

We Will All Be Different in Heaven II Peter 1:1-11 and I Corinthians 3:10-17

Tonight is because of our discussion about the importance of God's Word. I am not talking about Bible study; I am not talking about church, or sermons, or going to Bible studies. I think the importance of the study of the Word of God has been robbed, taken from the Christians. These particular pieces of scriptures you might have even heard them before. But what I am going to attempt to do tonight is show it to you in context of the fact that the early church taught that when you go to be with the Lord, who you are and what you are - that is, your new creation and in your transformed state, whatever that is - is what you are going to be throughout eternity. We are all going to be the same, we are going to be spiritual, we are going to have spiritual bodies, and we are all going to be the same, but we are going to be different. And you do not hear that message today.

And as we were talking earlier, I feel bad for the Christian that is putting in all their time and money to build buildings. You know buildings are important, obviously, because you have to meet somewhere. But when your whole life, you are involved in a building project, or you have some program or physical thing that you are involved in, and you go to be with the Lord and you think that when this life is over I'm going to get a big reward because of what I have done for this. I will show you tonight from God's Word the reward is who you are. That will be your reward.

Everything that the Spirit of God has done in you and through you, that is going to be the reward. There is going to be no physical crown with jewels on it and we are sitting there, I am looking at yours and you are looking at mine and we are comparing value of jewelry and all the jewels in the crown and karats of gold.

That is why Paul said in his messages to his churches, "You are my crown and my joy." It is people. Whatever the Lord does in you and through you, that is your reward. And all the people that have been touched by you is your reward. You are going to see them in heaven, you are going to see the transformation, the change and the ministry that took place through you to them. You are going to see it throughout eternity, and you are going to see the transformed person that you are. But there is going to be a difference in heaven, and you do not hear that.

Coming to Bible study is not duty. Going to church is not duty. Nobody is going to get extra credit, brownie points, or extra rewards for attendance. And that is why when you invite people or encourage people, "Hey you need to go to Bible study, you need to get into the Word." You know, it is like, "Well, if you go you need it, if I do not go, I do not need it, and it does not make any difference. It might make a little bit of difference here. You might be a little better off spiritually, or in the knowledge of the truth than I; but if I do not go, it is no big deal." Oh, yeah it is.

The writers of the New Testament in the early church taught it but you do not hear it taught today. II Peter Chapter 1. According to verses 12 and 13 of chapter 1, this is Peter's swan song. Peter says in verse 13 of II Peter 1 he is about ready to go, he is about ready to leave this tent. Pack it up. So what we have in verses 1 through 11 - this is Peter, you know who Peter

is. He is putting everything in eleven verses. That is the most important things that he could leave behind for Christians. Can you imagine that?

I Peter was written about the threats from outside the church to the Christian. II Peter, Peter's second letter was written to the church about the threats from inside: false teachers, false teachings. Even to the point where you can be going to church, going to Bible studies - that means here too, going to this church, anywhere - you can be in the scriptures but be misled. And just because you are in the scriptures, there is no benefit in that, it has to be the truth, and it has to be the ministry of God's Spirit. And Peter is writing and to say, "Folks, if verses 1 through 11 is not happening to you, you are getting ripped off." That is II Peter in a nutshell. It comes from the Greek word *rip-eo off-eo*. [laughter]

II Peter 1:1, **Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the ones who have received a like precious faith in the righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ.** Is not that interesting? It is in *the righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ*, same person. He is our God and He is our Savior. Your argument is with the early church folks if you do not think He is God. That is right off the bat, and he is speaking to those who are of like precious faith. A lot of people say they have faith but is not the same faith. Think about it.

Verse 2, **Grace to you and peace, may it be multiplied in the full knowledge.** Notice the translation, not just **γινώσκω** ginōskō, **ἐπίγινώσκω** (epignōskō). Peter says, "Here is your problem, that grace and peace be multiplied to you when you get the whole picture." Not just knowledge but the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

As His divine power has given to us, *has given to us*, all things pertaining to life and godliness. Not *will give, has given*. We have been given all things by His divine power with things pertaining to life and godliness.

