

The Covenants, Grace and Law (Part 8)

Sanctification

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We are going to begin this sermon almost where we left off the last time. This is in Hebrews 8: 10, which is one of the verses that we used right near the end of that sermon. Actually, I want to begin in verse 8, just to pick something up that is important to understand here. He's leading into the new covenant, and Paul writes:

Hebrews 8:8 For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, the days come," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

I want to draw your attention to the plural pronoun "them." There was only one covenant to this time. So, if he was referring to the covenant at that time — for finding fault with whatever it was — he would have had to say, "*for finding fault with it.*" But God did NOT find fault with the old covenant. Everything that God does is of the highest order, and the covenant that He gave to Israel was more than adequate for His intention at the time. It was not the covenant that failed. It was them! It was the people who failed. It was the people who did not live up to what the covenant was stipulating.

Everything God does is pure, and right, and true. Please hang on to that thought — not so much just for this sermon, but as an overall approach to this entire subject. I bring that to your attention because so many implications that are made by people who say the law is done away, that the old covenant was a failure — the implication all along is that there was something wrong with what God gave the people to do. God doesn't do things like that! And we can't afford to allow that kind of thinking to get into our minds, because then we are on the trail to something that is wrong and that will not help us in our relationship with God. And it will very greatly affect the way we approach the Bible — the Word of God.

The old covenant is a part of the Word of God. And there is a proverb — I think it is in Proverbs 30 — where he says, "Every word of God is pure." So the problem was NOT with the covenant. The problem was in the people. And, as we've been seeing in the last few sermons, specifically the problem was *in their heart*. The heart was uncircumcised. The heart was stiff-necked. The heart was filled with self-will. And, therefore, it rejected what God had to say.

I mentioned early in last week's sermon that Satan's ploy has not been to merely get us to break a few more laws — but, actually, to blow God's whole purpose out of the water. I said to you, at the very beginning of this series, that what they [the leadership in WCG] are doing here is BIG and may very well involve every doctrine that has to do with salvation. This is no little thing that they are doing.

Satan wants to blow the major portion of God's plan, that He is working out here to fulfill His

purpose, right out of the water. We'll see *why* and *how* in this sermon today, because we are coming right to the crux of the issue; and what we are going to see is that it has a very great deal to do with laws. And yet laws don't even appear very strongly within the course of this sermon subject.

Hebrews 8:10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days," says the Lord; "I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts. And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."

That very clearly tells us that the new covenant has laws as a part of its terms.

Satan has attempted here to ignore a major portion of God's plan, by making people think that God's plan is only a two-step operation. That is, (1) one believes in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, repents of his sins, accepts the blood of Jesus Christ, is declared justified or righteous before God; and then (2) the person kind of waits out the rest of his life until salvation comes. So we have (1) justification and (2) salvation. The way that you would hear it explained in the Protestant world is that after justification, then one dies and goes off to heaven.

Now, I realize that I am greatly simplifying this in order to make a point. There is more to it than that. Salvation is a process. And if there is not more to it than that, then how does God's law get written on our heart? On the one hand, He says that He will *put* His law in your mind. But, on the other hand, He says that it is going to be *written* on our heart. One seems to show *a supernatural giving to the mind* the law of God. But the other seems to show *an action required* in order for it to be written on our heart.

Deuteronomy 11:18-19 Therefore shall you lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them [an action required] for a sign upon your hand [the symbol of work], that they may be as frontlets between your eyes [something that is always visible. They are never out of sight, never out of mind. They are always with you.] And you shall teach them to your children...

Now we see an action required by the parents, to instruct children; and that in turn has *an inscribing effect* because I don't think anybody learns more than the teacher. As he or she is teaching, there is a refining of understanding.

Deuteronomy 11:19 And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

It covers every part of the day. You can see it — all day, all the time. The mind, the heart, is *involved* with the law of God.

