***Removing the Deceitful Lusts
RO144-01***

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We are studying Romans 11:7-10. Our subject is "The Divine Hardening," and this is segment number five.

**Satan**

Over the centuries, since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been active in promulgating disinformation about God, and about the issue of a sinner's justification before God. One of the earliest Satan-inspired rebellions against God's grace plan of salvation through faith in the Savior Jesus Christ, was Cain's offering for sin of agricultural produce instead of the shed blood of a lamb, symbolically portraying the coming Savior.

**Nimrod**

As the human race multiplied after the flood, Satan led Nimrod to organize mankind into a religion which worshiped the sun as god. We have our introduction in Scripture to Nimrod in Genesis 10:8-10. We subsequently add to that evidences and information from secular history about this man who organized the great culture of Babylon. The religion of Nimrod worshiped the sun through illicit and perverted sex practices. We call this the phallic cults. And the religion was basically known as Baalism. In Romans 11:4, that is the reference we have to the pursuit by the Jews of the worship of the sun, under the phallic cult of Baal. The religions of Nimrod set up its headquarters in the city of Babylon, and from there it permeated the whole world.

At the heart of Nimrod's worship of the sun was a mother goddess and her infant son, who was viewed as the incarnation of the sun deity. This phallic religion of Baalism (and "phallic" means sex religion of Baalism) was practiced secretly because there were large numbers of people in the world at this time who knew the true God, and who actually worshiped the true God. Furthermore, they were prominently led in this devotion to God for many centuries by one of Adam's sons, Seth, who lived a long, long time.

So, when Nimrod came along with his sun-god worship, he had to be very low key and laid back about it. Consequently, it was kept a secret. You were brought into it like you were brought into the occult practice of Masonry today. You came in, and you were given the secrets. People outside were not informed of the inner workings and the inner beliefs. For this reason, the Babylonian religious system that worshiped the sun was called "a mystery religion." The word "mystery" in the Bible means "secret." It was a secret setup.

Now, Satan set this cult of Baalism up, worshiping the mother child goddess, and secretly producing doctrines which were a perversion of the Word of God, and were the creation of Satan himself. This religious system is referred to in Revelation 17:5, which says, "Upon her forehead (upon this false church) was the name written: "Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." All false systems of salvation from hell are the product of Nimrod's Babylonian Mystery religion. That's what Revelation 17:5 is referring to.

Now, Satan seeks to legitimatize his false religions in the eyes of people by giving these religions occult powers which are beyond human capacity, seemingly, therefore, to be coming from the power of God – the capacity to perform miracles, and the capacity to create highly-charged, emotional experiences. This is the basis of the cult system today.

**Roman Catholicism**

Now, the ultimate expression of Satan's occult system of sun worship was, and is, the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church is the product of the absorption into Christianity of the beliefs and practices of Nimrod's Babylonian mystery religion, so that those who follow Roman Catholic worship are, in fact, following Satan. Therefore, they are headed for the lake of fire – not for heaven. They cannot go to heaven following the Roman Catholic system. Satan has created, in the religion of Roman Catholicism, the ultimate deception which, while seeming to honor and worship the true God and to exalt Jesus Christ, is in fact worshiping Satan, who is represented throughout Roman Catholicism by the constant appearance of the circle – the circle indicating the true God that they really worship, which is the sun-god. So, Roman Catholicism is no small thing. It is very serious. It is very big with the devil. And it is coming into enormous prominence worldwide under this present pope, because the world is getting closer and closer to the edge of the precipice that will drop it into the tribulation era, with we Christians off and running to meet the Lord in the air. Things are getting a lot more serious than most Christians have realized.