Through the full knowledge - again notice the translation, not just *knowledge, full knowledge* - **of the One who has called us through glory and virtue.** I do not know how many times I have heard people preach on this and it just drives me right up a wall. The calling is through God's glory and virtue. I do not know how many times, and we will see it in a moment, where people said, "God has saved you but you have to bring your glory and your virtue to God." We do not have any folks. The glory and the virtue. The word *virtue, ἀρετή* (arete) in Greek has to do with *the character, the inward virtues*. When God called us to Himself, we were called to His glory and to His virtues. Guess whose virtues we are being transformed by and into? His, not mine.

Through which (or through whom) it has been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises in order that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature. The word *partakers* is the word **κοινωνία** (koinonia), the word for *fellowship*.

Folks, point number one - there are three points here. Peter's gospel, what does it mean to be a Christian? It means you are partaking of the divine nature. God's Spirit in you is the very divine nature of God Himself, and all of His glory, and all of His virtues we are partaking of that.

Having left the corruption that is in the world in lust. So the participle there: *having left*, we are partakers of the divine nature, we left the corruption. When Jesus came into my heart the divine nature of God came in and I am partaking of the divine nature of God in all of His glory and all of His virtues.

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Question: What about *escape*? [referring to an alternate translation of "having left"]

Answer: That is fine. Because it literally means *to flee from, to run from*. Okay?

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Verse 5, **For this very reason then having supplied all diligence...** That is what we do. *Diligence* means *priority*, by the way. And I was going to get into some other texts tonight in our Genesis study. The word *diligence* is translated *hasten*. Hastening the day of God. And some people believe that we have to hurry up and do God's work so we can make His day come faster, hasten the day of the Lord. It literally means *priority, top priority*.

II Timothy 2:15 Paul says to Timothy, **Study to show your self-approved unto God.** Have you ever heard that one? The word *study* is the word *diligence*. It does not mean *study*, it means *top priority in your life*. Supply all diligence rightly dividing the word of truth. I do not get invited to ministerial meetings anymore, but I always spoke on II Timothy 2:15. **Do not be a workman that is ashamed**, your top priority is to rightly divide the word truth. They look at me like, "Huh?" That is right. What tools do you have? How much fellowship do we have together as ministers to talk over the problem texts that we are all wrestling with to find out what the truth is? Because that is what you are responsible for. Rightly dividing the word of truth and that is your top priority. They do not ask me back.

Having supplied all diligence add... Do you have the word *add* there in your text? It is the word *chorus*. A person who, for the chorus you supplied your own way, because it was all voluntary. You paid your own expenses: choir robes, whatever the case may be, it was a voluntary effort. **Supply (or add) in your faith.** Now this is interesting. Here, we are getting into other sermon things too. The Greek text shows that each one of these virtues is a process. Let me read it to you literally, **In the process of your faith let it supply virtue. In the process of virtue let it supply knowledge.** Each one of these things is a level of maturity that is produced from the other.

Going back to the beginning. **In your faith**, in the growth of your faith. You have now received the divine nature and now you are of the faith, this persuasion, this activity, this relationship with God. In this relationship, **In this faith let it supply virtue.** Whose virtue? His. **And in the process of virtue let it supply knowledge.** Folks, we do not know Him just because we are saved. We fellowship with Him, we get to know His virtues, His very character; this produces knowing Him, this produces knowledge.

And in the process of knowledge let it supply self control to you. Interesting the term *self control* means *to grip from without*. *Self control* is not you controlling yourself: what you eat, what you do. A person's life comes under control after they have fellowshiped with Him, after they partake of His virtues, after they come to know Him. It is the very maturity in Christ, His grip on you that controls you.

And in the process of growth in self control let it supply endurance. The word *endurance* is **ὑπομένω** (hupomeno), *remain under*. Do you ever try to have patience or endurance and it is like, no, you have to come under control first. You see, the reason we cannot remain under our circumstances and trust the Lord is because we are out of control. How do you come under control? You have to fellowship with Him, His virtue has to influence your life. You have to come to know the Lord, personally. Not just saved, I am talking about get to know Him personally. And when you get to know Him personally that is the control over your life, that influence is the control over your life. And when He has control over your life you are able to remain under your circumstances. You do not have to keep running around, keep getting delivered all the time. You can trust Him. You know Him now.