Now, just as an aside here, Hebrews 8:10 is quoted from Jeremiah 31:33. (Incidentally, that

section there in Hebrews 8 is the longest single quote in the entire New Testament of any passages taken from the Old Testament.) The word "law" in Jeremiah 31: 33 is *torah*. He says, "*Write the torah.*" Not just the Ten Commandments! He means the whole five books. And he says, "*You have this in front of your eyes all the time. You have this inscribed in your hands, and you work according to it. And you speak it out of your mouth to your children. Everywhere you walk, it goes with you. Whether you are at home during the morning, whether you are at work during the day, when you come home at night and sleep — every part of the day is covered.*"

Deuteronomy 11:20 And you shall write them upon the door posts of your house [So that, when you leave the house, they are on your mind. You are going to conduct your business with the law on your mind.], and upon your gates.

There is the process of *writing* the law of God *into a person's heart*. The commandments of God specifically — the law of God in general — is to be our constant companion in thought, in word, and in work.

If they are done away, how can one become holy as God is holy — because it is by living and using God's law in our daily experience, keeping them by the Spirit of God, that we become transformed into the image of Christ. Remember where Peter said that, in I Peter 1:16? "*Be you holy, because He is holy.*" That's our reason for becoming holy.

What has happened is that a very important *in-between step* in God's plan has been negated by this "no law" teaching into something of little consequence. Here is how Satan is going to blow God's purpose right out of the water — by negating a step that cannot be left out. In the Bible, this in-between step is called sanctification. It is called in other places in the Bible "going on to perfection," "growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ," "being transformed into the image of Christ," and "holiness."

There are only shades of differences between those terms — given in a specific context. And I am sure that their use by Paul, who is the one that most frequently used them, was determined by what he felt the context called for. They are all basically the same in intent; but I want you to notice that not one of them is *justification*. Neither is any of them *salvation*.

Sanctification is what God wants to *occur* following *justification*, because He has more in mind than merely declaring us righteous by Christ's righteousness. We must be righteous in fact.

That is, by the experience of walking God's way in our daily lives — not being righteous merely by declaration, or by God declaring us righteous.

Nor is sanctification *salvation* either, because God has more in mind than merely saving us. He is using the time in between justification and salvation to prepare us for living and working in God's Kingdom. It is the time in which the Bride is prepared. This is where God's law comes back into the picture, because the laws are part of the discipline God uses to accomplish this.

Brethren, relationships require rules. Relationships require laws. Otherwise, relationships degenerate into chaos.

Neither does sanctification — of and by itself — save us. We are saved by grace through faith. But it is a very important part of the whole process. And we are going to see in a moment a scripture that says that, unless we go on to holiness, we will not see God. So even though sanctification does not save us, if we don't have it, we won't be there. Do you want to be in the Kingdom of God? Well, you'd better go on *holiness*. We are obligated to do it. And, as we are going to see, we (individually) are the key element in this.

There are three things that the Bible tells us are absolutely necessary for salvation. Two of them are subjects that we hardly ever talk about. The first one is justification. That one gets an awful lot of teaching. It's the one that the Protestants concentrate on, and then they kind of stop there. The second one is taught about to a limited degree. In the Bible, it's called regeneration. And the third one is the one that hardly ever gets talked about. It is sanctification.

Brethren, the reason ministers do not want to talk about sanctification is because it is tough. People don't want to hear about it. It is the hard part of God's plan of salvation. It is not only the hard part, but it is one that takes the most time. It is the one that hurts us the most. It requires the most sacrifice. It is the most demanding part of God's whole plan. And I'll tell you, if we aren't committed, then we are going to have a tough time with *sanctification*.

It is that area that we are most likely to backslide in. It is that area that we are most likely to give up in, and go back to the world. It can be discouraging, depressing, and horrifying to some. It's the time when people can say, "*I never thought it would be like this!*" It's the time when people say, "*Well, God didn't say it would be a rose garden*" — when we begin to face the reality that this is true. This is that period of time that those who endure to the end are going to be saved.

For justification I will not give a scripture, because we have gone through so many of them already. But that is the step in which God declares us righteous by the righteousness of Christ, and gives us access into the Holiest of all — that is, into God's very throne room.

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

We won't go into this deeply because it would require, really, a whole sermon. But regeneration is another term that is not used very much in our church experience. It is symbolized by baptism and the laying on of hands. It involves such things as internal cleansing, rising in newness of life from a watery grave, becoming a new creation, and begetting through the receiving of God's Holy Spirit.

