

Epistle of First Peter IV

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Last time we came down through 1-Peter 1:12. And let me mention that there is so much in here. When we get done with the series and I get everything all finalized the way that I hope to do. What I want to do is—remember how I did *A Harmony of the Gospels*, putting certain things together in parallel columns; I want to do that. I also want to do a topical study. I am finding, and this is the reason why a minister needs to do it—and I would admonish every minister to do so and honestly do so with the Word of God—to really get in and study it so they understand it.

The more I get into it, the more I realize how great the Word of God is, how absolutely fantastic that it's put together, how that the Gospel of Christ and of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and of Paul and of Peter all agree. **They all agree!** There is no conflict one with the other even though, maybe on the surface when you read a verse or two, it may appear that there is a conflict.

It is so absolutely amazing how all of these things come together. And I think one of the biggest problems and disservices that has been done to the people of God has been that the emphasis has shifted from loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being to serving an organization. Now while organization is good, because you don't want confusion. Organization should never take the place of God. The end result is the Catholic Church, as an example.

Now let's pick it up here in 1-Peter 1:13. There's an awful lot to cover and there's an awful lot to do, and I want to finish chapter one and get into chapter two today. However, we're not going to rush through it just for the sake of rushing through it so that we become superficial in what we are studying.

1-Peter 1:13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace... [we'll have a lot to say about that as we go through here] ...that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conforming yourselves to your former lusts, *as* in *your former* ignorance. But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves be Holy in all *your* conduct. For it is written, 'You be Holy as I am Holy.' And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in *the* fear of God; knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited by *tradition* from *your* forefathers; but by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without

blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for your sakes; *even for you* who through Him are believing in God, Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, **so that your faith and hope might be in God.** Having purified your lives by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible *seed*, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever. For all flesh is like grass, and the glory of man is like the flower of the field; the grass withered, and its flower fell away. But the Word of God remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel" (vs 13-25). You'll notice the last couple of verses here how it ties in with James: *that all flesh is like the grass of the field.*

Let's go back here beginning in v 13 and let's begin to study a couple of things that are important for us to realize. There are certain commands that we have. Right here there are three commands. In the Greek it is in the aorist imperative, which means that it then becomes a directive for the Church. Verse 15 is one of them: "But according as He Who has called you is Holy, you yourselves also **be Holy in all your conduct.**" So that is a command. And we'll study today: How can you be Holy in conduct?

The next command we find here, which goes right along with it—v 17: "**...be conducting the time of your life's journey in the fear of God.**" Now I added to it '*life's* journey' because the original Greek is: "...be conducting the time of your journey in fear." Obviously, you're not to be in fear of men. Obviously, your *journey* represents what your life is, so it's proper to insert in italics: "...*life's* journey in *the* fear of God." That's Who you are to fear. So, there is the second command.

The third command is v 22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth to unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit... [here's the command]: **...be loving one another fervently** with a pure heart." And I think over the years that's exactly what we have done, in loving each other; in growing in knowledge; and focusing in on what God wants us to have and to do and to be.

What commandment can we think of that Jesus gave—we'll just start here in v 22—because again we're going to see **faith, hope and love.** Faith, hope and love all the way through. We saw that in James' epistle. We're seeing it in Peter's epistle, we

will see it in John's epistles. We saw it in the Gospel of Christ. We have seen it in all the writings of the Apostle Paul. Why? *Because it's the same Spirit inspiring the same message so that we can all know and understand God's way!* Can anyone think of the base commandment, the commandment where this comes from? There are a couple of places where it says, 'Jesus said'

John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that *is how* you are to love one another." That is the whole basis for this. Is Peter preaching the *same* doctrine as Jesus taught? *Yes!*

1-Peter 1:25—I think this is also important for us to realize: "But the Word of God [is abiding] remains forever..." That ties right in with v 23: "*For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever."

We are to have the Word of God abiding in us. Therefore, when that is happening and when that is being taught and our whole focus is on Christ and God the Father, you see how many problems drop by the wayside. It also creates certain problems in a way, because then you're not relying on the structure of an organization to bring you salvation, and some people can't take that. Some people have not grown to the point that they cannot rely on God alone. And then you also have another problem that this develops, which is that some people then, instead of really doing this, run on down the road, in the name of God, preaching another Gospel. So, you've got both sides of this coin here.

Verse 25: "But the Word of God remains forever..." Let's add a couple of Scriptures there. What is the most important, several important things, that Jesus said? One of the first ones is, you find in three places in the Bible: Matt. 4:4, Luke 4:4 and Deut. 8:3. Which is: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every Word of God.**' And one of those says, '...by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live.'

Now there's another Scripture which gives us the Word of God in personification—doesn't it? Which is Christ! Now you know these Scriptures by heart—don't you? John 1:1: "In the beginning was [?] **the Word.** And the Word was [?] **with God.** And the Word **was** [?] **God....** And **the Word became flesh...**" (vs 1, 14). That's the whole key thing of the Passover book.

