***Praying for Evangelism
RO132-01***

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Please turn to Romans 10:1-4. Our subject is "True and False Righteousness," and this is segment number two.

**The Jews**

The apostle Paul begins Romans 10 with an expression of his great desire for the salvation of his fellow countrymen, the Jew. The Jewish people, in Paul's day, as today, have followed their rabbis in rejecting the claims and the evidence of Jesus Christ – that He was their promised Messiah Savior. The God-Man Jesus Christ was sent to the Jews by God to save them from the lake of fire, and to gain for them entrance into heaven as had been promised to their progenitor Abraham, through the death of the sinless God-man Jesus Christ on the cross while bearing the sin of all mankind. The death penalty for sin has been paid. And God's justice, which demands death for sin has been satisfied in our behalf.

Thus, God was able to offer salvation as a grace gift to every Jew who trusts in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in his behalf. But the Jews, instead, chose to reject God's grace offer, and instead, to seek a salvation that they would produce by their own good works, and of all things, trying to keep the 613 requirements of the Mosaic Law.

Paul has a great concern for the unsaved Jews. He stresses his solicitude for the Jews because Paul is going to say some things now that are not going to be kindly received by the Jewish people. His concern for the lost Jew, however, reflects God's attitude toward the unsaved – for example, in Ezekiel 18:23, Ezekiel 18:32, Ezekiel 33:11 and 2 Peter 3:9. So, the Bible, in both testaments, is very clear that God wants people to go to heaven. And Paul is reflecting toward the Jews this same concern. A burden for the lost is what is produced in a believer by God the Holy Spirit. It is Paul's love for the lost Jews which compels him to warn them of their destiny without Jesus Christ.

So, Paul's first step in his concern here for the Jews, and trying to see that they come to Christ as Savior – his first step, in his deeply felt desire, he says, was to pray for them. And how tremendous is the power of prayer? The apostle Paul is right on track when he says, "The first way to turn people around is through prayer."

**Trust in Christ as Savior**

So, in the last session, we reviewed the basic biblical principles of prayer that are the guiding principles for attaining spiritual goals. There are many elect unbelievers (people that God has chosen for eternal life) who have yet to be led to Jesus Christ as Savior. And it is the prayers of believers that do that. It is prayer that turns the Holy Spirit loose to bring conviction in the heart of a person who is a lost person, and to bring him to Christ. You don't just evolve because you happen to be born in a Christian home. There comes a time in your life when you face the structure that we reviewed in the last session, and you say, "Yes, it is true. And it is not only true, but I'm going to trust Christ for this salvation."

**Don't Add any Works for Salvation**

However, I must warn you that if you had one single thing in the way of a human work: if you add your water baptism; if you add the Lord's Supper; if you add your church attendance; or, if you add your good moral life, you will go straight into hell. It's Christ plus nothing. That's what it means to be saved by grace. Grace means that it has to be uncontaminated by any human contribution, which is always a contamination from the sin nature.

**Why do we Pray?**

I'm surprised how many Christians have not caught on to that, and therefore, they present a contaminated gospel to somebody who really wants to know how to go to heaven. Prayer is the key to making a true presentation of the gospel work. 1 Timothy 2:1 points this out: "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men." These are prayers for all mankind. Verse 4 tells us specifically God's objective in our prayers: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." That's why we pray – so that people will believe the gospel. They're not going to believe the gospel because you ask them to make a public move, or you harass them, or harangue them, or try to get them with some emotional story. They're going to be saved because God the Holy Spirit opens their eyes, and they say, "That's what I needed," and they accept it. Therefore, prayer is a major element in our work of salvation.

**Praying for Evangelism**

Let's review a few of the things that the Bible says, therefore, in the process of our person witnessing, and in the process of witnessing to the lost, and saving them from the lake of fire, we should pray for.

1. **Pray for Laborers**

We should pray for laborers. Luke 10:2: "Therefore, said He unto them (Jesus speaking), 'The harvest (of unsafe people) truly is great, but the laborers are few. Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest.'" The context of this verse is the evangelistic ministry of Jesus in Galilee. The Lord Jesus Christ has sent out advance teams of witnesses, two-by-two to various cities to prepare the way for him. He's going to follow these advanced teams as they go about presenting the work of Christ as the promised Messiah.