This past week, if you've been watching the television news, you have seen the sorry state of the President and Mrs. Reagan calling on the chief high priest, the Pontifex Maximus, as he is known. He was known as the Pontifex Maximus in Baalism. He is known as the Pontifex Maximus in Rome today: the pope. It was very sad to me to see those pictures of Mrs. Reagan standing there, dressed in the black garb of death, which characterizes Satan's Roman Catholic system, with its stress on the dead Christ. As a matter of fact, I was struck by the fact that everybody standing in that room (in that audience) was dressed in black except one person: the pope himself was resplendent in white. I could not help suspecting that the symbolism was being conveyed that, here in the midst of darkness, here is this man who can lead us to God. After all, he calls himself the vicar of Christ. He calls himself the very representative and mouth of Jesus Christ on this earth. And appropriately, everybody around him dresses in black, but he is glistening white, because he is, in fact, virtually Christ here on this earth.

If you remember the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, one of the things that struck the disciples when Jesus permitted His deity to shine through, they said, "They looked upon Him, and He wore clothes that were whiter than anything ever seen on the face of the earth." He was clothed in brilliant white because it reflected the glory of God.

The pope has not missed that dramatic point. It is sad to me to see the president of the most powerful, prosperous, and influential nation on earth, the product of biblical principles and biblical Christianity, dignifying the shepherd of eternal death, leading people into hell, the pope in Rome. President Reagan said that he had a conversation with, "His Holiness, the pope." And he found, he said, the pope's ideas to be better than his. Here again, before millions and millions of human beings, exalting this agent of the devil as being the voice of God with great insights.

I listened to an invitation to transcendental meditation clinics, which are being held all over the Metroplex. You may attend the introductory clinics on transcendental meditation, the power to release the deity within you. And when they introduce Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on the television, they introduced him as "His Holiness." Here's this scraggly looking agent of the devil being called "His Holiness," just like the pope. And we have the president of the United States giving him that title. The word "holiness," obviously, has lost all biblical connotation.

**No Boundaries in the World**

So, the world is rapidly being prepared, by this traveling pope, and by the powers of Satan that are possessed by the Roman Catholic Church, to deceive the world, and to accept the Roman Catholic Church as the core of the universal religion of the tribulation under the antichrist. The Bible refers to this universal church as the harlot church because of her spiritual adultery with the Word of God. One of the news reports observed that the pope performed a Mass, in which more than a billion people either saw him on television or heard it on radio all around the world. And the commentator observed, euphorically, that for a short while, as everybody rallied to the pope, there were no boundaries in the world. That's an interesting remark. There were no boundaries in the world. What are we talking about? We're talking about universal religion, folks, and everybody reaching out, not only in free countries, but in communist countries as well. That is the ecumenical spirit of Satan really taking hold.

Do you know what the Mass was for? The Mass was inaugurating the year of Mary, during which the pope will seek to lead all humanity in prayer to Mary, to secure world peace. Now, I don't know how you are, but if that doesn't cause chills run up and down you, and cause you to really become sober about what you're going to do with the rest of the few years you have to live, then you're someplace off in the outer orbit, detached from the real world. The world is gearing up, with intense speed, toward the world religion under the auspices of this pope, who is popular with people who have no religious interest whatsoever. That is just the kind of a person that the antichrist needs to rally all of the religions of the world under one universal devotion to the antichrist.

When the Jews entered the land of Canaan, they found Nimrod's Baal religion of the mother-and-child, sun-worshiping cult in full swing. The moral corruption in Canaan was so great, and the theology of those people were so satanic. The inhabitants were a moral cancer upon the face of the earth, and the enslavement to the occult was so intense that God ordered the Jews, when they went into the Promised Land, to kill every inhabitant. The Lord said, "Don't let any man live. Don't let any woman live. Don't let any child live. Don't let any baby live. This moral cancer is to be removed. Nimrod's religion has taken deep roots. The land is now going to regurgitate them out by your sword."

Unfortunately, the Jews did not completely obey God's directive. And they let some of those inhabitants remain. So, the moral cancer and the false plan of salvation, that Nimrod had invented, survived to plague the descendants of the Exodus Jews. The Jews, therefore, later were themselves engaged in the worship of the sun through Baalism, and in devotion to the mother-and-child cult of Babylonianism. The epitome (the high point) of that the generation into the worship of the sun, under the Baal cult was reached, as you remember, under Ahab and Jezebel. Consequently, God brought severe judgment upon Israel and he removed them from the freedom that he had given them in the Promised Land. This is why the Jew is the dog's tail today. He was a devotee of Nimrod's religion, worshiping the sun. The Jews were followers of what the pope today represents. And finally, God removed them from their land.