Let's look at another Scripture concerning 'loving each other.' Let's go to John 15, and I'll tell you what, between the book of Ephesians and John 14, 15, 16 & 17, those perhaps are the most used portions of my Bible. This ties right in with those

verses right in at the end of 1-Peter. And the reason I'm going through this is so we can really fully appreciate the tremendous inspiration of the Bible. And how it all fits together so wonderfully. I mean it is absolutely magnificent the way it all fits and comes together.

John 15:7: "If you [abide] dwell in Me... [the word 'abide' (KJV) here means, *to live and remain in Me*] ...and My words dwell in you..." This is how we're to live by every Word of God. Let the Word of God be living in your mind, be guiding and directing you through the power of God's Holy Spirit in love and understanding.

Just like when we were going through the Epistle of James, remember how the little daggers of against the way you are living and doing, and me, too. You know, I got a lot of correction out of James. I tell you, I'm getting a lot of correction out of 1-Peter, too—an awful lot. Here's the key, v 7: "If you dwell [are living and remaining] in Me, and My words dwell... [are living and remaining] ...in you, you shall ask what you desire, and it shall come to pass for you."

That helps us really increase in faith. Claim this as a promise, brethren. What is the most important, overall goal that we really desire? *That we be in the Kingdom of God!* Isn't that correct? Everything else is subordinate to that—isn't it? *Yes, In varying degrees!* As long as we remember that then we understand what He's talking about here.

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciple.... [If you're not bearing fruit, then in degree you may not be His disciples.] ...As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you... [There cannot be any greater superlative of love. Absolutely there cannot be.] ...[continue] 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 8-10). That ties right in with these last few verses that we have in 1-Peter, the first chapter.

Let's go back to 1-Peter again, and we'll do just a little bit more surveying. I would like you to write down these following words so below each one of these words you will have enough space to write down a verse or two—and these we all find in chapter one:

1. Hope
2. Faith
3. Grace
4. Obedience
5. Holiness
6. Love

We will do this in all of the chapters as we go through. And the reason for doing this is to show you how wonderfully how God inspired this to be

written. It is amazing! Since Peter gives hope, but not without faith, and not without love, and not without obedience, and not without grace.

1-Peter 1

I. Hope

- v 3: "...[He] has begotten us again into a **living hope**... [how?] ...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
- v 13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully **hoping** in the grace..."
- v 21: "*Even for you* who through Him are believing in God, Who raised Him up from *the* dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and **hope** might be in God."

Let's look at this *hope* again in these three verses: 3, 13 & 21.

- v 3: "...into a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." So it's *connected with the resurrection* from the dead. Christ is the firstfruits. Afterward, those that are His, at His coming.

See how beautifully all of this ties together.

- v 13: "...be fully [completely] **hoping** in the grace..."

Now this is a different aspect of grace than just the forgiveness of sin. Be *hoping in the grace* that is being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, which is telling us what? What is the final grace that God is going to give us? *At the resurrection, a completely Holy body and mind!* This is *the* grace, the final grace of the resurrection that God gives. If there's anything we don't deserve, that's it! That's why it fits into the grace.

- v 21: "[To those who] are believing in God through Him, Who raised Him up from the dead... [Again referring back to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which then gives us **the hope**, and this *hope* then gives us **faith**.] ...and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God." And that means going right out until the time of the resurrection.

II. Faith

- v 5: "Who *are* being safeguarded by the power of God through **faith**, for salvation..." Again, I want you to see the emphasis of that. Unto the salvation, when? *The resurrection.*
- v 7: "In order that the proving of your **faith**..."

Now you see how all of that ties in. I'm trying to help give you a little different view on how to study.

Sometimes we read and study and we go through things or we go through a topic and we don't take the time to look at the whole structure of it and then put it together and go back and systematize it like we're doing here.

- v 8: "Whom, not having seen, you love; on Whom, though at the present time you do not see Him, you **are believing**..." I included 'believing' because root word for *faith* is for *belief*—you are believing. You can't write 'in whom you are faithizing,' but that would be a literal translation of it.
- v 9: "*And are* receiving the fulfillment of your **faith**—*even* the salvation of your souls."
- v 21: "...Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your **faith** and hope might be in God."

III. Grace

- v 2: [notice the last sentence]: "...**Grace** and peace be multiplied to you." Which means the grace of God given to you. The grace of God continues through your whole life. The final act of the grace of God—no, it isn't the final act, but it is in a sense; because what is the principle in the Bible? *Jesus said, "I am the Beginning and the Ending."* So whenever there's an ending, there's also a beginning, right? So the final act of that grace is your resurrection, but it is also the beginning of what? *The beginning of your whole new life in living in God's Kingdom in eternity forever and ever and ever.*

So, this is what really struck me when I was going through and really preparing this and studying it. How it all comes together so beautifully, so wonderfully. Then there are people out there today who are just so blinded. They say, 'the Bible's a myth. You ought to investigate Hinduism. You ought to investigate Buddhism.' It's amazing!

- v 10: "Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of **the grace** that would come to you..."
- v 13: "...*and* be fully hoping in the **grace**..."

So, under "grace" you have verses 2, 10, 13.

