***Yieldedness

Colossians 2:18-19

COL-471***

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Our subject tonight is "The Error of Angelic Worship," segment number 28 on Colossians 2:18-19.

The Laodicean Christians, who have a letter written to them by the Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation 3:14-22, were wealthy believers who lived the lifestyle of Satan's world system, and who thought very little about the Lord Jesus Christ, and about storing treasures in heaven. Jesus exposed them for the shallow lifestyle that they had, and for the lack of divine good works of Christian service. They had material things, but they had very little in the spiritual realm.

**The Prodigal Son**

The Laodiceans were like the prodigal son, which we've been looking at in the gospel of Luke 15:11-32. He was another young man. He was a person who had a great deal in life, but who, in fact, chose to waste his lifespan and his wealth. The younger son decided to take his inheritance. He left home, and went to a distant country so that he could get away from his father, and the family, and the guidance of that father. He fell in with a bad crowd, and was soon out of money. Consequently, he was soon out of friends as well. The prodigal son found that no one would help him in his need now, and he was getting increasingly more desperate for food and the sustenance of life. And he ended up hiring himself out to this gentile in his distant land. And his job was to feed the pigs. And he was feeding them the pods that were attached to the carob tree. And here he is, sharing their food as well.

Finally, the Bible says that he came to his senses. He admitted how wrong he had been. And he decided to return home, and to confess (to admit) to his father the situation. And he realized that he had sinned against heaven; that is, against God, as well as against his father. So, he prepared a speech to say to the father, when he met him. And in this speech, what he was doing was assigning penance to him for treating the father in the way he had. And the basic part of the penance was that he was no longer going to be treated as a son. Now, that was not the way the father was going to handle this. He was going to punish himself, in some way, so as to secure some favor from God. And the bottom line: "Just treat me like I'm a hired hand."

So, we direct your attention to Luke 15:20 – the return home, and the meeting with the Father: "And he (the younger son) got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran, and embraced him, and kissed him." He came to his father following the decision to turn back to the father for the solution for his botched-up life. He couldn't wait to get away from home. He couldn't wait to get away from the discipline and the dignity of the lifestyle of his godly father. Now, he can't wait to get home, because his life is all botched-up. And who knows what kind of thing he's going to bring home now, along with it – the baggage he's going to carry from that life, as so often happens.

Well, the father saw him coming from afar. And, using the analogy here, God always observes us in our carnality, and He's up there in heaven, tapping His foot, waiting for our return, so that we may once more open the door to blessings upon us. And, like our Heavenly Father, this father felt compassion for His Son. God is love and grace is the treatment that that love gives us.

So, the father moved forward and met the son. The son thought that the kind of treatment that he was going to get was that his father would looked at him, and said, "Well, what are you doing here again?" But no, the Father was going to treat him in love. This is characteristic of God. That's the comparison here. Instead, he embraced him: When the Father saw him coming, his heart went out to him. He pitied him for what he had done to his life, and for what he had run off and done all these years, through all the wasted opportunities and material treasures. And he welcomed his son (as God always welcomes a sinner who returns to the way of godliness.

Earlier, in Luke 15:7, Jesus said, "I tell you in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance. Yes, God is interested in those of us who choose to honor Him, and who choose to obey Him. But he is really, really happy when somebody has gone astray, comes back. This is a signal for us (a pattern for us) to have that same attitude. We tend to have a lot of contempt for people who bring down judgment upon themselves. And, yeah, they do deserve it. But grace always pities. That's what grace means.

So, the father was overjoyed to see the son. And he comes to him; he embraces him; puts his arm around him; and, then he kisses him. The Greek word here is "kataphileo." "Phileo" is the word for emotional love. And when you add this preposition "kata" onto it ("kataphileo"), what it is saying is that this father kissed him (and that's what "kataphileo" means), but it is in a tense that indicates that he did it again and again. He showered his son with kisses. He didn't push him away. He didn't just give a perfunctory welcome, like you would give to some stranger – kissing him on both cheeks. He took him into his arms, like the little boy he once was, that he had once held, and whose kisses he had placed upon his cheeks.

