

Human Nature, Sin and Conversion

Fred R. Coulter—October 31, 2015

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

- How do our minds work?
- If God forgives sin and forgets it, why do we remember it on different occasions?
- Does that mean that God has not forgiven that sin?
- What does it actually mean?

Let's look at the human mind.

We're all born with human nature, and our human nature is not the same as it was when God originally created Adam and Eve. After Adam and Eve sinned, their nature was changed so that they were subject to death and they had a hostile nature to God that is called *the law of sin*. Paul writes of 'the law of sin and death.' You can see this in little infants. They want their own way. They'll fight and squabble and war. The biggest problem is separating them. Notice what we are by nature.

Mark 7:21: "For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts..." This is by nature. Even some thoughts that we think of as 'good,' are evil. Without God's Spirit to guide us, you're stuck in this conundrum.

"...adulteries, fornications, murders... [everything that human nature does] ...thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evils go forth from within, and **these defile a man**" (vs 21-23).

Let's see how Jeremiah describes it. We will see that *no man has the power by his own works* to save himself. We also can see that no person is able to extend their life very far. Every once in a while, if you watch Fox News and watch Bill O'Reilly, they give a salute to someone whose 95, 102, and so forth, but they still die. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes that if a man live 1000 years twice-fold and dies, that's vanity. None of us are going to reach that in the flesh; we're all going to wear out and collapse before that. We're talking about the nature, the heart and the mind.

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things..." That's the first thing to remember, you're going to deceive yourself. It's easy to do. Do people live by lies? *Yes, they do!* Everything that we read in Mark 7:21 that's the way people behave and we're going to see that even though there are heinous crimes committed, there are those who have absolutely no remorse in doing them. *They think they're right!*

"...and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (v 9). A person does not even know his or her own mind without the Word of God to tell them what it really is. You're not aware of the sins. You may think that you've done some wrong. You may have a little guilty conscience, but you justify that and move on.

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." God says He's going to judge.

Let's see where God is going to take us. Here the problem: How do you get from Mark 7:21 and Jer. 17:9 to this:

Colossians 1:26: "*Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints."

- Isn't it a mystery that no one understands human nature?
- Isn't it a mystery that no one knows what God is doing, yet, it's revealed in the Bible?

The Bible is the most published book in the whole world, and yet, it is the most ignored.

Verse 27: "To whom God did will..." Understand this: What we know and what we understand **comes from the will of God!**

"...to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (v 27).

- How is God going to come from total dedication to evil—the carnal mind, hostile against God—to Christ *in* you?
- What is that to do?
- How is that going to be done?

Here we're describing the beginning, when we start to understand about God, to the ending of it at the resurrection. First, we have to have something in between, which is:

Philippians. 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus"—to have the very mind of Christ. You have to let this happen, and it cannot happen without the Spirit of God. This is what we are going to cover today.

Matthew 19:16—this is a very revealing statement: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master...'"

- Was Christ 'good'? *Have to say so!*
- Was He perfect? *Yes, He was!*

- Why does He say this?

“...what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?’ And He said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good?’ (vs 16-17). Why did Christ say that? *Because He was in the flesh!* What kind of flesh? That’s the question!

“...No one *is* good except one—God” (v 17). Let’s ask another question that is hard for people to grasp. Jesus came to the earth:

- divested Himself of all of His glory as God
- was impregnated into the womb of the virgin Mary
- was born as any ordinary human being
- lived His life

Here’s His ministry. Why would He say, ‘Don’t call me *good*,’ when He was truly the only good person on earth? Remember what happened when Adam and Eve sinned:

- they were cut off from God
- they were sentenced to death to have the law of death within them
- their human nature was changed to be hostile against God, which is called the ‘law of sin’

Paul describes this as ‘the law of sin and death.’ Did Jesus die? *Yes!* He had to have the ‘law of death’ within Him.

Romans 5:12: “Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death...” So, in this way death passed into all mankind. They know there is a death gene. The scientists have been trying to figure out where it is so they can modify it.

It is for this reason that *all have sinned*. If you have a nature that is carnal, physical and subject to death, it is also subject to sin. That’s why *all sin regardless of their age*. Isn’t that what the Scriptures say? ‘*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God!*’ All you have to do is just watch the news. Sin is going on:

- everywhere
- every place
- every country
- every city
- every town
- every village
- every human being

Even the saints have a hard time with it. We’ll explain why he writes this in Rom. 8. We will get to why He says, ‘consequently,’ a little later.

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...”

- What does it mean to be in Christ Jesus? *It means you have to have the Spirit of God!*
- How do you get the Spirit of God? *Through repentance and baptism!*

“...who are not walking according to *the* flesh... [living your life just any way you want to live it] ...but **according to the Spirit**” (v 1). You can’t live “...according to the Spirit” without the Spirit of God.