We note in Luke 10:1: "After these things, the Lord appointed another 70 also, and sent them two-by-two before His face, into every city and place where He Himself would come." So, the advanced teams have gone out, and Jesus says, "Pray that many more would follow you. There's a tremendous harvest of unsaved people who have to hear the gospel, or they're never going to get to heaven. And they'll never hear it unless somebody gives them that information. The work of evangelizing the lost is so great, it requires an unlimited supply of witnesses. The supply of witnesses is to come from all of you Christians. It is not to come from a select group of clergy.

Christians require a divine motivation to seek out the unsaved. And that's what we're asking God to do – to motivate Christians to seek out the unsaved. Romans 1:14-15 present the motivation that the apostle Paul had. He said, "I am debtor, both to the gentiles and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in Me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. The New Testament Christians were accused of turning the New Testament world upside down. They changed society. How? Because they got people saved. When people are saved, they know how to function on God's thinking. And then things change.

The Christians who pray for laborers to be raised up to evangelize, however, should be aware of the fact that they themselves are part of that team of witnesses. Don't just pray that God would raise up laborers to go out there to harvest those unsaved people without being prepared yourself to know how to present that gospel, and to do the work of evangelism when an opportunity arises for you. Colossians 4:5 says, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are outside, redeeming the time" – buying up the opportunities as they come to.

1. **Personal Protection**

The second thing for which we should pray in the work of evangelism is to pray for personal protection – for your personal protection as you go about as a witness. Romans 15:30-31: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and have the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Paul says, "Please pray for me in my work of evangelism."

Verse 31: "Why? That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted by the saints."

Paul answered this in 2 Thessalonians 1:4. Paul says to them, "We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure." Paul says, "I am pleased to know that you stand up under the attack." What were they standing up under? They were standing up under the fact that they were preaching the gospel. They were explaining to people how to go to heaven, and the society in which they lived hated that. People do not appreciate being told that they are doomed to an eternity in hell without Christ. And they will even seek to do you physical harm in the process. It is not uncommon for missionaries to pay with their lives, in some primitive societies, when they try to bring the gospel. But do not think that people will not try to do you personal injury – if not physical, then in other ways, because you are a Christian who is proclaiming the gospel.

Acts 5:40 says, "And to him they agreed, and when he had called the apostles and beaten them (these are the authorities in Jerusalem, dealing with the apostles who are preaching salvation through Jesus Christ)" Gamaliel says to them, "You better go easy with these men, because I'll tell you, if they are really talking from God, you're going to be in big trouble if you resist them. But if they are not talking from God, they're going to evaporate. They're going to dissipate. Nothing will come of what they say. So, I would suggest that we just cool it, and let off this pressure." That's what they meant – that they agreed with Gamaliel's good advice. But they couldn't restrict themselves from beating the disciples.

So, they agreed: "They called the apostles and had them beaten. They commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." So, how did the apostles feel about this? Did they knuckle down?

Verse 41 says, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name." And what did they do? Get quiet?

Verse 42: "And daily, in the temple and in every house, they did not cease to teach and preach Jesus Christ." But they were well aware, as most of us never will be aware, that our very physical relationship in life is under threat because of the gospel message. The witness faces this kind of harm. The opposition to the Christian witness is especially severe from those who have a false plan of salvation. And I think that you can understand that. When you tell a Jew, who is very faithful to his Jewish ritual, and say, "You're never going to heaven by this system,” he is so incensed that you would suggest that, that he's ready to tear into you. His system of salvation is false, and he will do anything he can to cut you down.

If you go to a Roman Catholic and say, "If you believe the plan of salvation that the Roman Catholic Church preaches, which is a works plan of salvation, you will never go to heaven, from the pope on down," they will react with rage. But you must be aware of the fact that that is true. No Jew ever goes to heaven. No Roman Catholic who believes the Catholic system of salvation by works goes to heaven. And when you tell them that, those are the people who particularly will seek to do you harm.

Acts 17:5 says, "But the Jews who did not believe moved with envy, and took unto them certain vile fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people." Here at Thessalonica, the Jews create a riot, and try to cause problems for a Christian man who is supporting the apostle Paul's ministry – the Jews, who are being condemned by Paul's message.

