***The Love System, and Living a Godly Life
RO97-01***

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We are studying Romans 8:1-4. Our subject is "Freedom from Condemnation," and this is the ninth segment in that section.

Romans 8, we have found, is an official divine explanation of how a believer in the church age is to function and to survive in Satan's world. Under the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, Paul has first drawn clear and distinct emphasis upon the difference between salvation and sanctification. So, we found in the very first verse of Romans 8 a statement made which, by and large, is rejected indeed by most of Christendom. And that is that: "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." This statement is telling us that a person does not become saved by improving his lifestyle. A person is not saved on the basis of anything he does relative to how he lives.

**Condemnation**

Furthermore, this statement is indicating to us that once a person is saved, he does indeed develop a godly lifestyle to match his position in Christ. So, Paul, in Romans 8, is going to be explaining to us how to live a godly Christian life, a quality rarely found among church members today – how to live a godly Christian life begins by coming down very hard and very clearly on the fact that we are unequivocally, once for all, born again. If we are in Christ, and that position cannot be reversed. A person who is in Christ, Paul says, is forever beyond the reach of the lake of fire. And that, as we have seen, is the significance of the word "condemnation." The word "condemnation" means that no legal factor can be brought against you to bring you under condemnation, and thus into punishment.

However, the fallen reasoning of man wants to resist this truth by conditioning one's continued status of salvation on one's lifestyle. And, of course, that is completely false. You are not saved by human doing of any kind. You do not continue in salvation on the basis of your human doings. The Bible declares there is no possible ground for divine condemnation against the sinner who has been born again, and at that point placed into the body of Christ, the church, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, before Paul proceeds, in Romans 8, to explain how we may enter experiential sanctification (how we can live a holy life), he stresses the eternal security of the believer in salvation – a salvation provided by grace alone, apart from human doing. Once that issue is clear, then he can proceed to say, "Now this is how you can live a Christian life to the glory of God and to your personal blessing and well-being.

The agent for the divine salvation that we have securely given to us, we have seen, was the unique person of the universe, the God-man, Jesus Christ. And we have studied Him in some detail now.

The problem, however, facing every born again person is that, while he is secure in the eternal life which God has given him as a grace gift, he does come into the Christian life with the sin nature fully intact and fully operational. It is not squelched in any way whatsoever. Therefore, the Christian may permit his life to be under the control of that sin nature, and therefore, himself to be immersed in evil.

**Living a Godly Life**

The Christian who lives by the lust patterns of his sin nature will not lose his salvation, but he will indeed come under divine discipline for that, even to the point of physical death. The objective of the Christian life, then, is to live a life which is compatible with God's standard of righteousness. The question is: how do we achieve that kind of living?

Paul sums up the solution for controlling the sin nature and attaining personal godliness in Romans 8:4, where we begin today. And then, in the rest of the chapter, he explains that in greater detail. Romans 8:4 says, "That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. So, we begin with the victory of the spiritual Christian. The verse begins with the word "that." It looks like this in the Greek Bible: the conjunction "hina." This is a word which shows us that he is introducing a purpose. He is giving us the divine purpose for terminating the authority of the sin nature in the believer. We have already learned from the book of Romans that when you're born into the human race, you are under the dominating, imperial authority of the sin nature, and everything you do is equal in the sight of God, including your humanly produced good, which also flows from that contaminated sin nature.

**Righteousness**

Now we've also learned that God has broken, with the death of Christ, that imperial authority of the sin nature in the life of the believer, and has replaced it with the imperial authority of God the Holy Spirit. Now why did he do that? That's the significance of this word "that." He's going to explain what the purpose of that was. We may translate this simply as: "In order that:" "In order that the righteousness." This is our . . . word "dikaioma" in the Greek Bible. This is a noun. It's a word which here refers to that which, by divine standard, is right. It refers to the ordinances here of the Mosaic Law which actually express God's standard of absolute righteousness.

So, this Greek word, and especially when it ends with this "ma" ending, that tells us something in the Greek language – that we're talking about a result: a concrete statement of a righteous act. He is talking about what God says is right to do, in specific declarations that are compatible with God's essence.

Now we live in a society where people have no hesitancy of assuming to talk for God relative to what is acceptable to God, from salvation on to all the facets of daily living. But the Word of God is very clear that there are some "dikaioma" (some statements of right and wrong) that the Bible is very clear that come directly from Almighty God, and they are the only authority by which we are to be guided.

