

To Stand *with* God or Surrender to Satan (Go To Meeting)

Albert Jones—March 1, 2024

I wanted to bring something tonight that was in the spirit of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. I want to emphasize this race that we're in, this literal confrontation spiritually that we have right now in this life against the one who wants to threaten and prevent us from entering into the promised rest that God has promised us! God has indeed called us to His service. So, the question becomes:

- Do we stand with God?

or

- Are we surrendering to Satan the devil?

It's one or the other!

To stand with God is to fight for life! I think we'd all agree that the journey from where we were to where we are, to the 'Kingdom of God is not going to be one that's an easy walk. It's not a broad way, it's not an easy way!

- it is a difficult way
- it is a way that requires us to be dedicated and committed in this relationship
- it is to understand what is going on

So, to stand with God is to fight for life!

To surrender to Satan is *death*, because those who are held in bondage by him have subjected themselves to ***the Judgment! That judgment of the penalty of death!*** This is not just any death that we're talking about. ***This is the death!***

If you are in captivity to Satan by surrendering to him, he is going to return you to prison. He's going to return you to bondage and place you back on death row. There's no negotiation, there is no peace treaty. He will be happy to have us return to him and be put back in darkness and chains.

But God has called us ***to Life!*** God has called us to that which He has promised us and that is ***Life***. There is *no life, no hope, no mercy* in captivity to Satan. ***Only shame!***

To willfully, that is for us to willfully surrender the fight to him is a death unimaginable. It even boggles the mind to even contemplate this idea that we would return, as it were—and the symbolism is clear—to ***Egypt*** and to do ***his*** will. He is happy to have us:

- ***if*** we give up
- ***if*** we stop fighting

- ***if*** we stop striving after righteousness
- ***if*** we stop striving after the promises of God

Hebrews 10:19—*Paul writes*: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. **Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope that we profess, for He Who promised is faithful**” (vs 19-23).

We have a faithful God who has promised us good promises, who has assured us a victory. But Satan will do everything in his power to convince us that there is no hope, that there is no use. The flesh cannot be overcome, ***but our Savior Jesus Christ has already conquered sin in the flesh!***

Our hope is in Him. His experience in the flesh uniquely qualifies him to be that example and that hope for us. So, we are looking to Him.

- He is our leadership
- He is our light
- He lights the path for what we're trying to get to

Verse 24: “And let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, **encouraging one another...**” (vs 24-25).

- that's what we do every Sabbath
- that's what we do whenever we're together

“...and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near. For if we willfully go on sinning...” (vs 25-26). ***That is to give ourselves over to Satan!***

Now we're in the flesh; there's no doubt. We recognize the struggle in the flesh. We understand that the flesh is subject to sin. But we also understand that we have a High Priest; we also understand that we have an Advocate. These are all put in place so that we understand that this fight, this walk with God is not alone, but:

- it is with God's help
- it is with His strength

- it is with His loving hand guiding us

and brethren even more than that as we will see as we go through here!

Verse 26: “For **if** we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, **there is no longer any sacrifice for sins.**”

Here is the thing that Satan would deceive us to believe isn't true, ***but it is true!*** ***IF*** we give ourselves over to Satan and stop striving after righteousness, stop aspiring to Godliness, the only thing that's left is:

Verse 27: “But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries of God.”

*If you're not standing with God, you're standing with Satan! **But if you're standing with God, the grace of God will:***

- guide you
- keep you
- sustain you
- help you
- strengthen you
- give you the means by which you can defeat Satan the devil

Yes, Christ has already won the victory, but we, through faith in Him, have to continue in this fight and journey until His return; but the inspiration is there in Him.

So, to give up for whatever reason is not just to die, but to die ***the death!*** Because one who gives himself over as a bond slave of Satan the devil, to do his will, the contemplation is just one that's difficult to comprehend. It would be a sin greater than that of the fallen angels.

Why? Because we have been given the tools to win this war against Satan! We've been given the tools. Jesus Christ has demonstrated to us that it is possible, and He instructs us as to how to do it. So, let's see what we can learn more about this concept.

