

FREEDOM

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“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”

Note to ALL Readers: This study was given at Living Waters Youth Camp in July 1995. It was received with such blessing and benefit that we wanted to preserve it for the further edification of others who love the Word of God.

Provisions & Principles

The title of this study is simply freedom. It will be illustrated for the most part from the Book of Joshua when Israel went into the land of Canaan. We shall see that God wants us to be free and that He has given US a certain land, even as we read in Ephesians, we are “blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ...” Such an inheritance does not just automatically come to us. Just as Israel had to walk in their land, likewise we have to actually put our feet of faith upon this heavenly ground and lay hold of our blessing. These lessons are designed to help us understand what it means to be free. The last segment will address the subject of financial freedom, and we shall find out what that term means to us in a very practical sense. If anyone has trouble with finances, and your money doesn't go far enough, God has some wonderful insights for us.

First we must realize that freedom is both promised and provided for us. God has seen to that.

We know from Scripture that the moment we believe, He has freed us from the guilt of our sins. We know that we are just as safe from the wrath of Hell as we will ever be, eternally secure in Christ. We are immediately filled with the knowledge that if we die we will go directly to heaven. But just because we have believed upon Christ, just because we are no longer guilty of sin and are bound for heaven, does not mean that we are actually free in every part of our lives. We are not experimentally free from the power of sin or from the power of the flesh, or the power of Satan. Such freedom and how to obtain it is what these lessons are about. There are a number of verses which show to us the freedom that God intends that we should have. John 8:30-35, “As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” But notice an incredible statement which they made in the next verse, “they answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man.” That is a most amazing statement because they were so bound and oppressed by the Romans they couldn't do anything. It was almost as bad as it was when they were in Egypt, not quite, but they were bound by that government. They were looking forward to freedom. As we find elsewhere, the disciples said to Jesus, “wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” They wanted to be free and out from under the domination of the Romans. But in their retaliation and in their defense, said, “How can you say ye shall be made free?” Notice that “Jesus answered them; Verily, verily, I say unto you; whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” Again I say, the moment we believe, we are freed from the guilt of our sins and need not worry about them after that. However, as we read here, he that commits sin is the servant of sin. The moment we

believe, we are not absolutely freed from the dominion and the power of sin. “And the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth forever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” The same way that we receive freedom from the guilt of our sins, we also receive freedom from the power of sin in our lives. It means that you and I can live above sin! Some people argue that. “Oh no, you have to sin every day.” I do not believe that. I know of a college professor who was telling his students in a philosophy class, “You have to sin every day. There is no other way. Did you sin today?” It is almost like a goal, a mark of attainment, to commit sin daily. God frees us from the guilt of our sins and we realize there is nothing between us and God. It is no longer guilt that keeps us from His presence. In addition to that, He wants to free us from the power of sin and, yes, we can have that victory over sin in our lives right now. Before we leave this verse, notice that Jesus said “And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” We do not learn the truth all in one day. Neither are we made free all in one day. The more of God’s truth that we learn the more that we are set free. And this is the process that God is leading us through. As teenagers and young adults and on into older adulthood we find exactly the same thing. The more that God reveals His truth to us, the more that we are free from the bondages that are around us. Notice another verse in Matt. 11, “Come unto me...” “Once again, exactly the same pattern. The only way to freedom is through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a matter of us finding out the practicality of coming to Christ, and that, again and again; not to be saved again and again, that was done once, but for the constant freedom that God wants us to have in our lives. So, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden ... “This applies to people who have never accepted Christ initially, but it also applies to those who have. Israel, as he said come unto me all ye that labour, were laboring not only under sin and all of its guilt, but also under the decrees of the law. Peter describes it as a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. And so, as Jesus said to them, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden. I will give you rest.” Or I will give you freedom. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart ... “Note again, “take my yoke upon you, and” what? “Learn of me.” This is what so much of our lives are about, learning Christ as a Person. Yes, I know Jesus came and died for me. Yes, I know that Jesus sets me free. But day by day we must learn Christ as the Person that He is. The more we learn of Him the greater the impact and the greater the way He wants us to be and I trust we find what that means before these lessons are completed.

Next He says, “Ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Then you are going to be free. Then you are not going to be in bondage. “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Isaiah 58:6 says it this way, “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the band of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” God wants to set us free. There are many of those bands of wickedness that will hold us even after we are born again. Christians can be held in tremendous bondage, and we will see a number of these as we continue. God’s idea is to loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens—no matter what those burdens might be, to let the oppressed go free—and it is us who are oftentimes under such oppression, even after we are born again. We are to break every yoke. Romans 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life ... hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” This is one of the major operations of the power of the Holy Spirit. Many of you are wanting to be filled with the Spirit and God has definite reasons for us being filled with the Spirit.

The primary one is to teach us truth, but right here is another one. "The law of the spirit of life hath made me free." That is the Holy Spirit who has made me free from the law of sin and death, "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The power of the Holy Ghost is what actually gives us that very dynamite to be free of the bondage of sin in our lives. He has such a tremendous part and place to play in our lives insofar as freedom is concerned. Galatians 4:26 - 5:1 is in regard to Christians being in bondage to the law. These Galatians were under such bondage, and Paul was trying to bring them out, because as long as a person is bound by the law, he can never grow. He can never come to maturity. Paul says here that if you are servants you are no better than children. To be a servant of the law is to be an infant, to be immature, in spiritual things.

But notice 4:26, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Here Paul uses the analogy of Hagar and Sarah. He says Abraham had two wives, and he had children by each of them. The children of the one were of a bondswoman, and the children of the other, Isaac, was of the freewoman. He goes on to point out how that we are the children of the free woman.

Therefore, we are to be free. This one is the mother of us all. "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise, we are not children of the bondswoman, but of the free." We are born free and are to stand fast in the same liberty or freedom wherewith Christ has made us free. "... Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." That is, the law. The exact context of this is in reference to the law, but the overall teaching and idea is that we were born free. God intends that we should enjoy that freedom in our lives.

From the very first chapters of Genesis to the end of Revelation there has always been an opponent, one who is trying to destroy God's masterpiece. There has been one who has tried to absolutely annihilate what God has tried to build, and that is Satan. This is the one that you and I must contend with today. We must remember that our battle is against Satan when we are considering that we want to be free. He is the enemy who would keep us in prison, and he is the one who blinds and binds. One of the greatest tools that he uses is darkness. If he can hold us in darkness, he can hold us in prison, and I am speaking here of Christians. As Christians, the more light that we have, the more freedom we have. The less light we have, the more darkness. We are children of the light, we know that, but once again we do not know all of the truth the moment we believe. We do not have all of the light, which He has to reveal to us. As He says there in Isaiah, "precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line: here a little, and there a little". That is the way we learn God's Word, and that is the way we come into the light. When we come into more truth, then we indeed have the freedom. Remember the story of Israel in Egypt. They were in bondage to the Egyptian taskmasters and to Pharaoh. When God sent Moses to Pharaoh, he said, "let my people go." In other words he did not want them to be in bondage to Egypt. Satan was of course responsible for that bondage.

The text there in Exodus states that all of the judgments which were poured out on Egypt "were directly against the gods of Egypt, and Satan himself is responsible for those gods." Thus it is Satan who had Israel bound there in Egypt, and I do not think anyone would argue with that. In addition, there were the magicians who were also Satanic, despite the fact that they performed some supernatural feats. They did some powerful things, and Satan is powerful. We must never underestimate him. Those magicians duplicated the signs and wonders that Moses and Aaron did. When Aaron threw down

the rod, it became a serpent. The magicians likewise threw down their rods and they also became serpents. What did God do? The rod of Aaron ate up those of the magicians. God was saying, "I have more power here and you better know it." Note also some of the other judgments. It is just amazing to me to see the foolishness of these magicians. One of the judgments was frogs which literally covered the land, and these magicians, just to show that they could do it, created even more frogs. Can you imagine that? Here they were overrun already, and just to show that they could do it they decided we'll just bring up another frog or two. God finally stopped their works and they could no longer duplicate what He had done. But it is important that we understand these magicians were of Satan and Satan was responsible for the bondage of Israel. II Corinthians 4:4 tells us that the "modern world" is not free of the dominion of Satan. Satan is here called "the god of this world." Jesus says, in John 12, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Satan is the god of this world. It is he who "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not ...:" Why? "Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them." If Satan can ever keep us in darkness about anything, he can hold us in bondage. This is why that we must indeed understand God's Word which will give us light and ultimately will give us freedom. It is very important that we understand the role that Satan has in this world and how it happened.

In the beginning, God created Adam and gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and all the rest of the world. When Satan came on the scene and tempted him, Adam fell and lost that jurisdiction. He lost the dominion to Satan. This is manifest in Matthew 4 where Satan tempted Jesus and offered him a compromise. He said, "all the kingdoms of the world will I give you if you fall down and worship me." Those were his kingdoms to give. He had gained that authority from Adam, thus he is called the god of this world. We know who the Overall and Real Authority is, and one day God is going to show that. But right now Satan is the god of this world. I have known people who became rather adamant about this and declared, "No, God is the one in control." However, though we know He is the overall authority and could annihilate Satan in a moment, we must realize that if God were in absolute control and were ordering all the events of the world, we would not see the chaos and devastation that is in this world today. We must put the blame where it belongs, and that is upon Satan. He has brought the world to this place. What we must know is that we do not need to be under the dominion of Satan. Through the Lord Jesus Christ, He has brought us out. When Jesus refused to compromise, to bow to Satan, He gave us also the power and the authority that we do not have to bow to him either. We can be free despite the fact that he is the god of this world. We do not have to dwell under that dominion for Jesus has indeed set us free. As Christians we know that we are born into this world, subject to the elements, temptations, weaknesses and frustrations of this world, and we have to be delivered in a very practical and real manner. A living way. What happens to us can be compared with what happened to Adam because we too can relinquish ground to Satan when we don't go God's way. This has happened in the lives of Christians. If we do not maintain our way before the Lord, if we do not allow God to deliver us and to bring us out into this freedom, we actually relinquish ground to Satan and he is able to control us in certain areas of our lives. These are the grounds and this is the land that we want to take from him. Jesus won the entire victory there at the cross. He did not succumb to the temptation there in Matthew 4. Why? Because of the victory of the Cross. Satan is a defeated foe.

The battle has already been fought and already won. We do not see all the results yet, and we won't until Jesus comes and takes that scoundrel, binds him, and puts him in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. After that He is going to cast him into the lake of fire and then we will realize the fullness of Jesus' work at Calvary. But for us, it is as good as done. This is what we must believe when Satan comes against us with all these temptations. Jesus won back the dominion which Adam lost by His work on Calvary. Again it will eventually be manifest on a very large scale, but it can be shown forth in my life right now. I do not have to abide under the dominion of the devil. I do not belong to him anymore. I belong to Jesus. And so we find that we can live in that freedom.

The next segment that I want to see is Satan's tools. One of the first and foremost that we have already noticed is darkness. Again, II Corinthians. 4:4, "... the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them." If Satan can hold men's eyes in darkness, then he can hold them in fear as well as many other bondages. The next tool that Satan has is the flesh. You and I must realize that every one of us have the flesh. He was not taken out root and branch the day we believed and were born again. There are many that teach such a doctrine, and it is absolutely contrary to scripture. We are possessed of two natures. There is the old man which is the flesh and there is the new man which is that new nature which God implanted in us when we received Jesus. It is the very nature of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. What we want to see in this portion is that "Satan's playground" or place of operation is our own flesh. If you yield to the flesh, I guarantee you Satan will establish dominion over you. There is no other way. But I have good news. We read here, Jesus' words to the Jews, "you are of your father, the devil." That means that Satan is the father of all flesh. "... and the lusts of your father you will do." That lust simply means the desires. Young people, here is one point I want to bring out very emphatically, because you need to understand, and I need to understand, the lusts of your father you will do. Do you realize that people in this world, and I am talking about every person, people are going to do what they want to do. Every preacher knows that, and I am sure that others will learn it. The reason this is so important is that if we are going to do what we want to do, we better make sure that our desires are changed toward the things of God. "I delight to do thy will oh my God." That can be true in our lives. That is the way God made us, to be controlled and motivated by desire. Right now, whenever people are in this state of the natural and the flesh, they are controlled by the desires of the flesh. God doesn't intend that. As long as we are controlled by those desires, we can be controlled by Satan. "He was a murderer from the beginning. He abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaks of his own for he is a liar and the father of it." Notice further that Romans 1 contains a complete catalogue, a horrible roster of things that men are guilty of. All of this is the product of the works of the flesh and the result of this satanic dominion. However, I John 3:9 records this good news, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Who in the world is he talking about? He is talking about you and I as a new creation in Christ Jesus. The fact of the matter is this: Satan cannot touch the new creation. Is that not good news? If you walk in the Spirit you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Sin shall not have dominion over you. Jesus came into this world and, as you know, Jesus did not come to see if He would sin, but to prove that He could not. And He passed the test. If Jesus overcame this world and He did not sin, and we have that same life in us, the same thing is true of me. That is why John can

write, "He that is born of God doth not sin"! I will guarantee you on the authority of God's Word that if you yield to this new creation life, you will never, ever, ever, commit sin. That is the freedom that God can give. It is when we yield to that old fleshly nature that we get into trouble. And believe me, we have a fleshly nature. If you do not know it as yet, God will see to it that you are introduced to some circumstances which will prove it decisively very shortly. We have that old nature, and it is this through which Satan will try to defeat us. To repeat, the flesh is one of the primary tools Satan uses to deprive us of coming into the very best blessing of God. Not only so, but we must remember that a Christian can commit any act of ungodliness that the flesh is capable of, if he yields to that nature. We are a new creation in Christ Jesus from the moment we believe; but, as to conduct, this body will yield just as quickly to the flesh as it will to the spirit. It is our choice. Are we going to submit these bodies to this new man, or are we going to submit to the flesh, Satan's territory?

Two more tools that Satan uses today are anger and bitterness, and they are, sadly enough, very prevalent in Christendom today. So many people in churches everywhere are in this bondage. Ephesians 4:25-32 lists a number of very unsavory traits and the point we want to make here is that the Apostle is writing to Christians, not sinners. He says "put away lying", and we must acknowledge that we as Christians are capable of such things. At one time as I pondered these verses, I thought, "Paul, what are you doing? What is such language as this "doing" in a book which is written to Christians who are taking their place in the heavenlies, wherein they have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ?