These words specifically expressed in one place in what he refers to here as the righteousness of the Law. This is the word "nomos," and it here refers to the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law, indeed, while not a means for salvation, was a very clear statement of what God was like, and what we must be able to achieve in order to enter heaven. But he says, "The permanency of our salvation was provided, and the old sin nature's power was broken: "in order that the righteous demands (such as expressed in the Mosaic Law) might be fulfilled." The word "fulfilled" is a very important, significant word in the Bible. It's the word "pleroo." "Pleroo" here means "to be met," or "a standard to be attained."

Now in the Greek language, this is in the aorist tense, and that tells us that this is a point action in the past. At some point in the past, the believer takes the step of yielding to the influence of God the Holy Spirit within him. And the result is that he fulfills the righteous standard of God in his living.

It is furthermore in the passive voice, which tells us that you cannot do this on your own. That is the great mistake that people make. The Word of God is so clear. If this had been in active voice, we'd have some real problems, because that would be telling us that by our determined, self-will, we can produce this. But the Word of God is very careful to put this in the passive voice, which tells us that someone else has to fulfill this through us – namely God the Holy Spirit, fulfilling these divine, righteous conditions and statements of the Word of God.

Furthermore, interestingly enough, this is in what we call the subjunctive mood. This is not often used in the Bible. But the subjunctive mood is something that's possible. It's potential. It's not for real, but it is possible. And what he is telling us here is that there is the possibility for a yielded believer to live up to the standards of God's righteousness. You are almost frightened to think about that. This was what so frightened Luther when he performed his first mass, and he talked about that almighty, righteous God of the universe. He was so staggered to look at himself, holding what he believed at the time was actually the body of Christ in that bread in his hand, and to be so condemned as a sinner that he would dare be in the presence of such a God handling the very body of God.

What he is talking about is the staggering realization that we indeed can, as believers, live according to the standards of God's absolute righteousness. Not we – there is a technique by which this can be accomplished. Therefore, we can "pleroo" it. We can fulfill it. But it’s potential.

In 1 John 1:9, we have this same implication relative to our walk in daily fellowship with our Heavenly Father. It says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all our righteousness." That word "if" – as most of you know, there are four different kinds of "ifs" in the Greek Bible, and you have to know which one that is in order to understand exactly what the verse is saying. Well, that one happens to be the third-class "if," which means maybe you will; and, maybe you won't. So, here again, is that subjunctive mood, even in our confession of sin. If you do it, tremendous consequences will be there. If you don't do it: tremendous losses.

**Carnal Christians**

So, it is potential for God's standard of holy living to be experienced by the believer. And he says that specifically is "in us," referring to a specific segment of the family of God. Not all Christians are included in this: "In order that the righteous standard, such as expressed in the Mosaic Law might be attained in us" – a certain category of the Christian family. The biblical standard of righteousness is indeed not attained by all believers. There are carnal Christians who live all their lives under the guiding influence of the sin nature. They just don't know how to do it any other way. That's the only thing they've ever known. So, they do not fulfill the standard of God's righteousness.

Who does? Well, he identifies them specifically as the group of people who walk in a certain way. This word "walk" is "peripateo." "Peripateo" refers to the whole realm of activities of a person's life. It connotes your behavior. It connotes your lifestyle. So, certain people of the Christian family fulfill God's holy standards of living who live in a certain way. In the Greek language, this is in the present tense, which tells us that this is the continual patterns of the thoughts and actions of these people. And this is active voice. So, here is a choice that we can make. We can choose to do this part. And it is a participle in mood, indicating that a spiritual principle is being enunciated.

A person’s walk, of course, is determined by what he believes. That's why it is so important that, first of all, people get the right beliefs. They have to be instructed in the Word of God because that is going to determine their walk. They will never walk in a godly way, just because some preacher stands up and makes an emotional appeal to them. They may want to walk in a godly way, but they will soon fall if that's all they have.

There is a distinct difference between the way carnal people and spiritual people walk. In Ephesians 4:17, we have described for us, for example, the force which is guiding the unbeliever's walk, where the apostle Paul says, "This, I say, therefore, in testifying the Lord, that you henceforth walk not as other gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." Do you know what vanity is? It is zero emptiness. The unbelieving gentile walks with zero divine viewpoint guidance. And Paul says, "It is not becoming for you as Christians, who are members of the Royal Family of God (part of the royal priesthood), that you should walk as if you had no divine viewpoint understanding from the Word of God in your thinking. But that is what characterizes the walk of the unbeliever. Consequently, he causes great devastation to himself; to those around him; and, to everybody that he has such great influence over. Our government today is shot-through with people who are of this zero divine viewpoint mentality, and they have brought this great nation to its knees. This is what Paul is talking about. There is a great price to pay for walking in the emptiness of a mind devoid of God's viewpoint.