Psalms 107:1: “O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever. So, let **the redeemed of the LORD** say, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness...” (vs 1-4)

This is what our state was prior to God calling us into His Family. And yes He has called from all walks of life, from all over the world, sons and daughters, children to Himself in preparation for His Kingdom.

Verse 4: “They wandered in the wilderness, in a desert by the way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried to the LORD in their distress, and He delivered them out of their troubles. And **He led them by a straight way**... [the way of God is a straight and difficult way] ...so that they might go to a city to dwell” (vs 4-7).

God's House, God's Temple, collectively with all the saints, but individually in our covenant relationship with Him. And soon the established Kingdom of God on the earth at Christ's return.

Verse 8: “Let them praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of man, For He satisfies the thirsty soul and fills the hungry soul with good things. Some sat in the darkness and in the shadow of death, being chained in affliction and iron” (vs 8-10).

This is what Satan had us bound in the past, as we will see and as is emphasized in the book of Ephesians.

Verse 11: “Because they rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High.”

If that is an evident in the world today, whether it be through deception or rebellion, outright or just being blinded. The condition of the world is represented in this verse.

Verse 12: “Therefore, He humbled their heart with labor; they stumbled, and there was none to help. Then they cried to the LORD in their distress, and He saved them out of their troubles. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their bands asunder. Let them praise the LORD for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He has broken the gates of bronze and cut through the bars of iron” (vs 12-16).

That has rescued us, we now belong to Him. We stand with Him. That is our relationship with Him.

Verse 21: “Let them praise the LORD for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing!” (vs 21-22). *Have we thought about it recently that are standing:*

- with God today
- freed
- delivered
- reconciled
- begotten

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given this opportunity to walk anew as a son or daughter of God!

Verse 25: “He commanded and raised the stormy wind which lifted up the waves of the sea. They mounted up to heaven, they went down again to the depths; their courage melted away because of the peril. They reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man, and were at their wits’ end. And they cried to the LORD in their distress, and He delivered them out of their troubles. He made the storm calm, so that its waves were still. Then they were glad because they were quiet, and He led them to their desired haven” (vs 25-30).

Verse 31: “Let them praise the LORD for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men! And let them exalt Him in the congregation of the people and praise Him in the assembly of the elders” (vs 31-32). *Brethren, that’s what we’re doing here tonight.*

Verse 33: “He turns rivers into a wilderness and water springs into thirsty ground; a fruitful land *is changed* into a salty desert because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it” (vs 33-34)—*both metaphorically and in actuality!*

You look around you and the world today and ask yourself if it’s a salty desert because of the wickedness of mankind as we see it.

Verse 35: “He turns the wilderness into pools of water and dry ground into water springs.”

That is the opposite of that relationship that Satan draws you down into, but God lifts you up out of and offers you:

Verse 36—*putting it in context*: “And He makes the hungry dwell there, so that they may prepare a city of habitation, and sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase” (vs 36-37).

God has called us to thrive, not to be held in bondage! This is what God wants us to do.

God’s work in our life, there’s so much to meditate on. God has revealed His Truth to us in great amounts. We understand more of the Scripture than any of the Prophets understood, because we have more of it. God is not just dwelling *with* us, ***but IN us!***

Romans 6:16: “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?”

So that is what Satan would rather have us to be in bondage to him and obey him and be his servants.

But God says no; v 17: “But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart...”

That is God having placed His Laws within your heart and in your mind.

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; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness” (vs 17-18).

This is our state and standing now. Let’s remind ourselves once more in Eph. 2 of what we came out of and what God tells us to be careful not to return to.

Ephesians 2:1—*through Paul*: “You were dead... [that is the state of one in bondage to Satan; marked for death] ... in trespasses and sins, in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the world*” (vs 1-3)—*that is marked for death!*

Verse 4: “But God, Who is rich in mercy... [here’s the solution, here’s salvation] ...because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.) And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (vs 4-7).

Verse 8: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (vs 8-10).

