

Conversion, Obedience and Health

Fred R. Coulter—May 31, 2003

We're going to cover health and healing, and someone has already complained that what I'm covering means that we are not going to be anointing. *No! It does not mean that we are not going to be anointing.* Quite the opposite! When we anoint we are going to anoint for sicknesses and we're also going to understand that there may be some things that we need to take care of spiritually, as well as physically.

Some of the thing that I will cover here are in the spiritual emotional situations that we come across, which, if not resolved when they come, can—over a period of time—cause the body to have weaknesses and sicknesses and things like this.

Let's see what Jesus told the man who had this infirmity for 38 years. We don't know what it was, but because he was slow coming down into the pool whenever the angel came and agitated the water, we would have to say that since it is something that he has had for 38 years that we could liken unto—we don't know—rheumatoid arthritis where he could hardly move. Then he finally finds Jesus in the temple:

John 5:14: "After these things, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have been made whole. **Sin no more**, so that something worse does not happen to you.'" What was his sin? *We're not told!*

The implication is that this infirmity that he had for 38 years had something to do with an on-going sin. Since he was a Jew living in Jerusalem, chances are he wasn't eating unclean meats. At that time there were not McDonald's, so we can't blame it on a Big Mac. We can't blame it on genetically engineered foods.

So, we can conclude that it is likely—listen to me carefully—that it could be some of the things that we have talked about that they know causes sickness. We will see that they also knew back then that causes sickness. I'm talking about avoiding chronic things.

Here is something we need to realize. I had a situation with a man that in discussing things with him, there were some things that were somewhat corrective to him.

What we need to understand is that when something comes along where it is corrective—whether something out of God's Word or something that someone is giving you some council or advice concerning—that is going to be helpful to you, sometimes it's very hard to take.

That's why we have this in Heb. 4, because in order for it to come to the point that we repent and turn to God, sometimes the Word of God has to act. That's why Paul writes:

Hebrews 4:12 "For the Word of God is living..." Jesus says that *the words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are Life!*

"...and powerful..." (v 12). There's no way you are going to go against the Word of God in any manner whatsoever and not have some kind of result.

Whether it's an actual overt outward transgression, or whether it is one that is inner—covert—sin of the heart. It's going to have an action and reaction somewhere along the line.

"...and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit... [you can't get it any finer than that] ...and of both *the joints and the marrow*, and *is* able to discern... [judge] ...*the thoughts and intents of the heart*" (v 12).

Paul is writing here because our battles and the things that we are doing, once we understand the commandments of God and are keeping the commandments of God in the letter, then it becomes a process of growing and overcoming and keeping them in the spirit.

God is no longer dealing with the external things that we do. If we have the Spirit of God, God is dealing with the thoughts and intents of the heart. There are some thoughts—because we are evil by nature—that tend to put us in attitudes and emotional states and thoughts that can also affect our well-being. It can also bring upon us very difficult things indeed.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight..." We can fool ourselves, we can fool other people some of the time, not all the time, **but we can never fool God!** We're always "...manifest in His sight..."

Let's look at it this way: How does God handle it when we have His Spirit and we're fighting these inner battles to overcome sin? God knows them—right? *Yes, indeed!* That's why with repentance, you are covered by grace.

- Does God know that the 'heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked'? *Yes, indeed!*
- Does He know that we have 'the law of sin and death' in us? *Yes, indeed! He gave it to*

us!

- Does He know that we're well-intentioned as human being and want to do good, but can't find the real, true way to do it? *Yes, indeed!*

So, what God wants you to understand, though all of these things are true, He does not want you to get:

- despaired
- have a guilt complex
- get down so low that you are ready to abandon Him

He doesn't want that at all! He just wants you to understand that "...all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account" (v 13).

- What do we do in this case?
- Do we say that we are so ashamed that we don't want to pray?
- Do we say, 'How can God put up with me as a sinner this way?'

Which is a little different than the one who has one foot in the world and one foot in the Church, or that is 'double-minded' thinking half the time the way of the world and half the time the way of God.

No! This is different! This is so that each one of us can come to the true knowledge of self before God, and realize that God has called us and forgiven us, and will continue to do so. That's why He is exposing these things, so that you will come to Christ.

Verse 14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*."

In the light of everything concerning what our human nature is, what the world is and everything around us. So, regardless of the circumstances!