Well, with this upon them, when the Lord Jesus Christ came along, they were so disoriented from God's viewpoint they couldn't recognize that their Savior Messiah King had arrived. The Jews' rebellion against God, and their devotion to Baal, resulted in what Paul has described as an intense spiritual darkness, and an intense spiritual hardness, toward God, so that they could not trust in Jesus Christ, when He arrived, and be saved. The Jews took the works; the rituals; the morality; and, the festivals of the Mosaic Law, all of which portrayed Jesus Christ, and they tried to get into heaven by doing these things – a human works plan to secure absolute righteousness. And It didn't work. The Mosaic Law, which should have been a beacon light, guiding the Jews to their messiah Savior Jesus Christ, Paul says, "In fact, became a snare, a trap, and a stumbling block, resulting in their eternal doom in the lake of fire.

**Spiritual Hardness on the Soul**

The spiritual hardness on the souls of the Jews toward Jesus Christ, we found by consulting Ephesians 4:17-19, is the product of a chain reaction. Ephesians 4:17-19 tell us that the chain reaction that brings hardness of the soul against God is this. First, it begins with negative volition to Bible doctrine truth which one has received or ignored. Secondly, the result of that is that the mind of the soul is thereby denied the use of that divine viewpoint doctrinal principle. Third, the lack of divine viewpoint understanding creates a spiritual vacuum in the mind, which is then filled with the spiritual darkness of human viewpoint.

Number four: the person becomes totally alienated from a godly lifestyle. He's indifferent to it. And he learns what the Bible forbids all of us to learn: he learns evil by experience. Romans 16:19 says, "For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad, therefore, on your behalf. But yet I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil." I would have you to be wise unto that which is good. I want you to be smart about what is divine good production. I want you to be up to your eyeballs in divine good works. But I want you to be simple. I want you to be totally without experience. That's what "simple" means. I want you to be without any experience in what is evil. I do not want you to be thumbing your way through the pornographic magazines. I do not want you to be reading the pornographic literature. I do not want you to be looking at things; to be listening to things; or, to be experiencing the things of evil. That brings about spiritual hardness toward God. And it is a dangerous road to follow. So, the apostle Paul says, "These people become totally alienated from the lifestyle of God."

Number five: their minds then are totally under the control of human viewpoint darkness to guide their emotions and their will. There is nothing to guide them. Number six: the facets of their soul are now hardened toward God and toward His Word, the Bible. Number seven: the person then abandons himself to vile, sensual indulgence in all areas of life with deadly consequences. All of that is very clearly delineated in Ephesians 4:17-19.

**You have not so Learned Christ**

We then looked at verse 20, going over to the change to reverse all this, if you have fallen into this trap as a Christian. And in the Ephesians 4:20, the apostle Paul says, "But you have not so learned Christ." Paul points out that born-again, godly Christians did not come to know Jesus Christ, and to grow spiritually by following the pattern of degeneration described in Ephesians 4:17-19. These believers who have grown in Christ (and that's what it means "to learn Christ") who have responded in Christ, were the Jews who were positive to Bible doctrine. They had learned that truth from a gifted spiritual teacher. They did not seek the truth by how they felt about something or by personal experiences, both of which are easily manipulated by Satan. And some people are very determined in their ignorance.

The Word of God, in 1 Corinthians, says, "He that would be ignorant, let him be ignorant." Turn your back on the person who is going to be ignorant. And every now and then, there's an ignorant person who will come down and say, "I just can't believe that God would turn His back upon the charismatics. I just feel that God would not do that." And they express their ignorance and their willingness to be ignorant, and God said, "Let them be." The Word of God does not justify that kind of attitude. The Bible says, "That you do not learn about the things of God through your emotions. You do not learn the things of God through the decisions that you make. You do not learn about the things of God through the experiences, or the feelings, of other people. You do not learn about Jesus Christ, and you do not grow in grace by the therapy of group discussions, which are detached from the authoritative gift of teaching the Word of God."