So, God has called us to be a part of His work, and that work is meant to shine the light on sin, to overcome sin and to defeat every aspect of it. We are to be lights, we are to be the salt that makes mankind turn and question the way of this world vs what they may see in you or I, in God’s Church and the work that it is doing.

So, we are a part of a great and awesome thing. The greater sin would be toward us if we turn from this Truth, turn from this understanding.

Eph. 1—here God has:

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- reconciled us to Him
- bought us back
- given us pardon through the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 4:1: “Therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, am exhorting you to walk worthily of the calling to which you were called.”

Yes, we have been called to a way of life that will lead us into eternal life. We are to walk it:

Verse 2: “**With all humility and meekness**... [we are to walk it]: ...with long suffering... [there is not an option for us] ...forbearing one another in love; being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (vs 2-3).

I know it gets difficult in our life sometimes, and I know sometimes it feels like the world is pressing hard upon us. But God says:

- stand still
- hold on
- don't faint

Verse 4: *There is one body and one Spirit, even as you were also called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in you all*” (vs 4-6).

Verse 7: “But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ. For this *very* reason, He says *that* after ascending on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men” (vs 7-8).

Verse 9: “Now He Who ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He Who descended is the same One Who also ascended above all the heavens so that He might fulfill all things” (vs 9-10).

So we have this promise and He is working in our life!

Ephesians 6:10: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength.”

Brethren this fight that we are in is not where we are muscling up our own strength. It is one where we are joining forces with God for good.

- **He** recruited us
- we are part of **His** forces
- **He** is our Commander
- **He** is our strength

Be strong in the Lord and in the might of His strength! He tells us to be wise in this way because He has given us a powerful armor.

Verse 11: “Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Now we are seeing this relationship, having joined with Christ in this fight:

- He went back to the Father
- He told us that we would be lights in the world
- He told us that we would be salt in the world
- He told us that we would have to wage a personal warfare with Satan and his demons who would be coming after us
- He tells us to love one another and be close and united together

because there is:

- strength in family
- strength in the children of God loving one another
- strength in helping and encouraging one another

We see the evil in the world, but God tells us don't worry about that!

That is in His department to handle that; He has a plan for that. But if we give up because it got tough, it got too difficult and we fell short of the fight, we dropped our guns, if you will, our weapons of war against sin and retreated into bondage and gave ourselves over to Satan. *God has no pleasure in that!*

He understands that because we are not wrestling, struggling, fighting against...

Verse 12: “Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities... [we can't fight that with flesh] ...against powers... [we don't have a weapon to confront that] ...against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*.”

Yes, Satan's demons are in the world. He does influence all kinds of circumstances around us. But we know that he has already been defeated. His time is short and he knows it, as well.

Verse 13: “Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth...” (vs 13-14)..

Here's one of those weapons; So sharpen your weapon of Truth:

- study God's Word
- be in a pattern of study

- be in a regiment of study every morning, every night

“...and **wearing the breastplate of righteousness**” (v 14).

Yes, make sure your garment is white and clean as much as it is in your control. But the imputed righteousness of God, that righteousness that is by faith, comes from God and through faith.

But ***IF you start doubting, your conscience is going to convict you!***

Verse 15: “And having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.”

- **God’s Word!**
- **God’s promise!**
 - **Jesus Christ** being a key part of that Gospel
 - **the Kingdom of God** being a key part of that Gospel
 - **the Spirit of God** being a key part of that Gospel

So your feet are shod with that preparation of that Truth, that Gospel Truth, which brings us to peace that is defined here.

Verse 15: “And having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Besides all these, take up the shield of the faith...” (vs 15-16).

Never waver in your faith with which you will have the power to:

“...quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one; and put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; **praying...**” (vs 16-18).

- in your fellowship groups
- in your families
- individually within your prayer closets

Verse 18: “Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and for me...” (18-19)—*Paul says!*

For me and all the elders in for the work of God and for Fred and all the work that he does and Hollister. Praying, brethren, we need prayer today within God’s Family. **Active prayer! That boldness!**

“...**that boldness of speech** may be given to me so that I may open my mouth to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may speak with boldness, as it behooves me to speak” (vs 19-20).