Verse 15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." ***Christ knows!*** If Christ be in us, which He is, then He knows! That's the key as to why He has only given us an earnest of the Holy Spirit.

Note from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*:

- Appendix R: What is Meant by "the Works of the Law"?
- Appendix P: What Does it Mean to be "Born Again"?
- Appendix Q: What Does it Mean to be "Born of God"?

Which means *begotten of God*. You're not born

again, yet, but you are begotten. The reason that God has only given the begettal is because just like a newly-begotten infant in the womb, it must grow and develop and come to the point and time of being ready for birth.

Our process of overcoming has to do with growing in grace and knowledge and understanding, coming to have the mind of Christ, and because we are still fighting this human nature like Paul said, 'that only Christ can save him from it'—therefore God has only given a 'begettal' of the Holy Spirit:

- so that you can grow in grace and knowledge
- so that you can understand human nature so you can repent of it

But God is merciful and kind and doesn't show all of this to us all at once in the beginning. If He did, no one could handle it.

As I've mentioned before, what God is doing with us is to His glory and His honor because He's doing the impossibility that no man can do and only God can do, and that is *to make you perfect for the resurrection!* God can do that. But He does want our cooperation and our willingness. The truth is that ***we can do them; we can!*** Because we have a great High Priest, and when we ask forgiveness we are forgiven. Here's the reason why:

"...but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He was* without sin" (v 15). ***He knows!*** The hardest thing for human nature to admit, when there are inner sins, ***is to admit them to God!*** You don't have to admit them to anyone else, but *to God*; ***He knows already!***

If God brings it to your attention through the Spirit that is in you, then God is also working with you, and that's part of the work that God is creating in you. He creates in you by putting in:

- His Spirit
- His Word
- His Laws
- His commandments
- His attitude
- the mind of Christ

That means that there has to be a constant working against human nature. That's on a daily basis. That's why when we come before God—Rom. 8:1-3—that there is no condemnation.

Since God gave us only a portion of His Holy Spirit for begettal, and since God has not removed human nature, but is converting it—changing it—therefore, there is no condemnation to you before God. When you come along and find

these different things—hidden sins of the heart and mind—and God is revealing those, then you need to pray and ask God for forgiveness. I do, you do, everyone does, because that's the battle that's constantly going on. Didn't the Apostle Paul have to? *Yes, indeed!* We need to understand that in relationship to what we are doing.

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness... [through Christ, obviously with repentance] ...to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." That's what God wants us to do. This is a daily thing that we go through.

Let's review Matt. 19 just to make sure that we understand it and totally realize it, because we need to spiritually graduate from just the external obedience in the letter, which many people can do. We need to graduate from that to the internal, and that's why it came up this way in Matt. 19 and this is important to understand. For those who only look to the external, this is going to be hard for them to understand. That's why it was hard for the disciples to understand it.

Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?' And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except one—God....'" (vs 16-17).

The reason Jesus said that at the time was because He was God in the flesh and had human nature, so He could not be called 'good' of Himself because, bearing human nature, He still had yet to finish unto the end and not sin.

A lot of people point to this and say that He was not God before He was human, because if He was God then He would have included Himself in this. Well, at the time that He was saying this, the only God there was, was God the Father in heaven above. Jesus was God manifested in the flesh, but He certainly did not have all the glory of God shining forth while He was in the flesh.

"...But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.' Then he said to Him, 'Which?' And Jesus said, 'You shall not commit murder...'" (vs 17-18).

A lot of Protestants turn here and say, 'See, He did not mention the Sabbath. So therefore, since He didn't mention the Sabbath, we don't have to keep it.' Well, He mentioned it in several other places (Mark 2, Matt. 15, etc.). He inspired in Heb. 4 that there 'remains for the people of God Sabbath-keeping.'

Remember what kind of society that they were living in. They were living in a society that were keeping the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and had

the temple of God. So, there was no need mentioning those because he lived in an environment where those were automatic. So, therefore, the ones that He covered were these:

"...you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'.... [the last one, we will see, he didn't do] ...The young man said to Him, 'I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?' Jesus said to him, 'If you desire to be perfect...'" (vs 18-21)—going on the spiritual track.

Jesus said, 'We're to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.' Of course that is an impossible thing that only God can accomplish.

Verse 21: "Jesus said to him, 'If you desire to be perfect go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.'" Now, that was a pretty hefty thing to do.