Now, this was totally different than what this son expected. He did not expect this kind of a reception after what he had done. He had acted like a dog, and he had ended up with the pigs.

In Luke 15:21, the son proceeds to make his confession that he had prepared. He said, "Father, I've sinned against heaven, and in your sight." He says, "I've sinned against God, as all sin is first against Him, and I have injured you in the process:" "I am no longer worthy to be called your son." After chastening and confession, the principal in the Word of God, of the grace dealings of God, is forgiveness.

**Discipline**

In Hebrews 12:11, the writer says, "All discipline, for the moment, seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful. Yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

The discipline had come upon this young man (having lost all of his material possessions). He had nothing with which to carry on, even to sustain his livelihood. He had had to descend, as a Jew, to dealing with pigs, and having to share their food. That discipline brought him to his senses, and now he is repentant. He goes back to the father, and he makes his confession to the father: "I no longer worthy to be called your son. I've sinned against heaven, in your sight.

However, that was not the treatment that was in store for him. In verse 22, the father interrupts him. He interrupts him because he was now going to add the penance clause in verse 19, to tell the father how to treat him. And his penance clause, in verse 19 was: "I am no longer to be called your son. Make me one of your hired hands. I'll sleep in the bunkhouse. I don't sleep in the family house anymore. This is my punishment. This is my penance."

But the father who is operating on grace, as our Father in heaven operates on grace, says, "No, no. Wait a minute. I'll make the decision, and that's not the decision. We're not going to go for penance." That was improper. Why? Because confession frees the Father to act. Confession puts everything back in proper order. So, the father was able to respond, to interrupt this thing, but then he directed his servants to do something else. He told the servants, "Quickly (on with it – no longer waiting), bring out the best robe. This boy needs a new set of clothes. Look at him. He still smells like the pigs."

The result was that they brought a new robe and put it on him. Then the father put a ring on his finger. This was a signet ring. This ring was what you used to impress in the wax when you made a collection on the family wealth. The signet ring opened the door to having all of the riches of that family again at his disposal. Isn't that interesting? Now he has once more all the wealth that he had taken with him and squandered. The father says, "Everything is in the past. You're back in the family, and you may draw on the father's wealth. You may draw on all those operating spiritual assets for us as Christians, our Heavenly Father says, that are ours when we're in temporal fellowship.

Then he said. "Put sandals on his feet." This was symbolic of the face that now he's walking in a new way. He's walking on a new path. He's back in a position of privilege, and he's ready to start serving me again: "Get the new sandals on his feet. Forget what was in the past. There's a new life before him." That's good to know that, as long as there is life in us, we are never out, no matter how far we may stray.

Unfortunately, this is not always pointed out to Christians, especially younger people, who really botch up their lives, and they go astray – to remind them of what Philippians 3:13-14 say to us. The apostle Paul says, "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind (where I messed up), and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus." I'm back on track. I'm going to make my life count for God. I'm going to put it in eternal service, and in producing treasures for heaven – the upward call, and all the wealth that's going to be there for me in heaven. That's what the Christian has, once he has confessed, and he's out from under the discipline.

Now, what you may have done may have brought upon you certain things that cannot just be blown off again. There may be some lasting consequences, but the discipline will then turn to grace. And whatever the consequence may be: social; physical; or, emotional, God makes it possible for us to bear it.

In verse 23, the father continues. Forget that penance stuff. He says, "Bring the fatted calf; kill it; and, let us eat and be merry." So, fellowship is restored. And how do you express fellowship? Jesus is knocking at the heart's door. Open it up, and we'll sit down and dine together. So, here again, the fellowship is brought on by a meal. And when you get back into spiritual fellowship with the Heavenly Father, what happens? You're ready to start feeding upon the Word of God. You're ready to start feeding upon church-age doctrine. You're ready to start being able to be strengthened spiritually, so that you don't walk as a fool in the devil's world. He said, "Let's prepare the meal and be merry." Once you're in temple fellowship with the Heavenly Father, you can lean back and relax. You can never be happy when you're out of temporal fellowship.