It is this step that the world calls being "born again," but the Bible calls it regeneration. And you can understand why — because when we have a confrontation with God at the beginning of His salvation process, we are dead to sin. We need to be regenerated and given life once again.

Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness...

This is the same word, which in other places is translated sanctification. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness (or sanctification)." Now, look at that last phrase:

Hebrews 12:14 ...without which no man shall see the Lord.

Sanctification does not save a person. Yet it is so important that, IF we leave that step out, THEN we don't see God. In other words, it's just another way of saying that we won't be in His Kingdom. Let me put it this way: If we don't grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ... We are not talking about quantity or quality here. We are just talking about growth. If we don't grow, if we don't overcome, if we don't put sin out, if we don't go on to perfection — we don't see God. In other words, justification is NOT the end. It is only the doorway into *sanctification*. That is, going on to holiness.

This word that is translated *holiness* here is *hagiasmos* in the Greek. It is a masculine noun from the verb *hagiazo*. Now *hagiasmos* means, "*separation*." It is used in the sense of the condition produced by the receipt of God's Holy Spirit, and also the behavior fitting those so separated. So says Spiros Zodhiates in his *Complete Word Study New Testament Words* book.

But even more interesting is the verb *hagiazo*. That's the word from which *hagiasmos* is derived; and, according to Zodhiates, it means, "*to make clean*." Isn't that interesting? We are declared righteous and therefore justified. But we have to *become clean*! Baptism provides a symbolic washing, and it is a witness — to us and to the world — that we have committed ourselves to Jesus Christ. But in fact, we are NOT really clean yet — are we? Human nature is still a part of us. All of the bad habits, all of the bad thought patterns, all of those things that made us in need of forgiveness, justification, and the cleansing that baptism does — all of those things still remain within us. They have to come out.

So Zodhiates says that it means, "*to make clean; to render pure; metaphorically, to render clean in a moral sense; to purify. Thus the purity indicates consecration, devotion, set apart from common use*" Do you see? What it is that provides the consecration, or the devotion, or the separation is that we are becoming pure. The rest of the world is dirty. But the very fact that we are becoming pure — that we are being purified — sets us apart from the rest of the world.

Here is a quote from a book by John Owen. It's titled "The Holy Spirit." In this book, under the article Works, volume 3, page 370:

"There is mention in the Scripture of a two-fold sanctification and, consequently, of a two-fold holiness. The first is common unto persons and things consisting in the peculiar dedication, consecration, or separation of them into the service of God by His own appointment whereby they became holy. Thus, the priests and Levites of old, the ark, the altar, the tabernacle, and the temple were sanctified and made holy. And, indeed, in all holiness whatever there is a peculiar dedication and separation unto God"

And so, all God has to do in this case is declare somebody holy because He is going to use them. But are they holy in fact? The answer to that, obviously, is "No." So what could we do? Or what could we see in history? Anybody who has done any reading of ancient history for a period of time — let's say from Ezra up through the time of Christ — knows that by the time Christ came along, the high priesthood had degenerated to such a state that the family of high priests were selling the office, or buying it from the Romans — and it went to the highest bidder.

Now, were those people holy — even though they were the high priests? You get to reading some of those things, and those people were murderers. They would murder a claimant to the high priesthood in order to get rid of them, and then they were the next in line. They were in a holy position, because God consecrated the office; but they themselves were NOT holy.

Continuing with John Owen:

"But, in the sense mentioned, this was solitary and alone. No more belonged unto it but this sacred separation. Nor was there any other affect of this sanctification. But secondly, there is another kind of sanctification and holiness wherein this separation to God is not the first thing done or intended, but a consequent and effect thereof. This is real and internal by the communication by a principle of holiness into our natures, attended with its exercise in acts and duties of holy obedience unto God. This is that which we inquire after."

Sanctification, then, does consist of two stages. Stage one merely consists of being declared holy because God has chosen us. The second stage, though, consists of the effect of holy obedience and purification of our lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And this is why *there must be law connected to the new covenant!*

This purification, as we are going to see, is a *cooperative effort* between God and us. This is the means through which the "circumcision made without hands" is maintained. Since He (God) has given us free moral agency, we must voluntarily *choose* to follow His guidance. And for guidance (as to what we must obey so that our lives can be purified) there must be LAWS.