Verse 22: "But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions."

The whole story is that physical obedience in the letter of the Law and physical things—you can say that you find the Laodiceans in the Gospels—do not meet the requirements for eternal life. *You have to do them in the spirit!* God wants something from each one of us that is greater than the external commandment-keeping.

- How many millions of people honor their fathers and mothers?
- How many millions of people do not murder?
- How many millions of people—though getting less and less—do not commit adultery or sexual perversion?
- How many millions of people do not steal?
- How many millions of people are willing to tell the truth in the letter?

So, it's possible for carnal, unconverted people, which this rich man was—to keep the commandments of God in the letter.

The truth is that ***God requires that of all human beings!*** Did you know that? So, the letter of the Law was not going to produce eternal life. Because if it were by the letter of the Law, then you would have works that would compel God to give you eternal life.

Eternal life is a gift from God, and no law can give you eternal life, though you are to keep the commandments of God, not only in the letter, but also in spirit.

- What is that God wants?
- What is it that God is going to provide?
- How is it possible to please God?

Luke 14 is the rest of the story of Matt. 19. Read the whole chapter and what comes up to this. First of all, Jesus talks about the Pharisees and the lawyers and what they have done.

Luke 14:11: “For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.”

If you had works that you could do, you could boast. Then Jesus gives the example concerning inviting your friends, relatives and kinfolks for dinner, but invite those who have nothing. Jesus is asking people to do the opposite of what carnality normally thinks. Then He talks about the wedding supper and how it was made ready and everyone gave an excuse and didn’t come.

Verse 23: “Then the lord said to the servant, “Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, not one of those men who were invited shall taste of my supper.” And great multitudes were going with Him...” (vs 23-25).

What does it say about *the way of the multitudes* vs *the way of God*? *Broad is the gate and wide is the way that leads to destruction!* That’s why Satan has to have *broad religions*, covering every facet of different societies, so that he can keep them deceived.

“...and He turned *and* said to them...” (v 25). This is what people don’t like to hear, but this is what we have to come to when we come to God in answering the call, in everything that we do:

Verse 26: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife...” To love God more than any of these (Matt. 10), though they may take it as hate toward them. But treat them in as loving a way as you can. But that is before God. He’s saying here, and this is the requirement:

“...and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple” (vs 26-27). What is that God wants?

He wants all of you! He does not want a portion of you on Sabbath—or Sunday as the Protestants would put it—and you put on your best and get all gussied up and go to church and you’re nice and friendly, shake hands and everything is good, lovely and fine. That’s okay; God expects that. He doesn’t expect you to come in your worst clothing and come in ‘blazing and shooting’ and all that sort of stuff. But *He wants all of you*:

- heart
- mind
- soul
- being

This is why God hates hierarchy that leverages that to itself. In the things that God wants us to do, we are to be completely wholehearted to God. Part of the reason why that people get so disillusioned in the Church wars is because they have not made this commitment to God, ***but have given it to a man!*** When the man goes bad or sins—which all men do to greater or lesser degrees—then they become disillusioned ***because they haven’t been given this commitment to God!***

Hence you have anger, bitterness, frustration and all of these things that come along with it. Of course, we have all gone down that road! God wants *all of you!* To put it another way: ***In order to have all of you, you have to forsake everything!*** That’s what it’s talking about. You may have possessions, you may have different things, that’s fine. God has probably blessed you with them. That’s good, ***but don’t make an idol of them! Don’t put any of those things before God!*** This is the spiritual commitment that we make with God.

- What commitment did Jesus Christ make for you?
- What did He do?

In going over some of these things, I’m not covering something that is beyond being able to do.

- What did God do for you?
 - ✓ Christ gave up being God to become a human being.
 - ✓ He came down here to live a perfect life apart of God the Father
 - ✓ He called His disciples and the apostles He set things in motion for the Church
 - ✓ He then gave His life, in perfect love, in a sacrifice

So great that when we come to God, what He asks us to give up in sacrifice—even to our own physical life—compared to what He did is really very small.

There it is great to us, because the only life we have is this. That’s what God desires. That’s why God hates ‘religion,’ because ‘religion’ comes between God and the individual. Here’s what God wants, and there’s going to be a fight against ‘religion’ right here:

Matthew 10:34: Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth...” You individually can have peace with God—through repentance and so forth—but not on the earth.