"The first three chapters of this book are filled with the marvelous, glorious blessings, and these words here in our text seem to be rather out of place for that kind of a Christian. When we understand that our battle is against Satan and Satan uses our flesh, we are not at a loss as to why these words are here. Paul wants us to be on guard against the operations of the flesh whereby this enemy would bring us into bondage. And so we read, "Wherefore put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: we are members one of another." We are one body, we are to love one another rather than bicker and find fault. And God gives us abundant opportunity in many of these ways to find out: is the old man really dead? Then he says, "Be ye angry and sin not ..." This has put some people into a real quandary over the years, but it is very important that we understand this verse. Some would teach that if you are ever angry for any reason you have just lost it and are controlled by the Devil. By this verse we realize that there is the possibility of being angry and yet not sinning. Paul goes on to say, "... let not the sun go down on your wrath ..." It is vitally important to understand what Paul is talking about. "Be angry and sin not" means that we cannot be controlled by anger, and so we read, "let not the sun go down on your wrath". Some say that this means, don't ever go to bed angry. We can certainly agree with that statement and should never go to bed angry because you will not have a good night's sleep anyway. Such causes of anger need to be resolved before you hit the bed, but Paul's message here goes quite beyond that. He is not saying that it is alright to get angry early in the morning and let it seethe all day, just so you resolve it before night fall. If you are infuriated in the late afternoon, then you do not have much time to get the victory or you will be in real trouble. First of all, Paul is saying that yes we can become angry, but do not be controlled or motivated by it, and as we shall see shortly there is good reason why. When he says, "let not the sun go down on your wrath" he

means the sunlight of God's Word. We must not try to justify anger, but rather judge it by the light of scripture. I have heard people say many, many, times "I have a right to be angry, and I am furious." Some years ago a young man was very tragically murdered. The minister who preached his funeral stated rather vehemently, "I am angry and I want you to be angry with me!" Anger is not the way to handle such a grievous circumstance. It is a human emotion, but it is by no means to be justified. We must get rid of it, and Paul tells us why. "... let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil." Phillips translates it, "don't give the devil that sort of foothold." If one is controlled by anger, he is living, fertile, ground to be controlled by the devil. This is why we cannot allow ourselves to be controlled and motivated for any length of time by anger. Satan will get a foothold in our lives and he is the one who will then gain control over them. Paul here instructs us further, "Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth . . ." Remember what Jesus said, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." That is why we need the pure hearts, the new creation heart, in order that these things of the flesh do not come out, that we be not controlled by Satan. Notice further, "... that it may minister grace unto the hearers." We are to use our words for edifying. Then he says, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit ...". And I have heard so many, many different explanations over the years of what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit wants to speak in tongues through you, or use you for some other demonstration and you won't let Him. Paul tells us in this portion of scripture what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit. We grieve Him when we do not follow the instructions of verses 25-32. Notice what he says in the very next breath, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." This is how you grieve the Spirit. You do not allow Him to put down these operations of the flesh. If we do not get hold of our anger, if we do not contain this very damaging emotion, it will turn to bitterness and will in turn become a stronghold of the devil. You will notice here once again that we read, "be angry and sin not." Yes, we do flare up from time to time. I don't know anyone that doesn't, but as long as it is just that flare and you are not controlled by anger, you bring it to the Lord and get victory over it, you can be angry and sin not. But do not push away the instructions of God's Word trying to justify anger. To do so is to give place to the enemy. We will see more of this shortly as we explore more in depth a parable taken from Matthew 18. Another tool which Satan uses is guilt, and such guilt can be real or imagined. It is important for us to understand imagined guilt because Satan does hold so many people enslaved by it. He will constantly remind us of past sins which we have already confessed to the Lord, if we allow him to do so. When he can hold such things "over our heads", such imagined guilt is just as destructive as if we were actually guilty of some misdeed. Real guilt is when we have done something wrong and have not asked for forgiveness. For example, David committed some horrible sins. Not only was he guilty of adultery, he became guilty of murder when he tried to cover up the ungodly deed which he had already committed. Based on some commentaries, it was just about a year from the time that David sinned with Bathsheba and murdered her husband until the time that Nathan the prophet came to him. Psalm 32, especially verses 3 and 4, are David's testimony of a man with a guilty conscience. It says this, "When I kept silence my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my

moisture is turned into the drought of summer.” That is the feeling of a guilty man. David did not have any victory, he was just completely wrung out and dried out at that particular time. That is real guilt. David did not get victory over it until he confessed his sin to the Lord, and he did exactly that in Psalm 51. But what about the person that has come to the Lord? What about the person that has asked forgiveness of the Lord, and indeed if there have been offenses against other people has asked forgiveness of them? Another thing that we need to emphasize here is that if we have offended people, we must ask their forgiveness as well as God’s forgiveness. I have heard people say down through the years that as long as I make it right with God, that is good enough. No it isn’t. If you sin against God you need to ask forgiveness of God. If you sin against men, you need to ask forgiveness of God and men, because all sin is against God. We must realize that we do not have “two consciences”, one that is offended when we sin against God and must be taken care of, and one that is offended when we sin against man and can be let go. It is imperative that we have a clear conscience, and to have that we must ask forgiveness of those whom we have offended. If you have followed this procedure and still Satan tries to intimidate and accuse you, that is imagined guilt. He will try such tactics if we allow him to do so. However, here is where we can most assuredly claim Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus .. .” Our sins are under the blood and remembered against us no more. When Satan comes in such an accusing manner reminding you of your past after you have already asked forgiveness, you can kindly remind him of his future. It is not a pretty one. When we stand on God’s Word in this manner, Satan cannot hold us in condemnation. He cannot hold us guilty of something we have already brought to the cross and put under the blood. Guilt and bitterness produce many of the same symptoms in the lives of people but they come from two different sources. If we have offended others and never resolved it, guilt is the result. Bitterness comes when others have offended us and we have never believed God for the grace to forgive them. If we have an unforgiving spirit, then I guarantee you, we will become bitter. Scripture plainly tells us this in Hebrews 12:15, “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled:” If we do not believe God for the grace to grant forgiveness to other people, we will become bitter. We will see more of this illustrated by a parable from Matthew 18.

But notice one more tool that Satan uses. It is pride. I Timothy 3:6 states, “Not a novice...” Paul exhorts Timothy here not to lay hands on a young preacher. He says don’t ordain him too quickly or push him too fast, “... lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Falling into the condemnation of the devil means being subject to pride. Over the years, some people have tried to justify their actions by saying, “Well that is just my pride.” Pride is no justification for anything. Pride will keep people from going to the altar and confessing their sins. It will hold them in a state of independence whereby they will never learn the depths and wonders of God’s grace. In addition to that, if you use pride as an excuse for anything, you are setting yourself up for an attack of the enemy. This is the very ground in which he can work, and if we are filled with pride, we become a wide open target. Pride is the condemnation of Satan. So often we may have pride and not even know it, and God has to reveal it to us. Sometimes, He shows it in very painful ways, and when He does, we simply confess it to the Lord and just fall down again and cry out for His grace, because God resists the proud but He gives

grace to the humble. That is why we must be humble. Such humility is not saying I am a terrible person and ought to be in hell. That is unbelief. Real humility is when we realize that we must depend absolutely on the Lord. It goes beyond our words and actions in the presence of others. It is rather our attitude deep inside when we are alone with the Lord and there is no one else around to impress. It is God who will reveal such things to us if we are honest enough to allow it. Isaiah 14:11 is a good commentary on where pride came from and why Paul called it the condemnation of the devil. "Thy pomp is brought down to the grave and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart ..." (and here is pride, underline the "I wills") "... I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High." Pride is that very willful attitude, "I am going to do what I want to do regardless of who you are and what you think of it." Pride is independence of God. That is why it is nothing to fool around with and nothing to excuse. If we even dare say, "Well, I think I have a little pride," then we better get to the throne of grace for a good dose of it in a real hurry, because Satan will defeat us every time. Pride will take us out of God's realm of protection. It makes us susceptible to satanic attack. Again, James 4:6 says, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God." And what does the next part of the verse say? "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." The only way we can ever resist the devil is to be taken out of his realm of pride, submitting ourselves unto God and then we have the very God of heaven behind us and Satan is absolutely unable to resist us.

As noted earlier, Matthew 18 gives us a beautiful illustration of what happens when men do not accept God's grace and in turn show it to others. "Therefore, is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave his debt. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants which owed him an hundred pence and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." vs. 23-35. Verse 15 of this

chapter begins with some detailed instruction as how to resolve conflicts between brethren. Our present parable continues with how we must conduct ourselves when we have been victimized or others are indebted to us. The King here is easily interpreted as being God, against whom we have committed offenses so great that we would never be able to repay Him. Notice the beautiful plan of redemption as the offender simply falls on his face knowing he has nothing to pay. That also is our only recourse for we have nothing with which to pay. We are shut up to grace alone. Like this creditor, we too have been completely forgiven of our debt due entirely to God's abundant grace. However, this servant is not so gracious to the one who "owes him." "The reason for this conduct is that this man really does not understand what has happened. He had asked for time not mercy... "have patience with me and I will pay thee all..." verse 26. He really does not have the revelation that his debt has been removed. In short, he does not understand the unqualified and undeserved grace that he has just received. When that happens, a person can in no wise show such grace to other people. This man hopes to "eventually gather up enough" to pay the debt he owes, even though he owes ten thousand talents and is owed by another only one hundred pence. The teaching is simply that the offenses against us by other people can never ever compare to the debt and the damage which we did against God, but we do not always realize it. It was my debt of sin against God that took such a high toll and cost Him His own Son. That damage could never be repaired were we given eternity to do it. However, as human beings we somehow seem to be trying desperately to "balance the books," thinking that the offenses which others have done against us somehow cancel the debt that we owe against God. After all, I have never killed any one or done "any of the things" which have been committed against me. It is this kind of thinking whereby we believe that we are justified in our feelings of vengeance and unforgiveness of other people. When we feel thus, we really do not have a clear comprehension of what God has already done for us purely because of His grace. We are plainly instructed in Ephesians 4:32, "...forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." In reality God forgave us before we even asked for it because He laid all our sin on Jesus and forgave us "for Christ's sake." We must grasp what this means. God forgave us before we asked; therefore, we too must forgive even though the offender never asks for it. If we do not, we are going to be imprisoned, always trying to collect on a debt and balance the books. There is a strange thing about our unwillingness to forgive others. We think that by so doing, we are somehow going to punish those who have hurt us. Such is not the case and we in fact will pay a great price because we will develop bitterness and a number of other "tormentors." Here in this parable, this ungrateful servant is "delivered to the tormentors" because he refused to impart to another the grace shown to him. Sometimes this is interpreted as meaning he surely went to hell, but there is no mention of future judgment. This man is delivered to the tormentors now rather than being given a promise of the lake of fire later. In the pattern prayer Jesus said that your Father will not forgive your trespasses if you do not forgive those who trespass against you. This does not mean that God holds grudges, for He has already forgiven all men because of Jesus. It rather means that one of an unforgiving spirit can never ENJOY the forgiveness which he has received. The tormentors are some of the very things already mentioned such as anger, bitterness, anxiety, sleepless nights, and a whole host of others. Laying hold of this man and taking him by the throat was a wrong response and we must not fall into the trap of trying to take vengeance on those

who have offended us. Such must be left to the lord. There is, however, a right response to some very difficult circumstance and we must learn it. Sometimes people think that if they will just ignore the offense, it will go away, no big deal. And yet, it is something that continues to plague and gnaw at them because they have been violated.

Some years ago I heard of a girl who was raped. She did not tell anyone, hiding it even from her parents. She bore the consequence of severe resentment toward her attacker, anger, guilt, bitterness, fear, and looked upon herself as being damaged goods though she had in no way been at fault. Scripture makes it plain as to one reason why she felt guilt. She did not obey the Word of God. Rather than covering up this sin, Scripture plainly tells us that such a victim is to “cry out”. “If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor’s wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.” Deut. 22:23. The impetus here is that she must tell someone, and if she doesn’t she is also going to suffer some severe “emotional stones” being cast at her. Proverbs 28:13 is another verse which she violated, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. “ There is no contradiction here with Proverbs. 17:9, “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.” The last verse refers to one who would be motivated by divine love and would therefore not broadcast an offense which would damage the relationships of others. The former refers to one who would cover sin and continue in it. Though this poor girl could not be accused of sin because of the attack against her, she became an “accomplice” to the “cover up” of such sin by refusing to tell the proper authorities, namely parents. One cannot keep all this “bottled up” inside them without suffering some severe consequences. She fell prey to a common Christian syndrome today when she wonders again and again, “Why did God let it happen?” This is a dangerous question to ponder for it implies that God is ultimately at fault and our bitterness is directed against Him. We must put the blame where it belongs and that is on Satan. God is not responsible. To be free in cases such as this, one MUST identify both the offense and the offender. Until that is done, a person can in no way forgive the one who offended them.

Consider some of the tormentors which take their toll on us today and God’s answer for us: Fear:

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” An unforgiving person is a tormented person due in part to the fact that he can in no wise show love. He first withholds such love from the offender but tragically he learns to withhold love even from those who love him.

Doubt: “Hath God said thou shalt not eat of every tree of the garden...” Gen 3:1. Satan tried to form doubt in Jesus mind in Matthew 4, as he said, “If thou be the son of God...” He will torment us with the same doubts causing us to question God’s dealings with us and eventually blaming and becoming bitter against Him.

Anxiety: God says to us “Be careful for nothing.” in Philippians chapter four. However, that is impossible without absolute trust in Him, and we cannot trust Him if we do not receive and show divine grace. We have no basis for such.

Depression: Psalm 32:3-4 describes the misery of depression. “When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.” David’s feelings here are a direct result of the guilt caused by unconfessed sin. II Corinthians. 4:8 records some of Paul’s feelings, “We are troubled (pressed) on every side, yet not distressed: (crushed) we are perplexed (at a low mentally) but not in despair.” Paul here describes being at a low point mentally, which is a part of this frail human existence, but he was not controlled by it. Those caught in the throes of guilt and bitterness are constantly oppressed by this tormentor.

Empty: This feeling also is described by David in Psalm 32 and it is neither pleasant nor victorious. One of the major problems here is that men try to fill this void with drugs, alcohol, sex, and many other types of pleasure. They become controlled by their senses. Those given to harlotry and prostitution today are in so many cases controlled and motivated by anger, resentment, hate, and guilt. They do not do these things out of love. Some go so far as to try to bring others down with them just to justify themselves. One very promiscuous young woman had tried to seduce a minister of the gospel. She admitted that she did it on purpose because she felt that if he could fall, then anyone, including herself, could. She would be justified in her thinking that no one could live a pure life. Such are the lies of the devil and such is the bondage that many face. We must realize that such temptations are there, but the void must be filled with God and His ways of grace, not the ways of the flesh. What we have seen is not a pretty picture, but thank God we do not have to end on that note.