What did God say to the Israelites when they said to Moses, ‘Everything that God said we’ll do?’ What did God say? ‘*Oh, if there were such a heart in them that they would,*’ because it takes the Spirit of God and God didn’t give them the Holy Spirit of God. That’s why they were to keep the laws and commandments of God in the letter of the Law.

That’s what I also explained on how do you understand/study the Bible. You begin with the simple things, **obey His voice!** You start in the letter of the Law, but unless you come to repentance so you can receive the Spirit of God, you cannot walk in the Spirit the way God wants you to.

Verse 2: “Because **the Law of the Spirit of Life** in Christ Jesus...” —includes:

- repentance
- baptism
- receiving the Spirit of God
- growing and overcoming

That’s what the New Testament is all about.

“...has **delivered me** from the law of sin and death” (v 2). What do you mean *delivered*? Did God, when we’re converted, remove the ‘law of sin and death’? *No, He did not!* It even says of the saints that die that it’s a delight, it’s a blessing from God, that you die in the faith.

- Were we delivered completely from the law of sin?
- Did God remove sinful inclinations from out of our being? *No!*
- Why did He say “...delivered me...”?

Because when you receive the Spirit of God, you now have the Spirit of God to lead you and to convict you in heart and mind so you can repent and overcome human nature! Otherwise, if you’re made perfect as soon as you’re baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God... We’ll talk about what baptism does and why it works the way that it works, which answers the questions:

- Why do you still have sin within?
- What are you going to do about it?
- How do you overcome it?
- How do you change?

By yourself, maybe you can improve yourself to do certain things, but you **cannot** get rid of *the law of sin and death*, but He has *delivered* us.

- How are we delivered from death?
- When does that come?
- *The resurrection!*

We'll talk about the law of sin in a little bit.

Here's why Jesus did not say He was good, did not even allow someone to come and say, 'Good Master.' He said that there's only One Who is good and that is God. With Jesus as God manifested in the flesh, how many Gods were there in heaven? ***One, the Father!***

Sidebar: All you Sacred Namers don't get mad, but the only revealed name in the New Testament of God is *the Father* and of Christ: *Jesus* and *the Christ*. ***That's it!***

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it *was* weak through the flesh..." How many people know right from wrong but still continue to do wrong? *They're carnal and fleshly!* Maybe if you've been taught while you're growing up, right and wrong, good and evil, you're not going to be so inclined to go out and do things that are sin:

- you know that you shouldn't kill
- you know that you shouldn't commit adultery
- you know that you shouldn't steal
- you know that you shouldn't lie

You know the one on coveting most everyone forgets, because you're striving after all the things that you want, but you have some knowledge of right and wrong.

What we're doing today in this society, we're not teaching them right from wrong. Look at what's happening: everything is *right in their own eyes*, all the lawlessness everywhere; all through the weakness of the flesh, all through the carnal mind. Here's the solution:

"...God, having sent His own Son **in the likeness of sinful flesh**... [exactly as our sinful flesh is sinful flesh] ...and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (v 3). Whose flesh was it condemned in? *Jesus' flesh!* Why?

You may have heard some people say, 'For God to judge Adam and Eve that way and give them *the law of sin and death* within their very beings, that's not fair. For every human being to be born with *the law of sin and death* within them, that's not fair.' ***God works on justice, not fairness!***

- What did God do?
- Who was the Creator of mankind?

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... [v 3] ...All things came into being through Him..." All human nature and all human flesh is a result of Jesus Christ. He was the One Who created Adam and Eve.

In order to be a Savior of all of mankind, He took upon Him, through His mother Mary—there was never an immaculate conception with Mary, she had human nature—He received human nature and carried within Him, in His fleshly being, 'the law of sin and death.' ***Yet, never sinned!***

- You think you have a hard time overcoming sin?
- Was Jesus tempted? ***Yes, indeed!***
- Was it difficult? ***Yes, indeed!***

Hebrews 5:5 talks about the priesthood and Christ's priesthood: "In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest... [on the earth] ...but He Who said to Him, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.' Even as He also says in another *place*, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec'" (vs 5-6).

He could not become that High Priest in heaven until He brought the perfect sacrifice condemning sin in the flesh. It was difficult for Jesus. Yes, He had the Holy Spirit. Yes, the Father taught Him. That's why He was never taught by the rabbis. God the Father taught Him, woke Him up every morning and taught Him (Isa. 50).

Verse 7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death..." What does that mean? ***The wages of sin is death!***

God risked everything coming in the flesh and taking upon Himself human nature and also to fight against Satan the devil. Think of that!