“...I did not come to bring peace, but a

sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father... [ties in with Luke 14] ...and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies *shall be those of his own household*" (vs 34-36).

When you have that, what is one of the things that you want to do? *We would like to have peace rather than a family feud!* So, mother and father come to you and say, 'If you just give up this kooky religion of yours'—because they can't understand anything in other terms than 'religious' terms—'then we can get along.' OR: 'You have quit coming to church with me on Sunday and you have just hurt my feelings.' OR: in the case here, you quite coming to synagogue and now you're going 'with that group over there.' Either way, the same principle applies.

The ones that you will want to make peace with are those of your own family. That's the hardest thing. That's why He puts it this way. And also your own life.

Verse 37: "The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me" (vs 37-38). We're talking now about the spiritual things.

If God did this for us, and then in turn gives us His Holy Spirit, since He died for us and was resurrected for justification, when we repent and receive the Holy Spirit of God, we belong to Him, **and Him alone!**—though we be married—husband/wife, though we have children, because eternal life is worth it, and the momentary strife that occurs because you

- choose God instead of your family
- choose God instead of your work
- choose God instead of whatever

God will be able to compensate you for that, and much more, as He says, 'not only in this life but also in the Kingdom of God.' He offering you eternal life, and all these other hurts and things that come along, and the problems and difficulties, God is going to solve in His way and in His time, in His plan, and in the long run He's going to take care of it, **because He's Creator!**

Verse 39: "The one who has found his life shall lose it... [in this world] ...and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it."

This is the exact opposite of the world, and this is why it's impossible for physical things and letter of the Law obedience to give you eternal life. In doing those things, you are not required to give yourself wholly to God. But when you repent and

are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God, that's what He requires. God will bless you for it.

Maybe some of the blessing will be a trial. William Tyndale says, 'It's better to be poor and have Christ, than to have riches that God gives to His enemies.' What did Satan say when he was tempting Christ? *All this will be Yours if You worship me!*

This is why God has called us and why we're doing the things that we do. But notice, there are some blessings.

Verse 41: "The one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet... [God is fair, kind and understanding] ...and the one who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive the reward of a righteous man. And if anyone shall in the name of a disciple give to one of these little ones... [of Christ] ...to drink a cup of cold water only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward" (vs 41-42).

What are all of these things here? *Obviously doing and receiving from the heart!* God is not asking you to give up something that you are not willing to give up. I think what we're going to cover is going to help us:

1. understand more of the grace and love of God
2. realize and comprehend and understand even more the work that God is doing in us.

If we can yield to God and grow in grace and knowledge and overcome these inner, covert unseen, sins that God's blessing, wisdom, understanding and grace will be on us that much more.

Now let's see what we are supposed to do. Once we receive the Holy Spirit this is what is to happen. I've mentioned that we are to be wholly God's; that is **we are wholly belonging to Him!**

- we love God
- we worship God
- we serve God
- we keep His commandments

with His Holy Spirit and His Word! Then He exposes our human nature to us, our thoughts and our minds are changed over a period of time.

Romans 12:1: "I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice... [it belongs to God] ... Holy and well-pleasing to God, **which is your spiritual service**"—not only the things that are outward, but more particularly the things that are inward.

Verse 2: **“Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed...”** Not only in the way of living, but also in the way of thinking, acting and doing.

“...by the renewing of your mind...” (v 2). God has given us a mind and created it in such a way that with the power of His Holy Spirit He is able to renew and to regenerate from a degenerate mind. ***He is able to renew it and to change it; that is the process of conversion!***

“...in order that you may prove...” (v 2). It’s an active thing that happens; not ‘I’ve got an idea’ and you go on your way without acting upon it.

“...what is well-pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God” (v 2). That’s why we’re going over these Scriptures, so we know that that’s what God wants us to do.

Let’s see that *the greatest majority of this work is what Christ is doing in us*. Here in Titus, Paul makes it very clear that it’s not the outward works of righteousness, which we could do, *but the inner changing that takes place!*

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Titus 3:3: “For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all kinds of lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.... [listing all those things as sin] ...But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we practiced...” (vs 3-5)—like the scribes and Pharisees; all different religions have *their own* works.

“...but according to His mercy He saved us... [by grace you are saved] ...through the washing of regeneration...” (v 5). That’s not baptism, not a new birth; it is regeneration. I’ve done a study on the word *washing*, and Greek for *washing* is not the same word that refers to baptism.