God has called us to that Truth and that way!

Verse 21: “Now that you may also know the things concerning me and what I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you. I have sent him to you for this very thing, so that you might know the things concerning us, and that he might encourage your hearts” (vs 21-22).

We have access to information to kind of know the state of things within God’s Family, within God’s Word. God wants us to have peace.

Verse 23: “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Let’s read that one more time, brethren, so that we understand who we are fighting with, whose side is it that we’re on?

Verse 23: “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those whose love for our Lord Jesus Christ is uncorrupted. Amen” (vs 23-24).

- uncorrupted by man
- uncorrupted by Satan the devil
- uncorrupted by sin

This is our calling!

We have the promise of power, armor, weaponry, a spiritual infantry if we need to call it in, and air superiority. We have support for backup and yes, even Him who goes forth as a Mighty Warrior for His people.

Isa. 42—Israel may have had David when it came to Goliath, but we have Christ:

- He is our Mighty Warrior
- He is our King
- He is the Leadership Who will guide us

Isaiah 42:12: “Give glory to the LORD and declare His praise in the isles. The LORD shall go forth as a warrior, He stirs up zeal like a man of war; He shouts, yea, roars; **He overcomes His enemies**” (vs 12-13). *Who shall stand before Him?*

As Nehemiah understood; it was a very difficult time when this was written, but Nehemiah was clear in his encouragement to us.

Nehemiah 4:20: “In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, **gather there to us....**”

This is the building of the wall, and these men are working with enemies all around, and Nehemiah said to them:

Nehemiah 4:20: “In whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, **gather there to us. Our God will fight for us.**”

So, when we go forward, we go forward with great courage and hope. I know again, the body is weak, ***but God’s Spirit is strong! God can do great things!***

I’m telling you, I’ve seen some physically fit people in God’s Church. I really have. I’ve seen tall, big, deep voice individuals step forward, but I’ve not seen strength as I’ve seen in some of the little widows, those who are very dedicated to service and prayer. ***There’s power in those prayers!***

The strength of God’s Family is in those who are committed to Him, ***the weak are made strong through Him and faith in Him!*** Yes, there is strength in God’s Church in that way.

Isaiah 52:1: “Awake! Awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful robes, O Jerusalem, the Holy city, for never again shall come to you the uncircumcised and the unclean ones. Shake yourself from the dust; rise up! Sit, Jerusalem! Free yourself from your neckbands, O captive daughter of Zion, For thus says the LORD, ‘You were sold for nothing; and you shall be redeemed without money.’ For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘My people went down at first *into* Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now, therefore, what have I here,’ says the LORD, ‘that My people are taken away for nothing? Those who rule over them how!’ says the LORD; ‘and without ceasing My name is blasphemed every day’” (vs 1-5). ***No respect for God or His people!***

Verse 6: “Therefore, **My people shall know My name, thus it shall be in that day, for I am He Who speaks; behold, it is I.**”

This is the great and awesome God speaking here, and it is meant to inspire you and me. As those in this end-time who are the spirit-begotten sons and daughters walking in a dark and very difficult world that we live in. ***God tells us that He is God!***

Verse 7: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace; who brings good news, who publishes salvation; who says to Zion, ‘**Your God reigns!**’ The voice of Your watchmen shall be lifted up! They lift up the voice together; they sing aloud, **for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD returns again to Zion**” (vs 7-8). ***God has called us to understand that!***

Exodus 14:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel that

they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal Zephon. You shall camp before *it* by the sea’” (vs 1-2).

God is about to show His might, His strength, so that the children of Israel comprehend the power of God against those who would exalt themselves against Him! ***He’s about to show His strength, His power!***

Verse 3: “For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They *are* trapped in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart that he will follow them. And I will be glorified through Pharaoh and all his army, **so that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.**’ And they did so” (vs 3-4).

Verse 10: “And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes. And, behold, the Egyptians marched after them. And they were very afraid. And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. And they said to Moses, ‘Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because *there were* no graves in Egypt? Why have you dealt this way with us to carry us forth out of Egypt? Did we not tell you this word in Egypt, saying, “Let us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians?” for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians...’” (vs 10-12).