IV. Obedience

That's interesting, because a lot of people don't like to obey God. They hate that little word. They hate what it means. They want the love; they want the hope; they want eternal life, but they don't want obedience. Let's look at that; we see how everything all ties together.

- v 2: "...according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification... [and you can also put that down under 'Holiness'—because 'sanctified' means *to be made Holy*.] ...through the Spirit, unto the **obedience**..."

There it is. What is the opposite of 'obedience'? *Sin*! Isn't it? *Sin is the opposite of obedience*—right? Sin is what? *Transgression of the Law*! You see how when you get the Word of God in your mind, and you let the Word of God in your mind lead you, then you can understand the Word of God, because it all fits together.

"...and *the* sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you" (v 2).

Hebrews 10:19: "Therefore, brethren, having [boldness] confidence to enter into the *true* holiest by the blood of Jesus." And that boldness means *full confidence*. If I can express to you one of the things which I'm sure you're going through, the more that you understand what God has done and what He's doing and what He's offering, and the salvation that God is holding out to us and the great grace that He gives to us.

I tell you one thing, it's very important for us to understand. We have a lot of seniors in our congregation and on our mailing list. I tell you one thing that is so absolutely important and that is that the older we get the more dilapidated we become. That's just the way it is. Those of us who are approaching that are also understanding that. That's why Jesus said, 'The flesh prophesies nothing.'

But it also does one other thing that's very important: It makes you realize the great and fantastic magnitude of God's blessing. That we, by praying, 'Our Father,' have direct access to God the Father in heaven above. That should be a continuous source of inspiration and love and also profound humility. And the more you think on that and the more you understand that, and the more you realize how fantastic God is, the greater that this becomes. All of that, brethren, if you're going through that—which I'm sure that you are—are experiencing a deeper degree of conversion, which then puts all doctrine into proper perspective—doesn't it? Because unless you love God and have access this way, all the doctrine in the world isn't going to do you a bit of good. But we have access to the Holiest, into the most sacrosanct Holy place in the universe.

That's why he says, v 20: "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**..." (vs 20-22). Notice how that ties right in with what

Peter's teaching here. When you look at your sins and you look at your shortcomings, you think, 'Oh, man, how can I ever do that?' But, what you can realize is that God is there. Ready, willing, able and waiting to forgive. And that's what's so absolutely profound and important.

"...our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water" (v 22).

I was thinking the other night, I was watching some TV. You know, we're all so callused and numb to TV. I don't know about you, but in some ways I am, and I'm sure everybody else is. There is killing! There is murder! All mayhem, all over! And I thought the other night: here we are, just filling our minds with the natural course of events in this world with the murder of Cain. Cain's murder of Abel. And we watch it as if it's nothing! And I thought, boy, what are we as human beings, living in this end-time? It's amazing! And I thought how evil our conscience is and so forth!

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful... [That promised salvation. That promised eternal life.] ...And let us be concerned about one another ... [which we need to] ...and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works.... [It's interesting, all of those who love the word "love"—and we've got to have love, but we don't need works—how are they going to get around it? Here's 'to provoke and to love unto good works.'] ...Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do" (vs 23-25).

That becomes a problem when we're all scattered as we are, and many on the mailing list as they are—scattered. You have to keep your Sabbath at home because you've been so battered and bruised by others that that's the only place of safety you can go to, as it were, in keeping the Sabbath. Well, let's hope that God will work things out that there will be a time of the 'assembling of yourselves together.'

"...but rather, encouraging *one another*... [not brow-beating and gossiping each other] ...and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near.... [How much more today than then?] ...For if we sin willfully... [is planned and pre-determined, unrepentant sin] ...go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*. *Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses.... [Here's what Paul wants us to think on.]: ...How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son

of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, ‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’ says *the* Lord. And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God” (vs 25–31).

That’s why God gives us repentance, brethren. And that’s why God gives us a tender heart. So that in spite of our weakness of the ‘law of sin and death’ within us, in anyone of us, that God sends us repentance so that we can avoid that. It says in another place: ‘for our God is a fire.’

Now let’s go back to 1-Peter—under obedience. How much should that obedience be? Well, you judge it, based upon what we read there in Heb. 10.

- 1-Peter 1:2: “...unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ.”
- v 14: “As obedient children...” Does this mean we’re to become like teeny little babes? We can put in there about ‘bring the children to Me’ (Matt. 18)—He laid hands on them and said, ‘Unless you come as these children, you shall in no wise see the Kingdom of God.’ But, whose children are we when we receive the Spirit of God? *We’re the children of God.* So that’s how we are to obey. Be as obedient children of God.
- v 17—and tie that right together: “And if you are calling upon the Father...” So, there it is, right there. We’re to be children of the Father.
- v 22: “Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth...” And immediately, if you know the Scripture, what comes into mind? ‘Sanctify them with Your Word. Your Word is Truth.’ Then we go to Psa. 119: ‘Your commandments are Truth. Your laws are true. You’re Holy and righteous’ altogether.