“...and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior; so that, having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life” (vs 5-7).

That’s what we’re dealing with. We’re not dealing with just being good and sincere people. The world views us as that. That’s true, because that’s all they can see of us. Just like you can’t read anybody’s mind, no one in the world can read your mind either! But if we have our mind renewed with Christ, that’s what’s important. Let’s look at this *washing*.

Ephesians 5:25: “Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might

sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with **the washing of the water by the Word**” (vs 25-26). That’s what the washing of regeneration is referring to.

What does that mean **“...the washing of the water by the Word...”**? That *does not* mean that there is a spiritual body of water that you sprinkle, and so forth.

Because the Word of God is Spirit and Life, it is *the action of cleaning up our mind!* What is the term that they coined during the Korean War? When the Americans were captured and they were forced upon to think differently? *Brainwashing!* Spiritually, that’s what we need; we need our brains *washed!* Our *minds cleansed!* But it takes the Word of God, and the best thing we can liken it to is a computer program where you take out certain digits and you put in new ones. It’s not bit-by-bit-by-bit!

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but **He cleanses each one that bears fruit...**” (vs 1-2). As an analogy with a plant, you trim off the extra things that aren’t necessary.

“...in order that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you” (vs 2-3). So, *the washing of the water by the Word* comes from studying the Word of God.

What happens when you study the Word of God? Let’s ask it another way: What happens when you don’t study the Word of God? *Pretty soon it begins to fade!* Pretty soon your mind gets all cluttered up with other things. In other words, it becomes spiritually more *unclean!* So, God’s Word does something when we study it.

In the process of *the washing of the water by the Word* and *cleansing our mind...* We’ve read in Psa. 51 where David, in repenting said. ‘Wash me thoroughly from my sin.’

Here’s what happens when we study the Word of God, when we let it apply to ourselves, when we let it apply to us spiritually and ask God to help us overcome. All of these things are important for spiritual and physical health. That’s what I’m trying to cover here. In other words: ***How can we, as Christians living in this world***—with so many things going on, and so many of the devices of Satan all around us that no other society has had like we have today—***keep our spiritual bearings, keep our spiritual perspective and not become part of the world again?*** That’s what I’m trying to bring out here. This will be for your spiritual health, your physical health, etc.

Hebrews 10:16: ““This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,”” says *the*

Lord, 'I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.'" How is this going to be done?

Since you are not a robot and you can't receive a new chip in the head, since you don't have a funnel hole so He can put it in there, *the only way it's going to come is that you study!*

Just like He told Timothy, 'Study to show yourself approved rightly dividing the Word of God.' The way that people can fall into error so quickly is to do like the Protestants: open the Bible on Sunday and have a good time at church, and you meet all your friends, and then you close it up and go home and live your life in the world.

There's nothing being written in the heart and the mind! That's why it has to be done daily.

- that's why you have to let the Holy Spirit work in your mind
- that's how it is written in your mind
- that's how you are clean through the words that He has spoken

because He's inspired all of these things

- that is how the washing of regeneration takes place

The washing of the water—obviously when you're reading the Bible you're not being sprinkled in the face—***means the action of God's Holy Spirit!***

Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.' It is the spiritual cleansing, and the spiritual cutting that takes place when you study the Word of God.

Just like anything else, I would have to say that our human nature is much like unto an onion that has layers and we're very willing to give up some of the exterior things. Like you take an onion and you cut and it's got the hard skin on the outside so you cut both ends of it and then you peel away the hard skin and you also take often the first layer of onion when you do that.

That's kind of like people who are willing, as long as they can be counted good, to go ahead and take off a layer or two. But when it gets right down into the heart and mind, and the real conversion that God wants us to have, it's going to take some work. It's going to take some changing and God's Spirit—*the washing of the water by the Word*—to change us.