No, brethren! ‘God forbid,’ as Paul would say, ‘May It Never Be.’ This thought would never enter our mind, to return to Satan, to return to captivity! To return to the fleshly way of life that we were held captive in the past! ***NO!***

They said, “...for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.’ And Moses said to the people, **‘Fear not!’**...” (vs 12-13). ***God tells us to fear not!***

I’ll go on to read this verse from our perspective today:

“...Stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today, for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall never see them again! The LORD shall fight for you, and you shall be still” (vs 13-14).

Faith, trust, and living faith is doing the will of God, walking in His way, but the fight belongs to God. ***God will fight for us!***

Verse 15: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry to Me? Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward. And you—lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And behold, I *am* about to harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and

they shall follow them....” (vs 15-17).

Once again, the children of Israel are going forward to do what God has instructed them to do.

- God takes care of the world
- God takes care of Satan and his demon
- God fights for us

This is a very inspiring section for me; v 19: “And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved. And he went to the rear of them. And the pillar of the cloud went from in front of them and it stood behind them. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. It was a cloud of darkness to *one*, but gave light by night to *the other*, so that the *two* did not come near one another all night” (vs 19-20).

Verse 21: “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. And the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. And the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the middle of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen” (vs 21-23).

God had victory that day, and His name was glorified throughout the world, because the knowledge of this event was known. So, God tells us **never, never** doubt, that we should **never doubt God!**

If we seek to be free from Satan, **God only can help us, and He will help us and deliver us!**

John 8:35: “And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, **if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free**” (vs 35-36).

- God has freed us
- God has called us
- He is with us every day

Colossians 1:9: “For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God” (vs 9-10). *This is ongoing:*

- commitment
- dedication
- study
- prayer

- doing those things that God has called us to do

Verse 11: “Being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance... [*trials and testings* God bring you through, which builds endurance] ...and longsuffering with joy. Giving thanks to the Father...” (vs 11-12).

Not to *an idea* of God, but ***to God Himself!*** The Father’s Throne is available to you ***in the name of Christ, in the blood of Christ!***

Verse 12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins; Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* Firstborn of all creation, because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him” (vs 12-16).

Verse 17: “And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; Who is *the* Beginning, *the* Firstborn from among the dead so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father...*” (vs 17-19).

You can see the tandem relationship here on our behalf, the Father and the Son, ONE, ***executing Their wonderful, perfect Plan for us!***

Verse 19: “For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven” (vs 19-20).

Verse 21: “For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled *you* in the body of His flesh through death, to present you Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him; if indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which you have heard, *and* which was proclaimed in all the creation that *is* under heaven; of which I, Paul, became a servant” (vs 21-23).

We are going to come to see and understand as we continue our walk with God that there is no substitute in this world for what God is offering us.

- we must choose Him
- we must fight with Him

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We are not born, nor were we given life—this precious gift of life—to *be*:

- servants of sin
- controlled by the fleshly lusts

the darkness and the death that Satan puts forward in this world as something good!

Christ—our Lord and Savior—and our Father in heaven has something higher for us, a higher calling for us. He calls us to ***true life; not just any life!*** God extends to us eternal life with Him as a spirit-born member of His very own Family. His Word, that is Christ, is the Light that shines light unto that path that leads us to eternal life, that leads us there.

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. But ***if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments***” (vs 16-17). *And He gave Their prescription for life!*

- God’s Word
- God’s Truth
- His Commandments
- His Way

being defined there!

John 15:1—*here’s the relationship in the world for life*: “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, in order that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you. Dwell in Me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me” (vs 1-4).

Verse 5: “I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; ***because apart from Me you can do nothing.***”

That is no exaggeration, that is a Truth; without God, we cannot do anything.

Verse 6: “If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned.” *A worthless, dried up branch without Christ!*

Verse 7: “If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you...”

They can’t dwell in you if you’re not studying Them, if you’re not reading God’s Word for understanding and Truth regularly. Not just occasionally, it has to be a routine in one’s life, a daily routine.