And in the process of growth in endurance let it produce godliness. The word *godly* means *to have an attitude of reverence toward God*. Godliness does not mean you become a real good holy person; it means to have an attitude of reverence.

Now check this out, why do we become bitter against God? It is because we cannot remain under our circumstances because it is too hard. And after all, God left us out in the cold and He is not helping us, and God why are you putting me through all this? Do you know what produces a healthy respect for Him is when we come to know Him, we come under His control. We can remain under it because we can trust Him with our lives and that causes us to praise Him. You see, the problem is not with Him it is we do not know Him. I mean we know Him, we have the divine nature, but we are participating with His divine nature. We are getting to know Him. The more we get to know Him, the more our life is under control.

And in the process of godliness, brotherly love. Is not it interesting the end result is not only brotherly love, but the next step is **ἀγάπη** (agape) love? Let us love one another. Let me tell you something, not until you get over that hump and that hurdle of how you reverence God are you going to be able to fellowship with the brothers and sisters in Christ and give them the reverence and be sensitive to their needs. Until you have reached that point where your relationship with the Lord - you are under control, you remain under, you trust the Lord, you know Him. If you have a reverence for God, then you can have a reverence for your brothers and sisters. You can start paying attention to the members of the family and their needs because not all of the attention is on you anymore.

And in the process of brotherly love, ἀγάπη (agape). Highest level of maturity in this process. These are processes of growth; one produces the other. Okay? Are you following this? This is very important.

- 1) We are partakers of the divine nature, that is right from Peter.

2) While participating with the divine nature we are growing.

Because this book right here is going to end up in Chapter 3 by saying, **Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** This is what he is talking about, you understand? We are not talking about Bible study.

Verse 8, give it you literally, **For these things existing and abounding in you shall establish you as not being barren nor unfruitful into the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** See, *fruitful* and *being without barrenness* has to do with a complete understanding of who Jesus is and a complete awareness of our fellowship with Him.

Now verse 9, **For to whom these things are not present...** Hey, we are getting to the kicker here, we are getting to number three. We have not even hit important thing yet. **For to whom these things are not present...** What? they are not Christians? Oh no, no. We are talking about two different kinds of Christians now. The one in whom these things exist, and they are abounding, they are progressing, they are in the growth processes. They are fruitful. They are productive. **But to whom these things are not present is blind being myopic.** Shortsighted. The reason it is called *blind* is because you get a picture of some guy squinting. If you are nearsighted, do you ever have your glasses off, you have to squint to see. It looks like your eyes are closed. But in reality, you can only see up here {gestures to right in front of his face}. There are Christians that all they can see is right here. They have no depth, no perception.

So the one in whom these things are not present is blind being myopic, having forgotten that he was cleansed (or forgiven) from his old sins. We forget. Jesus saved me, put His Spirit in me, but I am too busy. Something does not fit there, does it?

Wherefore rather brethren be diligent... Now you know what that word means now do you not? Top priority. **...to make your calling and election established.** How many of you have heard messages that the word *sure* in the King James: **make your calling and election sure.** So make sure that you are saved. That is not what it means. *Sure* is an old English word, *to make something firm, to make it sure.* It is the word **βεβαιος** (bebaios), it means *to establish something.* The top priority of your life is to make your calling and election established. You are not established yet, you are saved but you are not established in the things of Christ.

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Question: So, the word *sure* is incorrect?

Answer: Well, it is correct if you understand the old English usage of it. It does not mean the modern usage. If somebody twists that around and says, "See, you have to make sure you are saved. That is not what it means. It means *established.*"

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So, **Be diligent to make your calling and election established for the one who is doing (showing continuous involvement) the one doing these things shall never at any time stumble.**

Triple negative. There it is. It means two negatives and an adverb that says, **Never, no not ever, stumble.** Forever.

Now, here is the third kicker folks, **For so...** Anybody have *so* in their text? Just the word *so*? The word *so* is an adverb that means *in this way, in this manner*. Here is why it is important, here is point number three.

3) **For so richly shall be supplied to you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** The word *so* means *this way*, this is the way you are going to enter. The one who is doing these things, involved in these growth processes, this wealth, this rich; this is how you are going to enter into heaven.