V. Holiness

- v 2: “...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto the obedience...”
- v 15: “But according as He Who called you is Holy... [that is the full, perfect measure.] ...you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct.” How can you be Holy in all your conduct? *By having the Spirit of God motivate you! By having the Holy Spirit of God lead you!* What does the Scripture say?

Romans 8:14: “As many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. For the Spirit itself... [the Holy Spirit of God] ...bears witness with our spirit

that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs.” So there we have *obedient children*—Holiness, sanctified.

- v 16: “...**You be Holy because I am Holy.**”

VI. Love

- v 8: “Whom, not having seen, you love [are loving]...” Now, that’s very interesting in the translation, because it’s present tense. You “are loving”—on an ongoing basis, which really has a much more profound meaning—*much more profound meaning*—because it’s something that you are doing. We’ve covered part of that already in John 14 & 15.
- v 22: “Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart.”

Now you see how beautifully and nicely all of these things tie together. And how many times we have said that the Word of God is like a sphere. It’s not like a circle. It’s not like a string. But it’s like a sphere or a ball. That it intersects in an infinite number of ways to reveal the Truth of God. Which also means that the more we study the Word of God, the more that we learn, which also means that the more that there is for us to learn. That’s what’s so wonderful about it, and that’s what’s so exciting about it. There are some people who get kind of dull and turned off and aren’t excited about the Word of God. But It tell you what, brethren, the more that we study it, the more excited we ought to be, because the more it really proves itself to be true, and the more we know that it’s from God, and the more that we ought to love God and love Christ, and all of these things together.

Let’s go back and we’ll study the verses. But I thought that that was absolutely important for us to know and to do and to realize. Just to take the first chapter of Peter alone, and to show how fantastically it has been inspired and written. My translation, just taken from the Greek. And by the way, I just recently got some other commentary things, which I will have to say that confirms the translation that I have here. As I’ve said, this is for the purposes of study. It’s not for the purpose of having a new, authorized version. When I put it all together, I’m going to include in it, the Greek *Interlinear* text, which then has the Greek, it has the English below it, and it has the *King James* translation so that people can compare it back and forth, so that no one is going to say that I’m trying to create a translation of the Bible.

(go to the next track)

1-Peter 1:13: “For this reason, have your

minds ready... [The *King James* says, ‘gird up the loins of your mind’ and it’s kind of an awkward saying. But it fully means *be prepared for action*.] ...be self-controlled...” I tell you, if there’s any one thing in life that is really, really, really the key, and that is being self-controlled!

Normally we react—don’t we? *Yes, oh we react!* We have many ways to react: temper, anger, righteousness, self-defense—all this sort of thing. I’m beginning to see that God puts you in situations that you don’t like and relationships that you don’t necessarily want, and sometimes with your own family, so that you can learn self-control; so that you can learn love. It’s easy to love someone when they love you. It’s harder to love someone when they don’t love you. Much harder! That’s why we have to have the self-control.

“...and be fully hoping in the grace... [In other words, this ties right in with the Scripture: ‘where there is no vision the people fail.’ This is why Christ has given us this goal of completely hoping] ...in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (v 13)—or at the resurrection.

Let’s see then how we’re to ‘gird up the loins of our minds.’ 2-Corinthians 10 tells us then how we’re to have our minds prepared for action—or ‘gird up the loins of your mind’—because each one of these, brethren, the more you know the Word of God, the more each one of these verses becomes profound.

2-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you **by the meekness and gentleness of Christ**...” That’s how our obedience to Christ is to be, that by the very meekness and the gentleness of Christ.

How many times have we been in a situation where the ministers have been arrogant and self-serving and harsh? How many times have WE—you notice who the finger’s pointed to? *Me!* Even in those own, personal relationships that we have, our very closest relations that we have, have we used the arrogance and the harshness in a way that has been destructive? I can speak from experience on that myself, of which I am not very pleased or happy about.

But notice how the Apostle Paul approaches this. He says, “...I Paul am personally exhorting you **by the meekness and gentleness of Christ**...” (v 1). What does this tell you about Christ? He was as a lamb led to the slaughter, and ‘He opened not *His mouth*’ and He ‘uttered not a word’ in contradiction or anger. But what did He say? What did He say when He was hanging there dying? To the very people that did it? That to the very people that, in

judgment, deserved death? Is that not correct? He said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they no not what they are doing.’ I’ll let you think on that in relationship to what Christ can and will do.

Paul said, “...On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base... [That could have reference to several things: the way he looked, the way he talked, whatever.] ...but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you” (v 1). He could write. That’s what they said, ‘Oh, in presence he’s weak, but oh, his letters are heavy!’ **Weighty!**

Verse 2: “But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the flesh*.” If there’s any one man who could say that, that was Paul and all the things that he went through in his life.

Verse 3: “For although we walk in *the flesh*, we do not war according to *the flesh*... [here’s how to have our minds ‘girded up’ or have our minds ready for action]: ...For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to *the overthrowing of strongholds*” (vs 3-4). What is the strongest thing in your life? **Human nature!** Where is it stored? *Right there in the ole cranium!*

Verse 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself... [That is every thought that comes along in your mind, or imagination—which it will!] ...against the knowledge of God...”