On the other hand, Colossians 2:6 describes the basis which governs the walk of the spiritual Christian: "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" – to walk in all that is compatible with the mind of Christ.

This verb "peripateo" has the negative, so we would translate is as: "those who do not walk." "Who do not walk in what way?" It says, "Who do not walk after." The word "after" is the Greek preposition "kata," which means "according to; "who do not walk according to the flesh." And that's the Greek word "sarx." These words from the original manuscripts are very important because when you find that something strikes you in a negative way, you will know that you are dealing with what God the Holy Spirit has said, not that which some human communicator has said. This is actually the Word of God. And this word "flesh" here refers, in this context, to the nature which is in the Christian. It refers to that quality with which we are born of self-centeredness and of animal lust. This is the propensity to evil, which every one of us has inherited from our human fathers.

So, God's standard of righteousness, Paul said, can be achieved by those whose lifestyle is not under the control of the sin nature, but rather those who are under a different control, and that is the control of the Spirit. That is the word "pneuma," referring here to God the Holy Spirit. So, that verse is an explicit, clear summary of what Paul has been leading into. You are born again, and at the point of your faith in Christ as Savior, the baptism of the Holy Spirit places you into the body of Christ, which is the church. And at that point, you are born again. And at that point, the dominating control of the sin nature in your life is neutralized. God the Holy Spirit comes to indwell you, and you have a new authority to guide your life. And for those who are subject to that new authority, they walk a holy life which God can prosper and bless.

**Experiential Sanctification**

So, we're talking about the divine standard of righteousness. In our experience, we call it experiential sanctification. The word "sanctification" means being set apart to a standard of holiness. The absolute righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ is imputed to the one who believes the gospel. But it is imputed not only for his justification, but also for his sanctification. As you know, justification means that you possess, on your record, absolute righteousness. It is not enough to have your sins forgiven to go to heaven. That will never make it. That's a negative quality. You must also, as the Bible makes very clear, have imputed to you the absolute righteousness of God. You must be as good as Jesus Christ to go to heaven. And in this way, we possess that quality of righteousness.

The death of Christ to pay for the sins of mankind has terminated the reigning authority of the sin nature, as well as satisfying the justice of God. So, the standard of God can now be attained by Holy Spirit-led believers in daily living. Grace has made salvation possible; and, grace makes holiness in life possible.

The self-righteous person will minimize the moral standard of God as revealed in the Bible. Many Christians do this. And that's why holiness is so unknown a quality among church people today. There was a time in the history of this country when holiness was a very important quality among Christian; certainly among the founding fathers, and among the Pilgrims. Holiness was a prime concern in their lives. And they organized their society accordingly. The self-righteous person, however, minimizes God's standard as revealed in the Bible. He instead will magnify his own human righteousness, and he will view himself as acceptable to God. However, the conscientious person will recognize how far short he falls from God's standard, and that person will be driven to despair. And he will find nothing but frustration as he tries to live up to what he knows he should be. Many Christians never get any farther than that – conscientious despair.

The standard of divine holiness is to be met by the Christian – not rationalized away. God intends for us to live as per that standard. Most Christians, however, walk by means of their sin nature (their mere human capacities). This, therefore, has a widespread effect on godliness among church members, and particularly this is to be found in mental attitude sins. The church members that overtly and outwardly look very dignified and very acceptable are shot-through with mental attitude sins. And sooner or later, that begins to crop up in the church congregation, bringing grief to the congregation and grief to the minister.

Walking in a cultured way is not walking in the Spirit. It takes something more than that. The walk of the carnal believer, however, I should point out, is generally a very cultured walk. He is not necessarily living in grossly sinful ways. The carnal Christian is more likely to be the responsible, moral person who functions on Satan's human viewpoint thinking, and so produces the evil of human good. Remember that God loathes human good as much as he loathes sins. And they are two different things. And our society now has been immersed in human good – not by people who live in a grossly evil way, but who seem to be intelligent, and acceptable, and big-hearted, and conscientious, and compassionate. That's one of the favorite words. But they are human viewpoint people who are seeking to impose on society that which is contrary to the will of God for human government establishment and for society.

So, what I'm saying is that most people who are dominated by the sin nature are not thieves; not adulterers; not murders; and, not drunkards. They are nice people who are under the control of the delusions of their sin nature. "Walking in the flesh," that Paul refers to here, is simply not living by the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the doctrinal principles of Scripture.