If you haven't learned yet, you will someday. Sooner or later, we are out of step with the will of God. We're out of step with subjection to His authority, and His way of life, and His Christlike expectations, and it's no fun. You will be miserable until you decide to come back.

Now the conditions were right to have a party, and that's what they did. In verse 24, the father explains why this is also important to him – why he's rejoicing so tremendously: "For this Son of mine was dead;" that is, he was in temporal death. He was out of fellowship with his father. He was in the outer circle (of the two concentric circles that we've shown you) that we have. He was no longer in the inner circle of fellowship. He had left that some time ago. He was out here in this carnality circle. Now, he had made his confession, and he was back into the inner circle.

So, what happens? He's under the blessing of God. So, he is now once more spiritually operational. He never died spiritually, but he was completely incapacitated. Now he is functioning on his normal life as a son in that family, as we begin functioning of the normal life which is ours in the family of God. So, that's what he means in verse 24, when he says, "My son was dead in his relationship to the father. He's come to life again. He has made the confession. He has come home. He was lost. He was out in the world, wasting his life." Now, for the Christian who confesses, he comes back into divine good production. He's storing treasures in heaven. The Christian who walks out of fellowship with the father – his life is lost. The rewards are lost. He's wasting his life completely. This son has been found, and they began to be merry. So, he has come back in the fellowship. He's in the inner circle. And for the Christian "to be merry" means to be in a position of that inner happiness that is the result of the Holy Spirit within us.

Times can be very hard on the external. Times can be moments of crises – times where you don't know what the outcome is going to be. But that does not drag you down into a joyless existence. You know that God is in charge. And you know that when you walk with Him, in the light of His word, all will be well. So, the Father said, "We have conditions now that to be joyfully happy as we have this party.

However, in verse 25, we must not forget that there was another son – the older brother. The older son had been out in the field, as always, doing the father's work. He was out serving the father. And when he approached the big house, he heard music and dancing. And he wondered, "What's going on here?" So, in verse 26, he summoned one of the servants, and began inquiring what these things might be: "What's going on here? What's all this music? And what's all this dancing? And what's all this partying about?" And he (the servant) said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he had received him back safe and sound.

In verse 26, when it says, "He began inquiring," you can see those English words in italics, put in there to try to convey what the Greek means. And that is the fact that he kept on asking. The servant told him, "Now, wait a minute. What do you mean? My brother's back, and my father's running a party? What are you talking about?" And he kept asking and inquiring, trying to perceive what was inconceivable to him – that this younger brother, who has squandered his part of the fortune, this wastrel, is back home, and the father is running a party for him.

In verses 28-29, we have the reaction of this older brother. He wasn't about to act with the grace that the father did. He resented very much this kind of a welcome to this brother. So, he became angry, and was not willing to go in to the house. His father, therefore, came out, and began entreating him. He became angry because the sinner had been restored. He should have rejoiced over the fact that his brother had come to his senses.

How often do we fall into this trap of not rejoicing when people realize that they've been out of step with God, and they decide to get back on track, and they show up among the believers, and everybody cold-shoulders them? That is not God's way. He was not willing to go in and to join the party at all. He refused to treat this brother in grace as if this brother, the older brother, might not need that kind of consideration himself someday. So, the father pleads with him to come on in, and to exercise Christian grace, and to exercise pity. He refuses to go in.

The principle for us, as Christians, is enunciated in Colossians 3:13, toward people who have injured us, and who are out of fellowship. The apostle Paul points out our attitude toward sinning brethren who decide to come back to the fold, and who confess to the father: "Bearing with each other, and forgiving each other. Whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so, also should you." So, the principle was: treat other people, when they stumble, and just remember that, but for the grace of God, there go you too. Do not become angry, but become gracious and open to receive them.