What we are going to look at for the remainder of this sermon is the nature of sanctification — — so that we will *recognize it*. That is, recognize whether it is taking place in our life or whether it is taking place in somebody else's life. Do you know what? You can NOT see justification. You CAN see sanctification — with your eyes! You don't have to be a rocket scientist to be able to see it. It doesn't take a great deal of discernment. Anybody with the Holy Spirit can begin to see whether or not a person is being sanctified

The nature means the "inherent character of." What does the scripture mean by a sanctified man? Sanctification is that inward spiritual work which God works in us, by His Holy Spirit, when He calls us to be a son of God. He not only washes us from our sins by Christ's blood, but He also separates us from our carnal love of sin (that is, our carnality) and works into our mind a new motivating principle of living.

Much of this is done *supernaturally* by the receiving of His Holy Spirit. *"I will put My law into your mind."* He can do that. But He can't make you use it! And it is when we choose to use it that it becomes inscribed in our hearts. It becomes a part of our nature. It becomes a part of our way of living. But, brethren, this does not occur in the blink of an eye. It is a process whose main element is *faith* — faith in something very specific. Not faith that God is, but faith in God's Word. If you don't trust His Word, you won't obey it. And if you won't obey it, you won't be sanctified. If you are not sanctified, you won't be purified. You won't become holy. And you won't be in the Kingdom of God.

So, once we are justified, the main element is *faith in the Word of God*. This whole process includes justification. But if one supposes that Christ only lived and died and rose again in order to provide justification and the forgiveness of sin — whether a person knows it, or not — he has only half a Savior. We are saved by His life! Who is it that works this purification process on the supernatural end? Well, it's our Savior — Jesus Christ.

Now let's go back to Exodus 19, where the covenant was proposed.

Exodus 19:1-2 In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

What we are going to see here is that there were various stages by which they progressed to the Promised Land. Egypt was the type of *being in the world*. The journey through the wilderness was the type of sanctification. The coming out of Egypt was the type of redemption, or justification. And entering into the Promised Land was the type of salvation.

We see several clear steps there. Which one took the longest time? The sanctification! They came out with a high hand, didn't they? *"Yeah! We're free. Everything is fine. Boy, this is going to be a lark."* But where did they do all their crying? Where did they go hungry? Where did they have their pain? Where did they have their fear? Where did they have their greatest tests?

Where did they fail? Why did they fail? Hebrews 4:1-2 makes it clear. They failed because their faith broke down! Their faith broke down during that portion of God's plan called *sanctification*. They couldn't hack it. They couldn't endure to the end. And so, as those verses say, their bodies were strewn from one end of the wilderness to the other.

So being freed from Egypt pictures redemption, or justification; but there was a great deal more to come. They had to walk for a lifetime — roughly 40 years — before they even got to the Promised Land. So walking out was only the beginning. Brethren, if you get the picture (and I'm sure you do), thus it is *withus* and the receiving of *our* inheritance.

One of the first things that God did, when He got them out, was to enter into a covenant with them; and He revealed His laws to them. There's a parallel here. There's a pattern here. People want to do away with the laws of God. But, if we do that — from the clear pattern that is shown

in the old covenant — then we are doing away with the rules of the game. We are doing away with part of the very elements that are necessary for our purification. That is, so that we are prepared to inherit the Land.

And so this *revelation of the law* was necessary — in order to prepare them, and to set the rules for the relationship between them. It was to prepare them so that they would be fit to live in their inheritance. So it didn't save them. God did that. But it was to prepare them. But look at this:

Exodus 19:5-6 Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.

As we can readily see, it didn't prepare them — because they didn't believe God. They were uncircumcised in heart; and, therefore, they refused to live by it. Notice all the future tense words hear. (That is, "future" from the time period of Exodus 19.) First of all, they were already holy in the sense that they had been chosen by God. They had been separated away from the Egyptians, separated away from the world. God was going to use them for something. But they never became sanctified in the second sense, because that would be accomplished *only if* they lived God's way. And so they never made it to be a kingdom of priests. They never made it to be a holy nation. Again, it is the same with us!

Let's go back into the New Testament again — this time in I Corinthians 1; and we'll see something that is a rather surprising instruction.