Do you see Peter's point? He is not saying, "Hey brothers, sisters, I am about ready to leave and kind of hang in there and go to Bible study and I hope you are faithful and tithe." No. He is saying, "Folks, the one who is involved in these growth processes, the one who is establishing and firming up his walk with the Lord, and is progressing in these various growth processes, this way is going to be your entrance into the kingdom of heaven." This is it. I cannot even express it anymore in English of what verse 11 says in Greek. He is saying folks, that is how important this is.

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Question: Why do they put *so*?

Answer: Because that is what it means, *so*. It is the same thing with John 3:16, **For God so loved the world.** It means God loved the world in this way: that He gave His only begotten son. It does not mean, "God sooo loved the world." I have heard people say that trying to emphasize how sooo much He loves us.

Comment: One of the things that people fail to recognize about the English language is it is by far one of the least expressive. Because being bilingual and biliterate myself in Spanish, you know sometimes I will fall into Spanish to make emphasis. I think that is one of the major issues with a lot of people in difficulty in understanding the Bible is they do not understand that concept of what is the Greek, the basic Latin structure.

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Turn with me please to I Corinthians 3:10. Boy this is a dilly, Christians have wrestled with this. Here's Paul's version. And this brother is not ready to leave yet so he gives a little more detail. 3:10, in all Bibles it is I Corinthians 3:10. Listen to this. Remember Paul's writing to carnal Christians, here is what he says. I will give it to you literally: **According to the grace of God which has been given to me as a wise master builder, which is the word *architect*... as a wise architect I have laid a foundation, but another has built upon it. Let each one look, let each one see how he is building upon it.**

We are talking about two phases here. Laying a foundation - we are talking about building a house. Laying a foundation and what you build on that foundation. Keep that picture in mind because we are talking about - he is using construction terms, but we are talking about a spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul says, "I laid the foundation, I preached Christ, you got saved. But somebody else came in and built upon this, but you look, you take heed how the building is taking shape upon the foundation."

Watch this. **For no other foundation is able to be laid, alongside of that which has been laid.** That is right in the original language. You cannot lay a different foundation. Jesus Christ is the only foundation that you can build on. So, first of all, let us get it straight, if you are going to build salvation on any other foundation you are gone. Do not even talk about what material the building is made of because if you are on the wrong foundation, it does not make any difference, okay? There is no foundation, **There is no other foundation that is able to be laid alongside of that which has been laid which is Jesus the Christ.** Some of your texts, the King James will have *Jesus the Christ* because the word *the* is in the Textus Receptus. Others will just have *Jesus Christ*.

Verse 12, **But if any should build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, each one's work shall become manifest for the day shall reveal it,** (or make it clear) **because it shall be revealed in fire.** Now we are passing through fire, folks. Not the fire of hell, this is something completely different.

I always picture, I do not know why, I used to work in a car wash too by the way, but I always picture this car wash. I know I am not going to be judged for heaven or hell, I am already in but, here is the picture, this will tell you. What is it going to be like when we enter in to be with Christ? Here is the Lord standing there and He is saying, "Enter in my good and faithful servant." Okay, now what? what is the step here? It is kind of like a car wash. They hook your car up and it passes through, and it gets washed and soaped and everything, and comes out the other end, right? Well, this picture is that every believer is going to pass through the fire and whatever has not been done by Jesus Christ will burn. Everything. And whatever comes out on the other side, that is you. All of us.

The day is going to reveal it, he says in verse 13, **because it shall be revealed in fire for each one's work.** It shall be tested, excuse me, let me go back. **For the fire shall test each one's work as to what kind it is. Now if anyone's work is abiding which he has built upon he shall receive a reward.** That is it! If the work stays, if whatever is built there stays after passing through the fire, that is your reward, you receive a reward. **If anyone's work shall be destroyed** (or burned), notice this, this is a Christian, **he shall suffer loss but himself shall be saved even so as through fire.** I want you to notice that. We are going to pass through the fire; this has nothing to do with your salvation. You have the foundation but whatever is anything other than gold, silver, and precious stones, it is going to burn. Christians will suffer loss even though they themselves will be saved.