We are going to learn to “take ground back” that may have been relinquished to Satan because we have not followed the ways of the Lord. These lessons are taken from the first eleven chapters of Joshua. Even after we are born again, Christians can allow the enemy to enter in and they can experience many of the problems we have spoken of. Some have been on drugs, some have had bouts with alcohol, promiscuity and other very devastating acts of the flesh. We would point out today that we can take back such ground. We may have given it up for a little while, but we do not have to let it go and say I am going to be like this for the rest of my life. **GOD WILL RESTORE US TO WHAT HE WANTS US TO BE IF WE GIVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.** We will notice seven distinct steps that we can take in order to accomplish this. Just as Israel went through a process to claim their land, so we must claim or reclaim ours.

First, we claim the land by promise. “Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.” Joshua. 1:2. “That land”, for Israel, was the land of Canaan. God says to us, I have blessed you with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, and you can list all those wonderful blessings and freedoms that God intends for us to have. To do that, we must realize that the land is ours because God has promised it to us. Here in Joshua the land also was theirs by promise, but they had to literally go in and take it. They had to battle for it. It didn’t just fall into their laps.

Likewise we must know that it is not mine because of my own merit, or because of good conduct, or because I have worked for it or deserve it. This land is mine because God promised it, and I believe Him to give it to me.

Secondly, there must be the confession of bitterness or guilt or any other conduct of the flesh. This is beautifully portrayed in chapter three. “And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” When we are taking back the land, we have to realize the same thing. God is going to do wonders for me, but the freedom for Him to perform these wonders comes after I have sanctified myself unto Him or indeed confessed to Him that which is wrong and needs to be corrected. God is going to show forth spectacular things in my life. Sometimes people think I have such a mediocre, such a dull life. God will show you wonders if you simply believe Him to do that. I have known some people over the years that have had miraculous deliverances, and we must believe that He will do it for me also. He says here that He will do wonders, and it is in these things that we will experience God’s awesome power. I cannot extricate myself from the bondage wherein I may be held, I cannot set myself free, but God can unleash that awesome power in my life.

Verse 9 declares more, “And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, “Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God.” And Joshua said, “Hereby...” The meaning of “hereby” is the crossing of the river Jordan. When God gives victory over Jordan, which means coming through death with Christ, it is just a foretaste of all the other victories God is going to give. So, “hereby, you shall know that the living God is among you and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites...(and all these other “ites”) “...before you.” verse 10. Our coming through death with Christ is the proof that God will grant us all these other victories in our lives, too. Then, “...the ark of the Lord, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, of all the earth passes over before you into Jordan.” This ark is a reference to the Word of God. It tells us of Christ’s work of redemption there at Calvary, and this path of redemption as recorded in the Scripture is what we must follow today. Chapter 4:9 is where we really get into the actual presentation of our guilt and bitterness and any other fleshly weight to the Lord. “And Joshua set up 12 stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the Ark of the Covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.” Those 12 stones that Joshua took off of the riverbank and put down into the river is symbolic of our old man which Jesus laid to rest at Calvary. Joshua did all the work. All our sins were laid upon Christ. We didn’t do anything there. I have heard people say, “Oh I was so close, I felt the nails in my hands.” No you did not! That was laid only on Jesus! He’s the one that felt all of the burden; he’s the one that felt all of the sin, all the corruption, all the degradation. The only thing that you and I can do is to confess our sin and lay it literally upon Christ. And I say it in this way: if there is some difficulty in your life, if there is some difficulty in my life, sometimes it even helps to visualize it if its a real problem to you. If there is a bondage, if there is a difficulty, if there is a weakness, bring that to the Lord and literally present it to Him and say, “Jesus I lay it at your feet and nail it to your cross. “ That is the only way to get rid of it. Jesus already took that and we simply confess the victory that He has already wrought. We must admit that it exists before He can take it away from us. And so you’ll notice that Joshua took these 12 stones, representative of the entire 12 tribes of Israel, and he laid them there at the bottom of the river. When the water flowed over them, they were gone forever. We realize the same

thing. Once you lay it on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is gone forever and you are not tormented by it any longer. Notice another thing that happened here in verse 3, "And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests feet stood firm, twelve stones..." The representatives of each tribe of Israel took a stone out of the river and they put it on the bank on the other side. Keep in mind Joshua put 12 in there by himself, that's Christ as the Priest laying all of our sin upon Himself But there were 12 representatives. Each of them took a stone out of the river and they put it over on the bank. This is symbolic of you and I coming out of the depths of death into resurrection with Christ. Notice we didn't have anything to do with the sin part of it, except to believe. But we do feel the resurrection part of it. We experience resurrection life as they had to make a memorial of stones. Verse 7 says it this way, "Then shall ye answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off. and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever." We had nothing to do with our death but to believe it, but we have plenty to do with our lives. We feel our life and our lives actually become a memorial of the resurrection power of Christ. This is the truth that you find in Romans 6, "... buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We do not feel our death except to confess it, but we do feel our life. When we really get hold of this, we realize I am not living by the old life, I am not living by what I left behind, I am living by the new life of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am come up in the newness of life and I don't have to be bound by those things, so, the third thing we see is that we establish a resurrection memorial. I live by the resurrection life of Christ. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but..." but what? "...Christ liveth 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." Every day we take life. This is the life of the Lord Jesus that is being lived in me. And so we must have that resurrection life. Romans 6, tells us, "... reckon ye also yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God. " What I want to impress upon us about this is: what you believe is ultimately going to be translated into your life. If you believe that you died with Christ and that you came up in newness of life with Him, that is what is going to be translated into your life; you are literally going to be living by the life and power of Jesus and that old flesh is going to fade away.

Thirdly, Chapter 5:2, "At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives and circumcise again the children of Israel a second time." Before we really have victory in our lives, there must be circumcision. We're talking here about the practical circumcision. The circumcising tool is the sword of the Word of God. We read in Hebrews 4 that the Word of God is sharp, quick and powerful, dividing asunder the soul and spirit. It is the Word of God which cuts off the flesh. When these in our text were circumcised, the blade was literally laid on the bodies of those men, a very painful operation. The same thing happens in your life and mine as Christians. Sometimes, the Word of God can be extremely painful. I've had that experience and I know others have. I have argued with the Lord about how this didn't apply to me, and yet it did apply to me. When God wants to take the Word and circumcise our hearts, we need to let Him do it. Circumcision means that the Word of God will discover even the very thoughts and

intents of our hearts, and He will cut off those things which are not pleasing. It is a literal happening.

Fourth, Chapter 5:11, “And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. “ I cannot emphasize and stress this point too much, because I really believe this is where so many Christians lose out on the victory and the freedom for their lives. There are many who concentrate on the circumcision: cutting off this and cutting off that and cutting off something else. That is all well and in order, but if we do not feed on the old corn of the land, which is God’s Word, we are never going to grow up into Christ in all things. We will never grow strong spiritually and be able to throw off the bondages of the flesh and of Egypt. Note further that the manna dried up after it was replaced by the old corn of the land. Manna in the scripture is symbolic of baby food. It was good in the wilderness, a life giver during that time and they were thankful, but you cannot go to battle on manna or the milk of the Word. We must have the meat of God’s Word, and that is why I constantly stress to people, you need to get a systematic study and a deep study of God’s Word in order to survive the onslaughts and the power of the enemy. There is no substitute for that.

Our fifth point is found in verses 13-14, “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and he looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and he said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, “Nay: but as the captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, “What saith my lord unto his servant?” The next thing we must do is establish Christ as our own personal head. We have come to this place where we realize that we are now under new leadership. I am not controlling and leading my own life. Jesus has to be making my decisions. I know you have many dreams, visions, and plans when you are young. But unless we learn to let the Lord make those decisions we are going to be in deep trouble. Some have made their own decisions in regard to marriage and they have wound up in a horrible predicament. Giving Christ the headship of my life is absolutely imperative in every area of our lives. Do I go to school? Do I marry this one or that one? Do I do this? Do I do something else? There is no substitute for establishing Christ Himself as your head. And that’s what Joshua is telling us here. We are never going to take the land that He has for us, unless Jesus becomes my own personal head and leader.

The sixth step is the fall of Jericho and I want to notice that this one is where we overcome with a shout. Chapter 6, “And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, shout: for the Lord hath given you the city.” Verse 20, “So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up unto the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.” What we want to see here is that all seven of these things happened before the walls of Jericho fell. And I might add that all of us from time to time build walls around us. We must go through a certain process for those walls to tumble. Many things must come to pass, as we see by these seven steps. We start by claiming God’s promise and then going on to experience

the truth of going through death with Christ. That pattern continues as we claim by experience the remainder of these seven steps. This final step is simply a shout, but it is vitally important that we understand its meaning. It was a shout of authority against the enemy. We do not overcome the enemy by our own power or strength today, but rather by authority. God's authority. Jesus has already won the victory because of His work at the cross and subsequent resurrection. Now we just enjoy and claim that victory which He already won. There is a beautiful illustration of this taken from an incident which happened in World War II. There was a man by the name of General Wainright. He was under General MacArthur's command, and General MacArthur left him in occupied territory knowing that Wainright would be overrun, which he was. According to my understanding, General Wainright was the only general to be captured in World War II. He was taken to outer Mongolia where he wound up in a Japanese Prisoner of War Camp. He was there until the end of the war. After Japan surrendered, the commandant of the camp knew that Japan had been defeated but he did not tell his prisoners about it. For another two, or three, or even five days, those men remained POW's even though Japan had already surrendered. Then an allied aircraft flew in. A sergeant got off that plane, and walked over to the fence behind which General Wainright was standing as a prisoner. He saluted him and told him that Japan had surrendered. General Wainright, as bad off as he was, a very frail, starved man, leaning on a cane, hobbled over to the commandant's office. He kicked that door open as best he could, looked the commandant right in the eye and said, "my commander-in-chief has defeated your Commander-In-Chief and I am in charge of this camp. I am taking over right now. " How did he do that? Not on the basis of strength, but authority. That is the way we come against the devil. Our Commander-in-Chief defeated him and his army at the cross. We have the victory! If Satan can hold us in unbelief or ignorance as the commandant did to those prisoners of war, he has us. We're still in a prison camp. But there is no reason to be there. We can command victory because Jesus already won. Just go up and take it.

Just one more point before we close. We will use this as a springboard for the next segment. Jericho is fallen, but that's not the end of the war. Just because God brings down these walls and Jericho is in ruins, that doesn't mean all of the victory is won yet. When Israel went against Ai, they were very soundly defeated. They wondered, "what has happened?" Chapter 7 reveals that they were dishonest. There were things that were hidden. This can happen to us when we do not absolutely surrender and agree with God, as to the full extent of the judgment of the flesh He wants for our lives. Although Israel lost the first engagement with Ai and were humiliated, they came back and won decisively in the second contest. That means that even though we may have suffered some setbacks in our experience—and who hasn't—God will still give the victory. Do not let the enemy talk us into thinking that just because Satan won a skirmish he's got the whole war. He doesn't. We must go back and lay hold of all the ground that God has given us. We can believe God for the victory, even after a temporary setback. God can give every one of us the absolute complete and full victory in every area of our lives.

Spirit, Soul, and Body

I Thessalonians 5:23 is a wonderful scripture, which speaks of having freedom in body, soul, and spirit. This is illustrated in Joshua, Chapters 9, 10, and 11. As you undoubtedly know, man is made up of three parts. God said in the beginning let us create man in Our

image. One part of that “image” is the fact that God is a trinity. Likewise, man also is a trinity. God has made provision for the entire being of man’s spirit, soul, and body. This is brought together so beautifully in I Thessalonians 5:23, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Notice that this is one of the functions or jobs of the Holy Ghost, the God of Peace. Compare that with Hebrews 13:20 and 21 where we read, “Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep... Romans 8 declares that the spirit of God raised him from the dead, verse 11. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power that works in us to preserve us or to sanctify us wholly. That means the Spirit works in our spirit, He works in our soul, and He works in our body in a very literal way. We see throughout scripture the Holy Ghost made Himself manifest even in the bodies of men. It was especially evident on the day of Pentecost. That is the only way that He makes Himself manifest, of course as we shall see in these lessons. Here, Chapters 9-11 of Joshua are a beautiful illustration of this verse. As I said, God created man, spirit, soul, and body, and when man fell, back there in the Garden of Eden, he fell spirit, soul, and body. A close study of Satan’s tactics with Eve show the progression which ultimately brought the “trinity” of man down into death. Since the fall included spirit, soul, and body, man had to be redeemed the same way. We know of course what the body is. This is the outward appearance as we distinguish the “looks” of one body from another. But, as we very well know, the body is actually not the person. We often make note of this at funerals, as we say; “Now we know this is not Brother Jones or Brother so and so. We know he is with the Lord in heaven. This is just his tabernacle, the vessel that he lived in, a tent he occupied while on this earth.” That is the body. The soul is what we call the seat of the affections. This is where our affections, our desires, or appetites, are found and there are a number of scriptures which bear this out. Deuteronomy 12:21 is one where God says, “thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates whatsoever thy SOUL lusteth after.” The term lust is used various times in scripture and is often associated with the soul. Lust is a just and an extreme desire, a longing, an appetite that one has. I Pet. 2:11 says, “...I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against THE SOUL.” These lusts are appetites that men have which war against the soul. These are the desires which must be brought under control in our own personal lives. Rev. 18:14 is yet another verse which speaks about the connection between lust and the soul. “And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee ...” The Soul then, is the part or location of deep seated desires which we have. They can be good desires or they can be evil, and that is what these lessons are about. One’s desires must be restored unto God.