Acts 17:13: "But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the Word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the people." Paul finally had to get out of Thessalonica. He had to go to the next town down the road, which was the city of Berea. And when the Jews back in Thessalonica heard that they were preaching at Berea, and people were listening, they weren't satisfied. They came from Thessalonica to cause trouble in Berea. That's how they hated the true message. It was these Bereans, who were so responsive to the Word of God, that our church was named after. It's Acts 17:11, which says, "These (the Jews at Berea who listened to the gospel, and considered what Paul had to say) – these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word of God with all readiness of mind." That's our number one principle at Berean church: "We receive the Word of God with an open mind to Scripture, and search the Scriptures themselves daily whether these things were so."

They gave Paula hearing, and then they looked to the Scriptures, and they compared what he said, and they said, "Yes, that's true;" or, "that's false."

A very fine speaker who has dealt with the inroads of psychology contaminating Christian viewpoint, trying to apply psychology as a Christian expression, spoke at a very large Bible church in Dallas and condemned the practice – many of the evils that come from psychology into Christian concepts that are totally anti-biblical, and the official board of that church said, "You must never again speak in this church." And he's a well-known speaker: "You will not be allowed here again because you have spoken against our Christian psychologists in such a way."

The Bereans here said that: "They received the word with all readiness." They listened: "I'm not going to button him up. I want that pulpit to tell me. But then I will look in the Scriptures and see whether that is true or not, because God will hold me responsible for what I hear that is the truth.

So, those who do not want to hear the truth will not want others to hear the truth. The enemies of the gospel will seek to frustrate the efforts of personal evangelism by all kinds of means that they can. They won't listen, and they'll prevent others from doing so if they can. People who seek to silence God's witnesses are irrational in their resistance to the Word of God, so they cannot be restrained by either their conscience or by reason.

The enemies of God's witnesses, furthermore, actually believe that they are serving God. And you remember that that's what happened in the New Testament church. John 16:2 said, "They shall put you out of the synagogues. Yea, the time will come that whosoever kills you shall think that he is doing God's service." So, when you go out with the gospel, just be prepared that people are going to oppose you in various ways. And those who are the religious crowd, who think they really understand where God is, and how to get to heaven, they (with a false system) will be the ones who hit you the hardest.

1. **Opportunities to Present the Gospel**

The third thing we have to pray for in the process of evangelism is opportunities to present the gospel. This has to be opportunities that God has prepared as the result of our prayer, so that people are ready to hear the gospel. Colossians 4:2-3 present it in this way: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ for which I am also in bonds. Paul wrote Colossians while he was in imprisonment in Rome. And he said, "Pray that God would give me open doors in which I may present the gospel, and that I'll have the opportunity to speak." Christian witnesses need lost people who will listen to the gospel. It is God the Holy Spirit who opens those doors of opportunity.

Where do you get them? Well, they're in your normal contacts of life. You're down at the grocery store. Something opens up. It's in your employment. It's in your business. It's in a time of sickness. It's in a time of your social relationships. It's in the time of recreation that you are sensitive to seeking to open the door to presenting the gospel. Now if God does not open the door, you're not going to have an entree. And prayer is what makes that opening. Christians need the provision of a smooth opening for presenting the gospel. God the Holy Spirit prepares the lost person to listen to your message, and to believe the gospel.

1. **Pray for Boldness**

It is self-evident that we must pray for boldness. Here in Acts 4:29, that is pointed out to us. For many people, it is not easy to talk to unsaved people about the gospel. It requires a certain poise and boldness on our part to be able to do this. That's why knowing the structure of the bad news / good news approach makes it so much easier for you to talk without stumbling and mumbling.

Acts 4:29 says, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word." Early in the church, the religious authorities came down upon the disciples, and here the disciples pray that God would give them boldness: that they would not be intimidated; and, that they would not back off because they are threatened by the authorities.