The mental attitude sin of jealousy was what the older brother had toward the younger. So, he responded to the father's gracious appeal with his indignation in verse 29: "But he answered and said to his father, "Look, for so many years, I've been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours. And you've never given me a kid that I might be merry with my friends." He probably never asked the father. The father had plenty of lambs. He had plenty of servants to run a party. So, this is not really a very good excuse, saying, "You never exercised this kind of rejoicing over me."

However, look at verse 30: "When this Son of yours came ('this son of yours' – not 'my brother,' but 'this son of yours'), who had devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him." This was an expression of bitterness. And a person who is out of fellowship loses his spiritual perspective. And he says irrational words. What would he want? For great tragedy to come to the life of this brother? Would he be happy if he saw his brother, because of his loose life, pick up a disease, or to become endangered by his friends? . . .

So, he was irrational. That's what happens when you're out of fellowship. What the father did was ultimately none of the older son's business. You are not to judge another person on what they choose to do. But a certain type of Christians hate to be told this. They like to be the Pharisees, and they like to be superior, and they like to pass their judgments. But with God, once is confession made, sins are forgiven. Therefore, they are not to be mentioned again. If you keep mentioning them again, you're back into carnality, and the result is that you don't kick around the person who has wounded himself.

So, he says, "You never killed the calf for me" – a sign of celebration. The result is that he took it upon himself, and he said, "I think we ought to punish him." That's what he was saying. But in the Word of God, the principle is that you have to leave some things to the Lord.

In Romans 14:4, it is not your place to be passing judgment, and to be calling down judgment upon people. Paul says, "Who are you to judge the servant of another? To own master he stands or falls. And stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand." Sometime you are doing good things in the Lord's work, and Christians do not appreciate it. Christians want to beat you over the head. Christians come, and they talk to other believers about your failures, instead of saying, "I'm going to turn this person over to the Lord, beyond what I can do on a human level, and I'll let God deal with them, to bring back, because he's in a better position. The principle of the grace life is to live your life as unto the Lord. And your attack on another person may get you between God's judgment on that person, and his own whip. You don't want to put yourself in that position.

So, in verse 31, the father says to him, very tenderly: "My child, you've always been with me. And all that is mine is yours. It's all yours. You can appropriate what we have in our family wealth." And this is what God is saying: "All the spiritual blessings in heavenly places that are yours, and all the privileges of being in a family of God, they're yours to count on, and to bring down. Why do you need to want someone else to get what he's got coming?"

In verse 32, the Father says, "But we had to be merry and rejoice. We had to have a good time. We had to be happy. Your brother has come home. This brother of yours was dead. In effect, he was gone from us. It was as if he had died. Now he's back. So, he's back alive with us. He was lost. He was wandering around in the wilderness of his own carnality. But now he has been found. We had to be merry, and we had to rejoice."

So, when the confession of sin is used, our spiritual missteps are made right. We get back into temporal fellowship, and we're living again. And the result is that we find ourselves, and our life then begins to have meaning. And no matter how many times it is necessary for us to use the confession principal of 1 John 1:9, God always responds in grace to it. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we admit it to the Father, He will faithfully (every time) forgive us. And what does that do? It puts us right back into all the privileges of the family.

**Yieldedness**

Now, another word for this, that is very common with people, and is in the Scriptures, is the meaning of "yieldedness." What does it mean to be yielded to the will of God? What does it mean to be in fellowship, which is what you're talking about here? Please notice Romans 6:13: "We do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin. Do not use the parts of your body to be used by the sin nature as instruments of unrighteousness, violating the moral code of God (not just sometimes, but not any time), violating the principles of Christian conduct, and violating the principles of grace treatment. Do not go on using them as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead. You were headed for the lake of fire. You are alive from that position of death. And your members (the parts of your body) as instruments of righteousness to God." That's with yieldedness us: "God, I have a brain. You can use it. I have arms. I have legs. I have physical capacity. You can use it."

For many Christians, a long time goes by, and their lives are wasted in the trivialities of life, and they are not there in the Lord's service. And the result is that time goes by. And what happens if you are not on track with Father: "What do you want me to do today?" Then you're saying to the sin nature: "Tell me what to do."