If you want to be out there, that's fine. But God says, "You do not learn in the little group. Do you know what happens to the little group? It is almost inevitable (unless you have a really solid leader) – that little group is going to degenerate into: "Do you know what I feel about this? Do you know what I think about this? Do you know how this strikes me?" And pretty soon, you've got everybody's ignorance about some passage of Scripture that leads them away from the Lord. And where have done it? Of all things, for heaven's sakes, in a Bible class. Yeah, I'm not too keen on that, but it's OK with me if you at least have enough sense to keep yourself stabilized by being a regular attender at the church services where you get some orientation to be able to spot somebody who's getting off base in the little group of teaching.

Yes, we have been accused of being the big brain technique at in church. I like that a lot better than the big mouth technique of ignorance. And you can make your choice between the two.

Christians in reversionism are spiritually disoriented, and consequently, they're callouses in their souls toward God. Spiritual hardness in a Christian can be reversed by going back to the pattern which originally taught them about Jesus Christ, and caused them to mature.

**You did Listen**

So, we continue this morning in Ephesians 4:21. How are we going to get this terrible indifference toward God flushed out of our soul, once we were foolish enough to let it get in there? In verse 20, we have the emphasis upon the communicator of the word. Verse 21 stresses the recipient of the Word of God. Verse 21 begins: "If so be." This word "if" here is first-class condition. It means: "Since you have done this." What the Ephesian Christians have done is to have "heard." He uses the Greek word "akouo." The word "akouo" here means that you listen, and you pay attention. You've made progress because you listened and you paid attention to Jesus Christ. It's in the aorist tense, which means that it happened at a certain point in time in your experience. And that point in time is when you sat someplace, in some group, mostly in the local church where you had authoritative instruction in the Word of God. It was active because you attended by choice.

Hebrews 10:25 tells us: "Folks stay in church. Don't neglect going to church. Be sure you there every time the doors are open for instruction."

Acts 2:42 says that one of the first things the early Christians did was that they sat around and learned the apostles' doctrine. It is very clear in the Word of God what a Christian should be doing come Sunday morning and Sunday night. And you shouldn't be doing anything else. You should be there for the instruction of the Word of God if you want to maximize your eternity.

This is a statement of fact: "Since you people did listen." They heard the gospel under the filling of the Holy Spirit so that they understood what the gospel message was, and they understood the rest of the full counsel of the Word of God. He says, "Since you have been taught." The word is "didasko:" "Since you have listened to Jesus Christ, and you have been taught." Here again, when were you taught? When you heard the Word of God explained and you said, "Yes, I believe that." And it is interesting that this word is passive. You received this instruction. You didn't invent it. It came to you as the result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who sealed it to your understanding. When you were positive through the Word of God, then the Lord was able to teach our human spirit, and insights were stored for our use.

**You have Heard Him**

It actually says, "Since you have heard Him, and have been taught (not by Him, but) have been taught *in* Him. Jesus Christ is not teaching you. I am loathe to say that I am the vicar of Christ on earth, and when I open my mouth, you are listening to the words of Christ. You indeed are listening to the words of Christ, but not by Him directly, but by an agent who is quoting His words – not one who, like the Pope, can invent words, and say that these are the words of Christ.

So, these people have heard the Word of God. They did it in a group. They had the freedom to believe it or not to believe it. The truth was in Jesus Who has told us in John 14:6 that He is the truth. He is the only way to salvation.

So, the Jews made a very big mistake. They were not taught the truth about salvation. I remind you today that the truth about how to get to heaven is not in Buddhism. It is not in the Jewish rabbis. It is not in Mohammedanism. It is not in liberal Protestantism. It is not to be found in the cults. Going to heaven is a very narrow road, and it's a very explicit path. And it is true that most of the human beings in the world are not going to make it. Those millions upon millions of people that are getting all excited over the pope are all going to share, in all likelihood, his hell together with him.