- Is God just? ***Yes, indeed!***
- Is God fair? ***Yes, indeed!***

He did that for all mankind and since He's the Creator of all human beings, then His life and His death as a sacrifice with His shed blood can be applied to all of those who repent. Sin was condemned in His flesh on the cross and in His life that He never sinned, though He had *the law of sin and death* within Him. There'll be some theologians that'll say, 'You're way off base here.'

"...and was heard because *He* feared *God*. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the **things that He suffered**" (vs 7-8). We don't know all the things that Jesus suffered. We

don't have anything recorded about that. We have some things, but not all.

Verse 9: “**And having been perfected...**” Is God perfect? *Yes!* Why did Jesus come and take on human flesh? *To be perfected as the sacrifice for all human beings and to be able to bring eternal life to them!*

“...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those **who obey Him**” (v 9). **Obey My voice!** Simple as can be! Some of the things are hard to understand. As I brought out at *Church at Home* {churchofhome.org}, it's easy to understand the Ten Commandments. There's nothing difficult about them. *Obey Him!* How does this apply to us? First of all, it is *God* Who leads us to repentance.

Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?” You see your sins in the light that you see them and in the light that God sees them.

Let's talk about the sin between David and Bathsheba and the killing of her husband Uriah: Here's the king:

- all power
- loved God
- wrote hundreds of Psalms
- was a real battler and a warrior fighting the battles that God told him to fight

So much so, that God gave him the plans for his son Solomon—who by the way, his mother was Bathsheba—to build the temple. Think of that!

Think of all that went in with it. David did have the Spirit of God, just like us! We have the Spirit of God! Do we sin? *Yes!* David really sinned; so did Bathsheba. She knew her husband was gone to battle, and apparently their house was right next to the house of King David. She bathed on the rooftop knowing that the king would walk by and see her. So, she had her part. David made a lot of mistakes. He could have said, ‘Uh, oh! No way!’ We say today, ‘No way, José.’ He didn't! **Lust got enticed!**

Let's see how sin works even if you have the Spirit of God, if you do not resist it!

James 1:13: “Do not let anyone who is tempted say, ‘I am being tempted by God...’” Did God tempt David to lust after Bathsheba? *Of course not!* Notice the process. This happened to David. He saw her and thought, ‘Woo, woo!’

“...because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*” (v 13). What does God set before us? *Choices! Life and death, blessing and cursing!*

Here's David: What's he going to do? What's he going to choose? He had a chance to not get involved. He could have thought, ‘Oh, I'll never do that to one of my generals, one of my captains, or maybe a major,’ because Joab was over Uriah. He didn't put it down.

Verse 14: “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away...” With his own human nature. Of course, when Satan tempts you he gives you a benefit. The benefit was, ‘This would be spectacular with this woman!’ She was there bathing letting the king know, ‘I'm all ready!’ So, when the king's messenger came, she didn't send a note back saying, ‘Tell the king I cannot come.’ She could have, but she didn't. David sent the messenger. Now somebody else is involved and knows what's going on. Think of that! So, she came.

Can you imagine all the servants in the household of David, after she came? *They knew what was going on!* She even stayed there until she was clean then went back home. David should not have done that.

That's how human nature works. He justified it all the way along. He probably said, ‘I'm king. I can do whatever I want.’ It seems to me we heard that of some narcissists in America. After all, ‘I have great desire for her.’ Satan will give you a benefit; so, she came.

The Proverb says that what is ‘spoken in secret a little bird is going to fly away with it.’ Can you imagine the wagging tongues that went with that? Can you imagine the next morning when the servants looked around and said, ‘Oh, she's still here?’ Of course, they knew what went on. The reason I'm bringing this out is because **that's how sin entices!**

Verse 15: “And after lust has conceived... [it did] ...it gives birth to sin... [he committed adultery and she committed adultery] ...and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death.” That's exactly what happened!

So, he thought, ‘She left, she went home.’ It must have been about six weeks later, she sent a message to the king, ‘David, I'm pregnant.’ What did he do? He said, ‘I've got to get rid of the evidence.’ He worked it out with Joab, the commander. He wrote a special note to Joab and had a messenger take it to him to put her husband Uriah the Hittite right up in the thick of the battle and when he's there, back away and let him die. So, he did. Can you imagine what Joab thought? *Joab had to do a lot of dirty work for David!* I don't think he had too good of an opinion of David.

Why am I bringing this out? *To show you the process of sin with even those who are*

converted, that unless you overcome it every day, it will take you down! We know what happened, he didn't repent of it. Finally, God had to send Nathan the prophet, and he told David about the rich man who took the poor man's little ewe to make a feast for his friends. David got all angry and Nathan looked him right in the eye and said, '*You are the one.*'

What happened? Everything was in rebellion from that day on. The sin of one man affected the whole kingdom. It affected his family and the child died. God took the life of the child. Can you imagine if that child would have lived with all the hypocrisy of everything that went on? *Just think what his name would have been called with the wagging tongues of all the people talking about it!* If he would have inherited the throne, there would have been absolutely no respect at all. David did repent. This is how it comes about. It brings forth death.