In Galatians 3:3, Paul points out the foolishness of trying to live a Christian life on the basis of the human efforts that the sin nature can produce through us: "Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit (that is, having been born again by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit)? Are you now made perfect by the flesh?" Are you now going to achieve spiritual maturity by means of the sin nature? And that expresses itself in a variety of ways of keeping religious rituals; observing religious holidays; and, all the other things that are mere sin nature expressions. There is a great difference between godly and ungodly living.

Philippians 3:3 points out that difference, where Paul says, "For we are the circumcision (we Christians are the real circumcision) who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." There is a twofold walk here. The contrast that is indicated here is between living by means of the Holy Spirit and living by means of the sin nature. And that's what we're talking about.

The Pharisees were men whose carnality was a self-righteous delusion. They considered themselves very godly men. They were living, however, under the control of their sin nature, because all of their observing of the Mosaic rituals did not make them spiritual men. When the Lord Jesus pointed this out to them, they proceeded to murder Him. But the Pharisees outwardly impressed people because people could not look into their minds and see all the mental attitude sins that characterized them.

So, those who walk not after the sin nature, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit, fulfill the standard of divine righteousness in their daily living.

Now, how did we come into such a system? And we'll be looking at this in greater detail. It's necessary for us to back up again to some of the things we've been studying about the person of Jesus Christ. Our recent study of the doctrine of the hypostatic union has reminded us that Christ was not schizophrenic. He was one person, though He had two natures: divine; and, human. Now, the deity of Jesus Christ needed nothing when He came into the scene of the human race here on this earth. But once He became a God-Man, there was a new element introduced – namely His humanity. He was indeed back to where Adam started, because he did not have a human father through whom genetically the sin nature is transmitted. He was virgin born, and thus free of the sin nature, and thus free of Adam's imputed guilt. So, He was (again) a sinless human being, but He was human. Therefore, God the Father understood that it was necessary to provide a system of life (a basis of power) by which the humanity of Jesus Christ could be sustained. Deity was self-sufficient. It needed nothing. The humanity of Christ needed a provision for guidance into the kind of godly living we've been talking about today. He, in that respect, was no different than we are.

Now, God the Father therefore designed a divine power system which the humanity of Jesus Christ functioned under while He was on this earth. And the Lord Jesus Christ, having proven this divine power system, now has made it available to all church-age believers. It is for the royal family of God only – those in the age of the church: those who are in Christ. It is in this respect that Hebrews 12:2 refers to the Lord Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. That is, He was the one who took the system; put it into its original use; tested it out (field-tested it for us; and, thus became the Author and the Completer of our faith, which includes holiness of living.

Now, indeed, Satan, saw this happening, and saw that God the Father provided a power system for the humanity of Christ to live under in Satan's world. Satan immediately countered with a system of life himself – a system of light which was based on the domination of the sin nature, and which, Philippians 3:18 tells us, was designed to make the believer an enemy of the cross of Jesus Christ.

So, today, the church believer may choose between these two. You may choose between God's power system of freedom, or you may choose Satan's system, which, in fact, is a yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1 refers to both of these systems, when the apostle says, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty with which Christ has made us free (God's divine power system for our humanity), and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Satan's power system for humanity)." The purpose of the divine power system is to honor the Father by displaying in daily life His virtues.

In 1 Peter 2:9, we are told that we Christians are: "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation of people of His own, that you should show forth the praises of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; the praises of Him, the virtues of God."

Christians who are united forever to the Lord Jesus Christ have certain unique relationships, consequently, in the church age. For example, we find that Jesus Christ indwells every Christian. John 14:20 and Colossians 1:27 tell us that. Every Christian is indwelt by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, Romans 8:9-11 indicate to us that our human bodies are the Lord's temple. By living within the church-age power system, the Christian, who is indwelt by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose body is indeed the temple of Jesus Christ – the Christian, by living within this same power system that the Lord used, is able to develop a love for the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is his Lord and Bridegroom. Love for Christ is the ultimate product of this divine power system. It is the product, first of all, of divine doctrinal understanding in our human spirits.