I always get this picture, and here is another picture, when we have these terrible fires, Malibu fire raging on. You go back to the visit the neighborhood, here is a foundation and a chimney. I say, "I Corinthians 3." That is going to be some Christians. Now, that does not

mean they are going to be sitting around going, "Oh gee, I made it to heaven only with a chimney and a foundation," and sit around pouting. But that is it! Do you understand? That is it! What is going to be the development? What is going to be the relationship? Nothing there! They had the foundation of Jesus Christ. They had the divine nature living in them. But they did not realize the importance of the two facets of God's work. Number one to get saved, obviously that is the most important thing. If you get there with a foundation and a chimney good for you. Nobody is going walk by and say, "Oh, all you have is a chimney. I have a railing, what do you think of that?" But Christians are going to suffer loss.

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Question: Define work. What kind of work are you talking about?

Answer: We are talking about gold, silver, and precious stones. We are talking about the development that takes place upon the foundation. Either we are going to approach it from our standpoint and say, "Now that I am saved, I am going to do a work for God," or, "I am going to do this." By the way, the way the scripture presents it is whether I am doing a work for God or if I go out and play water polo there is no difference. It is still the flesh; it is still personal effort.

Question: So that is what you are talking about, flesh work? We bring it on ourselves without even discussing and trying to find out if that is what He wants us to do.

Answer: Yes.

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So if anyone's work is destroyed, he shall suffer loss but he himself shall be saved even so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God is dwelling in you? Now if anyone should corrupt the temple of God, God shall corrupt that person for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. What do you think the point is? Take heed how you are building. Take what is being built upon your foundation.

We take and line up with up Peter says, he gives a little more of an inner, in depth view of saying - remember I told you II Peter was written because of the threat within the church, false teachers. In fact, in II Peter Chapter 2 - let us turn to that, I will give you one verse. I wish I could just go through this whole thing with you, and we did not have to go to work. II Peter Chapter 2.

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Question: What is defiled (at verse 17)?

Answer: *Corruption* is the same word used for the corrupting of fruit off the tree when it falls down. So it has to do with works and words that corrupt. So that would be the world. That is what Peter says in II Peter Chapter 1.

Question: Would it be defiling yourself physically or all of it?

Answer: Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. He will say that later in I Corinthians Chapter 6 which is what...we are not talking about abuses like food, we are talking about sin. And that is what the Corinthian church was doing. They were getting all caught up in the gifts of

the Spirit, what they were calling the gifts of the Spirit, but they were not dealing with the sin problem in their church. Sin corrupts, it can even kill.

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Okay verse 3, these are the false teachers who have come into the church. I am going to give you one verse. Peter is describing, **And in covetousness they work as emporium operators using πλαστός (plastos) plastic words.** Whoa, whoa, whoa. I think the King James says, "They make merchandise of you." It is the word *emporium* (ἐμπορεύομαι, emporeuomai). They are emporium operators. They got all the programs going. *Plastic words* are words that are shaped and formed to get people involved with the program. He says, "Folks, you are going to church and what you are really involved in is religious and Christian emporium. And the workers of the emporium are using plastic words."

But you go back to Chapter 1 verses 1 to 11, Peter is saying, "But folks, you do not know, we are partakers of the divine nature." There is a growth process that is taking place so make it top priority to establish your relationship participating with the divine nature because so will be your entrance into heaven. "Oh, but I went to church, and I did the program." Zero. You are taking with you what goes on inside, period. Only your personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the transformation that is taking place. And if it is not that it is going to burn. Gone. The only thing left is gold, silver, and precious stones upon the foundation. And like I say, that is enough but as you can see from I Corinthians Chapter 3 there is going to be a difference in heaven.

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Question: Now would that transformation, would that be what we were reading in II Peter [chapter 1 verses] 5 through 8?

Answer: Yes.

Question: So, the transformation you are talking about when you were talking over here on the foundation in I Corinthians 3:13, **his work will be shown for what it is because the day will bring it to life** - now that work is what is in II Peter? That is the work?

Answer: Yes, that is right. Now I would not match it up and say Paul is talking about II Peter here. But yes, in principle that is what he is talking about. And you can see why Paul would say that now in I Corinthian Chapter 3 when they are talking about all the outward manifestations, the gifts, the this, the healings. Even if we were talking about physical healing, it is going to be left behind. I mean it is nice if God wants you healed, but the physical thing that God healed is left behind, right?