I Corinthians 1:30 But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Now, the righteousness has to do with *justification*. We don't often think of Christ as being our *sanctification* — but He is, because we are saved by His life. We are justified by His death; and we can very clearly relate to that, because we have been taught it so frequently. But we are saved by the fact that He is ALIVE and that He is working in us.

He is watching over our lives. He is leading us into things, out of things — giving us strength to overcome, giving us instruction, giving us power to live by Spirit, spanking us whenever necessary, correcting us in love, admonishing us, encouraging us. And He becomes our sanctification as well. If He were not on the job, every one of us would perish. This is why I said earlier that if one only looks upon Christ for *justification*, then he only has half a Savior. The job is just beginning whenever we accept His blood.

The *New Testament Commentary* has a very interesting notation on this verse. I will quote it to you:

"Righteousness is a single act; but holiness [that is, sanctification] is the result, or effect, of an act. Righteousness is an external act [That is, it is God who declares us righteous. He does that apart from us.] by which a person is declared righteous in Christ. Holiness is an internal state attained through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer"

That is a very interesting statement. Brethren, sanctification is when all of the spots and wrinkles are gotten out of us. Remember that I said earlier that the main ingredient in this was our faith in God's Word. In John 17, in Christ's prayer [we read]:

John 17:19 "And for their sakes, I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Now, that very familiar verse 17:

John 17:17 "Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth."

If we don't believe God's Word and if we ignore God's Word, we will never become sanctified. I don't know whether you are beginning to see what I am leading towards here, so I am going to say it. IF you aren't spending time *studying God's Word*, you are in trouble! You'll get by for a good while listening to sermons — because, in a sermon, you get God's Word and it feeds you. And you get some of it to the extent that it is able to nourish you. But, IF you are not doing it on your own and IF you are depending upon somebody else, THEN I can guarantee you that it's not really being put into your mind; and it won't be purifying your thoughts. It will not be purifying your attitudes. And you may very well remain just as competitive, controlling, carnal, and self-centered as always.

It's God's Word that makes us holy — along with God's Holy Spirit. Do you know why? *Holy words* effect *holy thinking*. Our thinking processes are limited to what's in our mind. And IF we are going to think according to God's Word, THEN God's Word has to be in our mind! It's a simple process. Now, let's add to it — back in the book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it. That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

Isn't that clear? I don't know how it could be made any clearer. All of our lives, until God calls us, we are subject to the constant bombardments of the words—the thinking, the ideas, the concepts, the hopes and dreams, and ideals and standards — of this world. Some of them also come from God, undoubtedly. It's a mixture. But isn't it far better to use the pure thing? Every Word of God is pure. And IF we want our thinking to be pure, THEN it has to be fed with the thing that will make the thinking pure.

On the one hand, the Holy Spirit. On the other hand the Word of God. And then there is the putting them into practice so that it becomes *inscribed — by habit*. God gives most of us a long time. He gave the Israelites 40 years to inscribe it in their hearts. And the reason He gives us so much time is because it takes an awful lot of *time* to change a carnal mind — to purify it.

Ephesians 5:27 That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Again, that is so clear. So the problem of sin is in man's thinking. That's why God says the problem is in the heart — in the mind. We are *limited* to thinking what is in our mind. And IF we have God's Word in our mind — along with the Holy Spirit — THEN there's a pretty good chance that the mind is going to begin to change, to become circumcised, to become purified, to become holy as God is holy. He says, "*My thoughts are higher than yours, better than yours. So much greater than the east is from the west.*" Yet we have to begin to make a step in going in that direction — to begin thinking like Him.

Are you beginning to understand why *a person who is not holy* will not "see" God? They won't see God because they don't think like Him. He doesn't recognize any of Himself in those people! So, until the heart is changed, nothing will change. The change begins by *taking in* the Word of God — on a daily basis — and *applying it* in our lives.

Colossians 1:21-23 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works [Where was the problem? It was in the mind! And why did the body do wicked works? Because the mind directed it to do that.], yet now has He reconciled [How did He do this?] in the body of His flesh through death, [Now why did He do this?] to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight/ *f* you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.

That *purification* is sanctification. And so we are presented, then, before God — holy and unblameable — *IF* we continue... So now we see, very clearly, that there are two sides to this. There is (1) what God does, and there is (2) what we do.