Lastly, we see the spirit which is the highest part of man. The spirit is the part of man that knows. We will get into this a bit more later, but we must realize that the spirit and the mind are not the same thing. The spirit is the part of man that knows, but that knowledge does not necessarily come from his intellect. I Corinthians 2:11 declares, “For what things know the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.” The spirit of man especially separates him from the rest of God’s creation. It is the highest part of man and no other creature was given that eternal spirit. Man was and is God’s crowning work. To repeat, we must not confuse the spirit with the mind. As we shall see later, we know things in our spirit

which go beyond our intellect or our reasoning capabilities. Indeed the mind can be a detriment to understanding spiritual truth. Romans 1 refers to the spirit of man. "... when they KNEW God, they glorified him not as God ...". That means that when man is born, whether they want to admit it or not, men are born with the knowledge of God. Did you know that men have to learn not to believe in God? People say, "Oh I have been an atheist all my life." No they haven't. Man is born with the knowledge of his creator. He has to learn not to believe God. He knows God in his spirit, knows there is God, and then he learns not to believe. So the spirit of man is the part of him that knows. The first part of this triune man we shall explore is found in Joshua 9. It is illustrated by the Gibeonites, and they speak of the body. We read in verse 4 that the Gibeonites are a part of the Canaanites. They are just as much Canaanite as any of the rest of the people of the land, and they saw what happened to the others, like Jericho and Ai, when Israel marched in. "They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and they took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, "We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us." The word Gibeon means hilly; it is therefore associated with the earth. That is exactly what we find of the body. It was made of the dust and that is all it is, dust. Dust thou art to dust returnest. Notice what happens. The Gibeonites came to Joshua as deceivers. They were actually under the sentence of death right along with the rest of the Canaanites. But because they became a deceiver, they made a league with Joshua, and he let them live. We'll find out how that came about here in just a little while. But just as they were deceivers, so also the body is as a deceiver. It was actually born under the sentence of death, yet the body is permitted to live for the same reason as the Gibeonites. These Gibeonites gave this message to Joshua as they came to him, and they said, "We saw everything that you did." "And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og, king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth." As you go through the scripture, you are going to find out that names are very important. God puts names in the scripture. Just a little sideline, the name you have is not an accident. We find throughout scripture that God specifically gave names to some. Then there were times that He changed the name of people. That is one reason why it is so important for you to look up your name and find out what God had in mind for you as a person, as an individual. When God took the time to write down these names in scripture, he didn't intend that they should be passed lightly over and that they be viewed as an accident or coincidence. Names are extremely important and we are going to find that in the lessons at this time. Notice, first of all, these kings had been defeated. Sihon means "sweeping away". Heshbon means "reason". Og is "hearth cake". And Bashan means "fertile or one in sleep or one in shame". All these kings which Israel defeated and whose lands they took have spiritual instruction for us. Sihon, meaning sweeping away, was king of Heshbon, reason. He speaks of one who would dominate the thoughts or reasoning's of the mind, and must therefore be dethroned. We will see more of this same truth as we get into Chapter 11. Og means hearth cake and that means heating, or baking. It tells us of the hot adversity that there is in our lives. We realize that much of that comes whenever we begin to yield to the Lord. As we submit our lives to Him, Satan steps up his efforts against us and can make things extremely hot for us.

Bashan has a double meaning and it is important to put them together in order to get its full instruction. The defeat of these kings before Israel went into the land describe the victories that young Christians have before they actually learn the fullness of the ways of the Lord and lay hold of their place in the heavenlies. So it is with Bashan. The kingdom of Og is possessed when we overcome the fiery trial that Satan brings against us. Bashan can be a very fertile spiritual ground, but it can also be a very deceiving ground. Sometimes Christians can mistake it for “having arrived”. This is where the second meaning of “sleep or shame” comes in. Young Christians especially can be lulled into a false security, become sleepy and not realize that the real battle is yet to come. Like the 2 ½ tribes of Israel who settled on the wilderness side of Jordan, they never actually appropriated the heavenly land which God intended. They are carnal Christians who never come to spiritual maturity. They are satisfied to know that I am a Christian and I am going to heaven when I die. I have had a few battles and experienced a few victories. Such individuals have never truly sold out to the Lord and they do languish, sleeping in the land of shame. They settle far short of what they could have had. In verse 14 we read, “And the men took of their victuals and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.” Naturally speaking, and literally speaking, it was not wise for them to make a league with Gibeon without talking to the Lord about it. But God uses it for a wonderful type and illustration in our lives. So Joshua made peace with them. Joshua, once again, is figurative of that new creation. He tells us of Christ in me. He is the new leader of this nation of Israel. And that is the new man that God has ordained should lead us. “And Joshua made peace with the, ... to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto the ... :” But notice, “and it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them that they heard they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. “ Once again, we see that they made peace by deception. The Gibeonites made Israel think they were someone else. In answer to the type, the body was actually to be put to death along with the rest of these “ites”, but this league cannot be broken. Israel is in a quandary. What are we going to do with these impostors? They should have been destroyed, but we cannot destroy these people because we made a covenant with them, which cannot be broken. Something else must be decided. Before we see what that was, consider how these cities of Gibeon speak so graphically of the body. “And the children of Israel journeyed and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kidathjearim.” When Gibeon made the covenant with Israel, all these places became the possession of Israel. We have already seen that Gibeon means “hilly” and speaks of the dust from whence we came. Chephirah means “a young lioness, or a covert”. That tells us of the natural defenses with which we are born. These are the strongholds of this literal natural body which can sometimes make us very strong and independent in ourselves. We truly believe we can fight our own battles. I can remember, and perhaps you have had the experience recently, I have not, but I remember when I was a young kid somewhere in the years between 13 and 16 when I could get up in the morning and feel like I could whip the whole world. I just felt so strong and vibrant. Such is the feeling represented by Chephirah. Next is Beeroth and it goes along the same line, for it means “wells”. It tells of those wells of refreshment and invigoration. It is the natural invigoration and strength that one would feel, especially in youth. Kidathjearim means “city of forests”. Those forests speak of a place of refuge and refreshment. Again, it is symbolic of the natural inclinations and the trusts that we have,

that is the feeling of security inside these forests. We have all these things gathered around us, who can hurt us?

Verses 19-20 reveal Israel's dilemma with the Gibeonites and how they escaped it. "But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. " As noted earlier, they had made a league with them and absolutely could not break their word before God. No way could God prosper them for such a breach of promise or covenant, they would have to be true to their commitment. However, they could not just let them go either, because they were included in God's decree that the people of the land should be dispossessed. "This is what we will do to them: we will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore unto them. And the princes said to them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them. And Joshua called for them and he spake to them, saying Wherefore have you beguiled us, saying We are very far from you; when you dwell among us?" This is exactly what has happened concerning the body. It was under the sentence of death. But the body has made a league with this new man by virtue of that. The body now serves the new man and becomes a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. The body is to be used for the service of the Lord, no longer is this body our own. No longer is it to be used for the dictates of its former master, the flesh. The body is now made to serve. This is a beautiful illustration of Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." It was by sheer mercy that Gibeon lived. It is also by sheer mercy that this body is not destroyed, that it has been preserved unto the Lord. Notice further that, "ye present your bodies." That means it is up to us to willingly present our bodies unto the Lord. God doesn't demand or sovereignly extricate it from us. It is so important that we know God does not treat us as robots. Sometimes people think that He just comes down and makes you do this or that. He does not. He could have created us without a will of our own if He had wanted to, but He didn't. He rather created us with the power of choice to serve and gives ourselves to Him. So it is that we serve and surrender ourselves to Him, not because we are forced, but because we love Him. Love must be that motivating force. Anything short of that is not what God desires. Next we read, present your bodies a living sacrifice. That is exactly what He is talking about. Our bodies are alive. They are not sacrificed on the altar and burnt up literally as they were in Old Testament times. He wants a living sacrifice. The analogy carries forth especially with the burnt offering, and that is the offering portrayed here in Romans 12. The burnt offering was all offering, totally burnt or given to God. None of it was given to the priest or man as were the other Levitical offerings. God is telling us this same thing about our bodies. He wants them to be totally burned or given over to the Lord. However, it is to be a living sacrifice, a living vessel which is given to Him. Several years ago there was a young man who came to the bible school. He had some deep problems, but the school agreed to take him in. We tried to help him and minister to him, but he had all sorts of rebellion, resentment, and other problems. One night he slashed his wrists and tried to take his life. He said to Sis. Smith, "I am offering myself as a burnt offering to God." He had just picked up bits and pieces of the Word of God. She said to him, "God wants a living sacrifice, not a dead one," and

that is exactly right. God wants these bodies, alive and well, to use as a vehicle to carry out His purposes and do His bidding.

Next we are told to “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy”. That means that our bodies are to be holy, separated from the world and all its defilements, therein being acceptable to the Lord for whatever He sees fit. He can work in it or through it, doing exactly what He wants to do. It is acceptable to Him. Finally He says, “which is your reasonable service.” Is it not reasonable to conclude that if we have been bought with such a tremendous price, we should give this body to God? Of course it is. No one can deny or argue with that. Paul in fact says that this body belongs to God and is therefore to be surrendered to Him. In another place the apostle says, “I keep under my body and bring it into subjection ...” When we learn to do that in our lives, then we too become God’s free man. No longer are we bound by sin, the flesh, or the devil. We have come to know real freedom in Christ.

This brings us to the 10th chapter of Joshua. The body has been accounted for. Chapter 10 deals with the soul of man. Remember as we had in I Thessalonians 5:23, “... pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless...” Here we begin to deal with the soul. This is where we come into a major number of battles in our lives. In verse 1, “It came to pass when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty. Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.” The first thing I want to notice as we read here is that Gibeon was a greater city than these others. As they had done to Jericho and her king, he had done to Ai and her king, and they feared. And Gibeon was actually greater than Ai. You remember earlier in our lesson we found out that they were defeated here in Ai. Then they went back and God gave them the victory. Thus we learn that even though we may at times have setbacks in our lives, it is not a time to give up, throw caution to the winds and just say forget it. A number of alcoholics have “fallen off the wagon,” but that does not mean they went back to the gutter. It just means that even though we may have failed, God can give even a greater victory for it is at these times we learn by experience just how dependent we really are. Here in our text God not only gave Israel victory over Ai, He also gives victory over an entire country, along with their cities and peoples which were greater than Ai. In chapter 10, the Canaanites came against Gibeon. “Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon:” That becomes very important, as we shall soon see. Notice first of all, however, who these are which came against Gibeon. Remember that we had those scriptures at the beginning on lust which war against the soul. It shows once again the intense desires or the affections of men. As we related earlier, we are controlled by our affections, our inner desires. We are motivated by them. We are ultimately going to do what we want to do. That is why our wants must be changed. Such desires have to be transferred from the desires of the flesh to the desires that God has for us. Col. 3:1-2 says it this way, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, ... Set your affections on things above, not on

things on the earth.” Our desires have to be toward God. Another one is Psalm 40:8, “I delight to do thy will, O my God.” If you delight to do the will of God, I guarantee you, you are going to do it. And that is what God wants. We do the will of God from deep, deep, desire, and not simply because of the fear of hell, or fear of consequence, or fear of judgment, or anything else. Fear is a very strong emotion. It will keep us from a lot of things, but there is only one thing that never fails. God says in I Corinthians 13, “love never fails.” This is why if we love God, if our affections are toward Him, then we are not going to fail. It is this love that God wants to place in our hearts and lives so that our emotions, affections, and desires are exactly in the right place. Men will ultimately do what they want to do. These kings, which we will talk about presently, describe the fleshly desires that every one of us are born with. As we enlarge on them we will be able to recognize the traits they represent in our own lives. Perhaps you will be able to see incidents in your own life where this ugly king or that one has reared his head, and tried to bring you into bondage. These kings and their respective cities are related. The king describes the fleshly tendency that we all have. They are a part of the old man and, regardless of what people might say or think, everyone of us have these tendencies. We are born with them. That is what we have and are as a result of Adam’s fall, and no one is excluded. The king by the meaning of his name tells us of those fleshly weaknesses with which we are born. The city describes a great treasure that God wants us to have in our experience. There is a direct relationship between the king and the city he defends. God tells us that we must defeat the king in order to have his city. The pattern is the same through all of these kings. The first is Adonizedek. His name means lord of righteousness. It speaks of the fact that all of humanity is ruled by self righteousness which prevents them from coming to God. Self righteousness presents an attitude which does not need God or His redemption. Adonizedek will keep us from Jerusalem, the foundations of peace. When self righteousness rules, there is no peace. There are in fact two types of peace in scripture and self righteousness will deprive men of both. One is peace with God. The other is the peace of God. Peace with God comes when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Up until that time we are enemies of God and we are not at peace with Him. Once we believe and accept Christ as our Savior we have peace with God and are no longer enemies. We are not at enmity with Him. The peace of God means the peace which God has is conveyed to us. He bequeaths it to us as we believe Him. Phil. 4 says, “And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” I like to describe the peace of God this way: do you think that God is worried about anything in this world or anything that can happen? I don’t think so. I think God is at perfect peace. At times I am a bit amused when I get a little bit upset and begin to think about this turmoil and that one. All of a sudden I wonder if God is concerned or if He is really worried about it. The conclusion must be that He does not get worried, or anxious, or as we say today “uptight”. Such is the peace which He can give, even in the midst of all the adversity around us. God intends that we should have this priceless city of Jerusalem. But whether we are talking about peace with God or the peace of God, self righteousness will keep us from this coveted city. If a man is self righteous he will never have peace with God because he will never accept Christ as his personal Savior, he has enough righteousness of his own. I do not need that kind of righteousness. The rich young ruler who came to Jesus had such a righteousness. He came to Him and said, “Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said,

“You know the commandments”. His reply was, “all these have I kept from my youth up.” And yet, do you realize that that man did not have peace? He went away sorrowful. If he was so good and if everything had worked so perfectly for him, why ask the question? He had it made. A self righteous person is a very, very unhappy and unstable person, and he has no peace. People who are involved in legality and law keeping are always worried that someone is going to find a flaw in their righteousness. That is why they are always so adamant and why they are always so evasive and defensive. If you even mention that perhaps, just perhaps, there is a flaw in that righteous shield, which they have put around themselves, they have no peace. They cannot sleep and they are always afraid that some little part is going to get by. That is because human righteousness will not stand up. I remember when I first began to minister, after I had gotten out of Bible School, and I went into a denominational Church. It was a rather loose denominational church, without a regular pastor, so they let me be the Pastor for that one summer. I began to teach the grace of God. I went through the books of Romans and Galatians. There was one man who became extremely argumentative. He recognized the difference in grace and legality, but he did not want the grace of God. I began to teach the scripture that when we begin to yield to the Lord, and give ourselves totally to God, as we see with the Thessalonians when they turned to God from idols, fleshly activity and control cease. It was much like I am telling you here this morning. Let God work in your life and these desires change. The acts and desires of the flesh will just fall off. At the end of the class I asked, as I most often do; “does any one have any questions?” He said, “Yes, I have a question. Do you mean to tell me that these women that paint their fingernails and put on lipstick, if they begin to yield to God and take in the Word like your saying, that those fingernails and painted lips will just drop off” I said that is exactly what I am saying, but who told you that painting lips and fingernails is worldly or not right? He declared vehemently that such things were indeed of the world and we could not tolerate them. I then asked if he used hair oil on his hair. (That was back when we used it.) He replied that he most certainly did use it and I informed him that that was just as much a cosmetic as what he condemned the ladies for. He did not say another word, but I saw the poor man the next Sunday and his hair was a mess! He looked like he had been through a tornado! Someone had found a chink in his righteousness. But you see, if we are depending on human righteousness someone will always find a flaw in it. There is only one righteousness that will stand the test of absolutely everything, and that is the righteousness of Christ. Unless we slay Adonizedek, self righteousness, we will never give the righteousness of Christ the opportunity in our lives and we will never be able to possess Jerusalem even though God has given it to us.

