***Our Cup Overflows

Colossians 1:3-8

COL-057***

We are studying Colossians 1:3-8. Our subject is "Thanksgiving for the Colossians," number 35.

Now, you will not be offended, I'm sure, if I act like I know what I'm talking about. You'll not be offended if I take the position that the Word of God is supreme in the life of a believer, and that there is a way to walk with God and be successful, and to be a real man and a real woman, and that if you do not follow this path, then you are selling yourself short. You will not, I hope, be offended by the fact that you may be chasing will of the wisp corncobs instead of the real grain that God has provided in His word.

I can congratulate you for the fact that you have the good judgment to interrupt your evening and to be here tonight. And our hearts go out to the members of this congregation who are elsewhere tonight, who could have been here. And it will be to their eternal sorrow, as they will someday discover.

So you needn't vibrate if you hear something in the privacy of your priesthood that brings you up short. You might want to just stop and consider it.

What we have been dealing with recently, in our passage here in Colossians 1 the opening verses. And we have come to Paul's statement at the end of verse 6, where he is pleased that the people of Colossae have proceeded to such spiritual maturity that they understand the grace of God in truth – that means in its reality, and what the grace of God is all about. What I've been trying to do now is to help you to get a new vision and a deeper perspective about this grace of God, and the significance of that grace when it is permitted to work in your life. In short, what we are dealing with is how to make Christ the Lord of your life.

**Savior and Lord**

There's a lot of debate about how you do that, and there's a lot of debate about when that happens. And we're following the biblical pattern that the Christian life begins with an appropriation of the grace of God in salvation, and then it follows with a commitment to the grace of God to make Christ Lord in your life. He cannot be Lord, and then Savior. He can only be Savior, and then Lord. Now this is no subtle difference. It's a very big difference. And his majesty the devil is raising all kinds of confusion, and disconcerting people from the concept of the fact that the Christian life is a developing experience in maturity – and the idea that if Jesus is your Lord, you are not going to be a Christian who does anything that is wrong. That is not true. And it is discouraging to the Christian who falls by the wayside.

So, I want you to understand that it goes from commitment of grace salvation to the appropriation of the power structure of living under the combined doctrine of the Word of God, and the guidance of the internal Holy Spirit for the Christian who is in tune with Him. We're trying to show you where God's guidance and power really lies for your life. If you do not know this, and you don't act upon it, I'll tell you exactly what you're going to do. You're going to be chasing around the seminars. You're going to be paying out money to go to a seminar to teach you what your pastor-teacher should have taught you to begin with.

Some years ago we had a group who went to a marriage seminar. And one of the men came back and said, "All we heard, for the three days we were there, was what we had heard at Berean Church. And I was pleased to hear that. Seminars are people who make vast sums of money. You cannot believe the money that is to be made in seminars, because some preacher has brought together some systematic studies, and he teaches people what they should have learned at their churches, but they don't; and, what their young people should have learned, but they don't. So, they send their kids off to little rallies (little seminars), so that they can come up to speed in the Christian life.

Our recent trip to Galveston Island, with our junior and senior high school children, only demonstrated the enormous value of that association in the Berean Youth Clubs. One girl this afternoon told me: "That was just a perfect campout." And one of the reasons that it was such a perfect campout is because I was there, along with the other leaders, who were reinforcing the doctrines of the Word of God. That's where it's all at, and that's what it's all about. And the kids learned a great deal about their relationships (boys with girls), and the things that are dangerous territory. And one girl sat down by me (one of the high school girls) on the bus, and said, "What you told us about marriage and relating to boys, that is just super. That has helped me a lot."

It's a sad fact, but parents are scared of their kids. However, I'm not afraid of them. I'm not even afraid of their parents. Therefore, I can tell you the way it should be, because I know my business, and I know the Word of God, and I also know the implications of the Word of God. And I'm also aware of the fact that when people get mad at us for telling them the way things really are, then they disappear, and we don't see them anymore. Or when they get the mistake that there is something in life other than doctrine, then they're floating around with the cutesy-pooh churches, getting their emotional kicks, and thinking that they have something great. And only eternity will give us the reason for the tears and the sorrows that will come to the eyes of Christians, as they stand and realize what they have done to themselves, especially if they had a place like Berean Church to go to.