So that we know that it is possible, and you do not feel that your battle in overcoming is hopeless, by you yourself alone it is worse than hopeless. ***It's impossible! But with God, it is possible!*** Jesus said, 'That which is impossible with men ***is possible with God!***' He wanted everyone to understand how important it was, so He told His disciples that 'it's easier for a camel to pass through

the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' He meant a literal needle and a literal camel. Then He said, 'That which is not possible for men ***is possible with God!***'

How could you pass a camel through the eye of a needle? *Well, a man can't do it, but God can do it!* He can do it in many ways. He could reduce the camel small enough to make it go through. After all, when it was first conceived, how big was it? Or He could take it and change it so much just by stringing out all the DNA in one line and then pass it through and reconstitute it on the other side. I suppose you could liken that to the resurrection. Nevertheless, ***God can do it! There is nothing impossible with God!***

It's also possible for us to do the spiritual things that we have been covering here and how we need to do it. Instead of saying that this and that is wrong, 'brethren go home and repent and get over it and come back next week perfect.' *That's not going to happen!*

First of all, you have to have the tools. You also have to have the knowledge, and you have to realize that it can be done with the help and Spirit of God. That's what we all need to understand.

1-John 3:18: "My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues..." This is the outward. We can be nice, friendly, sociable, shake hands, hug each other, and so forth.

Whenever you watch a sports event the two coaches come up and they say nice things to each other, but they really don't mean it. You know, 'congratulations.' You mean to congratulate him, you wish that you could be congratulated. You can tell it when you watch that moment when the coaches talk to each other.

God doesn't want us to be that way. He says, "...rather, *we should love* in deed and in truth" (v 18). Not only just the deed, but the truth from within. That whatever the deed is, you truly desire to it because you love that individual. That's what John is talking about here. This gives you hope that you can do it.

Verse 19: "And in this way we know that we are of the Truth, and shall **assure our hearts before Him**." That's where you go with *the washing of the water by the Word* coupled with prayer to God to assure your heart before Him.

Verse 20: "That if our hearts condemn us..." This has to do with a guilty conscience. A lot of people put 'guilt trips' on themselves all the time. Do not have a 'guilt trip' over anything. Repent of the sins and put it away.

If your heart condemn you because you have

sinned, which it probably should, because God's Holy Spirit is there to bring that your awareness and prick your conscience and heart, then we have to know:

"...God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things" (v 20). . God is there willing to forgive. So, don't go around and put a 'guilt trip' on yourself.

A lot of 'guilt trips' are inadvertently laid upon a lot of people via the television, and they don't even know it.

Example: Everyone was exposed to the Scott and Lacey Peterson thing. What happens? They play on the emotions of everybody every day as to how horrible that this was. Those who get emotionally involved carry a guilt feeling that it happened to this individual. It goes beyond just sorrow. This is intended to bring upon people... Because you can control people when you put 'guilt trips' on them. That's why God doesn't want 'guilt trips' put on you.

If Christ puts a 'guilt trip' on you, because of His Spirit, and you repent that's fine! That's what it's talking about here. But they also said that the reason people are more stressed out today than ever before is because there is news 24/7. You hear all this news, but they haven't told you that since the time that Lacey Peterson was killed until today, there were many thousands of murders in the United States.

Don't let exterior things and the influences of the world put a 'guilt trip' on you. If you are so easily influenced with those things that you get a 'guilt trip' and you feel bad, and you just kind of relive what were Lacey's last moment like. Or kind of relive in your mind and emotions what was the little baby boy's life like right at the end. All that sort of thing is going to be dwelling on something that you cannot solve, something you cannot change, something you cannot work out. You put a 'guilt trip' upon yourself and you feel bad and down. What you need to do is put it all in God's hands. After all, He knew the minute that she died!

- ***You have to praise God for the second resurrection!***
- ***He's going to undo all of these things!***

It's a shame that she died; it's a shame that she died the way that she did. Or you can take another other situation, be it father, mother, brother, sister, and if they die and things happen them, your own children, that's all a part of life and you with a 'guilty conscious' cannot live their lives for them or change them one iota except through prayer and your example. That's all you can do. So, don't put a 'guilt trip' on yourself for anything.

If there is a some sin that you have committed, *repent!* Don't go around with a 'guilt trip.' Do not let your heart condemn you; but "...if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts..."

What is really happening when you get a 'guilt trip' and you're not willing to give it up? Not only are you hurting yourself physically, mentally and spiritually, but you're really saying that God can't handle it and you are telling yourself that you're going to handle it, which then puts you in the seat of God. Only God can take care of the 'guilt trip,' a guilty conscious, or a condemnation where your heart condemns you. Take it to God. That's why John says,

"...God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us... [there are times when we're not sinning] ...*then* we have confidence toward God. And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight" (vs 20-22). And the things that we do that are pleasing in His sight is to:

- love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- love our neighbor as ourselves
- love the brethren as Christ has loved us
- love our enemies

And to work on overcoming the sin within with the power of God's Holy Spirit to be transformed, regenerated and renewed in the spirit of your mind. That's what will be pleasing to Him!