So, since you have been taught the Word of God in the proper way, and you have heard the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, you are now in the position to reverse the terrible hardening of your soul toward God, which you may have been foolish enough to permit, with all of its terrible consequences and expressions.

**"The Old Man"**

Verse 22 tells us about peeling the callouses off: "That you put off concerning the former manner of life – the old man. This is the old man way of life. When the apostle Paul talks about "the old man," he's talking about that position of death in Adam – that lifestyle which is characterized by sensual self-centeredness. The unbelievers are subject to this place of death in the old man. But believers are not subject to the old sin nature. The Christian, therefore, is told to: "put off this old man:" Put off that filthy lifestyle. Put off that spirit of rebellion against the Word of God. The Greek word is "apotithemi." This word is reinforced with that preposition "apo" here. It means just tear it off. Just get rid of it. At some point in time – it's aorist tense. But its middle voice. You get rid of that old lifestyle. That means it's going to be for your benefit.

Also, there is something else here. It's in the infinitive mood, which tells us that this is the will of God. When you throw the infinitive in, in the Greek, it's telling you that God means that you better do this. Rip that old, unsaved lifestyle off you like a coat. I'll let you look up some Scriptures that deal with that: Colossians 3:8-9; 1 Peter 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:2; 2 Peter 2:2-3; and, 2 Peter 2:18-19. All those express the same idea. Take off that old corrupt lifestyle. Why?

He says, "Put off that lifestyle which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." It's corrupt because of lusts of deceit – because it has desires in it that are going to fool you. These are desires which are excited by the sin nature. And what do they give you? They give you corruption; they give you shame; they give you sorrow; they give you AIDS; and, they give you all kinds of things. It is the deceitful lusts that seem very attractive. And the apostle Paul says, "Once you're a Christian, get rid of that."

**Deceitful Lusts**

Now, if you have fallen into hardness toward God, then you're going to live this way. You will go to the movies you shouldn't go to. You will read the things you shouldn't read. You'll go to any slop that's up on the marquee. You'll go and be entertained by any degraded thing on television that comes along, just because it's time for you to watch it. The old sin nature functions on false values, and that's what Paul means when he says, "Deceitful lusts." The spiritual Christian has a soul which is sensitive to God. So, it's not deceived by these lusts. But this Christian who is hardened toward God – he's a sitting duck.

**How do you Remove these Deceitful Lusts?**

Now, how do you remove these deceitful lusts?

**Confession**

First of all, you learn that that was a wrong road to follow. And if you've down that track of rebellion, against constituted authority in the Word of God, then the first step is confession of that sin. Confession of the sins of this old lifestyle enables God the Holy Spirit, to come back, and to fill you. This state of spirituality will not remove the callouses, but it sets up the condition to reverse the hardening. You have declared that you are abandoning the lifestyle of evil under the leadership of the sin nature. The first step to the road to spiritual recovery is to name your negative attitudes to God. Confess your sins.

**Forge the Sins that You Confessed**

Then I must stress that the second thing is that you forget the sin you confessed. God has forgotten it. Who are you to want to remember it? And why should you? Confess the sin, and forget it. And, of course, do not seek to pursue it again. There is a great error being promulgated which you should be aware of, and you should not fall for. And that is that there are certain sins in the Christian life – there are such gross sins that God treats them in a certain different, unforgiving way. They are said to be sins which are somehow beyond the grace of God. This is a satanic doctrine. And there is promulgated among even some fundamentalists, such that if you are guilty of a certain grievous sin of some kind (as if God had good sins and bad sins), that therefore, you cannot even engage in Christian service.

**Christian Service**

How many times have people who have been divorced come to me with hesitancy and intimidation, when they've come into the Berean ministry? They grow in the grace of God. They've learned about the things of the Lord. And now we think that they are in a position to have a place of Christian service. And the person says, "But I've been divorced." And I say, "Oh, really? So?"