This can be applied in many ways. Any thought: whether it be thought of sin; whether it be thought of arrogance and self-aggrandizement, that you know better than God. That you’re going to instruct God. Or that your anger is going to work out the righteousness of God. What did James say? *‘The wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God.’* And boy, you know, since we’ve studied that, I’ve been trying to apply that, brethren, in my life, more and more. So pray for me that I can do it.

Verse 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself ... [And here’s how to have your mind ready for action:] ...and bringing into captivity... [that is, bring under control] ...**every thought to the obedience of Christ.**”

To have a thought come along, that’s not sin. To have temptation come along, that is not sin. But when your lust gets involved, and you don’t cast the thought down, then you’re leading to sin. And when it has conceived, the whole process then brings forth sin. And I just bring to your attention, the whole thing concerning David and Bathsheba. Perfect process of that because David was not doing

what he should have been doing here as related here in 2-Cor. 10:5—and he knew better.

“...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.... [It shows what you have to do. Take your disobedience and turn it into obedience. And it all starts right here in the mind.] ...Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s” (vs 5-7). That’s how to have your mind prepared for action.

Your mind prepared for action and self-controlled. Here’s another example of it spoken by Christ—the same word in the Greek—Luke 12:35 “Let your loins be girded about...” That means, prepared for action. It’s hard for us to figure, because most of us, when we think of that, we think of wearing a girdle or a corset. But that’s not what it’s talking about. When they wore the longer robes, when you’re ready for action, you’re going to be greatly limited if all these robes are draped all around you.

Do this sometime: Try doing exercise and running in a long, flowing gown. I’ll tell you, about the third step out, you’re on your face—it’ll never happen. So what they did was this: They had a wide belt that they kept around their middle. So when they needed to get out and go for action, they would take and unhook this belt and gird or pull up and bring up out of the way of walking and running the long robe so they could move. So that’s what it means.

Verse 35: “Let your loins be girded about and *your* lights burning.” Your example, you’re a light unto the world. You can put in there Matt. 5: ‘You’re the light of the world, the salt of the earth.’

Let’s add one more Scripture to this; Ephesians 6:14: “Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth...” So, instead of just a leather belt, you have the Word of God as such a very part of your being. Now notice how wonderfully all of God’s Word ties together. Isn’t that something? That is amazing! It just amazes me!

Now let’s go on back here to 1-Peter 1:13: “...fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, **do not be conforming yourselves to the your former lusts, as in your former ignorance**” (vs 13-14). We’re not to be doing that. Now, put in your margin: 1-John 3:1-2, concerning children. Which says, ‘Behold, what manner of love (or what glorious love) the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God.’

Let’s focus in on the last part of this, 1-Peter 1:14: “...**do not be conforming yourselves to the your former lusts, as in your former ignorance.**” Let’s go to Romans, the sixth chapter. Here he starts out with what you do with your mind. Don’t be conforming yourselves in the way that you used to live. How do you do that? *Well, you do don’t yield yourselves to your former lusts!* But what if you slip and make a mistake? What if you have a problem that it plagues you, that is almost a life-long problem? How then are you going to take care of that? *Whenever it comes up then you repent of it and you go back to God!* And you say, ‘Oh God, what a miserable mess.’

I know a man who had a terrible, terrible, terrible time overcoming smoking—which is just one small example. We can take smoking. We can take temper. We can take whatever it may be. And he came to me when I was up in Boise, because he heard that one of the ministers said, “If you are smoking you cannot take the Passover.” He came up to me all afraid—my first Passover there. He said, ‘Oh, I really don’t want to do it, but I’m still smoking. Oh, I shouldn’t take the Passover.’ I said, *No, you should! You should take the Passover. What you need to do is to continue to repent of that.* And it’s a terrible thing.

Here’s a man who’s smoking, and every time he smokes he hates it. And every time he lights that thing and puffs on it and drags in the smoke he hates himself, his conscience is whipped, his attitude toward God is just laid flat on the ground. Well, that man needs to take the Passover. And the second Passover we were there, he said, ‘Ah, I’m still smoking.’ I said, *Well, have you cut down?* He said, ‘Yeah, I’ve cut down, but I’m still smoking and it’s awfully hard for me to get over this habit.’ I said, *What we’re going to do is really ask God to help you this time. You go ahead and take the Passover. The Passover’s to cover your sins. Do you want this sin covered?* ‘Yes’ I said, *Take the Passover.* So then he came up the third Passover and he said, ‘Guess what? I’ve quit!’ I said, *Good!*

So it’s the same way in any one of the sins that we have to overcome. NEVER GIVE UP! It doesn’t matter. Sin does matter! Don’t take me wrong; but what I’m saying is that **God hasn’t given up on you** because of that. So, repent and stay close to God and here’s how to do it. Now we have the goal and focus on the resurrection—right? And the Kingdom of God—correct? But what else are we also to do?