Verse 16 "Do not deceive yourselves..." That's what he says here.

Psa. 51 is David's repentance. This helps us to answer the question as to why God does not take away *the law of sin and death* from us immediately. That cannot happen as long as we're in the flesh.

Psalm 51:1: "Have mercy upon me, O God... [He forgave David; Nathan said, 'Your sin has been forgiven.] ...according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions"—all the series of those things leading to that affair and afterwards.

Verse 2: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity..." We're going to talk about the 'washing of the water by the Word' a little later. You have to have your sins washed away. We will see that *that is a process*. It doesn't happen all at once.

"...and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me" (vs 2-3). He could see the greatness of his sin. That's why it talks about that sin may become *exceedingly* sinful.

Someone who commits a murder or somebody he doesn't like, that's nothing to him. He doesn't understand about murder. Someone who steals from someone because 'they have more than I do and I'm going to take it.' They don't view that as sin. Look at it on the lawless riots that they've had in various cities. They smash in the windows, burn cars, loot the stores, take everything and they're innocent because someone has something that they want and they take. There's no remorse.

David understood what it was after Nathan came and really let him have it. He fasted for how

many days hoping that the child would live, but it didn't.

Verse 4: "Against You, You only, have I sinned..." When you sin *it's against God first* and then the other people. Everybody suffered from that.

A good example is what we've experienced with the Church. Remember what happened? *It's all scattered. Here we are in small groups, getting older and all of that thing, that's all part of it!* It affected every one of us. How was your attitude when you were living through those things and finding out what was going on? *Miserable!* That's how all of Israel was because of the sin of David, and it took them some time to get over it. *David realized that he sinned against God directly!* This was *after* God promised that he would never lack for a descendent to sit on his throne. After that fantastic promise, God did not take away that promise, because God's Word stands.

"...and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity..." (vs 4-5). That means with *the law of sin and death*, not that his mother committed adultery to have him as a child. *No!*

"...and in sin did my mother conceive me" (v 5)—because *the law of sin and death* comes right with conception. It's right there.

Verse 6: "Behold, You desire **Truth in the inward parts...**" *That is the goal of repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit!* What's in the inward parts before that? *Deceit, lying, all the works of the flesh (Mark 7:21)!* Isn't it true that 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?' Even King David fell to that.

Psalm 51:6: "...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom". That's why you're going to *learn* from the things that you did.

If you think of that again after you've repented of it, does that mean that God has not forgiven you? *No!* That doesn't mean that God has not forgiven you but it means that is a memory of history for you to learn not to do that. How about here with David. *It's written for all of us!* Won't David be surprised when he's resurrected and finds out?

Verse 7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me... [David says it in v 2, 'wash me.'] ...and I shall be whiter than snow."

(go to the next track)

Aren't you glad that you are not struck dead the instant you sin? *Yes!* Why doesn't God do that? *Because you already have the law of death within*

you and perhaps as you exercise your choices, you may repent! Sometimes it may take you a while to come to repentance. Let's see how God has done it through Christ.

Paul talks about all the sins. You can read the first part of it.

Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God..."—everyone; no one is exempt.

I'm not going to get into a detailed discussion of the difficult things to understand in Rom. 3, but the righteousness of God means His justification. **Justification comes upon repentance**, which God leads you to do, **and the sacrifice of Christ and His shed blood** applied to you individually.

Verse 23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, [justification] in respect to the remission of sins that are past" (vs 23-25). All sin is past, because the instant you commit it, it becomes a past sin.

Paul shows that it's not by works and he shows that God is a God of the Jews and the Gentiles and you're not abolishing Law.

Rom. 6 is about baptism. That's why Jesus came and said, 'Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.' He was the Representative of the Kingdom of God. That's why Peter preached, '*Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*' Receiving the Holy Spirit is the key for how we overcome sin.

Romans 6 1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**...." Paul said, 'No! No!'

When you're baptized, you are "...**baptized into His death**" (v 3). God applies the death of Christ to your life as payment for your sins. We are buried with Him through baptism. This is a symbolic death. **You die!** You're telling God, 'Yes, I'm going to die in this watery grave.' For what purpose? *Now your life is going to change!*

You're going to come up out of that grave, and we're to "...**walk in newness of life**" (v 4). That's what it's all about.

Verse 8: "...we died together... [v 9]: ...knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, **He died unto sin once for all**; but in that He lives, He lives

unto God. **In the same way...**" (vs 8-11). Here is how we are to live after we are baptized. God forgives all your sins, then we will see that He gives you His Spirit to give you enough strength to begin to overcome the sin within. Here's how we are to look at our lives.