Verse 23: "And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us. And the one who keeps His commandments... [you can see that outwardly and also you yourself can know inwardly] ...is dwelling in Him, and He in him... [that's what's important] ...and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us" (vs 23-24).

- that's why these things take place
- that's why we are to change, grow and overcome

God has called us because He wants to do something so unique and fantastic through the power of His Holy Spirit. Of course, the world doesn't know this, and really doesn't completely understand it, even those who are 'religious.' They may be able to read the words, but it's an entirely different thing here.

Christ is dwelling in you! That is what is the important and profound thing. That is what is going to help overcome these difficulties, problems, attitudes and inner sins that we're going to talk about.

1-Corinthians 3:16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?" That's what God wants us to know.

That's what John said, 'Hereby we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. He is in us and we are in Him.' That's a tremendous thing!

Everyone wants to know where God is, and God says, ***'If you repent and love Me, I will dwell with you.'*** That's a tremendous thing! Comprehend that if you can! That's something that's really hard to grasp. But the great God Who created the heavens and the earth, and everything that there is, desires to dwell with His Spirit in us so that we, at the resurrection of the dead, can be changed and conformed to be like Him and live with Him forever!

That is so awesome and fantastic that it makes all of this playing little law-keeping and religion ridiculous. Then He gives a warning:

Verse 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are." That's something to consider.

Proverbs 4:20: **"My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings."**

Remember all the words that Jesus said that He spoke were the words of the Father. All these are the inspired words of God, even though this is David, at this particular point, talking to Solomon. Unfortunately, Solomon did not follow David's advice.

Verse 21: "Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart." 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks,' and God is interested in the heart and mind.

Verse 22: "For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh"—and spirit.

It is not only health to the flesh—which we need to be concerned with—but also the spirit. If you are healthy before God spiritually, you are going to be healthy physically, nine times out of ten. This is true today: How many things bother people's health because they are not keeping their heart right with God, rather they're letting too much of the world in and too much of the past continue to dominate.

Verse 23: **"Above all guard the door of**

your mind with diligence... [part of thing we're to do] ...for out of it *are* the issues of life"—physical life and spiritual life.

As we read Prov. 3 let's bring together what we brought concerning the commandments of Christ: *If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely My commandments!* Let's see if this will help us give a little better understanding concerning spiritual and physical health.

Proverbs 3:1: "My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commandments.... [again, we're dealing with the heart] ...for they shall add length of days, and long life, and peace, to you" (vs 1-2). Of course, ours is to *eternal life!*

You can look at all of these rock idols and rap idols that are in the world. They break every one of God's Laws and what happens? They die young! Some in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s. They don't live long, because they're going against what God has said here. Likewise with young people, they get their parents' car and go out driving 100mph and crack it up and kill everybody in it. They didn't listen, so they're dead.

Verse 3: **"Do not let mercy and Truth forsake you..."** Always keep both! 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.' Truth is the Word of God and never forsake the Truth of God.

"...bind them around your neck; write them upon the tablet of your heart" (v 3). That's what we covered earlier 'concerning the washing of the water by the Word' by study and God's Holy Spirit together.

Verse 4: "And so you shall find favor... [grace] ...and good understanding in the sight of God and man. **Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding**" (vs 4-5).

- ***This is where we need to be all the time!***
- ***That's the battle that we're fighting!***
- ***That's the battle that we need to work on!***

Verse 6: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." That ties in with Rom. 8, 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.' He will direct our paths.

Many times God has us do things that we don't even know what He may have spared us from. Nevertheless, when we have 20/20 hindsight, we can look back and see, yes, 'God, you saved me from a mess.'

Verse 7: "Do not be wise in your own eyes..." That's where a lot of these things come where they trust in the flesh and the outward keeping

of the commandments.

To this very day the Jews are so locked into their Judaism and that they're the 'chosen people' that they just do not comprehend that *they are the 'rejected.'* One of these days they will repent! I use that as an example to take it to the extreme.

"...fear the LORD and depart from evil" (v 7). That's the kind of fear we're supposed to have. The other kind we're not to have.