Ephesians 6:19-19 reinforces this same idea. In verse 18, Paul says, "Pray always with all prayer." And in verse 19, he says, "And for me (that is, pray for me), that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth only to make known the mystery of the gospel. Pray for me that I will have the courage to present the gospel." Christians can be intimidated in their witnessing, because they may be speaking to a person of great importance, or a person of great status. That will intimidate you. Or it is somebody who is all so indifferent, or somebody who is so condescending, or somebody who ridicules. It's hard to keep coming with the gospel to that person, and to do it boldly. You have to be prepared for being treated with resentment. You have to be prepared to be treated with rejection.

God can give the Christian, however, great poise in the face of all of it. We Christians have the truth about Jesus Christ from God's word, the Bible. We know what we're talking about. Therefore, we have no reason to be hesitant in speaking the gospel to the blind and lost humanity. We need to pray that we will have that courage.

Acts 4:13 says, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled. And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." People were impressed, even though these were ordinary fishermen. They listened, and they said, "These men know what they're talking about. They speak with the authority of God."

1. **Clarity**

Then in the fifth place, we Christians, in the work of evangelism, have to pray for clarity. Here's where the devil comes in. If you cannot keep your mouth silent concerning the gospel, he will give you a confused message so that it doesn't do any good when you talk. In Colossians 4:4, Paul says, "That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak." The word "manifest" means "clear" – that I may make the message clear the way I should. The gospel message must be a grace message, not tainted by the addition of human good works or religious rituals.

When somebody asks you how to go to heaven, don't come up with that nonsense: "Well, you have to live by the golden rule. You have to keep the Ten Commandments." None of that has anything to do with going to heaven. That's all man doing something. Going to heaven, a true gospel says, "I've got a gift from God. If you want it, you can have it. But if you add one thing to it, you don't have it.

Can you imagine how many congregations, who believe in salvation by water baptism, as well as what Christ has done – how many congregations are all going to be in hell together when they open their eyes on the other side, and they look at one another and wonder, "How did this happen? We who gave our money? We who are active in church. We who were engaged in all kinds of Christian enterprises. And here we are in the lake of fire, because we added something to what Christ has done?"

Romans 11:6 says, "If it's grace, it's not of works. If it's works, it's not grace." You can't mix the two.

Ephesians 2:8-9 days, "You're only saved by grace. It's got to be a gift, or you can't have it."

So, make the message clear. The Bible is very clear about the gospel. And it's very clear about what the lost is to do with the gospel. So, it's inexcusable for us to be conveying a garbled message. There's no excuse for that. If Satan cannot keep you from speaking, he will try to confuse the message so that you are ineffective.

The unsaved person already has a very hard time accepting the idea of a free grace salvation instead of one that they earn in some way. The average person has a very difficult time, not only accepting a grace salvation, but believing that he can keep it. They say, "Ah, sure, you might get saved, but tomorrow you're out – none of this once-saved, always-saved.

**Being Born Again**

It was so wise of the Lord Jesus when Nicodemus wanted to know: what is it like to be born again? Do you realize all the comparisons Christ could have made – all the analogies? And what did He say? It's like being born again. It's like the birth process. Why did he use that illustration? Because the Lord was, at the same time, emphasizing that you cannot reverse it. You cannot reverse a birth process. Once a child is born, you can't get him unborn, which Nicodemus recognized. He said, "Wait a minute. How can you get unborn?" You can't. And when you got born again spiritually, you cannot get unborn again. It's a once-for-all deal. It is a terrible thing to insult God by telling Him that you've got some kind of sin that He couldn't cover. And that's what you're saying. You can do something after you're saved that will take you back out of the family of God. How wonderful it is to read John 10:28. Jesus says, "You're in the Father's hand. No man can take you out of My hand."

1. **Pray for the Spread of the Gospel**

2 Thessalonians 3:1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us: that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified even as it is with you." The Word of the Lord refers to the gospel here. "Free course" means "to spread rapidly/" "Be glorified" means "to be honored with a positive response by those who hear it." And the means for spreading the gospel is primarily individual believers.

Romans 10:13-14 make it clear that you have to have someone tell you the gospel: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Whosoever trusts in Christ is what that is saying. Verse 14 says, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher (that is, without a communicator)." That's where you Christians come in. It's a chain reaction. Without a communicator, there's no way for a person to get into heaven. He has to know the gospel, and he has to know what to do with it: to believe it; and, to trust in Christ. This is the principle that we like here at Berean Church: Every heart without Christ is a mission field. Every heart with Christ is a missionary." That's the principle on which the Scriptures operates.