Romans 6:11: “In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin... [You’re dead to that, though it’s a lust pulling you down. Though there is something there going

against you, you're still dead to it.] ...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, **do not let sin rule**... [or to have control over you; don't let it rule] ...in your mortal body... [as you're overcoming sin, let Christ in you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, give you more power. 'Bring every thought into the captivity of the obedience of Jesus Christ,' **and don't let the sin rule!** Cast down that thought.] ...by obeying it in the lusts thereof." That ties right in with what we just covered here. Don't fashion yourself according to your former lusts.

Verse 13: "Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, **yield yourselves to God** as those who are alive from *the* dead... [Notice how, again, everything fits into the resurrection, and how to have that focused right in on your mind continuously.] ...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you..." (vs 13-14).

- As long as you are *overcoming*.
- As long as you are *loving God*.
- As long as you are *servicing Him*.

Though you sin because of the 'law of sin and death'—very important for us to know and understand and really realize this, because as long as there is repentance there is hope. As long there is hope there is forgiveness. As long as there is forgiveness there is a way to overcome.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." That's what the grace of God is all about. It doesn't condemn you. But what do you have to do?

Let's go back to Romans 6:13: "...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**..." (vs 13-14). The word 'the' is not there in the Greek. It is: "...you are not **under law**..." Why? *Because you are under grace!* God has called you to His grace, and it is His grace and the whole relationship of it.

"...but under grace. What then?..." (vs 14-15)—because He doesn't want anyone to be misled. Because you're not under law you could put there: *under the penalty of law*—that would be okay, but you're not under the penalty of grace. So, you can't make that an exactly correct parallel there. You're under grace.

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**.... [Don't let the thought even enter

your mind.]. ...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?... [there's that word again, *obedience*] ...But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed... [there it is again] ...from *the* heart... [that's what God wants: *from the heart*] ...that form of doctrine which was delivered you. And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness..." (vs 15–19). You know, some of those that God has called have really given themselves over to it, and yet, God calls them.

I saw last night on the Family Channel, which is the only one we get with religion on it, and here was a man telling about his life where a 12-year-old kid would come up to the fence of the prison in which he was confined. And he told that man, 'You're my friend.' And at 12-years-old he witnessed to him about Jesus Christ. Well, to make a long story short, the man finally became converted, gave his life to Christ, and I can see the tremendous value in the approach that was used there in talking to this whole assembly of young people. And his motto was: *Twice Pardoned*. That's the name of his organization: *Twice Pardoned*. Pardoned by the governor so he could go out and do this work, be released from prison.

This young 12-year-old boy is now 25, and was there in the audience—and is was really very powerful how that this man had shown exactly what it was like to be in prison and all the experience of those prisoners and bringing the young people in to have the prisoners talk to them and really shake them up about what's going on in prison; and how it is true that there are many people who have taken drugs, who have been in illicit sex, who have gone iniquity onto iniquity. And you know, for those of us who have not gone through that, we ought not harden our hearts toward any of them, because

- God calls them
- God forgives them
- God leads them

They needed to go the next step further, and I just wish he would say after that, 'give your heart to the Lord: now come on over here and we'll be baptized. But at least they're making an effort. At least they're making an attempt. And at least they're moving people away from sin and toward Christ. And at least that was good, very good.

And I could not help but think of it, as "...you *once* yielded your members in bondage to

uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now... [turn your whole life around, turn your whole mind around, be prepared for action, gird up the loins of your mind] ...yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto [Holiness] sanctification.... [See how that ties right in with ‘be you Holy because I am Holy’?] ...For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” (vs 19–23).

So again, see how the Gospel is the same: what Peter preaches, what Paul preaches, what they wrote, and the Holy Spirit of God that inspires it. Let’s go back to 1-Peter, the first chapter. I was hoping to get through this today, but we’ll see what we can do. There are many other Scriptures we can add to this, but we obviously can’t take the time because you could almost take two or three verses and just go through the whole Bible and tie it all together.

1-Peter 1:15: “But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct.” And that means your conduct today.

This is another way of expressing the whole thing. You might ask: How can I be Holy as God is Holy? That’s a tough commandment, isn’t it? *Sure it is!* Well, we’ll answer that question. Here’s another one that’s tough, just like it. You can ask the same question: ‘How can I do this?’ What is the answer: **‘All things are possible through Christ which strengthens me’**—correct? *Yes!*

Matthew 5:48—here’s what Jesus said: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” Now, that’s a tall order! That’s a tall command! And it *is* a command. ‘Be you therefore’—that is a command. How’s that accomplished? *Well, that is accomplished by the Spirit of God.*

Let’s see where this comes from. And for all those anti-Old Testament people, let’s go back to Leviticus 19. This is where it comes from. There are some people who say, ‘Well, if I don’t see it in the New Testament I ain’t a gonna do it.’ Well, maybe, maybe not. Here’s some Old Testament doctrine in the New Testament, and I’ll just bet you that outside of the animal sacrifices that are here, that all of this is New Testament doctrine, we’ll survey just a little bit of it because it shows how to be Holy”

Leviticus 19:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel and say to them, “You shall be Holy, for **I the LORD your God *am* Holy**”’” (vs 1-2). How?