In the Bible, what God does is seen under a number of metaphors. He is called the Potter. We are the clay. And so, as the Potter, He forms and shapes. But as the clay — because we are free moral agents — we have the right to accept or refuse. We can be pliable, or we can stiffen up. We can reject. So, He not only undertakes our *justification*; but He also undertakes our *sanctification*.

If you are beginning to follow me, you can begin to see why the old covenant had to be set aside. The reason was that it was never designed by God to do these things. There is no

promise in the old covenant for God's Holy Spirit. There isn't even any promise of forgiveness of sin. And so, it was inadequate for salvation.

So the new covenant was introduced — in God's revealing of things — at the time that He felt was right to begin to open salvation in earnest to everybody. I think that some of us, from time to time, have speculated that the number of people saved prior to the coming of Jesus Christ might indeed have been limited to those people mentioned in Hebrews 11. That's just a thought. I personally think that there were more. But of this we can be sure — there were not very many.

Then Jesus Christ was revealed, and preached the gospel, and died for our sins, and rose to heaven to become the administrator of God's Holy Spirit and then the mediator of a new covenant that God opened with man. Thus, the basis of the relationship with God and man was expanded to give man a much better opportunity to attain to salvation purified by God's Holy Spirit in his own actions. So we see that this sanctification is in two steps. It requires the work of God. It also requires our yielding to Him.

If you are following me, you'll begin to see how sneaky Satan has been in trying to get this across to the church. If you take the law of God out of the way — even if you just take one of the major Ten [Commandments] out of the way — according to James, if you break one then you break them all. Each and every one of them are linked to one another. You cannot separate those Ten.

People undoubtedly think that the Sabbath is the "least" of all the Commandments, because that's the one they always attack. But it is my opinion that there is no commandment more important than the Sabbath if we are going to be sanctified. (I will say that there might be others that are equally important — especially the First Commandment.) What day is it that you receive your instruction about what you are to do, about how to improve your relationship with God and how to make things practical, or to get the right kind of inspiration, encouragement, and correction?

Do you begin to understand why, in Ezekiel 20, God said that there were two commandments that Israel broke that caused them to go into captivity? Idolatry and Sabbath breaking! You break the Sabbath — put it out of the way — and you cut yourself off from the kind of instruction that God intends that you have in order to go on to salvation. This is no little thing that they have done. In one sense, we might say that He has moved to remove the keystone, or the axle, around which the other commandments revolve.

Hebrews 2:11 For both He that sanctifies [That's Christ.] and they who are sanctified [That's us.] are all of one [We are all of one Father, and therefore of one family.]: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

The word "brethren" gives me the indication as to why I can say that this word "one" means family. We are all brothers and sisters. We are all of one family. If there is anything that these words teach us, it is that Christ not only undertakes our *justification* but also

our *sanctification*. Both of them are provided under the new covenant, which He mediates.

Galatians 2:20 [Paul wrote:] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Sanctification requires *time*. It requires *living by faith*. Remember that Israel failed in this sanctification period, because they didn't live by faith. Sanctification is the result of our union with Christ, which gives true faith — living faith — to the Christian. I'm heading for something here. This enables us to live by faith. It is one of the "better" things about a *better covenant* — the new covenant. Now we are not just operating on our own faith, but we have available to us the very faith of Jesus Christ—the kind that can save us.

John 15:5 "He that abides in Me..."

Abides means lives, or continues. Now think about what I just said a little bit earlier. We are in union with Christ. We are in Christ. We have become a part of Him. So, if we live in Him and we continue in Him — and, as He says in John 15:

John 15:5 "He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit."

Does it seem right that, if Christ is really living in us, we will produce fruit? Remember that I told you earlier that sanctification is something that can be SEEN. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure out whether a person has been sanctified or not — whether they are becoming holy. And the reason you don't have to be a rocket scientist is that you can SEE *the fruit* being produced.

A tree doesn't hide its peaches, or apples, or bananas, or anything else. They are clearly visible to people who are looking for them. Why do you think Christ used that metaphor? He used it because we ought to be able to SEE the effects of Him living in us. We ought to be able to SEE the effects of God's Holy Spirit in us. We ought to be able to SEE the effects of us using the Word of God and living by faith.