So, what we are doing tonight is reemphasizing for you how to make Christ Lord of your life. That is essential. And the issue of the grace way of doing these things is very big with people.

One of our young women came up to me this morning and said, "Do you have a listening device in our house? Everything that you talked about this morning was kind of eerie, because we were sitting there discussing this very thing. I can guarantee you that's not unusual to happen. People tell me that all the time. This is called the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is called the Spirit of God applying the Word of Truth.

I'm going to be speaking at a kind of ecumenical meeting (what we religious people call "the Holy Day services) the week before Easter. And there some posters on our bulletin board. . . And you'll notice that it's just 30 minutes, from 12:15 PM to 12:45 PM at Heritage Park. They are requiring a miracle of us preachers: we can only talk for 15 minutes. And they gave us a Scripture to speak from, and they put me on April 1st. Isn't April 1st some kind of a special day? They had another guy from a big church who's speaking at Williams Square the same day on the same Scripture. I'm not sure which one of us is more qualified in terms of the celebration of the day.

However, I was telling Mrs. Danish just before the service: I said, "I've got it. I'm having to talk about that little passage of John 13:34, where Jesus washes the feet of the disciples, and then He says, 'Now I'm going to give you a new commandment. I want you to love one another like I have loved you.' And I'm trying to think: 'How can I speak? They won't even let you have an overhead projector there.'" So, I'm trying to figure it out. I'm going to put this together, and it's got to be a devotional inspirational kind of thing, and I'm going to have to follow some big-time music.

Well, the theme of the week is love – the love of God, which is very significant, and the demonstration of the love of Christ and what He did. And it just hit me. I said, "I know how I'm going to handle it. I'm going to take that center on that passage: 'Love one another,' particularly focusing on loving the people that are in the family of God, and the act of love as a spirit of mental kindness and well-being sacrificial toward one another. And it's not normal for the sin nature to do that. But the solution is the one that Jesus gave us, and this is how I'm going to handle it."

In John 14:15, Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments.' And I'm going to zero the crowd in where their life really is on doctrine. And if the doctrine is there, they're going to have the capacity to love God. Otherwise it's a sham. And for many people who may stand there and listen to it, that's what they're doing. They're going through the sham talking about loving God, but they don't know the first thing about it. They've gotten so far away from the Word of God and from doctrine, and they're dealing on stale doctrine that they got months ago.

So, the Christian, we have learned, with a human spirit reservoir filled with Bible doctrine truth, has a very high spiritual IQ. And that is dependent entirely on your choice – your decision to learn the Word of God. It depends on how much of a real man you want to be. It depends on how much of a real woman you want to be. Instead of being one of these wimps that goes around as portrayed in our society as a man, or these sorry creatures going around portraying themselves as real women. A real man is a man who has this human spirit just loaded with doctrine. A real woman (a quality woman) is a woman who has this human spirit filled with the Word of God. That's why you don't want to let your child get attached to someone in a one-on-one person way.

I taught our kids on the camp out that 1 Corinthians 7:5 says, "Do not defraud one another." And it is talking, in that context, about sexual relationships. What is it saying? It says, "Don't be holding hands. Don't be hugging. Don't be cutesy-pooh with one another, if you cannot follow through with the emotions that that raises within you." That is because God has designed you to go from hand-holding, to caressing, to hugging, and to very close physical intimacy. If you've set that thing in motion, are you then going to stop it and deny that person what you've set in motion?" The Word of God says, "Keep your hands off." In fact, Paul tries to make it so clear that he says, "It's good for a man not to touch a woman." Why? Because that defrauds her. It sets in emotional relationships and anticipations that should not be.

I recently heard a man talk about a wedding. After the pastor finished the ceremony, he said, "Now ladies and gentlemen, you're going to see something that has never been done before, and no one has ever seen before. This couple is going to kiss at the completion of this ceremony. They had decided that their physical relationship was in the order of the Word of God. First comes out spiritual relationship to one another. Then our soul relationship and our personality: our mind; our emotions; and, our will. And then we will get down to the physical part. And they had made a decision between themselves that that physical part wasn't going to include anything – even the kissing part. Well, I'm not recommending that. I'm kind of inclined to be a kisser myself, but each to his own. But I respect the concept. That was very wise. And it certainly was very biblical.