The next king is Hoham. His name means “insatiable desires”. He is right in harmony with this statement regarding the desires of the flesh. If you have ever tried to satisfy those fleshy appetites you know they are indeed insatiable. There is no way that one can fulfill the desires of the flesh. Solomon described it thus: The eye is not filled with seeing nor the ear with hearing. Young people, I am not going to harp on this rock music a whole lot, but I am going to say this. As I have told you before, rock music is addictive. You cannot settle for any part of it. Solomon knew exactly what he was talking about when he said the eye is not filled with seeing nor the ear with hearing. If you start getting into pornographic material, the eye is never going to be satisfied, and will require more, and more, and more. Such things must be brought under control. They have to be checked

or they will literally bring you into bondage. I know people today who have admitted to me, "Yes, I am addicted to rock music. I do not intend to do anything about it, but I know I am addicted. "You know you are addicted when you cannot do without it. You cannot get into your car or go into your house without turning the radio on. Such music is not something that is quiet and soothing either. The blacker your mood, the louder the music becomes, but it does not bring you into a place of tranquility. Nor is one satisfied, for the ear is never filled with hearing. These are just a couple examples of insatiable desires. We see it also in drugs. One little puff of marijuana will never bring satisfaction, and so many move on to harder drugs like cocaine, seeking to fulfill these impossible desires. It is important also to realize at this point that rock music and sex go together. The creators of rock music literally planned it that way. The music literally stirs up the lust of the flesh. What do insatiable desires keep us from? Hebron. Hebron is one of the most wonderful places in scripture. Abraham came there as did many others. The word means communion, and speaks of deep fellowship and communion with God. However, if we are controlled by our insatiable desires for the flesh, we are not going to possess communion with God. The more that God has our affections and the more they are transferred over unto Him, the more will be our deep communion with the Lord. Fleshly uncontrolled appetites and desires will deprive us of that blessed communion. The next king is Pharaoh. His name means "wild ass", and he tells us of that stubborn rebellious old nature with which we were born. We noted earlier that pride is the condemnation of Satan. It is that independent nature with which we are born. If pride and rebellion rule in our lives, it will keep us from Jarmuth, which means "elevation". Elevation tells us of that lofty, high place to which God has exalted us as being the sons of God. Romans 8:14 says it this way, "For as many are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Our own rebellious nature must be brought into submission and subjection to the spirit of God if we are ever going to attain to that place of being mature sons of God. Compare this to the natural. You know, and your parents very well know, how it was and how it is in raising little children. Little children can show a tremendous, tremendous rebellion at a very young age. I have seen some defiant children, and I cannot believe some of the defiance that some children get by with. I saw a little girl, not more than five or six at the most, stand and defy a father who stood over six feet tall and was much broader than I am. She literally brought him to his knees, with her hands on her hips, telling him exactly what she was going to do and when she was going to do it. She then stomped her little foot and stormed off in a huff to do as she had purposed. He did nothing. That was the conduct of a six year old, but such defiance can show up even earlier than that because the seeds of rebellion are present at birth. As long as a child is possessed of such a spirit, they will never grow into maturity. They will be unable to learn the lessons that they should be learning. Why? Because they are going their own ways and are so wrapped up in their own little world that they cannot learn anything. The same thing is true in the spiritual. Unless we surrender our will to God, thinking we know so much and are filled with so many of our own ideas, nobody can tell us anything. If we are not teachable, we are not going to learn. We cannot come to the place of mature, elevated sons of God unless we get the victory over that rebellious old nature and are in subjection to the authority over us. The way to come to real maturity is to learn the lessons of subjection to authority. I will tell you young people, that begins at home. You must learn to be in subjection to the authority of your parents because you are never in this life going to get

out from under authority. Never. Everybody, and I do not care how much authority one may have, every one of us will always be under God's ordained authority. That is why it is so imperative that we learn the lesson and judge King Piram, the wild ass. When we do, and are led by the Spirit of God, then we become the mature sons of God. Our next king is Japhia, which means "resplendent". The city that he rules and is trying to keep us from is Lachish, meaning "to walk as men". Japhia speaks of the glitter and glare of the world. It shows the extreme appeal which the world presents to the flesh. Indeed the bright lights are calling. Unless that is judged in our lives and we get our eyes off such glamour and entertainment, wherein Satan would hold us, we are never going to walk as new creation men. Satan held up the same thing to Jesus there in the wilderness. He said all these kingdoms I am going to give to you if you will just fall down and worship me. But if Jesus had bowed to such glitter and appeal, if He had succumbed to the prospect of gaining those riches, no way could he have walked as the man of God that He did. The same thing is true of us. We must bring this king down into death in our lives to where we are not looking at all the resplendent glare of this deceptive world, but rather walking as new creation men.

The fifth one is Debir. If you study Joshua you will find that Debir is also the name of a city and it becomes something that is good. Here, however, Debir meaning "speaker", is a wicked king and tells us of a satanic speaker. He represents that which is contrary to what God wants for our lives. His city, Eglon, has a double meaning. It means "wheel of destiny, or round or circular", evidently because of the construction of it. It also means a male calf" from the same thought of being round, a roly-poly calf so to speak. Both of these are very significant because the wheel of destiny tells us of that circle of events that happen in our lives. It is the expression of Roman 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If Debir is reigning in our lives, he will deny us that truth. He will tell you, "oh you just failed, there is no hope for you, there is no way this can work good for you. You are just out in the cold, hopeless and helpless." Debir must be judged. Secondly, Eglon means this male calf, frisking round. In the scripture, such a calf is used as a sacrifice to God. If we listen to Debir, the satanic speaker, we will not be able to be such a sacrifice. We will not be the bull calf, so to speak, the servant of the Lord, the way that God intends that we should. The satanic suggestions of Debir must be soundly rejected. We will see more of this in our next chapter because this borders on the thoughts and reasonings of the mind. I am quite sure you have already heard the voice of Debir as he whispers in your ear of what to do here, what to do there, not to do this, not to do that. That is the enemy speaking. His suggestions are extremely destructive, designed to push us into following our own way rather than the way of the Lord. As noted previously, the battle here in Chapter 10 is directed not toward Joshua and Israel, but Gibeon. Verse 6, "And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us." Spiritually speaking, this means that when you make the decision to commit yourself and your body to be a servant and a vessel of the Lord, the body suffers the consequence. Sometimes it happens in a physical sickness. But more often than not, when kids or anybody begin to yield to the Lord things begin to fall apart in their lives. I have seen people that have more than an ample supply of money, yet when they began to yield to the Lord it just

goes with the wind. That is no accident. All of these satanic forces attack those things associated with the body, because that is what means so much to us in the early stages of our Christian experience. We enjoy those temporal materialistic provisions and want to have them. All of a sudden, here they go, just vanishing into the air. So these forces gather against Gibeon. But notice what Gibeon did: he went to Joshua. This tells us a little secret. When the body is subject to the new man, then the new man, and indeed God, has to defend that body, and He will. I want to encourage you today that if you have taken a step for the Lord and it seems like that you have just hit a brick wall, that things in your life have gotten seemingly so much worse than they were before you made the decision and commitment, I would encourage you to realize that you have the very God of heaven behind you and that God is going to defend His own property. As I am fond of telling people when they are in difficulty, God has not dropped one of us yet and He is not going to. Remember that they went to Joshua, or the new creation, and thereby God is bound to defend this body. This is exactly what happened when that battle began to ensue. These kings were not met by Gibeon, but Joshua. That is where the victory is won because the new creation begins to fight and he is the one that begins to take the ascension in our lives. Picture it this way: the body is really just a battle ground. The body will yield just as quickly to the flesh as it will to the spirit. It depends on which one has control. Whenever the new creation is in control, the body will be defended as it does the bidding of the new man. The battle does not belong to us, but to God and His new creation. "So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, verse 7. He wasn't going to leave these people of Gilgal to hang out to dry. God is not going to forsake us, either. And, so, he "... ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not..." I would say to you today, that if you have things in your life that you think are just insurmountable, that is the first thing you can be encouraged to do, fear them not. These are not empty words. The reason God says this is, "... for I have delivered them into thine hand..." God is behind you. God says no, I do not intend for you to be overrun, I do not intend for you to be smitten, or obliterated. "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. "And notice, "the Lord discomfited them When you commit yourself and your circumstance into the hand of the Lord, just begin to look around and see how God is going to meet that need because He will do it, oftentimes with supernatural power. God discomfited them, and He "... slew them with a great slaughter." The Lord did that.

We must realize the battle is His, it is not ours. Ours is simply to pray and believe that God will do it. This is what we must realize: willpower is never going to accomplish the victory over these desires of our lives. We must believe God to change those and to give victory over those evil kings. They must be driven out. There is a word that is used in the world today and that word is "coping". Cope with your cigarettes, cope with your alcohol, cope with your drug addiction, or your anger. God never did intend that. God says you drive them out, I will get rid of them. You are not to be controlled by them and God does not intend for us to be controlled by such evil appetites, or to learn to co-exist with them. The desires have to be changed. As we continue with this story, we find in verse 11, "And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven ..." God fought

from heaven for them and He will do exactly the same for us. I have heard of more than one testimony of how God immediately delivered a person from drugs, or alcohol, or some other tendency or insatiable desire, just because He manifested His power in their behalf. The Lord fought from heaven for them and delivered them.

Now notice one more point before we continue, verse 12, “Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;...” Here, notice that without the sunlight of God’s Word, there is no victory. That is why we constantly admonish people to spend time studying God’s Word. Spend time in the scriptures and God will quicken it to your heart, casting His light on the very areas of our lives which need it. Such light is imperative if we are ever to gain a complete victory over these kings.

What is God’s plan of action to totally dominate and conquer these foes? In verse 16, these five kings fled and hid themselves in a cave. Joshua was told they were there and he said, just roll stones against the mouth of the cave. This was done and they pursued after the rest of their enemies. Having the kings in the cave out of sight is not the victory, and we must realize it. There are two things we wish to see here. First, they were indeed in the cave, out of sight, and incapacitated as far as doing any damage to Israel. That is figurative of the fact that Jesus provisionally put them to death by His work on the Cross. It is just as real as if it had happened yesterday and we must learn the lesson and lay hold of the provision. Our old man was crucified at the cross over 2000 years ago, but that is just a provision until God makes it practical in my actual experience. The second thing seen by these kings in the cave is this: it tells us of our own suppression of evil. In other words, I will just put this out of sight where nobody else will see it or know it, and that will be all right. But it is not all right because the king is not dead and you do not really have the victory over him.

People try to suppress these fleshly appetites and tendencies to make a good impression on others. They try to hold them in check without actually having it carried out in death and having their desires literally changed. How do we take care of that? In verse 24 we read, “And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, ... and Joshua said unto them Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave’s mouth, which remain until this very day. “Notice what happened. They wound up back in the same cave, after they were taken down from the tree. That means that the work which Jesus did provisionally at the cross now becomes a practical reality in my life. Notice also that they hanged those kings on the trees. This speaks of the fact that we hang all of those foolish desires, and all of the tendencies of the flesh on the cross of Christ. We simply agree with God that such things deserved death and were nailed to His Cross. It is exactly the same truth we discovered yesterday in the crossing of the Jordan River. It now becomes a practicality when we truly believe that these evil desires were nailed to the tree in the person of Jesus. No longer is it mere suppression held in check by tenacious will power or pretense. No longer do we live in fear that this evil king will rear

his ugly head at a most inopportune time. This time the culprit is dead and buried, and we are free forever from the burning desire which had enslaved us. This brings us to chapter 11, and it follows somewhat the same pattern that we have noticed in chapter 10. Chapter 11 deals with the victory that God gives to us in spirit. Verse 1, "And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor, had heard those things that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and the plains south of Chineroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west, and to the Canaanite in the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many." This confederation of five kings in Chapter 10 has been defeated. Now there is a new wave of forces which come against Joshua. All these kings are not mentioned by name, only their cities are named. The first one that is named is Jabin, and he is the one who organizes and stirs up the rest of them. His name means reason. Once again, notice that we are dealing with the spirit, the highest part of man. It is imperative that we once again realize that man's spirit and his mind, or intellect, are not the same. However, the mind is where this spiritual battle for knowledge is actually fought. Jabin, or reason, is one of the primary things which keeps us from understanding or knowing the deep things of God.

One must learn that we cannot "reason out" that which is spiritual. It defies logic and thus there is the tendency of the reasoning mind to reject it. The word Hazor means "enclosure" and speaks of that enclosure around our mind. Verse 10 declares that Hazor was the head of all those kingdoms. It tells us of this mind that is the head, but there is an enclosure here. Jabin rules that enclosure which is the head of all those kingdoms. It tells us of the higher critic today who will try to keep us from the deep and spiritual things of God. We have already seen in I Corinthians 2, "what things know the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so, the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God." The mind is indeed the highest part of man. His reasoning capability, his intelligence, is one thing that separated him from the rest of God's creation, the animal kingdom. That mind sets him apart but, again, the mind of man is not the spirit of man. The mind is just a vehicle that God uses to convey truth, so to speak, to the heart, just like that the ear conveys sound to the brain. They are just vehicles. We cannot reason out God's word with our natural mind. He reveals truth to our spirit, and this is why (and I have always been grateful) that you do not have to have an extremely high I.Q. and be a very intellectual person to understand the Word of God. As a matter of fact, that can be a very great detriment. We have the higher critics of today where their hearts and their minds are absolutely closed. The mind will not allow a message to go from God to the heart or spirit. Consider some of the questions asked by these higher critics, "Well, if you can explain to me where Cain got his wife, then I will believe." Another example, from the scripture, is Nicodemus. He came to Jesus undoubtedly seeking some answers which he did not have. When the Master announced the new birth, his reply was "how can these things be? Can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" What was he doing? He was trying to use natural reasoning to understand spiritual truth. It cannot be done. This is why it is so imperative for us to be filled with the Holy Ghost. God gives to us spiritual understanding through

the power of the Holy Spirit. There are many other examples of men trying to reason out God. Some try to prove there is no God because if He existed there would not be the chaos that there is in the world today. That is natural thinking and reasoning. Not long ago I read a couple of very interesting books written by Chuck Colson. He is a brilliant man, and he brings out in his books how he had to get by his brilliance in order to understand the ways of the Lord. That is because one cannot explain the ways of God. Who can explain how God can take the seed of His Son and implant Him in the human heart and make of us a new creation? Nobody. This is why I say that the reasoning mind can present one of the greatest disadvantages and become the greatest of enemies to us. That is why, as we will see a bit later, that every thought must be brought into the obedience of Christ. We must conquer Jabin.