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light [That is, in the truth. God's Word is truth.], as He is in the light [Remember He lives in us. We live in Him. We are in union with Him.], we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Here He's telling us how we become clean. We've added another factor here. We become clean as we *apply*. The Word gets in us. It begins to clarify, to purify, our thinking. But it still does not become a real cleansing until it begins to be *used*. Then, what does it begin to clean? It

cleans up the habits. It cleans up the thinking processes. The thinking processes change according to our *action*. If we keep doing the same things all the time, nothing changes. We are resisting. "Walking" here denotes living. IF we live as He lived, THEN we become cleansed. That's what holiness is. If we are doing that, then we *produce fruit*. It's impossible not to!

I John 3:3 And every man that has this hope in Him...

The hope being, to be like Christ. The hope to be able to see Him as He is. The hope to be in the Kingdom of God. Now, what does that do? What does that do, having that hope? It motivates the person so that he...

I John 3:3 ...purifies himself, even as He is pure.

That is, to live life as He lived it. Are you beginning to see how these things are tying together? This whole issue of sanctification revolves around the receiving of God's Holy Spirit and then the study and belief and putting into practice of God's Word. If we do those things, Christ is in us; and you can't help but to produce fruit — even as He produced fruit.

Just as surely as life is generated and growth begins when a sperm hits an egg, so IF a person receives God's Holy Spirit and God's Spirit joins with our spirit and we are converted, THEN sanctification — spiritual growth towards perfection — begins. It can't be stopped, unless we choose to stop it. Remember where Paul said to "quench not the Spirit." We have the power to do that. But if we will just yield to it, the fruit will be produced. Again, I am not saying how much. I am not saying what quality it will be. But growth will begin to take place. It can't be stopped! The process will begin.

I John 2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that every one that does righteousness is born [or, begotten] of Him.

I might add, what is it that is bringing forth that righteousness? Well, it's the begetting. It's the fact that Christ is in the person. It's the fact that the person is yielding to Christ.

I John 3:9 Whosoever is born [or, begotten] of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him. And he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Perhaps a little clarification is needed here. The words "cannot sin" — sometimes in the past you might have heard this described as applying to us when we are born into the Family of God and we are very God. I do not think that is correct, and the reason is because the whole context involves the here and now — right now. He is talking about a situation in which we have opportunities to sin, or not sin.

When it says, "cannot sin" — it does not mean that it is impossible. Rather, it is an act that we will not permit ourselves to do. Have you ever said to a child, "*You can't do that*"? Yes, they

could do it. But we think that it is something that is *totally unadvisable*. "You can't do that!" That's what this means here. In the context, it means that a person who is begotten of God is *unable to sin habitually*.

Now, why? Because of the divine nature being within him! It doesn't mean that he won't slip. It doesn't mean that he will not even sin willingly and willfully from time to time — knowing full well what he is getting into. That is, doing what they are doing with knowledge; there is still weakness there. But the person will repent, and they will fight the thing tooth and toenail. And they will not live in sin! God will not abide in sin. IF His Spirit is within us and we choose to abide in sin — continue in it, THEN that Spirit will be withdrawn.

I John 5:3-4 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

Remember that I said the key element in all of this faith. IF we believe God's Word, IF we trust God's Word, THEN we will put it into practice. IF we put it into practice, we are choosing to be obedient to Him; and we will begin to be purified. And IF we are purified, we will overcome. It can't be stopped. So fruit will begin to be developed.

Everyone knows that, when a woman is pregnant, changes begin; and her body begins to give evidence of the pregnancy. Spiritually, sanctification is *the only certain evidence* that one has the Spirit of God and is begotten by Him — because you can SEE it. The reason it can be seen is because sanctification produces the fruit. Just as surely as (after a while) you can see that a woman is pregnant, you can see *the fruit* of the "spiritual pregnancy" that has occurred in us.

Well, I think that is a good place to stop. I am thinking of suspending this series until the Days of Unleavened Bread are over; and then we will pick it up again, and go on. I hate to break the continuity, but God says to give 'meat in due season;' and so we want to give subjects that are topical for Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. *So that* we will do, and then we'll get back to THE COVENANTS once again.