Now that is what happens when you have doctrine. All you have to have is these simple little principles. And bingo! You know what to do. You don't have to go to some stupid rally or seminar where some guy comes running out on a platform in deck shoes and a big mouthful of teeth smile. And all of a sudden, gee, here's a guy that's gotten in contact with God. Now I'll know how to live my life as a youth. No you won't. Go to a Berean youth club campout, and that's where you'll learn how to live your life with God, because we'll pour into your soul the Word of God. And we won't give you little trivialities. You take it down through the deep things of God – down into the depths of the Word of God.

**The Belt of Truth**

Now, a Christian who has this human reservoir filled with Bible doctrine truth has a high spiritual IQ. And it is not dependent upon what kind of a human IQ you have. It only depends upon how much of a man, or how a woman, of God you want to be.

**The Grace System of Perception**

Now, this IQ is developed by means of the grace system of perception, which God has provided for the learning of spiritual things. And we have gone through that in detail. This grace system of perception functions through the local church ministry as a pastor-teacher gives instruction in doctrine from the inerrant Bible. This system of learning spiritual phenomena produces the belt of truth which supports the various elements of the Christian's life.

The Roman soldier wore this belt around his waist, and it was a very important part of his combat equipment, because everything else hung on that. And in our time, we have what we call a cartridge belt. Many things are hung on a cartridge belt of a soldier that are critical and important in his physical combat.

Now, the believer has the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit to teach him spiritual truths, and to apply them to life situations as they are brought up from the human spirit reservoir of doctrine.

Also, the grace system of perception has had provided by God the fact that every Christian is a priest, representing only himself before God, and accounting for his own life. And his life will be reviewed. I hope that you don't get tired of me stressing that, because I'm amazed at how some Christians (and some young people), to my sadness, never catch onto the fact that their life is going to be reviewed. How about Romans 14:10-12? "But you, why do you judge your brother (poking your nose into his priesthood)? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt, because you are superior to him." For we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ." That is the event which follows the rapture of the church, and it is the event at which all Christians will be present.

Revelations 14:11, "For is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God." Each one of us is going to give him an account of himself to God. You are your own priest. And you will give an explanation as to how you handle that priesthood. So, you should live in the light of that fact. Stop pretending that God doesn't know what's going on.

This is further reinforced by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Now, this is not going to be simply a determination on your part to behave yourself; to do good; and, to serve God. No. This is the direct result of doctrine in that human spirit, and the Holy Spirit functioning in your life as a spiritual Christian guiding your life, and directing you to fulfill your mission in life. You're not going to walk an aisle in the church and rededicate yourself to God and achieve this. You're going to get zilch at the Judgment Seat of Christ for that. You are going to fulfill God's purpose for you, and for your life, and for your material possessions, and for your spiritual gifts, as you turn the grace of God free in your life through the grace system of the perception of spiritual things.

Doctrinal truth to which the believer is negative, we have shown you, remains unusable in the perceptive mind as mere knowledge rather than as full knowledge. The instruction comes into the perceptive mind, and here's where it stays. And you shake your head internally and you refuse. And you go with reservations about this. You probably already have heard things today that have made you wonder, and brought you up short, and you're not sure you agree. Just be sure you're right, because if that's a biblical principle that has been brought to your mind, and you say no to it, and you do not treat it with faith, it never gets down here to that human spirit, and it never gets usable. You can know the Bible from one end to the other, and it's nothing. That's why you have religious churches who know so much about the Word of God, but they have nothing in the lives of the Christians that is of any depth of any significance in what they're doing for people. They're running great social programs, and they're keeping their gym jumping and jiving for the kids, but they're not going into anything that is significant in the Word of God. It is here in the human spirit where you said, "Amen, Lord. I believe what you say." Now, that information is usable.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure of the Soul**

Now, if you function on this grace system of perception, there is a product. We call it the spiritual maturity structure of the soul. This spiritual maturity structure, as we've pointed out, has a variety of factors. And out of doctrine comes the foundation of spiritual edification. This is a structure that we are told to build. The product of the grace system of perception over time is a spiritual maturity structure built in the soul of the Christian. This is the first and foremost duty of the Christian life – to build this structure. We have illustrated it in the form of a building. We may also put it in the form of a pentagon, which is a good way to think about because we know what the Pentagon is. It is a defense position, and a place where the nation is defended, and from which attacks are also planned.