Verse 11: "In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, **do not let sin rule** in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof" (vs 11-12).

What does this tell us? *You still have the law of sin and death within you!* How have you been delivered from it? *Not by removing it, but by having been given the Holy Spirit to overcome it!*

Verse 12: "Therefore, **do not let sin rule** in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof." {note James. 1, how all that comes about}

Verse 13: "Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin..." Don't be giving in to sin. Sin will come easy. God still does not come and destroy you, but **He will convict you in your mind and heart so that you will repent!** God wants you actively involved in overcoming sin within your life, within and without.

"...rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace**" (vs 13-14). You are under grace because you receive the Holy Spirit of God.

Romans 7:1: "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that **the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?**" Everybody in the world is under law. Law judges automatically all the time. Whether known or unknown, it judges you—*interior* in your mind, *exterior* to the world—but under grace.

Grace means that you now have access to God so that you can repent if and when you sin. You have a direct relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. The rest of the world does not; they don't know anything about it. There may be some people trying to quit this, that and the other, but they're not trying to overcome *the sin within* through the Spirit of God so that they can develop the character of God and the mind of Christ. So, don't let it rule over you.

Romans 6:15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (vs 15-16). There's still that *law of sin and death*

working within us, but having the Spirit of God we have *the circumcision of the heart*.

Verse 17: “But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you.” We are not to get all involved in sin again.

Verse 14: “For sin shall not rule over you...” It doesn’t say you won’t sin.

Romans 7:9: “For I was once alive without law... [the knowledge of the Law] ...but after the commandment came... [came to its understanding] ...sin revived, and I died.” How did he die? He died *in baptism!* After he received the Holy Spirit of God, what happened?

Verse 10: “And the commandment, which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me; because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore, the Law is indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good. Now then... [you find out about the Law and the commandments] ...did that which is good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin...” (vs 10-13). This is why you have *the law of sin and death* within you. So, when the knowledge of the Truth comes:

“...in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which is good, was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become **exceedingly sinful**” (v 13)—lying, cheating, stealing, adultery, idolatry, taking God’s name in vain, all of the Ten Commandments. We are not *under law* as the world is. We are *within law*. Now, to give us the strength to overcome sin and to recognize it when it comes within, God has done this:

Hebrews 10:14: “For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.” Perfection is a process, not instantaneous, for those who are sanctified. We’ve been sanctified because we’ve received the Holy Spirit.

Verse 15: “And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ‘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’” (vs 15-16). That is an amazing thing! How is it written there?

- by study
- by prayer
- by repentance
- by God’s Spirit

That’s why when you sin, you recognize it as sin. Whereas, before you knew God—repented, were baptized, and received the Spirit of God—you didn’t know it was sin. You may have thought it’s bad and shouldn’t do it. Just like a thief. When he first starts stealing, the first time he steals it’s probably, ‘Whoa, but I got away with that.’ The next time he steals, got away with it, and the next time he steals, gets away with it.

I like that program on American Heroes Channel, *I (Almost) Got Away With It*. What happens? When Satan gives you a benefit stealing and you have all this loot, you got a benefit. You steal \$10,000 you got \$10,000 to spend. You think that’s a benefit and you succeeded in that. What happens when you spend it all and you’re still not caught? You’re either going to go apply for a job and put on your application: What you have done: ‘I just robbed a bank for \$10,000.’ They’re not going to give you a job.

What do you have to do? Since you haven’t repented, you haven’t forsaken it, you go steal again. This time you really hit the jackpot; you come up with \$27,000, and you think that you’re really getting away with this. But all time the police are working and catching up with you. I remember watching the one where there were off-duty policemen who were robbing banks and they finally got them. There’s one Scripture that says very clearly, ‘Be sure your sins will find you out.’ That means that they will be exposed!

That’s why you need the commandments written in your heart and your mind, so you know what is right, you know what is wrong. God has given you now the ‘spiritual standard’ required to keep those laws and has given you the Holy Spirit. Let’s talk about receiving the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:10: “And you are complete in Him [Christ], Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (vs 10-11).

That is the *circumcision of the heart!* That is not a heart transplant; there’s a difference. If you understand about the physical circumcision with men, it doesn’t remove everything, just part of it. What this does, this takes away *part* of your human nature and you are to grow in grace and knowledge to have it replaced with *love, truth, character and the laws and commandments of God!*

Verse 12: “Having been buried with Him in baptism... [Rom. 6]...” That’s how you receive the circumcision of the heart: ***baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit!***

“...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross” (vs 12-14). That’s forgiveness, circumcision of the heart and receiving of the Holy Spirit of God.