**King David**

I would remind you of King David – who is described as "the man after God's own heart." Boy, he was the apple of God's eye. King David was guilty of adultery. In the process, he was guilty of the murder of the lady's husband. In the process, a baby was born, who died. It was a great tragedy. It was a horrible mess. It was sin bearing its most bitter fruit and consequences. Finally, God broke him, and he said, "Father, I've been a fool. What I did was terrible. I confess it." You can read all about it in Psalm 51. And he came back to the Lord. God said, "You're forgiven." He picked him up; brushed him off; set his feet on the high road once more; and, David went on for 25 more years, which were the most majestic, and fruitful, and dramatic, and divine-good years of his ministry. God never told David. "David, what you've done is so terrible that you cannot be in Christian service anymore. You're out."

Now, there are some fools in the pulpits who promote that. Do not follow their stupidity. I want you to understand that we are talking about peeling calluses off the soul; making us sensitive to God; and, being able to respond, and, out of the depths of our sin, being able to take the high road, and reach the high ground of Christian service and Christian victory once more.

**Spiritual Renewal**

In verse 23, he says, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind." There is to come a spiritual renewal. Where? In your mind. The Greek word for "renewal" here is the word "ananeoo." It sounds like a Hawaiian word. Hawaiian words pronounce all the vowels very explicitly. This word is interesting because it means "to restore something again to top condition."

You have an old junker car. You want to make it a prized possession. You "ananeoo" it. You restore it to prize, prime, premium condition – not just kind of halfway up there, and not just patch it up, but you make it: "Man, like this was new."

This is what the Word says. God says, "You will be renewed (made absolutely back perfect) in the spirit of your mind." The word "spirit" means attitude. It's in the present tense, which means that this will be your constant experience once you turn back with confession, and turn to the Word of God. It's passive voice, which means that God will do this for you as you take doctrine into your soul. And its infinitive, because it's again the Spirit of God's intention. This is the purpose of God for you. The spirit of your mind – that perceptive mind of yours, which was so darkened when you went negative to the Word of God, will now be renewed. You will be enlightened. And you will be inhaling the Word of God into your soul. And you'll be flushing out the blackness in the darkness of human viewpoint. Your human spirit will be able to supply the materials once more, to guide your mind, so that it will not be hard toward God: to guide your emotions; and, to guide your will.

We're talking about this part of the mind which has been darkened – that perceptive mind. You take the Word of God into your heart. You believe it by faith. It is stored in your human spirit. It is cycled back up to your directive mind, where your decisions are made; where it can affect the spiritual things in your life; where it can guide the temporal things in your life; where it can guide your volition; and, where it can guide your feelings. And instead of taking guidance from the sin nature, with all of its human good actions, you'll be taking it from the Spirit of God, and from the Word of God, producing all those divine good actions. This is what the apostle Paul is talking about. He's talking about cleaning this up, so that there's something in the perceptive mind to function for something up in the directive mind.

**A Restored Believer**

Verse 24 describes a restored believer: "And that you put on the new man (the man which is in Christ Jesus – the place of life), which after God is created in righteous (absolute righteousness), and true holiness – that you put on (as you ripped off the old clothing of the old man) now, the new suit of the new man, which is in Christ Jesus." This, again, is middle voice. When it tells you to do this, it tells us that you will do this for your own benefit. The Greek word is "enduo." And that means simply "to put on a coat." When you do this, at some point in time, it's for your benefit. It's infinitive mood again. It is the will of God. I love those infinities. So, you end up being a new man, not a recent baby born, but it means a new man in terms of a new species. 2 Corinthians 5:17 indicates that new creation in Christ Jesus.

So, you have a soul that moves from the chaos of callouses on the soul to maximum happiness in living in the Word of God. This man is described as being made after God: "That you put on the new man (the born-again man in Christ Jesus, with all that characterizes that lifestyle), which after God (which according to God), is created in righteousness" (is created in a righteousness and a holiness of the truth). You will build a spiritual maturity structure in your soul which will reflect the righteousness and the holiness of God.