Romans 6:16: "Do you not know that when you present yourself to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey – either of the sin nature, resulting in death; or, of obedience, resulting in righteousness?" Either you will obey God, or you will obey the nature. Either you will obey the principles of your mission and calling, or else you will obey the world's greed and selfishness and desire for things. One is the position of yieldedness, which brings great blessing in time and eternity. The other is the position of selfish misdirection.

God the Holy Spirit is absolute righteousness. He will never direct your life if the sin nature is in control. Do not make that mistake – that you can be out of step with the will of God in your life, but you're still under blessing.

I remember one time years ago at one of our tapers' conferences in California, we had been talking that night about this principle. And I had said that what the Word of God tells us is that someone is going to run your life: either God the Holy Spirit does; or, you do it through your sin nature. And you don't, through the sin nature, run some parts of your life, and the Holy Spirit runs in other parts of your life. It is a clean-cut break. A lady came, after the service, rushing to me, and said, "Do you really believe that it is carnality or spirituality: one or the other? If I were to give you her name, you would say, "She asked you that? Someone of such repute and nationally known? She asked you that? She didn't understand that?" You betcha. Most Christians never even hear about this. But you're either under the guidance of the Spirit of God; or, you're under the guidance of your sin nature. Make no mistake about it. There isn't part good and part bad. He will not share your life. The Spirit of God will not share your life with Satan through the sin nature.

**Walking the Spiritual Life**

There are two negative principles for walking the spiritual life, and one positive one. You should be able to pop these in your mind – zip! If these are obeyed, then you will not make the mistake, and fall in the trap of the prodigal.

**Do not grieve the Holy Spirit**

Here's the first one: Ephesians 4:30 30 says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. The word "grieve" means to sin, and refuse to correct. The word "grieve" means to go into great rebellion against God. This is this is a common condition among church people. In one way or another, they grieve the Holy Spirit. And the moment you grieve the Holy Spirit, He's not running things anymore. He walks off and says, "Fine. Carry on, on your own. That is principle number one: do not grieve the Holy Spirit by sin in your life.

**Do not Quench the Holy Spirit**

The second negative principle is in 1 Thessalonians 5:19: "Do not quench the Spirit." To quench the Spirit means to say "No" to Him. The Holy Spirit lays something upon your heart, and you say "No." The Holy Spirit calls upon you to use your money for something, and you say "No." The Holy Spirit calls you to rise to a ministry in the local church, that you are capable of doing, and you have the time to do, and you say, "No, I'm too busy with other things." Quenching the Holy Spirit is refusing the will of God. You're not yielded. When you grieve the Holy Spirit by your moral breakdown, you, again, are not yielded. When you quench you, you're not yielded.

**Walk by the Means of the Holy Spirit**

Then there is a third one. This is a positive command. This one is in Galatians 5:16: "But I say: walk by means of the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh;" that is, the sin nature. Walk by means of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That's why you have to know the Word of Scripture. That is the basis upon which the knowledge is given to you of how you should conduct your life. If you walk by means of the Spirit, then you'll be yielded.

So, there's the spiritual life in a nutshell. Do not quench Him; Do not grieve Him; and, walk by means of His guidance. The sin nature controls because a believer has yielded to it, instead of to the Holy Spirit. You're not helpless. You make the choice to do this. A Christian cannot be yielded to his sin nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit at the same time. I'm amazed when I see young people, many of them, sometimes, who have grown up in great Christian context and instruction, and along comes an opportunity to grieve the Holy Spirit, and they do it with their immorality. And they quench the Holy Spirit. They have the opportunity to do something that is right, and that God wants, and they say "No." Instead of walking by means of the Holy Spirit, they walk by their sin nature. And all of a sudden, you look, and say, "Well, you look like the world; you smell like the world; you act like the world; and, you are the world. You're a Christian going to heaven, and you're acting like the pigs of the world system?" Well, before you get to feeling too proud, and haughty, and contemptuous about that, remember the other admonition: "Let him thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall."