1. have the Holy Spirit of God
2. have the Word of God
3. obey the commandments of God.

If you’re following the commandments of God, which are Holy and just and true, are you not being Holy in your conduct? *Yes!* What is the final Holiness that is going to take place, which we focused in today? *The resurrection! Yes!*

Notice what He says, v 3: “You shall each man revere his mother and his father... [Are we to do that today? *Yes*] ...and keep My Sabbaths.... [plural—no distinction between weekly and annual] ...I *am* the LORD, your God. Do not turn to idols...” That’s New Testament doctrine, too— isn’t it? *Yes!* You might want to put in your notes right there, you can put in there Rev. 2 about eating things sacrificed unto idols. There are several verses there. The Church of Pergamos and the Church of Thyatira were corrected for and warned that they would lose their salvation.

“...nor make molten gods to yourselves. **I am the LORD your God**” (v 4). Basing it on Himself, on His existence, not just to have you do it as a burden upon you.

Now notice the command for sacrifice—I want you to understand something here because this is New Testament doctrine as well, when we understand it, v 5: “And if you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD... [any offering that you offer, anything that you give to the Lord] ...**you shall offer it of your own free will**.... [Because you choose to and desire to—New Testament doctrine. You love God because you choose to. You keep His commandments because you choose to.] ...It shall be eaten the same day you offer it...” (vs 5-6), and so forth and so on.

Verse 9: “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field. And you shall not gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard. And you shall not gather the *fallen grapes* of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger. **I am the LORD your God**” (vs 9-10).

What is one of the things they do right here in this county?—and I saw it on the news—right here, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek. They have this special group of people who give to the poor and the homeless and do you know what they do? They have volunteers that go around and they pick the oranges, they pick the apples, they pick the lemons and the plums from the trees that are just decorative trees in people’s yards and they give it to

the poor. Today, because people go in and thieve and take away crops, you can't even let the poor get in and glean your field because most of them will come the night before, because they're not truly poor—they're really thieves—and steal your crop, unfortunately. But this what God intended and this is what it should be.

Verse 11—some more New Testament doctrine: “You shall not steal, nor lie, nor be deceitful to one another....” If you want a more in-depth Bible study, go ahead and take these verses as a springboard and go and use your concordance and look in the New Testament and look and see where these are also in the New Testament.

“...And you shall not swear by My name falsely; nor shall you profane the name of your God. **I am the LORD**. You shall not defraud your neighbor nor rob *him*.... [is that not New Testament doctrine today? *Yes!*] ...The wages of him who is hired shall not stay with you all night until the morning.... [In other words, when it's due, pay him.] ...You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God. **I am the LORD**” (vs 11-14). So when God says, ‘I am the Lord,’ do you think He means business? *Yes!* He's giving this commandment based on what? *On His very existence and being!*

Verse 15: “You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment....” That's what they're trying to do right now in Los Angeles. They're trying to find a jury that's going convict these policemen, whether they're guilty or innocent.

“...You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty...” (v 15). In other words, the poor man who is a sinner is not to be accorded any more respect than the rich man who's a sinner. But you know what happens when people have money? You know this is true. When there's money, people just somehow lose all perspective. But God says we're not to be impressed with money and we're not to be impressed with poverty, neither one.

It's like the Apostle Paul said to the elders there in Acts 20, ‘You bear me witness that I coveted and lust not after any of your goods.’ And that's a fulfillment of this here. But some people are. You treat people differently because they're rich or treat them differently because they're poor. God doesn't do that.

“...*but* you shall judge your neighbor in righteousness. You shall not go *as* a slanderer among your people; you shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor. **I am the LORD**. You shall not hate your brother in your heart.... [that's as New Testament as you can get] ...You shall always admonish your neighbor, that you may not bear sin

because of him. You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. **I am the LORD**” (vs 15-18) Well now, it sounds just like I was reading out of the New Testament—right? *Buried right there in the Old Testament!*

Let's go to 1-John, the second chapter, and we'll see a verse about you should not hate your brother in your heart—and let's see the New Testament example of this here. 1-John 2:9: “Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light... [that is the light of Christ] ...but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (vs 9-11). If there's any one thing that blinds your eyes to any truth, that is hatred. All I say is witness Yugoslavia today; and the war there, just based on hatred.

What do you do if someone killed one of your children? That's a difficult question. You're sure not going to run out and hug them and kiss them. But what did Jesus say? ‘Pray for those that hate you, despitefully use you.’ That is a tremendous example. Sure, you should let the law run its course. Yes, you should. I suppose the epitome of the best example of that would be, if you had enough love in your heart, after you've put away all the trauma and everything, knowing that your child would be resurrected anyway in the second resurrection, that you could actually lead that person to Christ. That would be a challenge wouldn't it? Wouldn't that be a challenge? That's what God did with Paul. Did you know that? He took the one who was killing church members and made him an apostle.

What about where it says ‘a sin unto death’ and the ‘sin not unto death’? Let's go to 1-John 5:16: “If any one see his **brother**... [we're not talking about neighbor—we're talking about brother, in the Church] ...sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death...”