Question: But so as to eliminate any confusion on the word *work* the reference point has to be back in II Peter.

Answer: That is right.

Question: But the *work* that you are alluding to is the big buildings and the uh...

Answer: Now, I am not saying it is wrong to build buildings. But I am saying to put all of our marbles into buildings and saying, "I did a work for God." I did not do anything.

Question: You are talking about works that are based on our salvation, right?

Answer: Of participating with the divine nature, whatever that is.

Question: Okay, so, if I say I received, and I am saved, and I say, "Okay, I am going to be deacon." I work and I become a deacon, then I become a bishop, and I go out and do all kinds of things. But that is not based on the foundation. That stuff is just going to burn away.

Answer: That is right, burned. Unless it is the Lord Himself inspiring it.

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Whatever is of the flesh will be burn away. And I go back to John Chapter 3 - I will let you go here because it is getting late - but the John Chapter 3, you remember when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus. We have a tendency to miss really what Jesus was saying to Nicodemus because the importance of being born again. Remember when Jesus said, **It is necessary for you to be born from above?** That is what the word *again* means, it means you must have a heavenly or spiritual birth. So Nicodemus says, **You do not mean entering into a second time in my mother's womb, do you?** He expects a negative answer. Now he is not that dumb to say, "I have to go find my mother again." He says, "Let us eliminate the ridiculous, right?" and Jesus said, "Yes." Then He told Nicodemus, **That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** He is talking to the master head teacher in Israel, that is what He called him. He is telling him, "Flesh can only produce flesh." Even in the name of Jesus, it can only produce flesh. I produce kids. I produce flesh. That is the best I can do. Everything that I do is flesh, everything. But only God's Spirit can produce the spiritual things of God.

Now is that not what Paul said in I Corinthians Chapter 2? The Spirit of God Himself reveals the deep things of God because our hearts and our minds cannot know it unless God's Spirit reveals it to us. Only God's Spirit produces the things of God. Man does not produce the things of God. Only God's Spirit does. Man cannot save himself. Only God's Spirit can save me, you see? I cannot do God's work, only God's Spirit does God's work.

Now this is a beautiful part about it too, it is kind of a bummer but at the same time stop and think about it. When God the Father looked down, when Jesus was here on the earth, God the Father said from heaven, **Behold My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.** Paul says in Ephesians Chapter 1, **We are accepted in the beloved One.** At no time does God ever say that He is pleased with me, never. He is pleased with His Son in me.

It is kind of like if your kids whom you love dearly and you trust dearly and you are fond of, they bring a stranger home.

"Hey Mom and Dad, meet a friend.

"Sure. Welcome. Come on in."

You do not let him in just because he is standing at the door, it is because he is with your son. I am going to be accepted, not because of anything that I do, but because Jesus is in me, and I am in Jesus. That is what Ephesians is all about, our position in Christ never changes. If the question were ever to be asked - which it will not - but if the question were ever to be asked you

know the old joke, St. Peter at the gate, "And what makes you think you should get into heaven? The only answer is, "Christ is in me and I am in Christ," that is it. Because the Father is pleased with His Son and His Son is in me, so where He goes, I go. Is that not neat?! I do not want to ask the question, "Why?" because that will get into another - we could say why...

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Question: I went to something at church, and it was a lady that supposedly had the healing gifts, and she gave a lecture and she said that we are here to please God and walk as Jesus does. So, you are saying that number one, we cannot really please God in anything that we do? So was the false statement on her part? If it is not what Jesus does, then that is just works, right?

Answer: Let me say two things.

1) Listen to this, when I worked in the bookstore, we had the bracelets and the whole deal: WWJD, What Would Jesus Do? Well, I saw the plaque in the store. And you know, those bracelets were witnessing bracelets and they went like crazy and the T-shirts and the whole thing. I saw the plaque from where that came from. Do you know what the plaque said? If Jesus were here, what would Jesus do? I said, "Yeah, that is what was wrong with it." I realized it is not thinking, "Now if Jesus were here, what would He do? So that is what I should do." That is not Christianity. That is not following Jesus. It is not copying Him or doing the same thing He would have done if He were here. See, that is the whole point, He is here.