We Christians have to choose to respond to God the Holy Spirit – to tell the gospel in all parts of the world. We have to respond to His opportunity and to His leading of us to be the communicators of that gospel. And that's the wonderful thing to Christians in the New Testament church did. After their persecution scattered them, we read in Acts 8:3-4: "As for Saul (this was the apostle Paul before he was saved), he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." When the Christians were scattered, they took the Word of God with them.

1. **Pray for the Lost**

Finally, we pray for the lost people themselves. And that's what we see in Romans 10:1, where Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.

In 1 Timothy 2:1-4, we've already looked at that. That prayer for the lost is what God calls us to do. Lost people who hear the gospel have to believe it. That means that they have to trust in Christ to be saved. Christians are to ask God to save the people that He has chosen for eternal life. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts them of their guilt, and who brings them to responding to the gospel message.

This is what the Lord was pointing out in John 16:8-11: "When He (God the Holy Spirit, in this context here) – when God the Holy Spirit is come (as He did on the day of Pentecost), He will convict the world (the unsaved world) of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

**Sin**

“He will convict the unsaved world of sin because they don't believe on Me." It is God the Holy Spirit Who suddenly turns an unbeliever's heart to terror as he realizes that he's going to face a holy God if he does not believe in Christ.

**Righteousness**

"He will convict the world of righteousness because I go to My Father, and you don't see Me." It is a terrible thing when a person finally realizes that what God wants from me to get to heaven is not a righteousness that *I* produce. That's relative. I'm better than you, and you're better than he is. But that's not going to make it. It is an absolute righteousness, as good as God is, which you can only get by having it imputed to your credit by Jesus Christ. It is at salvation that God imputes the credit of absolute righteousness to us. That's what the Bible means when it says, "We are placed in Christ." Then we are as good as Jesus Christ in God's eyes.

**Judgment**

Finally, "He will convict the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." It is the Holy Spirit that makes it clear that Satan is judged, and that there is a lake of fire created for Satan and his angels. And you'll be there if you do not accept this option.

So, praying for the salvation of the Lord is at the heart of personal evangelism. And Christians who pray for the loss must be prepared to take the message themselves. So, there is the basic burden that is upon us, and which was behind Paul's statement in Romans 10:1 about his praying for Israel that they might be saved. This is what he was specifically praying about.

Now let's move on to verse 2, where Paul makes this comparison between a true and a false righteousness. Paul says, "For I bear then the Jews witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." Paul says, "I'm bearing a personal testimony. He actually uses this word in the Greek Bible. It's "martureo." This is a legal term. This is what you do in a court of law. And the New Testament Bible says, "In a court of law, you're standing up there, and I'm giving you a testimony, and I'm, in effect, saying, 'So help me God, this is true."

**A Zeal**

Paul is giving a true testimony that the Jews have got something. And what they have, he says, is "a zeal." The Greek word looks like this. It's the Greek word "zelos," and it's a noun for "a fervent attitude." It's a deep emotional quality. The Jews were God-intoxicated people. They were very zealous for God. They were fanatical in their zeal. They were fanatical in their hatred of idolatry. They had a great reverence for the temple and the ceremonies that reflected the character and the work and the person of Christ. They were devoted to the Mosaic Law, and they hated Christianity and Jesus Christ with a vengeance. You could not accuse the Jews of not being zealous for God as they understood it.

However, then comes the word "but." This is an interesting Greek word "alla." There are two Greek words for "but." There is a weak one, but this is the strong one. Paul says, "But listen to this: Not." Then he uses another strong word. There are two words in the Greek word for "no." There is a light word for "no," but there is a strong word for "no:" "no exceptions." He use the strong one. He said, "I bear them witness that they have a great, deep zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."

**Knowledge**

Now we hit an important word: "epignosis." We've had this before. There is another word for knowledge. It's "Gnosis." There is a very important difference between these two words. The word "epignosis" is in contrast to "gnosis." "Epignosis" is true, full knowledge properly applied. "Gnosis" is knowledge that you may have, and that you may improperly apply.