Notice what it's to do for you physically. It's not always spiritually, but physically; v 8: "It shall be health to your navel and marrow to your bones."

In other words, you're going to have good health from the inside out. *Marrow produces blood and life is in the blood!* The blood is that which heals or makes sick.

Verse 9: "Honor the LORD with your substance and with the firstfruits of all your increase." Substance is things other than agricultural products.

There are still some people to this day who are hung up in bitterness toward men because they misused the Laws of God concerning tithes and offerings, that they are bitter against God! They think against the man, but it really comes down that they're bitter against God, and do not believe that they ought to tithe. They do not recognize that likewise, just as you break any of these things here that you come under a curse. That's what does happen.

My observation has been, though the years, that God is no respecter of persons, and when people believe that way concerning the things that God has blessed them with—the physical things—and they thumb their nose at God and say they don't believe the New Testament teaches tithing—when it does—that they have been in *physical and spiritual* distress.

In some cases, because of the locking of their mind in on that thought, and their resentment because of it, *it has affected their health and their spiritual standing with God!* God says that He will bless you. Do you believe Him? or not? You want to believe Him in everything else, but not that. Trust me, if you don't believe Him in that, you don't believe Him in the other things either.

You not exercising faith and belief that God says that He will bless you. So, no wonder that so many have to spend so much for their health when they don't realize that they are sinning spiritually, as well as physically, and that what they need to do is repent. God will heal them! Won't God heal them? Didn't He say that He would heal them? *Yes, He*

did!

Verse 10: "And your barns shall be filled *with* plenty, and your presses shall burst *with* new wine." God is going to take care of you. I tell you what, there are many widows on our mailing list that put a lot of rich people to shame.

Who do you think God is going to look to? *Read Luke 21!* Then we're looking at all the rich men casting in their offerings into the treasury and a little widow came in put in two mites, which was everything she had, because she loved God and believed God. Jesus didn't tell the widow that she was exempt and to go back and take it out, because *she gave from the heart* and wanted to.

But what did He say of the rich who just cast in of their abundance. He said that they hadn't done anything at all because they just gave of their abundance. They didn't give anything from the heart; they didn't give anything because of love; they didn't give anything but because of the outward necessity of doing it. We could say, 'Verily, they have their reward.'

One other thing that he brings up here, because in order to do up through v 10, you also have to accept:

Verse 11: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD... [because there's going to be that correction] ...nor be weary of His correction." Paul wrote that that an assurance that you are the sons of God.

Verse 12: "For whom the LORD loves He corrects, even as a father *corrects* the son *in whom* he delights."

- so that he may be better
- so that he may be perfected
- so that he may grow in grace and knowledge

We need to understand and have this whole perspective so that we will be ready to talk about some of the things that we need to overcome along those lines and how we can do it.

Concerning keeping the commandments of God, and tithing and so forth, that you can liken that to preventive maintenance.

If you had a car and you spent x-number of dollars—and now they're almost as much as a house used to be 20 or more years ago—and you never changed the oil or did anything to it. Just think of what kind of shape it would be at 200,000 miles, and it all fell apart and you had to buy a new one. Did you save anything? or Did you lose? *You lost!*

The same person can take the same car and

with preventive maintenance of what it takes to do it, he can drive that car 300,000 miles or more!

Did preventive maintenance help? Did it prolong it? *Yes, indeed!* That's the same thing we're talking about here *spiritually*.

You first have to have the physical and then the spiritual. Then you have them all combined in Christ. So, it is a preventive maintenance, so you don't get the curse from stealing from God.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 5:14
- 2) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 3) Matthew 19:16-22
- 4) Luke 14:11, 23-27
- 5) Matthew 10:34-39, 41-42
- 6) Romans 12:1-2
- 7) Titus 3:3-7
- 8) Ephesians 5:25-26
- 9) John 15:1-3
- 10) Hebrews 10:16
- 11) 1 John 3:18-24
- 12) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
- 13) Proverbs 4:20-23
- 14) Proverbs 3:1-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 8:1-3
- Mark 2
- Matthew 15
- Hebrews 4
- Psalm 51
- Romans 8
- Luke 21

Also referenced:

from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*:

- Appendix R: What is Meant by “the Works of the Law”?
- Appendix P: What Does it Mean to be “Born Again”?
- Appendix Q: What Does it Mean to be “Born of God”?