It is not, "If He was here, what would Jesus do?" He is here. And it is not me thinking, "What would Jesus do?" That shows... and I am not saying - if you have a bracelet and it encourages you, God bless you. But what I am saying is it shows a very impersonal relationship with Jesus Christ that I have to project myself and say, "Now if He were here what would He do, okay, well then that is what I am going to do." No, He is here now. It is what He wants to do through you now. What are you going to do? Copy the works of Jesus? Be like Jesus. You will never find anywhere in the Bible where it says that God saved us, and He expects us to be like Jesus. In the first second we fell flat on our face. I cannot even begin to keep up with it.

And I do not like the phrase "Act like a Christian," because it never says, *act like a Christian*, it says, *be one*. I do not mean religiously. I mean walk with the Lord. Let His virtues be yours. Let His virtues change and transform you. Let His virtue, His character, give you character. You know whoever you hang around, it is going to rub off on you. To put in modern language, if you around the Lord and His word, He is going to rub off on you permanently.

2) And this other thing that I was going to mention, the second thing that I mentioned at the beginning, this attitude and you can listen to it in sermons. They will not come right out and say it but there is one presentation that you just gave that says it. There are other presentations that give the premise, "Jesus has ascended up to the right hand of the Father, and we are doing His work for Him, and we are running His church until He

comes back." That is the basic presentation. That is the underlying statement of we have to do God's work for Him.

I mean you never heard that in the early church because you start with Acts Chapter 2 the resurrected Jesus Christ was there. You did not have to work up any sweat. You did not have to practice any principles. You did not have to say, "Well, Jesus just got crucified and He has ascended up to heaven, so what are we going to do for our first sermon?" Not going to happen that way. The apostles were walking down the street and when their shadow passed over people, they got healed. It is just the power and presence of Jesus.

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Now I will summarize it with one scripture verse that Paul wrote to Timothy. And he told them that in the last days there would be those that would **have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof**. And I do not care how jumping and how energetic and how powerful a church is, and I am talking about ours, anybody's. We have forms, we have principles, we have practices. We do not deny the power of God, but the word *deny* means *reject*. It does not mean...

{side one of tape finished, some of the message lost in the process of flipping to side two}

... no, it is not. God the Father is only pleased with His Son and His Son has come to live within our hearts, to change me - and the changed me is what is going to be acceptable to Him - and to work through me to change others. And we are all going to be in heaven, we are looking around and somebody is going to say, "Oh! I was there that night and God really did a work in my heart." We are going to be talking what Jesus did. We are going to be praising Him throughout eternity. There will be no records of any personal work, or programs, or anything. The only record that is going to be in heaven is the finished work of Jesus Christ, period.

What does Paul say in Ephesians Chapter 2? **We are His workmanship**, listen, the literal translation is, **We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus upon the basis of good works**. Not for good works, **upon the basis of good works that He has ordained that we should walk in them**. Who did the works? Jesus did. The finished work of Jesus Christ. We are walking in them; we are not creating them. Do you understand what I am saying?

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Question: So as walking in them we need to partake of them as well?

Answer: Yes, partaking of Him.

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And He has done it all for us. The old work ethic is that we have to do something for God. We have to have something to show for ourselves when we get there. Like He is standing

up there going, "Now where were you when the building committee was meeting? You went bowling, did you not?" You know what I am saying? Zero. His work is His work, and He does His work. It is just that we are vessels, and we get to get in on it, you know?

That is why Satan works so hard to keep Christians away from the Word of God because we are being changed and transformed by God's Word. That is His chosen way, by His Spirit. And we have relegated, I am not saying you, but we as Christians, we have relegated it to Bible study and sermons and church. Sometimes we go and sometimes we do not. I mean we benefit from going but if we do not go, "Meh." Oh yeah?

It is God's chosen way for God's Spirit to transform and change our hearts and our minds. **Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.** And if you connect that with the definition, the persuasion and ministry of God's Spirit comes when you hear God's Word. It is alive. The word of God is alive. And we are not talking about giving you Bible notes and Bible studies, we are talking about the ministry of God's Word. It is alive!

If it were not so, I would not even do this. If you were to tell me, "Nice information you give but there is no ministry there. I am not being changed and transformed. I am not realizing or understanding anything." I would just say, "Look, we could all be better off doing something else," because it is just a futile religious exercise as Christians. It is just so that if people ask you, "Well do you go to church?"