**Body, Soul, and Spirit**

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we're told that human beings are made up of three elements, it says, "And the very God of peace," Paul prays, "sanctify (sets you apart to godliness, he means) you holy. And I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Every one of you sitting here today has a body. That body gives you consciousness of the material world around you through your five senses. Every one of you sitting here has a soul. That soul provides you with consciousness of other people. As we researched this in the Bible, we discover that the soul has three parts. It has an intellect; it has emotions; and, it has will. That's what a soul is: intellect; emotions; and, will. Then we're told that you have a human spirit. This is what provides man with God-consciousness through a regenerated human spirit. When you're born into the human race, your human spirit is dead. That's what takes you to hell. You have a dead human spirit. And that's why you can't produce any works from a dead human spirit that God would accept for your salvation. There's no way out of it. That's why God had to come in and get the solution.

**"Gnosis" in the Soul**

Now I want you to notice something very quickly. What the Jews' problem was, was their lack of "epignosis." Let's just look at the soul. The soul has a mind; the soul has emotions; and, the soul has volition. Volition has a positive side. Volition has a negative side. You also have a human spirit. In some means, as is happening this morning, you are instructed in the Word of God. You are private here in your own mind. You're listening. You're hearing. You're learning Bible doctrine.

**The Perceptive Mind**

That comes into the quality of your mind which we call the perceptive mentality – the perceptive mind. That's where you learn, and that's "gnosis." You have received a great deal of "gnosis" information today. This is understanding doctrine, which is given to the Christian who is filled with the Holy Spirit; that is, all of your sins are confessed, and God the Holy Spirit is able to teach you. He enables you to understand what you have been taught. This is no use to you yet. You have some doctoral information. You have some salvation information. It is no use to us yet. That's "gnosis" information.

**"Epignosis" in the Human Spirit**

However, you may believe it, and say, "Yes, that is true. That's what the Word of God teaches." If so, then God the Holy Spirit transfers that (that's an act of faith) down here into your human spirit. I'm talking about you as a Christian – a living human spirit. And that's where this "epignosis" comes in. Now what was just information becomes usable knowledge that you can live by. The "gnosis" is nothing. This is all the Jews had. They had all kinds of information, and Paul gave them information. But they wouldn't believe it. And because they wouldn't believe it, they had no basis for understanding full knowledge – true knowledge. And what happens when you have this "Gnosis" information? In other words, when you believe it, you have fulfilled what James 1:22-24 admonish us to do. You know the passage. James says, "But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only." This is a hearer of the Word. When you believe it, now you've become a doer of the Word. Now you've got something to work with in your relationship to God.

For James says, "If any man be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like a man beholding his natural face in the mirror. For he beholds himself, and goes his way, and immediately, he forgets what manner of man he was. James says, "It's like somebody with a dirty face." You look in the mirror, and you say, "Oh man, do I look terrible?" And you go away, and you forget it. That's "gnosis." You didn't do anything with the knowledge because you didn't really believe it was there.

**The Directive Mind**

So, now when you go positive toward the Word of God, that knowledge there is information transferred into your living human spirit, which has all kinds of compartments – categories of truth about all kinds of information from the Bible. This is where you're keeping it. And at certain points in your life, when it is necessary, God the Holy Spirit comes in, and He cycles that information up here into your directive mind. The directive mind is the place from which actions are made. And now, in your human spirit, this full knowledge comes up here to become valuable information.

Let me show you. It is a Job 32:8, for example, that we are told that God teaches our human spirit His truth: "But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding." Job Understood this. Job said, "There is a human spirit in man – a regenerated spirit. And it is God who gives spiritual understanding to that spirit. When you have that, you have this "epignosis" knowledge.

Romans 8:16 says this: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." It is God the Holy Spirit who teaches our human spirit that we are born again.

Let's compare that to other Scriptures. Proverbs 20:27: "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inward parts." The spirit of man that has God's viewpoint is God's lamp, illuminating his life, and telling him what to do, and guiding them.