We're talking about *eternal death*, committing the unpardonable sin here in this case, so it doesn't exactly fit in what we're talking about here—unless one of the church members would deliberately, premeditatedly kill one of your children. But if it's just someone out in the world, God hasn't called, it's a different circumstance. But what you're saying is true.

Verse 16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask... [in other words, pray for that individual] ...and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto

death.... [A good example would be: the man I talked about with a smoking problem.] ...There is a sin unto death... [in other words, they have committed the unpardonable sin] ...concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication to God.”

In other words, I’m not saying that you’re under obligation to pray. You can. You can say, ‘God, lead this person out of it.’ But if they committed the *unpardonable sin, which is a sin unto death*, there remains no more sacrifice of Christ. There are circumstances where it could be that. But this is not talking about where there is a sin that is done that it results just in murder. This is talking about a sin that is done, that’s the *unpardonable sin, which is going to result in eternal death*.

Sin is sin, that is correct. If a brother, in other words, if a Christian go out and do premeditated murder, that’s it! We’re all spiritual brothers, yes, yes. Being spiritual brothers in Christ is because what Christ has done, and we’re brothers and sisters with Christ within the Church, that is true.

Does this mean that we are also in a physical brother/sister relationship with people in the world? Is that the question you’re asking? You are not in a brother/sister relationship with people in the world, you are in a neighbor-to-neighbor relationship, which is not a close family relationship. That is different.

However, there are some people in the world that can be close as a brother or close as a sister in some cases. But the relationship is not quite that close. We should love our neighbor as our self, absolutely right. Oh, we can to a certain degree. That’s the whole goal that we are strive for. There are some neighbors that in loving them, you want to avoid them—but that’s still loving them. That is still loving them; and you pray for them. Like in the movie, *Fiddler on Roof*, this guy came up to the Rabbi and said, ‘Rabbi, is there a prayer for the Czar?’ That’s the Czar of Russia—the great hated object of the Jews in Russia. And he says, ‘Yes, may God bless him and keep him *far* away from us’—which is true.

My prayer for Charles Manson would be that he does not get out of jail. I will love him as my neighbor as my self, because the best thing for him is to stay in jail. It would’ve been better if they would have executed him, to spare other people all the problems. Because God can take care of him at the second resurrection. And it’s the same way with any of these other things.

That’s why God chose the Apostle Paul for doing what he did. And there were some people, and I’ve thought about this, and I’ve had people bring it

up to me: How would you feel if the Apostle Paul came into the synagogue where you were and you were sitting there in a synagogue and Paul comes in to preach. And Paul had ordered the death of one of your children, or your wife, or something. How would you feel?

- You talk about a test of brotherly love.
- You talk about a test of neighborly love.
- You talk about a test of Godly love.

That would be the ultimate test to me. I mean it really would. And for the one who did the murder to stand up there and preach about the love of God. I mean, without Christ that would be the most hypocritical thing in the world. So that’s why Paul said, ‘Look brethren, I am the least of all the apostles and I am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church.’ The persecution was murder. God has to work out a lot of those things. We can’t solve all the problems in all the world, and even many problems in our own life, we can’t solve all of those. Sometimes we just have to go to God and say, ‘God, I don’t know, help me out of this thing.’

You certainly can’t like everyone. And even Christ didn’t like a lot of people. But He showed His love to them in what He did and how He conducted Himself. And in some cases, His love was so great He got away from them. When they were ready to nab Him and throw Him down over the cliff. When they were ready to go ahead and stone Him, He disappeared and got out of the way. Was that not love toward them? *Yes, it was!* Even correction is love. You see, *in love* looks straight at things the way they are and doesn’t sugarcoat them. But it handles everything the way it really is.

1-Peter 1:16: “For it has been written, ‘You be Holy, because I am Holy.’ And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man’s work without respect of persons...” (vs 16-17). We just covered that, we’ll pick up a little more there next time and finish off the chapter next time. I didn’t want to necessarily take this much time, but I think it’s been productive regardless.

Are there times when we can be angry? *Yes, even Jesus healed in anger!* There’s righteous anger. Yes, and truth sometimes—love and truth—it doesn’t rejoice in iniquity.

New Testament Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural references:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:13-25, 15-22
- 2) John 13:34

- 3) 1 Peter 1:25, 23
- 4) John 1:1, 14
- 5) John 15:7-10
- 6) Hebrews 10:19-31
- 7) Romans 8:14
- 8) 1-Peter 1:13
- 9) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7
- 10) Luke 12:35
- 11) Ephesians 6:14
- 12) 1-Peter 1:13-14
- 13) Romans 6:11-14
- 14) Romans 8:1
- 15) Romans 6:13-23
- 16) 1-Peter 1:15
- 17) Matthew 5:48
- 18) Leviticus 19:1-6, 9-18
- 19) 1 John 2:9-11
- 20) 1-John 5:16
- 21) 1-Peter 1:16-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 4:4
- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Matthew 18
- Psalm 119
- 1-John 3:1-2
- Revelation 2
- Acts 20

Also referenced: Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
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- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

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