"Yep."

"Do you go to Bible study on Wednesday nights?"

"Yep."

"Okay, well I guess you are in fellowship."

There is a lot of Bible study going on but there is very little ministry of the Word of God. I am not talking about human, I am talking about transformation power, period. Where it just changes your thinking, your outlook, your understanding to where you function with Christ.

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Question: You were talking earlier about how we cannot please God. And I cannot remember the context it was in so forgive me but the scripture that talks about, "find out what pleases God..."

Answer: I do not know of one that says *find out what pleases God*. I know Paul mentions a phrase about **Doing that which is well pleasing in His sight**. So what would that be? Jesus is the only one that is pleasing to the Father. If my best works are as filthy rags, my best works, what do you think about that? How about if I bring my filthy rags into the Church and work for God, is it not better? No. It does not change when you walk into church and say, "We can use those filthy rags. We will have a rag drive. Take it down to the recycle center or something."

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We were talking about thirty years ago and the simple evangelistic message that we were involved with and the whole thing. From that thirty-year point - thirty years ago to this point - I have seen the church in a very natural way just get way off. From thirty years ago, from my perspective, I mean thirty years ago we gathered together around the Word almost - I mean we met every single morning. High school and junior high kids every single morning before they went to school, we had a Bible study except for Sunday because it was church. This is Saturday too! They got up at 6 o'clock on Saturday mornings to come for prayer and the study of the Word. Six days a week we had Bible studies.

I was giving Bible studies out in the park where we had at the end there, there was upwards of nine hundred kids. And when we were out there in the park and it was raining, I said, "Well," I sent somebody out there just in case anybody showed up and we got rained out. We had studies three times a week. The messenger comes back and says, "Brother Bill! You better get out there because they are sitting in the rain waiting." I go out there and here they are with their Bibles. They got their hoods over their heads, just sitting, waiting, saying, "Oh no, we are going to study the Word of God." And whatever that experience was, if it did not line up with the God's Word, "Eh! Forget it. It is not from God."

And now we have just gotten way off. We are doing God's work for Him. We are so concentrating on all these outward manifestations and all these outward goody things. And it is like when do we, as the body of Christ, ever sit down and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ? What about Him? If He is the healer, I want to know the Healer, not just the healing. Or the blessings, I want to know the Blessor. I would be very embarrassed to get up to heaven and stand before the Lord and say, "Jesus, right? I want to tell you that day you blessed me, that was just great!" It is like, but I never knew Him. He saved me, He blessed me.

Just like we were studying in II Peter, His divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. We have it all! We just fellowship with it, let it rub off, let it transform, let it change. He has given it all to us and yet Satan has succeeded, you know? I hate to say this even sometimes Bible study is a distraction because it becomes a Bible study discussion, "What is your opinion?" And what does that have to do with ministry? What is that text saying that God wants me to know that He is going to use to transform my life? That is what I want to know. I do not want to sit around and listen to everybody's opinions. And by the way, these discussion groups they start off right away by saying, "If you know the original languages, you cannot use that here." Because it eliminates everybody else's opinion. Well, that is my soap box.

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Comment: Do we get tapes of this?

Answer: Well, let me see a two-sided tape goes for \$39.95. No. [laughter] You see, you slip right into that, you know. You say, "Oh! Well, God's Work is for sale this week for \$39.95, the Earl Schibe special!"

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Emporium operators, if that does not fit, I do not know what does? With *plastic words*. But they are doing it in covetousness - it is what they want, not what they want to give. It is what they want out of you is why they run the emporium the way they do.

Do not think that these texts do not have anything to do with Genesis. Because the whole point - we are going to show you next week in the next day of creation verses 6 to 8 is The Law of Judgement. That God by His Word formed waters on the outside of the earth to bring a flood. And Peter is going to talk about the same Word of God that created the waters for the flood, verses 6 to 8, is the same Word of God that is reserving this earth right now for judgement. And so he says to Christians, "What are you doing knowing that this world is being reserved for judgement by the Word of God?" He says, **But rather you ought to be growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** It is right there; it all connects together.

Let's close with prayer.