The grace system of perception is called in Scripture the Christian's breastplate of righteousness. This spiritual maturity structure pentagon includes grace orientation depending on God – not on willpower. It includes a mastery of the details of life, which means stability in your material status. It includes a relaxed mental attitude, which is loving rapport in dealing with others – an emotional quality. It includes the capacity to love, which is a mental attitude kindness toward God and man, free of bitterness. And it includes inner happiness, which is the product of God working through the doctrines in your human spirit. Therefore, it is a happiness which cannot be undermined by anything external that comes in your life.

**Our Cup Overflows**

The spiritual maturity structure is actually a container into which God is pouring His grace. And once this container (the spiritual mater maturity structure) is built, then grace comes through on a constant stream. James 4:6 calls it "abounding grace." We may describe it as super grace. And the time comes, as Psalms 23:5 says, that "our cup begins to overflow". Now, you can go ahead and live like a clod in the Christian life if you want to. And you can grow up and be a clod, like all the rest of the clods you're associated with. Or you can become a real man, or a real woman, with great personal dignity; with great personal respect for yourself and for others; and, with this kind of a container built in your soul because you attended churches that taught you the Word. And you sat there, and were able to be led into a presentation that made doctrine practical. Oh yeah, you'll learn doctrine in other places. But it's tough to find a church where it's converted into practical use.

Now, we're not talking about anything esoteric here. This is something anybody, young and old here, can do. You just have to say, "I am a student of the Word of God. And with the principles I learn, I'm going to play by those principles. I will not open myself up to my sin nature. I will not open myself up to the corruption of the world system that Satan has created. And I won't open myself up to Satan and his demons. My influence is going to come from the Word of God, and I'm not going to be like the people that I associate with.

I encouraged our children on the campout. And when I say children, I'm talking about big husky people. Even the girls are husky. I'm talking about people that have big bodies, but little maturity on the inside. And I told them: "The way I like to live life is to always have the herd behind me. When I look back, I turn my cap around backwards, and I run that way. Then I look back, and when I see that they've all turned caps backwards, I turn mine around to the front again. I'm not going to be identified with the herd.

Now you're not going to have the capacity to do that if there is not a structure of maturity built in your soul. Then you have a Pentagon from which you can do combat. A fully mature, strong spiritual maturity structure carries the believer now to what James 4:6 describes as "abounding grace." And here we ask the super grace (SG) of the Christian life, where God's grace comes pouring into that container, and flowing over. Here's what James 4:6 says, "But He (God) gives a greater (or abounding) grace. Therefore," it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Here in James 4:6, the word "proud" refers to Christians who lack a mature spiritual maturity structure, while the word "humble" refers to those who are living in super grace. The Christian who is at super grace, you'll find, is a very ordinary, common, humble guy. He doesn't put on any heirs. But those who are nothing are proud, and they're the ones who put on airs.

Now, when you have this kind of super grace capacity in your life, the result will be that you'll be enjoying life. You will have discernment. Can you imagine what this is – to be a teenager with discernment? You'll have worthy values. You'll have good taste.

A lady was talking about manners in one of the articles of Dallas Morning News today. She referred to a teacher who had the habit of inviting her class to her home for a meal – a kindness that she would perform. And she found that she was getting tired of doing it because of the bad manners of the kids. They had a lack of good taste, even such that they criticized what she was serving. She served bread to her students, and one kid didn't take it, and she offered him a slice and he said, "No, I've already tasted it, and I don't like it at all. They just had bad manners. And here's a good lady doing a good thing who says, "I've just had a bellyful of this, and I'm not going to do it anymore." But then, fortunately, she revised, and she said that she is going to do it. She's inviting anybody who can come with bad manners, and appreciate what they get, and come with that kind of an attitude. So, she's trying to overcome people who are part of the world system. And they have bad manners. But super grace people – they enjoy great, good manners.