It is the use of 1 John 1:9 that is necessary to break the sin nature's control in the Christian life. When you're willing to admit to God: where you've grieved the Spirit of God; where you have quenched the Spirit of God; and, where you have not walked by means of the Holy Spirit, then you have entered the realm of yieldedness. You don't act in yieldedness because you have got a bench up here, covered by a military blanket, at which you can come, and kneel, and blubber, and try to get yourself emotionally on track. The sin nature controls you when you walk up to that bench, and it will control you when you walk away.

Again today, I was reminded of the shock that some of our people had in this (not unknown) Bible church in our area where they have six of these little kneeling stools, like you see in Roman Catholic Churches, that are there as mourners' benches for people to come, and to emotionalize before God, so that they can get yielded to Him. You'll never get yielded that way. That is one of the deceits of Satan, which is the result of people who do not explain the Bible. When the sin nature of the Christian is out of fellowship, he is not in a state of yieldedness. This was the condition in Laodicea. With all their good intentions, those people could not make one step toward God. When the Holy Spirit controls, which is what the Lord is appealing to them to return to – the yieldedness, then the Christian is in fellowship. He's in the state of yieldedness, he is in the blessing of God.

So, yieldedness is the result of being in fellowship – being in the inner circle. Unyieldedness is being only in the outer circle. Both are going to heaven. But here's where most Christians spend their lives – in the outer circle of carnality. That's a shame for most Christians. Nobody ever alerts them to it. They don't have the foggiest notion of this. This principle portrays that a believer in fellowship is in the state of yieldedness. The mechanics of getting into yieldedness is 1 John 1:9. The principle of yieldedness is Romans 6:13: "Do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness. Present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead – your members as instruments of righteousness to God." That's the principle of yieldedness. How do I bring about the principle of yieldedness? By 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What is the factor that makes the difference? Your volition – your decision to get out of the pigpen and get back to the father's house. Yieldedness, therefore, is not a onetime experience. In churches that want people to come down the aisle after every service, so they can show what a success they have been, this is one of the things you are invited to do. After the preacher finds that there is nobody who is going to come forward to be saved, then he goes to various other things. Today is Mother's Day. One of the favorite ones (I'm sure – if I were doing this, I sure would use this) is to say, "Those of you who want to promise to love your mothers more, come on down the front." Wouldn't that be a nice separating of the sheep and the goats? "You – how come you're not coming down?" Someone might say, "I don't like her now. I never liked her."

Yieldedness is one of the things they tell people: "Yield your life. Come forward" – like it's a one-time thing. No, it isn't. Every time you step out of line, you're unyielded. When you confess, and admit it, and get on track, you're now yielded. It's not a one-time experience or decision. It's a state of temporal fellowship, and that is maintained or it is rejected. Yieldedness means being in a condition where God can use you in divine good production, and where He can bless you, head over heels, in every which way that you need it, and more indeed, under His grace.

Yieldedness is being willing to do the will of God, before the believer knows what that will is: "I'm going to do what You want me to do. Tell me. "Well, I want you to go to Africa as a missionary." Whoa. I don't want to be that yielded. "Before I know what You're going to ask me to do, I'm going to do the mission. Just cut the orders and let me know."

The Laodicean believers have been commanded to get hot, and to repent of their spiritual revisionism. The Lord Jesus, Who loves His Laodicean sheep, has done His job of alerting them to their condition. And now it's their time to move, and get on the yielded track. The alternative to repentance is mounting divine discipline, maybe to the point of the physical death. No one can reverse their spiritual direction (here, in the Laodicean congregation), except these Christians themselves. They choose the direction.

**Discipline**

Discipline for carnality can only be applied by God. It is not the right of human agents. It is not our business to be bringing pressure on people. Once a believer repents (confesses his evil), it is forgotten by God, and it is sinful for you to remember it. And certainly, and even greater sin is to remind other people of their shortcomings in the past. Evil is never held against a repentant Christian. Evil may be referred to sometimes as an example. We do learn from other people's experiences.