The next king is Jobab. His name means “shouter”, and he is the kin of Madon which means “contention”. Jobab is an ally of the reasoner, and you always recognize him because he is the arguer. He is the one who is always in contention and will fight about anything whether it is important or not. You can be sure that his argument is always against truth. He also is most often found among the intellectuals. The next ruler is unnamed, but he is said to be the king of Shimron, which means “hedge, or guardian”. This one especially shows to us the legalistic mind, or the law keeper. He builds walls around himself, and the natural man is by nature a law keeper. He glories in it. For example, the first question by the rich young ruler who came to Jesus was: what must I do? By his own admission here is a law keeping person who wants to do something, anything. We read in John 6 of that marvelous discourse which Jesus gave on the bread of life. The people came to him and asked, “what must we do to work the works of God?” Once again, what must we do. This is a legal spirit which simply means that a person is a law keeper. This legal mind says, I have to do something, and men cannot in themselves get away from that. Jesus said to these people, “this is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” So it is that God’s way is the way of faith, as opposed to the way of works. It is what we believe, not what we do that counts, Once we believe the right things which are things which God has ordained, the works will follow. They will be a result of what God has worked. The next king is also unnamed, and his city is Achsaph, which means “sorcery”. It too shows legality. The book of Galatians goes into great detail in describing how Paul tried desperately to refute the error brought to this assembly by certain Judaizers. He said to them, “Who hath bewitched you?” That literally means, who has used witchcraft on you? He was talking about the law, which is a form of witchcraft according to the Apostle. Law keeping appeals to this natural legalistic mind and unless we learn to be led of God and allow Him to reveal truth to our spirit, we are going to be caught up in that syndrome. These are tremendous enemies to those who would lay hold of deep truth. The fact of the matter is this: if a person is involved in law keeping he will be cheated out of the deep things of God. He will be held in a state of infancy; as Paul says, he that is a servant is no better than a child. All the decisions are made for him and he never comes to maturity. One must become a man, and as long as people are in bondage to legality they are not going to do that. So it was that Paul addressed the Galatians as “My little children”.

In verse 5 all these kings met together and pitched their camp at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel. And wonder of wonders, it is no accident that they met at Merom. It means “high place”, and speaks of the highest truth that God has to reveal to and in us. It

also speaks of where the battle will take place, in our minds, which is the highest part of man as stated earlier. To repeat, we are not talking about brain power. It is here at Merom that the battle is enjoined and where Satan will try to thwart the purposes of God. God uses the mind many times as a channel to the heart, and thus the mind literally becomes a battle ground when deep truth is introduced. What we must know is that God goes beyond our intellect to reveal truth to our spirit. I remember when I went to Bible School God had already been speaking to my heart. I had been preaching from the pulpit and although the first sermon I ever preached was just three minutes long, I knew God had given me a gift. However, I also knew that if I was going to be God's messenger I would have to speak longer than three minutes. I had become very adept at saying the same thing up to six different ways, just to stretch the sermon out. This causes one to feel very inadequate, and to compensate for that I tried to extricate a compliment from my brother. Don't ever do that if you have an honest brother. He told me emphatically, "Gene, all you do is preach around in circles." Stinging from that I spoke to my father about how I had been so ill treated. He also is a very honest man and told me simply, "you shore do repeat yourself a lot. " God used these beloved family members to convince me that I must go to Bible School and learn the Word of God. This is where another battle ensued for I was terrified that I would not be able to understand the instruction of the teachers. That fear was erased in my very first class and I discovered first hand that God does not need a brilliant mind to reveal His Truth. He may use teachers, preachers, and the mental ability He has given us, but God reveals His message to our hearts. That is of course done by the power of the Holy Ghost, as we saw earlier. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." II Corinthians 10:3-5 is another powerful portion of scripture which expresses the relationship between the mind and revealed Truth. Every thought is to be brought into the obedience of the mind of Christ. God can take those thoughts and bring them into the obedience and comprehension of scripture.

In verse 9 of this chapter, "...Joshua did unto them as the Lord bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire." Horses in the natural speak of strength. God told Israel do not multiply horses to yourselves out of Egypt. That means do not bring your strength out of the world. In this place the horses mean brainpower, and we do not understand the scripture by such power. Joshua "hocked" their horses, or houghed them as is said in King James, and he burnt their chariots with fire. Then notice that he "... took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor before time was the head of all those kingdoms. Later on we read that Joshua burned Hazor with fire. This is literally what we have to do with our minds, you burn it with fire to where that only God can do anything with it. Only God can use the mind for what He wants. It is not great brains that understand the depth of the Truth.

Verse 23, "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war." What we see in these verses is vital to our complete freedom. It is not enough just to destroy the strongholds. Israel destroyed the kings in chapter 10 and the cities in chapter 11. But complete victory does not come just in such negative outward destruction; there must also be an active and aggressive plan to

take the land. Ours is not just a defensive battle. God intended for them to take the land. When we take that land, then we become the ones who are free. We are the ones who have the dominion and ruler ship over it. We are not conquered by any of these enemies; we are, rather, the conqueror. Translated to our experience, this means that it is not enough to just take the strongholds; we must take the land to rebuild the mind. I saw this happen with my own eyes just a few years ago. There was a young man who came to Bible School who had been on drugs and his mind was totally burned up. He would get out of bed in the morning and couldn't even tell you what his name was, and that really is no joke. However, he began to take in the word of God and we noticed that he began to change. You could kind of tell his spiritual condition by the length of his hair. He came to school as this long haired hippy, and it was amazing that the more truth he learned, the shorter his hair got. It was phenomenal. But his encounter with God's Word went beyond the classroom. We had printed some promise boxes in the Grace and Glory print shop and he began to take one of those cards to work every day to memorize it. It was that Word which literally rebuilt his mind and today this man is out preaching the gospel. This from a fellow who couldn't even give you the time of day or his own name. Drugs had destroyed his mind, but God delivered him from the drugs thus knocking down the stronghold. But that was not enough. He had to rebuild his mind and conquer the land. So it is not enough just to get rid of the bad habits and other evil tendencies, there must be a rebuilding process. Romans 12:2 says it this way, "and be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." God gave a warning to Moses before Israel ever entered the land of promise that if they chose not to follow His plan, the inhabitants of that land would be "pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will vex you in the land wherein you dwell." If you just knock down the stronghold and do not continue to take the land, these enemies will creep back in, causing great pain and vexation. I saw this same thing happen in the life of a young man who was addicted to cocaine. I have a tremendous love for him, but I am also greatly grieved for him because while he is so talented and has so much to give, he became trapped in the tentacles of the enemy. His addiction was so strong, despite all he had going for him; he would go out and in one week-end spend \$1500 on cocaine. He had many close calls and knew full well that God spared his life on more than one occasion. I began to speak to him and try to help him to bring him out of this horrible bondage. I tried to get him to act on some of the things we have had in this class insofar as being delivered, confessing the weakness of the flesh, and believing God for victory. He was doing rather well for a while. He was coming faithfully to class and taking in the Word and God was rebuilding his mind, transforming him. He told me himself that those were the best months of his life, he was freer than he had ever been. But things began to happen. He withdrew himself and no longer studied the scripture, either with us or on his own. He quit coming to meeting and the last I heard he was back on cocaine. This is why I am saying to you that it is not enough just to get the victory over the stronghold; there must also be an aggressive plan of continuing in the study of God's Word and laying hold of new land. We have to conquer the land and drive out these different enemies. Joshua 24:15 sums up this personal commitment, I cannot make it for you, nor you for me.

Joshua says it thus, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other

side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell.” I trust that we say with Joshua, “... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. “ That is not just serving Him here at camp, or just when there is an emotional high in our lives, or when everything is going well. It must be a full time commitment. I have prayed and have had others praying so earnestly that the results of this camp would be some lifelong commitments. “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,” and that means as long as we are on the face of the earth.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM

The final segment of these lessons on freedom deals with financial freedom. We will begin with Proverbs 22:7. This is a very important verse to remember in borrowing or lending, “The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.” Proverbs 11:24 is another important verse in this matter, “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” The first thing we must understand is what financial freedom is. As we see here in Proverbs 22:7, the borrower is servant to the lender. That means if you borrow from someone you become his servant. By the same token, if you lend to someone they become your servant. This can become very complicated. It is my personal conviction not to lend money. If I can give it to a person in need, I will, but not to lend. I have seen many problems over the years when Christians would borrow from one another. Invariably something always comes up which makes it impossible for the borrower to pay the debt. When that happens he cannot look the lender in the eye. He feels guilt. Fellowship is often broken and he avoids contact with his friend because he cannot pay him and does not want to explain himself. Hard feelings prevail. This happens even among family members, and some families have been broken apart because of money matters. It is vitally important that we learn to trust the Lord for our money rather than family and friends. I do not say by this that if you borrow you have committed the unpardonable sin. But it is very important that we do not establish a pattern of borrowing just to get what we want or think we need for as the scripture says, the borrower is indeed servant to the lender. We have another principle of finance in Proverbs 11:24, “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” Just what is financial freedom? How can you come to the place where you are financially free? How do you know when you get there? The above verse defies natural reasoning and one thing we must overcome to achieve financial freedom is natural reasoning.

The first thing we want to notice is what financial freedom is not. It does not mean that we can go out and buy anything we want when we want it regardless of price. A person who has that kind of attitude and appetite is a person who is in bondage, and must be delivered. It is amazing when God sets us free of certain bondages in our lives, it has a definite reflection in our pocketbook. There are a couple of guidelines here as to what genuine financial freedom is. It means that we are not enslaved to some lender and hopelessly in debt. Rom. 13:8 is a verse that some have used to forbid borrowing altogether, but I believe it is vitally important to put it into perspective. I do not think that we can take an unbending hard line and declare that one must never borrow. It is God’s purpose that we should eventually attain to that place wherein we do not even have a mortgage payment. That is almost unheard of in our day, but I am confident it can be

done. Let us bring Rom 13:8 into balance. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. " Notice further, Deuteronomy 15:6, "For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee." Both of these verses bring out the fact that we are not to be in bondage to others. We can see it on the national level. There are countries so far in debt and in bondage to other countries that they are never going to get out. There have been debts forgiven over the years after World War II because there was no hope of collecting them anyway. These nations have their national debt and they really are in bondage to others. They do not have the freedom to do what they would if they did not have that debt. We cannot do much about the national level, but we most certainly can do something about our own personal lives. It is the same way with righteousness. As far as righteousness is concerned, this country and nations around the world are bankrupt. But does that mean we have to be bankrupt? No! We can live in this world, not of it. We can live by the financial principles of God without having to go along with all the "conventional wisdom" of our day. The new way to follow must be according to the scripture. Owing money and being in bondage go hand in hand. One who does not owe is the one who would be free, and reign, as in Deuteronomy 15:6. But Romans 13:8 does not really forbid borrowing money at all. Sometimes I believe that God has to establish certain disciplines, and He can use money obligations to do it. "Owe no man anything" is a great key to discipline. When you go to a lending institution (not an established friend) to borrow money or if you borrow on a car or for some other necessity, you agree to pay "x" amount of dollars every month. Once you have paid that amount, you are not obligated to pay any more until the next month. You have kept your bargain and honored your word. Where people get into trouble is when they assume so much debt that they cannot under any circumstance pay that monthly obligation. I have known some over the years who had such massive debt that there would be no way they could repay it (much of it accumulated by credit card and we will see what a bondage that is just a bit later). Their solution was pay one creditor one month and pay another one the next. Such alternating only serves to accumulate a constant late charge, which can be rather substantial at times. The worse part is that such people have not lived up to their commitment and the scriptural treatise "owe no man anything." We read also in another place, "pay that thou owest." If you get into a situation such as that, you are either in financial bondage or else you are very, very, close. Financial bondage comes when we have debt that we cannot pay, and cannot live up to the agreement that we have made. We cannot keep our word, which is to be one of our most valued possessions. As far as automobile payments are concerned, and I am sure everyone of us have had a few of those over the years, it is vitally important that we do consider what we are doing because an automobile is a very depreciating item. I bought a car a few years back, and I have purchased several of them on time. What I say here is not for condemnation, but if you can ever get to that place where you can pay for the car outright, you will be far, far, ahead of the game. I bought this car which was supposed to be a brand new one, but I think it had 3,000 miles on it. I was a bit upset over that and told the salesman that I was not going to pay full price for that car. He finally discounted it 300 dollars. I accepted that deal but the more I thought about it, the more upset I became. I mean, what if I had driven it 3,000 miles and brought it back to him? Would he have given back all of the

purchase price except \$300? I think not. When you drive a new vehicle off the lot, even if you put just one mile on it, it becomes a used car and the depreciation is enormous. An automobile is not a good investment.

This brings us to the next point. You may have enough money to buy a certain car which may not be as luxurious, and it may not have the prestige or feed your ego, but if God gives you the money to pay cash for it and it meets the need, you would be better served to buy it for cash rather than go in debt for something beyond your means. This does not mean that a person would buy a “junker” just because he can pay cash. However, we must also realize that a higher price does not guarantee that freedom from expensive and extensive car repairs. Also, the more elaborate the vehicle the higher the taxes and insurance. It is amazing how by prayer and following God’s principles we are able to get that which God intends that we should have. Some years ago, I had a friend who saw this cute little Firebird, and it became the apple of his eye. He just had to have it. He went into debt and bought it, but the thrill of newness wasn’t even gone until it stopped on the highway, overheated. He finally got it back to the school and called me. To make a long story short, I pulled a spark plug out of it, turned the engine over and water hit the fence. You know what was wrong with it, but that was only half the bad news. Not only did he have one blown head gasket, there were two. I told him to buy the parts and we would fix it, which we did. He hadn’t driven another month until more trouble came. Finally, he woke up and found a dealer in Emporia who agreed to take it. The only reason he bought it is because he thought it was another car. But since he had given his word on the matter, he kept the bargain. So he drove down to Emporia and sold the car. He got enough to pay off his loan and buy a ticket back to Kansas City, and had around \$38 left. A couple of months later, the guys that bought the car told him that the thing threw a rod. Talk about a lemon. But I appreciated so much what another friend said to him. He said, you know, it costs money to go to school. That surely is a true statement. It was an expensive lesson for him because he was out all this money for repairs and had a world of inconvenience too, but nevertheless he learned a valuable lesson. Sometimes God does us that way. It costs money to go to school, and that includes God’s school.