Only people who walk in the truth of the Word of God have a right to be called "your holiness." Where did the president come off calling the pope (the representative of the Babylonian mystery religion, that perverted system that has led millions upon billions of human beings into hell) to call him "Your Holiness?" The calloused believer, indeed, can come back into the position of holiness, because he is now sensitive to the Word of God once he has abandoned it; confessed it; and, turned back to sitting in church; learning doctrine; and, putting it into effect in his life.

The condition of the Christian whose soul is not hardened toward God is this: His mind is not empty of divine viewpoint. His mind is filled with divine viewpoint. He knows how to look upon the world on things, circumstances, and people. Secondly, his understanding is enlightened. He is not spiritually darkened. He knows the score. Third, he is informed on God's thinking, so that he is no longer an ignorant person. An ignorant person doesn't mean that he's low on IQ. The most ignorant people in the world are very high IQ people. But he is ignorant because of the decision he made. And God says, "That is a fool."

Notice Luke 12:20. That rich man, that you're all well acquainted with, was so prosperous that he decided that there was nothing left for him to do but to live the good life: "But God said unto him, ‘You fool! This night your soul shall be required of you. Then whose shall those things be which you have provided?’" Remember how faithful you were when you weren't very rich, and when you didn't have very many material things. We could always count on seeing you in church: Sunday morning; Sunday night; and, Wednesday prayer meeting. Then when things got better; when you started prospering; and, when God said, "Because you're learning the Word of God, I have to start blessing you." For some of you, I'm going to bless you a lot with material things. Now you're too busy enjoying your material things to be in church. You're too indifferent. You don't need it. You have it made. You're going to eat. You have a place to sleep. You have warmth. What do you need God for? God says, "You're an unmitigated fool, and you'll pay for it, temporally: in your children; in your family; in your marriage; and, in your relationship with other human beings. Boy, there is no place where people are unmitigated fools as it is with their children. I have a hard time sitting on my tongue when I see what I see happening, and what people are doing with their kids.

The Word of God says, "Unless you have the orientation of God's doctrinal principles, you will not be an enlightened human being. And you will be indifferent; you'll be hard; and, you'll be callous toward the things that God wants to do for you, for your maximum blessing. And everybody around you has to suffer.

Finally, for the Christian who is not us, the soul is compatible with God, so that that person is in maximum blessing and maximum divine good production. When the apostle Paul finishes this portion in Ephesians 4, at the end of verse 24, he has now delineated what happens when you get hard against God. He then tells you how to get out of that condition, and get sensitive to God again. Then he goes on. And I'm going to close with an extended passage of Scripture that I want to read to you. And as I read, I want you to know that this is a description of the Christian whose soul is not calloused toward God. This is the description of a Christian who is totally compatible with the will; the mind; and, the emotions of God.

Beginning at Ephesians 4:25, he says now this is the consequence: "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." I'm reading out of the New American Standard: "Be angry, and yet do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger. And do not give the devil an opportunity. Let him who steals, steal no more. But rather, have him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word that is good for edification, according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and slander be put away from you with all malice. And be kind to one another – tender-hearted, forgiving one other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore be imitators of God as we love children, and walk in love just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us in offering and sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But do not let immorality, or any impurity, or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints. And there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, what you're not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty – that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

"Let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them. For you were formerly darkness, but now your light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them. For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

"For this reason, it says, 'Awake sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall shine on you." Therefore, be careful how you walk – not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time because the days are evil. So, then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit – speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

The Word of God is very clear as we apply it to ourselves in that Ephesians passage. The sensitive Christian is the one who is a very distinct kind of person. As, we read that passage, "If red flags fly up and say, "Boy, that's I – that's not the way I am," then that's telling you something about the sensitivity of your soul to Jesus Christ. And I would suggest that we all make appropriate corrections with confession, and to the return of the learning of the doctrine of Scriptures.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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