The apostle Paul used himself as an example. He said, "When I was a blinded Pharisee, I murdered Christians" (Acts 22:4, 1 Timothy 1:12-13). He grieved over the fact of how he treated believers, and he thought he was serving God in the process.

David's sin (recorded in 2 Samuel 11) – sins of a murder and adultery, are reminded as lessons for our learning. But God does not remember, in the sense of calling the believer to an account now to pay for some evil act. All of that payment has been done by Christ on the cross. So, if a believer does not confess, and then forgets what he did wrong, and then to move on with the Holy Spirit, he exposes himself to a guilty conscience, and to break up his temporal fellowship again. Attacking other people for their sins (gossiping about their sins) invites a multiple whammy discipline from God. And you don't want to do that.

So, we come to the end of the story. In Revelation 3:21, Jesus says to these people in Laodicea, after having invited them (knocking on their door) to open their hearts' door: "He who overcomes." The word 'overcomes' is 'nikao,' which means 'to conquer.' The people in the Bible to whom "the overcomers" refers, is Christians.

1 John 5:4-5: "For whatever is borne of God overcomes the world. And this is a victory that has overcome the world" – our faith. The overcomers are born-again people. That's what you're called by being born-again: "And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" So, the overcomer isn't some superior Christian. He is one who has *become* a Christian.

He says, "He who overcomes (the Christian who is born-again) – I will grant to him;" that is, I will give something to him. What? "I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne" – to sit down (to be seated) on this throne in a position of victory. It refers to "My throne." This is not the throne of God the Father in heaven. This is the throne of Jesus Christ on earth, in the Millennial Kingdom.

This is one of the things that was pointed out to his mother when she was told that she was going to bear this child. In Luke 1:32-33, speaking of Jesus to Mary: "He will be great. He will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father, David." The amillennialists are wrong to say that the throne of David is in heaven. No, it isn't. It has never been in heaven. That throne is on this earth. That throne is centered in the city of Jerusalem. And Jesus Christ is going to rule from that throne in the Millennial Kingdom, from the city of Jerusalem, over the whole world.

Verse 33 says, "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever (Israel). And His kingdom will have no end." He will rule this world forever. This whole world is going to be destroyed. He will create a new heaven and a new earth to replace it. And Christ will rule in it. The picture is: "The one who has overcome (born-again), I will grant to him to sit with Me on My throne;" that is, the very special throne that belongs to Jesus Christ on this earth: "As I overcame (the work on the cross, where he fulfilled His mission) and I sat down." When you have fulfilled your mission, which is what happened when a Christian dies, you then sit down. The job is over.

The priests of the Old Testament never sat down. He always had to kill another animal, and another animal: "As I also overcame, and I sat down with My Father on His throne." The word "throne" is the Greek word "thronos," and it means a place of authority. The Father's throne is in heaven, and the Lord Jesus Christ is seated now on that throne, while the Father is preparing this world for the return of His Son. And the time is going to come when the Father will turn to the Son, and say: "Operation footstool is completed. It is time for You to return (the Second Coming of Christ), and to take over the political authority, and the ruling of the whole world from your throne in Jerusalem." You and I, as Christians, because we are the bride of Christ, will be reigning and ruling with Him from that throne. That is another one of the evidences that it is quite proper for us to call you the royalty of God. Matthew 24:44 points out to us that: "The 'LORD' (in all capital letters – meaning 'Yahweh,' is the most sacred name of God), said to my 'LORD,' (here again, the word 'LORD,' in all capital letters, quoting David), 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet:'" "My LORD, the Father (the LORD God (Father)), said to my LORD (God the Son), 'Sit at My Right Hand (here in heaven), until I put all your enemies (at the end of the tribulation) under your feet, and they become your footstool.'"

So, the story of this letter closes on a very high note – a victory indeed. And it's all going to come to pass in exactly that way. And we are going to be part of it, and we should remember that.

Verse 22, in the last part of the letter says, "Wake up. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches."

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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