Are you reading the political commentaries today? I find it very interesting – the bad manners of the professional commentators: those talking heads; these guys with the $800 suits; these people who wear Rush Limbaugh ties; and, these people who are the elitists of our society. And an old Irishman like Pat Buchanan comes along, and begins to sound off about protecting the lives of unborn children; letting working people keep the money that they earn as fruits of their labors; and, all the great things that the Bible talks about. And these people are heaping ridicule; calling him an anti-Semite; and, calling him everything under the sun, and you wonder: what did this man do to deserve that kind of treatment? And finally, one of the liberal commentators himself said that he's had it up to his neck of this, and he wrote an article of the bad manners of people commenting on the political scene, and abusing people that they don't like without foundation. Even Ted Koppel had to go back on the air and apologize for something he said about Pat Buchanan's family that was utterly untrue. Also, please remember that what you see on television comes from the wire services. They pick it up there, and then they all repeat it to one another.

So, one of the nice things about being a super grace Christian is that you have good manners. You go through the line at Easter, the smorgasbord table, and you take a few things. You don't take what I saw one kid do: pick up 15 olives at one time. I thought, "The next time, I'm going to stuff a group of olives full of a laxative; and, then I'm going to put it out there to be sure that this guy grabs them since he doesn't have good manners. And I'm going to really give him a blast," so to speak. But there is this whole business of: why do our children not have quality manners? We used to.

If you're a super grace Christian, there'll be a genuineness about you. Nobody's going to have to look at you, and be wondering if you're conning that person. And it's nice to be associated with members of our congregation that you know are forthright and true. Your Christian service will be super. You'll have a spirit of sharing. Kindness will predominate in your life. You'll be a person who trusts God when the going gets tough. You'll get tough waiting upon Him. And certainly, you'll have integrity. You're not going to excuse yourself to compromise your integrity because this is the way you have to get along in the world. You'll have great freedom. And you will have prosperity. You'll have logistical grace, and God's going to give you even more than you ever need to live on. You'll understand economics. You won't be a liberal socialist under the guise that this is compassion to rob people and give it to those who have put you in office by their votes. You'll take suffering and stride when it comes. God may even say, "Okay, I need another Job. Sock-it to him, and I'll show you what a super grace Christian will do when he gets socked with undeserved suffering."

There'll be a capacity to love – not a maudlin sentimentality, but a genuine affection for people that they will know. They will trust you. And they will know that you are a person who will treat them in that kind of love. You will have a family that is a blessing to you and to others. You'll meet the crises of life. You'll have a great devotion to the Lord. Your mission for Him will come first. Those are the capacities that come from super grace.

**Obedience to God**

Out of that life of the super grace Christian, there is also the blessings of super grace. You'll reach the goals that you have in life. You won't have to go to success seminars. Joshua tells you right up in the very first chapter of Joshua: "Do you want good success? Obey the commandments of God, and success will follow."

You'll have a blessing of the money that you need. There'll be a sexual relationship within marriage that will be satisfying. There will be social relationships of people that are very close to you such that only super grace people can relate to one another on a closeness in that way. You'll have orientation in rearing your children. You're not going to let your kids do what you know is not smart for them to do. You're not going to let them get out there and play dangerous games before they at least come to some adulthood. You'll have some guidance for picking people to be married to, that are not dogs, because you got yourself related to somebody of the opposite sex in God's Thessalonian order of: spirit; soul; and, body. And you do not associate with people like two dogs sniffing upon one another, and then wondering why you get into a marriage that turns into a dog relationship.

You'll have family stability. You'll have promotion. You'll have good health. You'll have vitality. You'll have personal fulfillment. You'll have maximum good production. You'll have real freedom. And in short, you'll be a real man, or a real woman.