The second point in achieving real freedom is to be able to keep what God has given. That means He gives us a certain amount of money to meet our needs and the key, or secret, is to be able to use it for that purpose. The reason I say that is because there are so many ways of losing money which God gives us. When you lose such funds or put it in jeopardy, so to speak, it can cost you sleep and general contentment. Sometimes people go into certain ventures which are not of God. When monies which were meant for a certain purpose are mishandled people can be overtaken by massive debt and encounter much anxiety and many sleepless nights. Sometimes they endure great physical difficulties; I have heard of some individuals breaking out in hives and all sorts of sores due to excessive worry and anxiety. There are quite a number of ways to lose the money God gives us. One primary source is interest payments. We shall see a number of them as we continue, but one of the primary ones, and perhaps the most important to be aware of, is that the devourer will consume it. This truth is found in Mal. 3:8, “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, “Wherein have we robbed thee?” “In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith”, saith the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open you the windows of

heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Verse 11, “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field”, saith the Lord of hosts. I cannot over emphasize the importance of the tithe. God says if you take the tithe to yourself and do not give it to Him, you are robbing God. You are spending money that belongs to someone else. The tithe is not ours, since it already belongs to God. If you take anything that belongs to someone else, you are robbing them.

It is not that God needs the money; he has a number of reasons as to why he instituted the tithe. When their crops were harvested God referred to it as the firstfruit, the tithes of their land. When you see firstfruit in scripture it speaks of Christ, the firstfruit of the resurrection. Every time we give the tithe we are to be reminded of Christ, the firstfruit of the resurrection. It means that there will be more coming. The tithe commemorates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is also a teacher of discipline, by His instruction to tithe. He does not want what is left over. Sometimes people are caught in this trap, and they say, “I will pay all my bills and if there is anything left over then I will give the Lord His.” However, that is just opposite to God’s decree. He said, “I want the firstfruit.” That firstfruit is not limited to just our money. Sometimes people spend all their emotion, and strength, and all their energies on other things and have nothing left over for Him. That is not God’s plan. He is to receive the first, not the last, and that means not only everything we have, but everything we are. One reason God illustrates it with money is because money touches every part of our lives. How we handle it becomes an outward manifestation of many of the thoughts and intents of the heart. As noted, one benefit of giving the tithe is that God will rebuke the devourer. That means if we give the first fruit to Him, God will set up a standard against our arch enemy and he will not be able to take away what God has given to us. If we withhold the firstfruit, or tithe, God does not have the freedom to rebuke the devourer, who can come to us in so many different ways. Sickness, automobile breakdowns, storms, calamities, tragedies, traffic tickets, and accidents. The list goes on and on. I have heard people say for years, “now I know people that pay tithes and they have their car break and other hardships just like everyone else.” That is true. But if you will look into some specific cases it seems that people who are faithful to the tithe always have the money to take care of the emergencies which come. They may have to alter some of their routine and change some plans, using monies which had been saved, for something else, but they do not fall deeper and deeper into debt. It is also a joy to see some of the ways in which God has provided financial miracles for these same faithful people. They did not get rich from their hardship, but neither was the devourer allowed to hurt them. That cannot always be said of those who do not give that first part to the Lord. They seem to have that much trouble and more, yet they never have the money to take care of the problem, and before one hardship is absorbed another one comes. Oftentimes their only alternative is to borrow more money and sink deeper into debt. There is an interesting story told about a pastor who was asked how many of your people pay tithes. He answered every one of them. He was at a Pastor’s conference and there were quite a number of pastors interested in that phenomenon. They asked how he accomplished such a thing, and he responded that everyone pays. Some give it willingly and are abundantly blessed, while others withhold it for themselves and the devourer collects it. So regardless, they all pay. That in fact is the truth. If one withholds what is due he will not be able to spend it, God will see to that.

One way or another everybody will pay the tithe. The choice is ours: give it to God as the firstfruit, or withhold it and lose it to the devourer. There is one caution I want to give in this matter. I do not want us to get the idea that we give to get, because that is not scriptural. We do not pay God for His blessings, nor do we bargain with Him and eventually declare, "You owe me." God owes us nothing, but has given us all things in Christ.

I know a man who started a business and had just begun to come into the Truth. He read the scripture on tithing and decided to put the Lord to the test, just as God challenged Israel to do. He gave his tithe that month and his business increased dramatically, like 10 fold. He thought, boy, I have found the goose that laid the golden egg. The next month he doubled his tithe. This time, the business went down, down, down. He just barely did survive. It was not that God didn't appreciate his money, but God did not want him to get the idea you can buy God. So it was that this man began to give for the right reasons and God did bless him abundantly. The tithe belongs to the Lord. It is not that we give to get, or that we try to bargain with God to get Him indebted to us, it is rather that we are to learn to be faithful to what He has said in His Word. When we learn that, it is amazing what God can and will do for us. We must establish the discipline to tithe. If we do not, it is often an indication that there are also other disciplines lacking. Another thing which can funnel our money right out the window is uncontrolled fleshly appetites, which again indicates a lack of discipline in other areas of our lives. What I mean by that are not necessarily ungodly, pitiful, foolish, desires. Sometimes they are very legitimate desires but they key word here is "uncontrolled". You might write down another description here, "instant gratification. " If we ever fall into the ditch of instant gratification, we are in deep, deep, trouble because if we have to have it right now, we will have to pay for it. Advertisers use this constantly to appeal to this part of our nature. You better buy it right now or it will be gone, and if you do not buy it immediately, someone else will grab it. My young son went through this just a very, very, short time ago. He went out and bought a pickup. I can tell you that if he had brought it to me first I would have told him that I do not think this is a good idea (and I tried to be as easy as I could because he had already bought it and I did not want to dampen his spirit too bad). But when I heard his pickup I knew there to be a very expensive noise. It is still there and he is nursing it along, but he will have to replace that engine eventually if he keeps it because that vehicle has a loose rod. Do you know why he bought it? Because just as he was there, there were some other people coming up the road and he was convinced they would buy it. Now he is wondering if they were a part of the plan to induce him to do exactly what he did. If we develop that kind of attitude in our buying I will guarantee you we are going to pay more than what we otherwise would. Another little personal note. We just sold our home and we are believing God to build a new one completely debt free, without a mortgage, in just a few years. We sold our home and wanted to buy a piece of ground. We found five acres and were convinced that this is the property we were to have. I made an offer which I felt was very fair and which was \$2500 less than the asking price, and both the realtor and I thought it was a fair offer. I offered them cash money because if you can pay cash it does talk real loud and you can get things cheaper. They turned it down, and then they came back with a counter offer which I turned down. We decided to wait awhile and see what the Lord would do. To make a long story short, just before we came to the Youth Camp my realtor called and said that he had just gotten word by way

of the grapevine that if we made the same offer it would not be refused. So we did, and they didn't, and we got it. What I am saying is that if we are able to wait on the Lord we can often save a substantial amount of money and at the same time ascertain the will of God in a certain matter. By the way, the realtor said that what we had just experienced was unheard of. Uncontrolled fleshly appetites are devastating. If men try to feed the flesh they will wind up in poverty. If people are into drugs, gambling, ungodly pleasures, even worldly music, it is amazing how soon the money disappears. I mentioned a young man earlier who had such an ungodly appetite. By his own admission he had spent \$1500 in one weekend on cocaine. Fifteen hundred dollars is not small pocket change. What is the answer to such problems? More money? No. The answer is deliverance from the ungodly appetite. That is why I say financial freedom is not the amount of money we have, but what we do with what God gives us. Another pitfall we have is having a wrong attitude, or placing undue emphasis on riches, which will bring financial poverty. Proverbs 13:7, "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing...and we see this in our society today. There are people who seem to have a special ability to make money yet many of them are powerless to retain any of it, even as this young man of whom I spoke. Others may accumulate vast amounts of money, but lose everything else. I have seen men who give everything they have to create and build a business. Some have achieved their goal yet they lost their families in the process. They were so consumed with becoming rich that they totally neglected their real responsibilities. If you measure riches against the love and security of a family, there is no comparison, there is no way you can equate the two. A man must take care of his family financially; otherwise, scripture labels him worse than an infidel. However, such care means that he has to be there emotionally and spiritually, he must be the spiritual leader and personal minister to his wife and children. His primary responsibilities go far beyond finance, so there cannot, must not, be an undue emphasis on riches.

On the other hand, there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches. "That does not mean that a person gives away all his money, sacrificing needs of the family in the process, and make himself a pauper. We are here talking about attitude. A poor attitude in this instance means that one is absolutely dependent and cast on the Lord. When he has this kind of dependence God will see to it that he has great riches, though such riches may not always be measured in dollars and cents. Note another verse in regards to fleeting riches, Proverbs 23:5, "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?" This means that riches are very uncertain. People think riches make one secure, not so. Our security must come from the Lord, not money or even other people. We cannot set our eyes on "that which is not for riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. " This verse once again describes just how quickly riches can be gone. Proverbs 28:20 is another valuable principle regarding accumulation of riches, "A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." There are those, even in the secular world, who will verify this: if you are going to get wealth, you need to do it slowly, not all at once. That principle comes from the scripture. God does not always do things very quickly in our lives, it is rather a gradual process. As we noted earlier, the Word of God comes to us line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little, precept upon precept. God leads us in gradual ways. So often people get rich real quick, and spoiled real quick, and do not know how to handle it. You have heard stories as I have about a person who wins the lottery or gets

some other windfall and his life falls apart. I heard of one of them who is in prison and is not getting his lottery check. Isn't that the stupidest thing you ever heard of? But such is the way with riches, and so it is that God makes change gradually. But there are those who insist on taking the opposite path, to get rich quickly, as we see in these verses. What does it mean that we should not make haste to be rich? Quite simply that making money must not be our goal. Rather, it must be to be free, and indeed to believe God.

Notice another related principle couched in verse 21, "to have respect of persons is not good." This means that if a person is obsessed with becoming rich and makes such project his absolute goal, he will compromise somewhere along the line. He is going to have respect of persons and in some cases will sacrifice his own character, values, and sometimes his morals just for the sake of riches. It is not worth it. God say do not do it, and so we must believe God for His riches. A compromising man can be bought and we do not want to accept that kind of a price. The rest of this verse says, "For a piece of bread will that man transgress". Furthermore, "he that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye." The eye is an indication of the heart. Wrong attitudes toward money indicate that we have deeper problems than just money, and this is the root which God wants to discover. Consider also that this obsession with riches also has a severe consequence, for he "considereth not that poverty shall come upon him. " Going after all these riches brings a person to poverty. If someone has a get rich quick mentality he becomes an open target for con artists, because that is exactly the type they prey on.

God has both promised and provided our riches, he did not intend for us to go through life as poverty stricken beggars. Deut. 15:6, which we read before, says, "For the Lord God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee." Proverbs 10:22 is another promise, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow therewith." For the blessing of man you can turn it around and say just the opposite, it does not make rich and it does bring sorrow. The blessing of the Lord is better. In Psalm 37:25, David said, "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. " Again, God does not intend for us to abide in this world as paupers, dependent on people. He intends that we should be financially free, believing God for the riches which He would give. Deuteronomy 8:18 is a vitally important verse for us today, "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth. Remember that. It is God who gives us that power, and the reason is, "... that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." It is a fact that you learn to depend on the person that meets your needs, you have an allegiance to them and a special intimacy with them. If we look to the Lord, and it is God who is meeting those needs and gives us our wealth, we will have an affinity and intimacy with Him. If we are looking to people to meet our needs and we think they are meeting them then our allegiance and affection will be displaced from God to man. This is not what He desires. He rather declares, "I want to be your lifeline." Thus He establishes His covenant with us and that covenant is that of Divine Grace, a multi-faceted covenant which meets every need. Let us consider one more very important point before we get into the book of Exodus and find eight principles regarding our money. We have already discussed that first and foremost is the tithe, and we must be faithful to that. Another thing is that we must be a giver. Being a giver is in conjunction with tithing, but what I am talking about is the attitude we must have. People are often

takers and not givers, and if we are a taker we are in deep trouble. We must have the attitude of the giver, to whom God says in Luke 6:38, "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Proverbs 11:25 basically makes the same promise, "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" "Sister Mooneyhan used to tell us when I was in Bible School that you cannot out give God, and surely that is the truth. Once again, the idea here is not give to get but simply give out of a heart of love. When we do, we become fertile ground for God to bless. We must have that giving liberal heart for it gives God so much opportunity and leeway to give to us. Phil. 4:19 is often quoted when people are in desperate need and they reach out by faith to claim God's resources, but Phil. 4:19 is a qualified verse. You will find many scriptures in the Bible that are qualified, and by that I mean that there are certain things which must be true for them to be fulfilled. This is one of them, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. " If you look at the context of that verse, you will find it is spoken to Philippians or Macedonian givers. II Corinthians 8 tells us that the Macedonians gave out of their poverty. They gave themselves to God and then they gave everything they had. It is to that kind of giving to which Philippians 4:19 applies. If we have such a heart I guarantee you God will supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Eph. 4:28 further reinforces this thought, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good," Why? That he may keep all riches to himself? No. "That he may have to give to him that needeth." God never did intend for us to have money and wealth just to spend on ourselves. He hates selfishness. God is, of course, the greatest example of unselfishness because He gave the greatest possession that He ever had to come down into the world and die for us. That is the same attitude that He wants in our lives. To repeat, these verses do not mean that we give to get or that if we give God will be forced to pay a debt He owes to us. Some religious fundraisers use this tactic as they instruct their prospects, "now you just give to God and God will give back ten fold. " Why do they not follow their own advice? Let them step out in faith and do the giving and then let God give to them. What we must have is an attitude of giving with no thought of receiving anything in return. God will meet the need of the Macedonian giver, but getting something in return must never be our reason for giving. That reflects selfishness which is a serious offense in God's school.