When we receive the Sprit of God it is a begettal. It is not a transformation to make you a spirit being instantly, because God wants us to overcome the sin *within*. That’s why, with the circumcision of the heart and the mind, you’re going to remember some of the things in the past, not that God has failed to forgive you. He has forgiven you, but that’s like a history lesson written within: *how stupid was that; I’m not going to do that*.

You won’t think of it all the time, but there will be times when that will come. That is so you can use the Spirit of God to overcome: *the washing, the cleansing within!* Just like David prayed, ‘Wash me thoroughly from my sin.’ It’s a process.

Ephesians 1:13—concerning Christ “In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” ***That is the circumcision of the heart and mind!***

Verse 14: “Which is *the earnest...*” The earnest is the down payment very much likened unto this: When a new life is begotten in the womb of the mother by the father, it’s not ready for birth for nine months. It’s got to grow; It’s got to develop; everything has to be in place. Just like with us. Once we receive the begettal of the Holy Spirit:

- we are to grow in knowledge
- we are to grow in grace
- we are go grow in repentance

We can look back and see the things we repented of maybe a long time ago and we’ve had a flash back to that and we think, how rotten and terrible that really was. Then you grow in deeper repentance. That’s why we repent every day. As you go along you will be able to, in fighting the battle against the carnal mind within, repent when it first comes up as a thought. That’s what God wants us to do.

Just like the Sabbath. If one Sabbath made you perfect, let’s go to Sabbath services. *Yep!* It’s going to be quite an experience. You’re going to be changed from flesh to spirit. You’re going to rise up in the air. You’re going to be perfect. *No!*

- we need the Sabbath

- we need the Bible
- we need the Word of God
- we need the Spirit of God
- we need to see how sinful sin really is

Exactly as Paul said, ‘When the commandment came...’ That means that when he was baptized, received the Holy Spirit of God and God began writing the commandments within his heart and in his mind, he began to see how awful his life really was, especially persecuting the Christians. He was forgiven of that, but he never forgot it.

Just like us. There are certain sins that you have forgotten completely. There are other sins that come back and haunt you. Why is that? *Because you only have the earnest!* A circumcision is the beginning, *not the perfection!* Perfection comes day-by-day—some cases, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute, depending on what your circumstances are. You grow in grace and knowledge, and you overcome. You’re able to focus on what God wants. That’s why thoughts will come into your mind that you don’t want. The law of sin is still there. What do you do? *Repent of it and ask God to help you!*

Have you ever had an obsessive thought come? like a stupid song? You’ve had that happen, especially from a commercial! All the commercials are the most deceptive of all. Everybody’s happy, everybody’s doing good, oh, what a wonderful thing, take this medicine, it’ll kill you but you’ll smile to your grave.

“...of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession... [it’s like the lay-a-way plan] ...to *the* praise of His glory” (v 14).

Paul had to fight sin. He has many occasions in 2-Cor. and 1st & 2-Tim. where he reminds everybody of what he was before he was called. Think about Paul, #1 enemy of the Church, #1 handyman of the high priest, going out persecuting and killing Christians. God knocked him down and he had a change of attitude right quickly.

Romans 7:11: “Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment... [where there is no law there is no sin] ...deceived me, and by it killed *me*.” You think that if you do something that will be a benefit for you, even though it is a sin, you’re going to get away with it, but he didn’t, it killed him.

Verse 12: “Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy...” That’s not what the Protestants say. They say Jesus did away with the Law. *Proof that they don’t have the Spirit of God!* They may have some understanding of some things. Do you think God Who created everything that there is to run by laws that He created, is going to do away with those? Just because sinners sin is God going to come along and

say, 'Oh, now, now. That's all right. I've done away with the Law so anything you do is just fine now?' *Never happen! No!*

"...and the commandment Holy and righteous and good. Now then, did that which is good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [to show them that if he continued in transgressions, he would die] ...But sin, **in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me**" (vs 12-13). *Within!*

That's why it says in Heb. 12 that we need to keep looking to Jesus Christ because we're 'so easily beset with sin.' God knows we're going to sin, but He hasn't given us carte blanche to sin. He has given the vehicle through grace, prayer and repentance to be forgiven so that you will be strengthened, so you will not sin. That's a life long project.

"...by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become **exceedingly sinful**" (v 13).

- Isn't that what happened with David?
- Isn't that what happened with you?
- Isn't that what happens with everyone that God calls?
- *Yes!*

You begin to see the sin:

- your lying
- your cheating
- your deceitfulness
- your wickedness

We're coming up on Christmas time. Here's a benefit from Satan: We can all have a good time. Let's stop at Halloween first. All of the kiddies go out:

- introduce them to death
- introduce them to trick-or-treating
- introduce them to extortion

There are a lot of people willing to be extorted, so they have piles of candy and they come. The kids get all this candy and you go home. I remember when I went out and I came back with a big bag full of goodies: candies, cookies and everything like that. I put it out on my bed and looked at all of that and I thought: I got it made! Like kids are going to do, they're going to gorge themselves on all the sweets and in two weeks they're going to have a flu epidemic at school.