Verse 7: “If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.... [as we know, according to God’s will] ...In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. ***If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love***” (vs 7-10).

Once again, mark the verse, there is a formula for success. Promise from Christ Himself and the Father.

Verse 11: “These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and that your joy may be full.”

Christ is calling us so that we can have a true purpose in life!

1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ” (vs 1-3).

- we see the Father-Son relationship!
- we see the work of the Father.
- we see the work of Christ all designed to help us achieve the purpose for which God made us.

Verse 4: “These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is no darkness at all in Him” (vs 4-5). *Satan would have you to believe otherwise!*

Verse 6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves... [that is like a great tragedy to be in a system or a condition of self-deception] ...and we are not practicing the Truth. However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the

Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us” (vs 6-8).

So, this relationship with God is a constant struggle to overcome sin, a constant walk with God and the works of God being performed in our life so that we can conquer sin in this flesh. We can conquer sin in the flesh through Christ.

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 9-10).

So, the struggle in the flesh is there. We get that!

Galatians 5:16: “Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. And these things are opposed to each other...” (vs 16-17).

There is that struggle against the forces of darkness and the Way of God. Satan again throws all kinds of:

- stumbling stones
- enticements
- opinions
- fears
- feelings

but we’ve got to be:

- solidly *rooted* in Christ
- solidly *rooted* in God
- solidly *rooted* in His Way
- solidly *rooted* in His Truth

So that those things don’t for a moment detract to a point that we start wondering after them!

“...and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do. But if you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under *works of* law. Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*...” (vs 17-19).

These things are of Satan the devil in the world in which we live. All of these things, I won’t take time to read through that listing, but only to say here in conclusion

Verse 25: “If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vainglorious, provoking one another and envying one another” (vs 25-26).

God has called us to ***His*** Way to live and to abide in His Truth.

We are either a slave to sin ***or we are a soldier for righteousness with Christ!***

- ***IF*** you’re a soldier with Christ, *you can’t be a pacifist*
- ***IF*** you’re a soldier with Christ, *you cannot engage the enemy*

You have to be prepared to fight with every drop of blood in you for that matter, ***because the victory is an incredible reward***, which God says that if we desire it, ***it has to be more important than life!***

2-Timothy 2:1—the Apostle Paul’s inspiration through Timothy: “Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that *is* in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, these *things* commit to faithful men, such as will be competent to teach others also” (vs 1-2).

So these lessons are to be passed on within the faithful ministry of God, and within brethren sharpening iron within families, instructing the next generation in the Truth in the Way of God.

This world is a quagmire of sin and darkness. God is again lifting us up out of it. : And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, these *things* commit to faithful men, such as will be competent to teach others also.

Verse 3: “You, therefore, endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one who is serving as a soldier becomes involved in civilian pursuits...” (vs 3-4).

Getting caught up into the world, You’re again going out just far enough that Satan can snare you and pull you under.

- stay close to God
- stay strong in His might

Verse 4: “No one who is serving as a soldier becomes involved in civilian pursuits, so that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.”

So, we’re striving to please God in every way and in everything that we do. God does not want us to be entangled in this world. So, we fight and God supplies:

- His Spirit
- His Son as Savior

We are to see God as the strength for us to fulfill the purpose that He has called us to. So, once again, as good soldiers of God continue to fight diligently for the Life that God has promised!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 10:19-27
- 2) Psalm 107:1-16, 21-22, 25-37
- 3) Romans 6:16-18
- 4) Ephesians 2:1-10
- 5) Ephesians 4:1-10
- 6) Ephesians 6:10-24
- 7) Isaiah 42:12-13
- 8) Nehemiah 4:20
- 9) Isaiah 52:1-8
- 10) Exodus 14:1-4, 10-17, 19-23
- 11) John 8:35-36
- 12) Colossians 1:9-23
- 13) Matthew 19:16-17
- 14) John 15:1-11
- 15) 1 John 1:1-10
- 16) Galatians 5:16-19, 25-26
- 17) 2 Timothy 2:1-4

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