What's the final goal of moving your life through the grace system of perception towards super grace? 1 John 1:4 shows the goal: "And these things of the Word of God (the commandments of Christ, and the doctrines of Scripture) we write so that our joy may be complete." It is the purpose of God that you should be happy – just as happy as He is. In fact, in the book of Philippians, the apostle Paul says, "Be happy. Be always happy." And he puts it as a command. That's crazy unless you understand that the grace system of perception gives you a doctrinal capacity to be happy. And you'll have happiness that is beyond anything that the world can ever experience. It is God's purpose for us to have our joy made complete. There is no life that's more fun than the Christian life. And the Christian life is a kind of happy life that we are specialists in conveying here at Berean Church, both to our young people and to our adults.

Think of it this way: God is the host. He has invited you into His home. We Christians are His guests. When is God, as our Host, going to be glorified? When the guests are happy. The credit and the honor for their happiness is not to the guests, but to Christ, our Host. When a wife invites people to her home (she acts as hostess), if they are happy and pleased with the evening, it's not a credit to them. It is a credit to her. So, God is glorified and honored when Christians are happy, and when they're successful because they're living by divine standards.

It is not the will of God for you to eat worms for Jesus' sake. And if you are the kind of Christian that wants to prove your spirituality by eating worms for Jesus' sake, well go ahead. But worms generally don't eat worms. You ought to find something better. But that's not the life of joy to which we are called.

So, the greater grace position, is following the full development of a super maturity structure in the soul – that's the normal place that God has designed for the functioning of the believer priest. So, the next time you think you're blue, and you're down in the mouth, you better bring yourself up short, because God says, "Don't do that." Things may be tough, but the best is yet ahead. You have all eternity, and nothing but the greatest, greatest life in the New Jerusalem that you could ever imagine. Just don't scar it up now. It is the place of perfect happiness and of right responses in life – the super grace position. You'll be in the prime of your spiritual life, and you'll have great satisfaction in your temporal life.

The average Christian is totally helpless and disoriented to genuine values. But the super-grace Christian is the one who is enabled to make the power of Jesus Christ come to life in his own experience. On your own, as a Christian, you're helpless, and you're disoriented. But super grace makes Christ the director of your life, and it gives you a royal dignity. And that's what I'm really coming down on. I want to see Christians act with royal dignity. I'm tired of seeing people who have had great opportunity through this congregation, and through this ministry, for example, and then they act with something less than royal dignity, because they cannot focus their minds on where the real values lie. They can easily be dissuaded by the world. Paul says, "Don't be somebody that is blown around with every scoop of doctrine that comes along."

**A Fading Flower**

So, we Christians should remind ourselves that Super grace is the place we want to spend our lives. There's a special crown, by the way, a medal of honor, for those who spend most of their life at the super grace level. That's called the crown of righteousness. But our lives themselves are described in the Word of God as a fading flower, and as a dissipating cloud. 1 Peter 1:24 expresses it this way: "For all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off." Do you want to wait until your flower has fallen off to try to do what is in your power and capacity to do now? You can't do it then.

James 4:14 puts it this way: "Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just vapor that appears for a little while, and then it vanishes away." So, let's live, people, like today is the last day. Do it all now. Make it happen now. Keep yourself focused on what God has enabled you to do, and that will be the guide to what your mission is. A major evidence of the super grace Christian is that he understands that he's a fading flower.

Jesus Christ is free, when we understand this, to take charge of our lives. That's when we are open and pliable to Him. That's when we say, "Lord, how long do I have? How many more opportunities do I have? Please maximize my life? 2 Corinthians 12:10 says, "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.'" You say, "I'm a fading flower. I'm a vapor that is blowing away. When I know that, I know that I have a weak basis for my life here on this earth."

And Paul says, "And when I hear that, most gladly therefore will I rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me." And then, in verse 10, he names factors that relate to the five elements of the spiritual maturity structure, incidentally. Verse 10: "Therefore I am well-content with weakness; insults; distresses; persecution; difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Those five words each relate themselves to one of the facets of the maturity structure. Any Christian who lacks super grace status is lacking in all capacities of service and blessing. These people are generally unhappy. They are grim. They tend to be vicious. They are ugly. They are unfair. They are arbitrary. And they certainly are nosy. They're greedy; they're mean; they're arrogant; and, they're very self-righteous. Being out of super grace is not a very good condition of life.