Satan gives you a benefit. You don't think that is sin. When my Mom took me out trick-or-treating, I didn't say, 'No, Mom. I'm not going, that's sin.' She gave me a bag and said, 'Let's go fill it up.' I said, 'Fine!'

How does Satan work? *Incrementalism! A little bit at a time!* You're going to see this year the

beginning of an onslaught of Satan to deceive the whole world in the greater occult experiences. Halloween is becoming an adult thing; adults are spending as much or more on Halloween than they do on Christmas. It is the first holiday of the year that celebrates death and all the gruesomeness that goes with it and everything else that takes place.

Verse 14: "For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin." Bring that out with anyone. Tell a thief to stop stealing. 'Well, I know how to do it.'

I remember watching this one program that what the police finally did, they conceded to the greatest jewel thief in the United States. He would come into the high-priced, expensive hotels and steal the jewels from the top paying customers that would come in there. They never could catch him. Finally, they caught him. They said, 'All right. If you tell us how you do this, we'll strike a deal with you and not put you in prison, but you better never steal anymore.' So, he said, 'Thank you,' and told them how he did it. Every time he stole, that was a benefit. That's how Satan works, but somebody always suffers.

Verse 15: "Because what I am working out myself... [in other words, you're going to live your life by yourself, without God] ...I do not know..."

- you don't know what you're doing
- you don't know where you're going
- you don't know what the purpose of life is

"...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover,, what I hate, this *is what* I do" (v 15). This is the struggle that now takes place once you have the Holy Spirit of God.

- you're tempted
- you sin
- you don't know why you do it

- Were you perfect in temperament all this week?
- Was every word out of your mouth nothing but praise and glory to God?
- How about the thoughts in your mind?
- Were your thoughts only on God?

or

- Were they on something else, and that something else was sin in your mind?
- Now what do you do?

That's why you have to have God's Spirit to repent, pray and ask God for strength.

Verse 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.... [the Law is still good, there's nothing wrong with it] ...So then, **I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin that is dwelling within me**" (vs 16-

17). Because you still have *the law of sin and death* within you, and your deliverance comes from exercising the Holy Spirit to overcome. God wants our full-time, active involvement:

- in overcoming sin
- in studying and learning righteousness
- in learning how to do things God's way

Our full-time effort in life! That's what we're here to learn. That's why God just doesn't say, 'Oh, good. You repented. Let's take *the law of sin and death* out of you.' You going to live forever in the flesh? *Never happen! Not going to happen!* The sin is still there.

- that's why temptation comes along
- that's why you lose your temper
- that's why you even swear

Maybe you've quit swearing but you've got another word in place of it. So, you use that word now because you're not swearing, but it still means the same thing.

- Do you perfectly love everyone? *No!*
- Do you have some people you don't care for? *Yes!*
- What are you going to do about that?
- How are you going to handle that?

Those are all things that come along!

What if, when you get older? I'm 80-years-old and I remember things that I did as a kid. Why do I remember that? *That's a reminder that you've been a sinner from day one!* I remember when I would lie, my mom sent me out—there were hazelnut trees around where lived—and I had to pick my switch. I would try to bring in a little thicker one that didn't sting as much. She'd say, 'Go out and get a thin one.' Then she'd go *whack! whack! whack!* on my calves and everything. 'Don't you lie again.'

I was rambunctious. At five-years-old I'd walk five blocks down to the park and spend all day there. I'd play with the kids and come home.

'Where you been?' *Been down at the park. What'd you do?' Swinging, sliding, doing all of this. Don't you know something may happen down there? No!* 'Well, you stay home.' *So I went again.* 'You stay home.' *I went again.* 'All right. I'm not going to switch you for it. Here's the clock up on the mantle of the counter of the fireplace. You stand there with your arms out.'

First time 15 minutes: 'Get 'em up! Get 'em up!' So, I got through the 15 minutes. The next day. Gone again, come back. 'All right, a half hour. 'Get 'em up!' That went on until I got up to an hour. My mom finally surrendered and said, 'Look, if you're going to go, let me pack a lunch for you.' So, I quit going.

That's the sin within! We can laugh at it because it's humorous because it has to do when you're a kid. Think of that behavior when you get older. Think of what it is when there's rebellion. 'I'm going to take the car and go out.' *You be careful. Drive carefully.* 'Yep.' So you crash it at 100mph and kill somebody! *Sin within!* You don't know what you're doing.

