and he came up and

showed kind of his distorted face looking into a mirror. **Remember, God loves you.** God is looking to

- your heart
- your spirit
- your mind

This body, though we wish it wasn’t the way it is, *is going to be changed!* For that day we can all say, ‘Hallelujah,’ and we will. We will be there to say it.

Notice his attitude and this is the attitude of always going forward and not getting stuck down with GRAB-PHEW. “Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving...” (v 12). That’s what we do. ***The washing of the water by the Word:***

- growing
- praying
- study
- overcoming
- living

...but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (v 12). Nice way of putting it—isn’t it? That reminds of the saying, ‘You grab them by the scruff of the collar,’ when you’re trying to catch a little kid who is doing something and you grab them. Christ laid a hold of us, so that we can become like Him.

Verse 13—this is important; the key thing. This is what we need to do. It was very interesting when I was watching a special on the mind. The place where our memory is has two functions:

1. to remember
2. to forget

We can’t possibly remember everything. Our minds couldn’t handle it. So it’s also designed to filter some things out and forget them. With God’s Spirit, with the washing of the water by the Word, we can forget them. If they keep coming back, then ask God to cleanse it. Keep going to God until it doesn’t come back, only in the form of remembering the lesson.

Verse 13: “Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*... [Now he’s listed all of his sins right here—didn’t he?—all the things he went through.] ...this one thing *I do*—forgetting the things that are behind...” Through the washing of the water by the Word you can forget the things that are behind. Those were all done.

Yesterday is gone and over with. So is last week, so is last month, so is last year, so is five years ago, ten years ago, twenty years ago. Or you go clear back into your childhood where you may have had some traumatic thing in your life that is still there in your mind and you need to pray and ask God—

through *the washing of the water by the Word*—to wipe that away. Why should you carry that with you all your life?

“...forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead... [It’s the same thing. Put out the sin, put in righteousness. ‘Bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...Guard the door of your mind with all diligence.’] ...and reaching forth to the things that are ahead, **I press**... [Always working, always doing, always going ahead.] ...toward *the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (vs 13-14).

He always kept that in mind. Now if we do this in our prayers daily, just think how then God can cleanse us and help us and guide us. Fantastic thing. Now notice what he says. And you think, ‘Oh, well, the Apostle Paul can do that. He was an apostle. Little old me, man, you don’t know what my life has been.’ *Yes, God knows* what our lives have been from the instant we were conceived.

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind... [Forgetting the things that are behind. Let *the washing of the water by the Word* change and convert.] ...And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded... [Now isn’t that a blessing? God will reveal even this to you. So even some of the thoughts of the past that need to be repented of and cleansed out, who’s revealing that to you? *God, through the Spirit!* So, those things can be cleansed away.] ...God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, in regard to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind” (vs 15-16). So, there it is!

Then he talks about those who have left, and so forth, but come down here to v 20, because here’s the goal. So when you get up in the morning and look and see that you’ve lost a little more hair or it’s more grey or you have more wrinkles or it’s hard to open your eyes, and I tell you the routine that a lot of us go through in the morning to get up, to clear our throat, to blow our nose, clean out our eyes, clean our ears, and all of that sort of thing.

Remember: **God loves you!** God has called you. And when you look at see this old physical body shriveling up, remember Paul said, ‘*I have run the course, I have finished the race.* Now there’s a crown of glory laid up for me, a crown of righteousness and also for all those who love His appearing.’

Verse 20: “But for us, the commonwealth of *God*... [That’s interesting. That is ‘politeia’ in the Greek, meaning *politics*. You hate the politics of this world? You hate what the politicians are doing? *You’re going to replace them!* Isn’t that a great solution? *Yes!*] ...the commonwealth of *God* exists in

the heavens... [Christ is going to bring it] ...from where also we are waiting for *the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*... [Here’s what He’s going to do]: ...**Who will transform our vile bodies**...” (vs 20-21). And our bodies indeed are vile! I mean, it’s amazing how much inside God conceals from having to be outside. Need I be descriptive? *No!* And you know how vile it is when you get really, really sick. Then all the vileness comes up and you feel miserable, and all of that

“Who will transform our vile bodies, **that they may be conformed to His glorious body**... [Now that’s a deal—isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*] ...according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (vs 21).

So that’s how you let *the washing of the water by the Word* be an active, daily, ongoing thing

- to convert you
- to change you
- to let God create His character within you

Learn the lessons of the past! Don’t dwell on them!
Forgive! Forget! Go forward!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 5:1
- 2) Matthew 5:48
- 3) Ephesians 5:2, 22-27, 1, 27
- 4) Jeremiah 11:20
- 5) Psalm 7:1-6, 8-9
- 6) 1-Peter 1:14-22
- 7) Matthew 23:25-28
- 8) Proverbs 26:24-26
- 9) Proverbs 28:12-13
- 10) Proverbs 16:1-3
- 11) 2-Corinthians 10:3-6
- 12) Proverbs 16:17
- 13) Proverbs 21:2-3
- 14) Proverbs 16:3
- 15) 2 Corinthians 10:5
- 16) Proverbs 4:20-26
- 17) Proverbs 3:16
- 18) 1-John 1:6-8, 6, 8, 6, 9-10
- 19) 2-Timothy 1:7
- 20) Ephesians 4:22-24
- 21) Ephesians 2:10
- 22) Ephesians 4:25-31
- 23) Mark 11:20-26
- 24) Matthew 18:35
- 25) Philippians 2:5
- 26) Philippians 3:1-16, 20-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10:16
- Romans 8

Also referenced: Book: *Lord, What Should I Do?*
(coming soon)

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