It all comes down to what you have put into the human spirit. Now, how much preaching have you ever heard on the critical role of the human spirit in the Christian's experience. Most people don't even think about the human spirit. And yet, this is what we're born with that's dead. And this is our only point of contact with God. And when this is dead, we are out of touch with God completely.

Now, when we're born again spiritually, here's where we're born again. We come to life. This is what's regenerated – that human spirit. But we can treat it as if it's dead when we act in carnality as believers. But this human spirit: what role does it play? I remind you that it sends the doctrine to the Christian self-awareness, to produce occupation with Christ. The soul through the mind takes in doctrine. The human spirit enables the soul to breath out truth toward Christ. Secondly, it sends doctrine to the mind of the soul to help develop divine viewpoint thinking. Therefore, it is the human spirit that gives direction to your whole life. It sends doctrine to the will of the soul so that you can obey God. Without doctrine here, you can't obey God. You have no guidance. And I don't care how many seminars or youth rallies you attend, you're going to be as empty when you leave it as when you came.

This human spirit sends doctrine to the emotions of the soul. It does that through the mind as I've shown you. Therefore, your emotions do not run amok. And it prevents the emotions from dominating you. How many people have acted in emotions, in a fit of temper, because they were not under the control of the Spirit of God, and have stormed out of a place of great spiritual blessing, and have harmed themselves for all eternity. And they're always trying to make it up in some patchwork way: little seminars; little rallies; or, little home Bible classes – always trying to make it up. And they'll never do it. The local church and the sounding board of truth – that's where it's at.

This human spirit sets the standards to the conscience. It gives you the divine viewpoint values and standards. Your conscience knows that there is right and wrong, but what is right, and what is wrong? But what is right? What is wrong? Your conscience doesn't know that. That has to be taught by the Word of God. Then your conscience can be your guide.

Then, finally, it's this human spirit that frustrates the sin nature. Without the flow of doctrine through the soul, the old sin nature is going to take control. And at every moment of our lies, we are either under the filling of the Spirit (He's running the life), or we are under the filling of the old sin nature. And when you don't confess sin, then doctrine is cut off, and the sin nature takes over. With the old sin nature in control, the Christian fluctuates between sins and human good, both of which are evil.

Now, I've been promising you for a couple of weeks (just to get you to keep coming back) that I'm going to deal with something particular (and next Sunday morning, we will). We don't have time tonight. But it is important for you to know that if you are a Christian who is at least gone this far, such that you understand the role of the Word of God, and you have developed a spiritual maturity structure, and maybe you're all the way up to super grace – you can take it all apart. That's the answer to why we see people who are terrific: Christians who have served; Christians who are exemplary; and, Christians who have been an inspiration to all of us. And then we see something happen in those lives, and we wonder what happened.

Well, the Word of God is very explicit on the steps and the chain reaction that'll take this super marvelous structure of the grace system of perception to produce this house, or this pentagon of spiritual power – it can all be taken apart. The walls can be breached. The whole thing can be crushed. But it's a simple step that triggers that, and that step is what we're going to make very clear to you next week. And what results is a horrible callous that then grows upon the soul. And we will tell you what that's going to do.

It's a horrible, deadly growth. It's like somebody who looks and sees something very strange growing on their body, only to find that it's malignant. It is a deadly thing that's going to destroy the life. And there are Christians who will permit this thing to grow upon their souls, and they destroy their spiritual lives. It doesn't destroy their self-esteem for themselves, or their self-righteousness. It doesn't destroy their real acceptance even among Christians in certain circles. They don't really know what a deadly thing has taken place that's eating away. And someday, when they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, they'll wonder, how could I have let this happen?

Please remember that the worst thing about not having a spiritual maturity structure in the soul is that everything is backwards. Everything that you think about yourself is backwards from the truth. It's only when you're thinking through the lens of doctrine that things come right. If you're thinking through the lens of the old sin nature, everything is backward. Isaiah 5:20 says, "They call good evil, and they call evil good." Do they do that deliberately? No. They do it thinking that the evil is good, and that the good is evil. That's what happens within a believer's life. And it has horrible consequences. So, the next time we meet, we will look at the road to self-destruction. Dear God, we thank You for this time in the Word.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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