"...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do" (v 15). That's what happens when you sin. You don't like it, God's Spirit convicts you, reminds you of it so you can *repent; that's what God wants!*

Verse 18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good..." Where did we start? *Matt. 19, 'there is none good but God,' Jesus said to the young man!*

"...For the desire to do good is present... [my intensions were good] ...within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find" (v 18).

Have you ever had it where you want to do something really nice and lovely for someone and what happens? You have the best intensions possible, but it ends up in a fight and an argument and you just walk away angry and mad. I know that's never happened to you—has it?

Even within the Church is it okay that you love some people more than others? *Yes, because Jesus loved John more than the other disciples, but He still loved them within the Church!* Because of personality differences, or something—you're kind to them, you're good to them, you love them—but it's not necessarily a bosom buddy type of thing where it's huggy-kissy all the time. You better be careful about that.

Verse 19: "For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing." *This is the pull of human nature!*

You have a thought come into your head that you know didn't come from God. You have a memory from the past, and that memory from the past is a history lesson, just like you read in the Old Testament all the history; just like we read about David. That's a history lesson. He's forgiven! God has forgotten it! He's going to be raised as king over Israel forever!

God understands we're weak in the flesh. He's going to forgive when we repent. It's not *if we sin*, because there's no *if* about it. *You are going to!* So, it's *when you sin*.

Maybe you'll be really inspired after this sermon today and you're going to be really resolved

that you're going to do better. You're going to be really resolved that you're going to sit down and have those nice little talks with yourself and say:

- Now, {your name}, you know what you need to do. *Yes!*
- You know that you ought to do this. *Yes!*
- Are you going to do it? *Yes!*
- Why didn't you do it?

That's how it works. This is why:

Verse 20: "But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me.*" Why does God leave *the law of sin and death* within you? He leaves the law of sin in you so that *you will learn to use the Holy Spirit to overcome* and so that *you will learn that you can't overcome unless you repent!*

He doesn't know what sin you're going to do. You don't know what sin you're going to do. Tomorrow, tell me what sin you're going to do at eleven o'clock in the morning. You don't know. Neither does God, because there's free moral agency. Maybe at eleven you won't sin, but maybe at three o'clock in the afternoon, you will. Who knows? This is why prayer is every day, led by the Spirit of God to change and grow and overcome. If you have a thought flash from the past, repent of it, get it out of your mind and ask God to clean your mind.

How are you going to get your mind cleaned up? Think of all the garbage that is in there. There's a lot of garbage in the brain. Everything you've ever done is still recorded there somewhere. They know with brain surgery that you can touch a certain place in the brain and they can smell smells, while they're under surgery. It's recorded there. *Conversion of the mind becomes the important thing!*

The truth is, we'll just project ahead: none of us will be perfect until the resurrection. Just like when you're begotten you cannot be born. You can never, in the flesh, be totally perfect. *You are in the process of being perfected spiritually* so that at the resurrection God will finish that perfection. Then you shed everything; you leave everything behind.

Verse 21: "Consequently, **I find this law in my members, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.** For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man" (vs 21-22). You're not trying to resist against the laws of God. You're not trying to go out and sin, but sin is there and it pops up.

Verse 23: "But I see another law within my own members, warring against **the law of my mind**, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members." *The law of sin is still there!*

Stop and think for a minute. Suppose you could be perfect in the flesh. Would you not go around and look at other people in their sins and just condemn them up and down, one way or the other? Think of the arrogance it would be if that were possible.

That was the problem with Job. Maybe I ought to follow this up with a series on Job. I've done some in the past, but I've read the transcripts recently and it's not sufficient. That's what Job did. 'I'm so good. God has got to come down here. I need an umpire or a judge. I'm going to take God to court so He can know how good I am.' God took him to court and he found out he wasn't so good.

Here is what happens when you begin to see how sinful sin is as he said; Verse 24: "O *what a wretched man I am!* Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, **on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with my mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, I serve the law of sin**" (vs 24-25). *That is when you sin because it's still within you!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 7:21-23
- 2) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 3) Colossians 1:26-27
- 4) Philippians 2:5
- 5) Matthew 19:16-17
- 6) Romans 5:12
- 7) Romans 8:1-3
- 8) John 1:1, 3
- 9) Hebrews 5:5-9
- 10) Romans 2:4
- 11) James 1:13-16
- 12) Psalm 51:1-7
- 13) Romans 3:23-25
- 14) Romans 6:1-4, 8-14
- 15) Romans 7:1
- 16) Romans 6:15-17, 14
- 17) Romans 7:9-13
- 18) Hebrews 10:14-16
- 19) Colossians 2:10-14
- 20) Ephesians 1:13-14
- 21) Romans 7:11-17, 15, 18-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 50
- Hebrews 12

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Transcribed: 11-15-15 Proofed: bo—11-17-16

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