We are not born with the principles of freedom which have been discussed; these things must be worked and developed in our lives. We will make many mistakes on the way. As someone said one time, God works through our mistakes and some of us surely give Him an abundance of opportunity. Nevertheless, God will work even through all the errors we make in financial affairs. So if you make some mistakes, or have already seen some things which have not been done according to God's principles, just acknowledge it and believe God to do something better and greater. Just one small note on automobiles. The last car I bought is the best car I ever had in my life and I really rejoice in the Lord for that. I will have over 150,000 miles on it before I get back home, and I still have no intention of getting rid of it at this point. I bought it on a five year loan, 60 payments, and I thought I did fairly well. Well, I bought a computer program that had this financial calculator on it, and if you don't want to get sick don't buy a new car because over the

life of that loan I found that I had paid over \$4000 just in interest. Automobile interest if figured in such a manner, all perfectly legal mind you is among the highest interest packages there are. Anyway, I was determined I was going to pay off the loan, which I did, but I really do not want to ever finance another car. What I did after that was to continue to make the car payment, only this time it was to me, in a savings account. Hopefully, by the time I need another vehicle I will have the money to pay cash for it. Some of you may want to try that approach.

II Corinthians 8:12-15 presents more very valuable lessons to obtain financial freedom. "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality ... As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack." If there first be a willing mind. Paul is speaking here once again of the giving heart. As a matter of fact, Chapters 8 and 9 are both devoted to this "grace" as he describes it. The text before us annihilates a slogan some professional fund-raisers coined a few years ago. They realized people did not have the amount of money they were seeking all at one time so they asked them to make a "faith promise." This is contrary to scripture though it sounds so very spiritual. It means, however, that you are committing to give funds that you do not have, and we read here, "...it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not." It is a fundamental fact: we cannot give what we do not have. That includes money or anything else. If you do not have love, you cannot give love. If you do not have peace, you cannot give peace. If you do not have righteousness, you cannot give righteousness. It is the same with money. If you don't have it you can't give it. When people try, they go into debt. Some religious organizations today tell you that if you do not have the funds they seek, just put it on your credit card. That is absolutely foreign to scripture because you are spending money that you do not have. I am glad to say that some of these organizations do make the proviso that if you do not feel you can pay the bill when it comes in to avoid finance charges then don't do it. Let me say just a little bit more along this line about credit cards. It is not wrong to have one. They can be a real safety net when used properly. If you want to make a motel reservation, even though you tell the clerk, "I will pay cash," they will not hold your reservation without a credit card. Car rentals have the same policy. The rule of thumb is this: if you cannot pay the bill in full when it comes in, then do not put the expense on the card. I do not like to carry a great deal of cash when I travel. Therefore, I put many expenses on the card but the money is already in the bank to pay for it. In this way we do not spend money that we do not have. Credit card debt can be a tremendous enemy to financial freedom. If you have access to a computer with a financial calculator program, just see what kind of debt \$1,000 at 21% compounded daily turns into over a three year period. The answer may surprise you. One of the first things financial counselors do when people in credit card debt come to them is cut up all their credit cards. There is no other alternative. A change in spending must come immediately. Another financial principle is found in II Corinthians 9:6, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." This once again is speaking of the attitude of the heart. God delights in one who does not take everything to himself, but rather has a giving heart. Notice God's response to such a one, verse 8, "And God is

able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.” He is talking about the person with the giving heart. Notice the fullness of provision to him, all grace, ...always. all sufficiency, all things may abound, to every good work. Next the apostle quotes from Psalm 112, “As it is written, he hath dispersed abroad; ...” The “he” of whom he speaks is “the good man” of Psalm 112. It is the good man who disperses; he is not a selfish person. Rather, “he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remains forever.” Then verse 10 says, “Now he than ministereth seed to the sower ...” This is another truth which we must wholeheartedly embrace. The one who ministers the seed is God. Our money or any other seed comes from Him. So it is that the same God who “ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.” What we see here is that yes God wants to bring us to financial freedom, but what He is really interested in is bringing spiritual maturity to our lives. One way that is done is to develop this attitude of a giving heart. When that happens he is able to increase us both spiritually and naturally. When God gives us a spiritual blessing, it is an eternal one. The money is temporal but the work that God does in our lives through finance is an eternal one. II Corinthians 8:15 is quoted from Exodus 16, “As it is written, he that gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.” Here in II Corinthians the apostle is talking about money. The text which he quotes from Exodus is in regard to the manna. The same principles which applied to Israel when He gave them manna from heaven apply directly to the money which He gives us today. Manna was their natural lifeline, just as money is the element which is given to us today in order to maintain our natural existence. We will notice eight specific points:

Number one. God gave them the manna to supply a need. The same thing is true today. God gives money to meet NEEDS. Sometimes we tend to spell the word W-A- N-T, but that is not right. We must realize there is a difference between the two and we may often get them confused. God never does. Jesus said, “with food and raiment therewith be content”. Those are needs. If God gives us our clothes and provides our food, He has met our needs. We know that He gives us much, much more than that, but we are talking here about basics and establishing a certain mentality. Lay hold of the fact that God will meet a need. We see this in verse three, “And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” If one is hungry, he has a definite need. Therefore, you can rest assured that God will provide money for food. That does not mean that He will supply filet mignon. It may be only manna, which I understand could be rather bland. However, it satisfied the need of hunger. Also, He may not supply “three squares a day,” but then we do not really need three squares a day. I heard the story of a woman who had a very lazy son who refused to work. He was a sloth, who lay at home on the couch as a vegetable or couch potato, eating and sleeping and doing nothing. The Lord spoke to her one day that it was not right for her to just dole it out to this kid, working her fingers to the bone. Her husband was gone, and scripturally, now that the son was old enough, he was supposed to assume the responsibility of taking care of her. She came home one day and said bluntly, “I just thought I would tell you that I quit my job today. “ He was somewhat stricken with terror, and said, “What are we going to do?” She said, “I don’t know, that is not my problem. I am going to believe God. You

are really the one who is supposed to be taking care of things here.” He insisted he would not go to work and she said “fine.” His next question was, “How are we going to eat?” Her answer is a classic. She said, “Well, the first 30 days would make a good fast.” It didn’t take that long for in three days that young man had gotten a job. So you see, we really do not actually need three squares a day, but when food is a need God will supply it. In this case He was able to correct a very wrong attitude and prod a young man into growing up and taking the responsibility which He had ordained.

Number two. All money, just like manna, comes from God. “Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you ...” Ex. 16:4. It is very important here that we understand the implications of what it means that God gives us money. We read in scripture that every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from God. Money is a gift and any gift is to be received with thanksgiving. We must never get the idea that God owes me money, or food, or clothing. He has promised us all these things, but He owes me nothing. A person who feels that others owe him is not a grateful person. There is one thing I would like to establish in the lives of young people, and I trust I do not come across in a condemning manner. However, I have had the experience of giving money and they may say thank you at the time, but never have the courtesy to write a thank you note. I would encourage you to develop a grateful spirit. If someone gives you something, no matter if it is parents, neighbors, relatives, it makes no difference. Give them some kind of affirmation that you are of a thankful heart. We must have such a grateful spirit for if we do not, we are telling them “you owe me.” I have been rather disappointed over the years in this area. I know of one person to whom we gave graduation presents, wedding presents, baby shower presents, and we have yet to receive even one thank you note. It is not that we give with that thought in mind. However, as the recipient, we must have a grateful spirit and show it. This same thing is true where God is concerned. Let us never reach the point when we just take His glorious care and protection for granted, not realizing that His provisions are gifts to us. Sometimes we may be prone to get our eyes on the AMOUNT which He gives. However, “every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of Lights.” We must treat such gifts, as small as we may think them to be, as precious treasure or something that is valuable. This means that God does not want us to throw our money around and treat it lightly. I have said it this way: if you are too rich to pick up a penny, you are too rich. Even the penny is a gift from God and we need to appreciate it. Personally, I pick up every penny I see and give them to the missionaries. They do add up. When you value something, you account for it. It is very important that we establish a good accounting system. Some of you are old enough that you have a checking account. Be sure and account for every penny, for if you don’t you will begin to get notices of an overdraft. That has become very expensive and can be a great detriment to financial freedom. We are instructed to be good stewards of what God gives us. That means that we must keep track of what comes in and what goes out. The two must balance, and once again this idea of being a faithful steward goes far beyond money. However, it is often learned in this area of finance. I know a young man back home who did not keep good records. He wrote a check to McDonalds for a happy meal and the check bounced, about twice. They turned it over to a collection agency and by the time all was said and done; his happy meal cost over \$30. That is a pretty happy, happy meal. I hope he has learned his lesson and has become a faithful steward.

Number 3. God uses money to prove us. That is why we have certain needs. God wants to show that He is powerful and can show Himself mighty in our behalf. Here in our text the people were to go out and gather a certain rate every day, “that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no.” The way we handle money, as noted earlier, is a good indication of other areas in our lives, where we may or may not be believing God. If we have trouble with discipline in spending we may also have a problem with discipline elsewhere in our experience. The record here shows that Israel did not have the discipline to gather a certain rate every day. God intended to prove Israel but He also had a message He wanted to convey to them. “And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:” When God meets our financial needs, it is one of the most powerful expressions and proofs that we belong to God. I brought you out of the land of Egypt, I gave you this manna and I am proving to you that I redeemed you by meeting this need. He tells us the same thing. Yes, I saved you, but I am telling you again and again, that by meeting your financial needs I have redeemed you and you belong to Me.

Number 4. Exodus 16:16 “gather it”. “This the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents.” God intends that we gather the manna. God gave it to them, but they had to put forth the effort to gather it. He did not make it up into cakes, serve it up on a silver platter, and then put it into their mouths. I have heard of some with this type of attitude. “Oh well, when the Lord has a job for me, He will open it up,” and they just continue to sit at home and wait. God may keep an attitude like that waiting for a good long time, because He emphatically teaches that we are to work for our sustenance. He told Adam to work by the sweat of his face, and that same thing is true today. People who do not put forth this kind of effort never really appreciate or value what they have. Moreover, those who expect a free ride or hand out more often than not get into a good deal of trouble.

Number 5. This one is quoted in our text from II Corinthians 8:15, “And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.” God intends for us to share our substance with others. We must never become so focused on our own lives and needs, and our own wants and desires, that we lose sight of those around us. God intended that Israel share the manna. According to Paul’s interpretation none had too much and none too little. They were to have equality. When we speak of such sharing we are not talking about the tithe. That portion of our income already belongs to God. It is a portion of what we have left which is to be shared with others and sometimes, as in the case of the Macedonians, it may require sacrifice on our part. It may be that we have to sacrifice our want to meet their need.

Before we go to number 6, let us see one more thing about sharing our substance. That is that there may come a day when we are the one in need. We may be on the receiving end rather than being the giver. Sometimes people can be too proud to receive from others and that is a very serious offence in God’s school. I know of a couple who was retired and living on a pension. They were not on easy street, but they could get by. For some strange reason, that pension was abruptly cut off and they were left with nothing. In the early stages of their trial others tried to minister to them but they refused it, insisting that

they were getting along fine. But there came a day when the pressure became too great, and the fire too hot. Then they very gratefully accepted what was offered to them, rejoicing greatly in the Lord who had chosen to meet their needs through others. Amazingly, when that happened, the pension was restored as quickly as it had been taken away. So, as Paul tells us here, there may be a time when your abundance may supply the need of someone else, but there may also come the day when you are the one in need, and God will supply it through other members of the body. Never did God intend that we should be independent of everyone else. He created us as a body to minister to one another, and that ministry includes money as well as many other ways.

Number 6. Do not horde money. Ex. 16:19, “And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.” This does not mean that you should not have a savings account. That is pure insanity. We should have some reserve if possible and that is illustrated from the proverbs by the ant which lays up in summer for the hard winter which is sure to come. There is wisdom in making preparation ahead of time for needs which you know are coming, as well as some that may be surprises. Such savings are far different from hoarding. When one hordes money it reflects an attitude of independence. If we are totally sufficient of ourselves, we do not need to believe God. One who hordes money is also one that is selfish and though he may see others in need, he will not turn loose of his possessions for fear of hurting himself. Holding on to money in this manner means that we will trust money more than God, and He never intended such a thing. We can have a savings account for rainy days or so that we may give to others, but never can we replace God with money.

Number 7. This is a very important principle and one I fear that is greatly violated in our day. Exodus 16:26, “Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.” God made his intention so clear that He didn’t even give them manna on the seventh day. The principle illustrated here is rest. God makes it emphatically plain, that one day is to be used exclusively for rest. God does not want us to be obsessed with making money. I realize there are times today if you are working for an employer that certain emergencies may require someone to work. Jesus Himself made such a provision when He said that if the ox falls into the ditch, you must pull him out. The only problem is that in our day, it seems that there are too many oxen in trouble. The fact of the matter is that men are in love with money and refuse to rest on Sunday or any other day. God did not say that Sunday is unequivocally the day of rest. He does insist that one day is to be used for such rest and traditionally it has become Sunday. However, a day of rest does not mean a day of waste. This day is to be set aside for Him, to meditate on His Word and give ourselves to Him in prayer and worship. It is no holier than any other day, but we must establish the attitude and conduct that the first part of our time belongs to God. We cannot substitute that for the sake of making more money. God has made the consequences for violating this principle very real in the lives of some people. I learned it from my father in my early childhood long before I knew it as a principle of scripture. He spoke from his own experience in the tanking business. He and my uncle carved dirt tanks out of the earth by building dikes or dams across various waterways. The equipment in those days was certainly different than what is used today. Their antiquated fresnos were pulled with tractors or teams of horses and their progress was often very painstakingly slow. They decided that with all the business they had there

was no alternative but to work seven days a week. However, it wasn't very long until they learned real quick that this was not God's way, because their equipment began to break down rather frequently. Not only did they lose work on Sunday, but they lost the next two days repairing what was broken. He found out it just isn't worth it. So it is today. God wants us to take Him at His Word and when we do not, there will always be consequences. This day of rest was given for our benefit, to recharge and to meditate on Him, to remember the Sabbath, the Real Rest - Christ. This must become a conviction in our lives. If it is, there are many who have found out by experience that God will move mountains to free them up on Sundays. I do not say that it can be done in every case, but if this is a conviction that is real to you, your employer will know it and if you tell him, "I am willing to work overtime Friday or some other day," oftentimes he will be very sympathetic to your request in order that you can be in service.

Number 8. Our final point here is that we must realize money is only temporal. Exodus 16:35, "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan." Our money is good only while we are in this world, so why would we be so foolish as to make money our goal? When Jesus comes it will all be gone and we have wasted our time. We need to concentrate on spiritual riches which are going to last throughout eternity. It is imperative for us to develop the scriptural attitude, "With food and raiment, therewith be content. " We know full well that God gives us more than that; however, it is imperative that we do not make money our primary focus. We must be able to separate need from want and believe God to meet the need. Paul said, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. " It seems that so many are trying to find contentment in money, but that is never going to happen. Contentment comes when we are satisfied with the things of God and His operations in our lives. When we get to that place, we will be well on our way to true happiness and financial freedom.