Compare that to Psalm 18:28: "For you will light my lamp. The Lord my God will lighten my darkness." Proverbs says, "The spirit of man acts as God's lamp." The psalmist says, "It is God that lights the lamp." Here is God lighting your lamp of illumination so that you have tremendous capacity now to think like God; to feel the way God feels about things; and, to act like God. That is the power of a human soul under the control of a human spirit, alive to divine truth, because somebody has taught you Scripture.

**The Belt of Truth**

Incidentally, Ephesians 6:14 talks about the Christian's belt of truth. That's this human spirit filled with doctrine.

Now you have a circumstance, some issue in life, and up cycles the information you need on how to act in this case. You are faced with a moral question. Up cycles information from the human spirit where you have stored what God has to say about that point of morality. And you know exactly how to act, and your directive mind takes action. Your directive mind itself gives information here to your volition, and your volition goes for godly action. From your human spirit, the information about that moral issue goes to your directive mind, which is going to take action. The directive mind hits the positive side of your volition, and godly action is the result.

**Joseph**

This is what happened to Joseph when Potiphar's wife wanted to lead him into immorality. He said, "How can I do this great sin against God?" What was happening? Joseph had been given information. He believed it. It was stored in his human spirit. When Potiphar's wife faced him with that temptation, up from his human spirit came information from the Word of God to his directive mind, and his directive mind signaled his positive volition, and he took the godly action of beating it out of there.

**Your Emotions**

This "epignosis" knowledge in the directive mind will create a divine viewpoint up here. It will create that as a frame of reference for making your decision. It will give guidance to your conscience. Your conscience is no good unless it is conscience guided by the Word of God. It will establish godly values and standards. And it is the spiritually enlightened directive mind that sends divine viewpoint guidance to the believer's emotions. Here are your emotions. Your emotions deal with spiritual things. They deal with temporal things. Here from the directive mind – information from the directive mind tells your emotions how to act, so that your emotions do not run amuck, and you don't feel the wrong way about things.

Our society today, politically and socially, is filled with wrong feelings about all kinds of subjects. Why? Because people have emotions that are not compatible to doctrine. When the Word of God says, "If a man will not work, he doesn't eat," the people of our society say, "Oh, I don't like that. Even if he is an alcoholic; even if he is a bum; and, even if he does play at the racetrack and spend his money, we have to give him something for benefits of welfare." But the Word of God says, "No, you don't." But your feelings toward that are going to be governed by the Word of God.

The Christian with a negative attitude toward "gnosis" knowledge opens his door to all kinds of terrible things. We won't go into that. Ephesians 4:17-24 describe that for us.

However, suppose that you go negative. Now "gnosis" knowledge stops. The old sin nature is lying here like a tiger, and like a lion waiting to pounce upon you. The sin nature gives you information to your directive mind. Your directive mind tells you to be negative. So, here comes a moral issue. You have a worldly frame of reference. The directive mind says, "Go negative," because the sin nature is controlling you. And bingo, you end up with evil actions.

In your emotions, you do the same thing. The directive mind feeds wrong information. You're high on a life that is counting for God and storing rewards in heaven. But along come your emotions controlled by the sin nature, and you do something that neutralizes all that. And you spend the rest of your life pouring yourself down a rat hole.

The same thing happens with temporal things. You don't have the balance that you need to have: "Yes, my prosperity is not going to cause me now to forget how close I was to the Lord when I was not so prosperous, and how powerful was God's use of my life, and the blessings that came through me, and the riches of treasures in heaven that I was accumulating. Now that I'm powerful with some money, I should do even better. However, unless it is the Spirit of God who is guiding those temporal things, it'll ruin you.

So, this, in short, was the problem. The Jews had nothing but this "gnosis," and therefore, Paul says, "They didn't understand about getting salvation by a gift of God's righteousness." And as we shall see next time, they went about creating their own human righteousness, thinking that they had something they could bring to God. This is a way of thinking about these elements that I find useful, and that I think will clarify to you why it is important for you to be in church, and to be instructed in the Word of God, and why you will go far afield if you sit someplace where the Word of God is not being explained to you. You're starting down there. The only way you're going to have that human spirit filled with God's viewpoint, so that your soul can function, is when somebody explains the Scriptures to you. That's what you have a pastor-teacher for, and a local church ministry. Spiritual maturity in the Christian soul is a result of building up this reservoir of doctrinal truth.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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