**Love**

The word "love" – I'm almost reluctant to use it. It is such an abused word; such a corrupted word; and, such a word widely used among Christians, but rarely understood in a biblical sense. John 14:15 gives us a very explicit explanation of the relationship of genuine love for Jesus Christ, where the Lord Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Verse 21 says, "He, that has My commandments and keeps them – he it is that loves Me. He that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." Those two verses make it very clear that, unless your spirit is stored with doctrinal understanding, you cannot love Jesus Christ. And it is nonsense for Christians to be told to love God when they cannot possibly do it. And if you cannot love God, you can't love anybody else in the human race. It all begins with a genuine love for Jesus Christ, and in our humanity, that love has to be developed. It is the power system which God provided for the humanity of His Son that enables us, through the Word of God, to develop the capacity to love. And this is the thing that transforms one Christian into a spiritual Christian, and leaves another groveling around in his carnality.

You can see, indeed, why it is that Satan comes down so hard on discouraging pulpit teaching of the Word of God. Everything else under the sun comes pouring forth from the pulpits of this nation, but rarely are people given the words of God. Rarely is the Bible explained to them in terms of what God the Holy Spirit meant when He said something at a certain point, and the implications of that in the person's life. And as long as people are kept ignorant of the Word of God, they are under control of the sin nature.

**The National Education Association (NEA)**

In our country, there is a powerful labor union called the National Education Association. The National Education Association has an explicit program, and we have studied that in some detail. And you will remember that the explicit program of the National Education Association is to change capitalist America, with its free enterprise system, into a socialist country. And it has decided to do this through the school children. And the technique for doing this (a very calculated, specific technique) was to keep information about the nation and about our past from the children. How in the world are you going to keep information from people? It's simple: don't teach them to read. Put up a system of education where you create functional illiterates. People who cannot read are people who are restricted from major sources of information. They will never learn the duties of the capitalist system. They'll never learn how it is compatible with the principles of the Word of God. They'll never learn how private property ownership is at the heart of personal freedom. And when that's gone, everything is gone, and we are enslaved. That is a specific, calculated way of keeping people enslaved, and to deny them freedom.

This is exactly what Satan did in churches with the Word of God: rebel against being taught Scripture; rebel against having to sit there and think, and learn the Word of God; and, call for an emotional expression under the title of love, which is not love, and which is a false sin nature emotion. And it is only propagated by those who want to think off the top of their heads; who do not want to study the Word of God; and, who do not want to prepare to teach and to learn. By learning the Word of God, we think the thoughts of Christ, which produces our love for Him.

So, Satan has been very, very successful in undermining the love of Christians for the Lord. They have a little emotional kick that goes up and down, but the real stabilizing love that the divine power system can produce is widely unknown.

In 1 Corinthians 2:16, the apostle Paul says, "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct him. But we have the mind of Christ." You have the mind of Christ. Yes. You had capacity to love Christ. Yes. But only if someone has taught you the Word of God. By living in the divine power system in which Jesus Christ lived, we are then capable of becoming imitators of Him in love.

Ephesians 5:1 calls upon us to be imitators of Jesus Christ. And until we live under this divine system of power, we cannot do that.

So, in this way, the capacities of Christ's humanity become our capacities: His godly virtues; His happiness; and, His glory. 2 Corinthians 3:18 puts it this way: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image: from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. And of course, you have now already begun to suspect that the key personality in the divine power system is God the Holy Spirit. And indeed, that's quite right. That's exactly what it is. And that's what Paul is referring to here. We are changed from glory unto glory, in the image of the Lord, as we function in this divine power system, which is administered by the Spirit of God. God's system for godly living, and for divine good works, functions in every generation of believers, and it includes every kind of Christian. This system will transform the Christians into mature, productive believers in the devil's world. And that's the amazing thing – that in spite of Satan's resistance, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

In John 12:31, we read, "Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Satan's authority has been broken.

John 14:30 says, "Hereafter, I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me. The Lord has defeated him on the cross.

John 6:7 says, "Of judgment: because the prince of this world is judged."

Finally, Ephesians 2:1-10 give us a very precise and explicit description of the victory that Christians can have while living in the devil's world: "And you He has made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sin, in which, in times past, you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air – the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience (the sin nature); among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past, and the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, made us alive, together with Christ. By grace you are saved. And (He) has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained, that we should walk in them."

So, the victory is in spite of Satan. In John 15:10, we have indicated that the divine power system enables a Christian to walk indeed in the love of God: "If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."

**The Love System**

So, this system is so associated with the concept of love that, in fact, we may call it "the love system," this virtue which is so grossly misrepresented among people as an emotional expression. The Greek words "agape" and "agapao" very clearly mean non-emotional love. They very clearly, by the etymology of the words, mean a mental attitude free of bitterness and antagonism. That is what the word "love" means. Indeed, there is another word that does deal with emotional rapport in the Greek Bible. But the primary word "love," which describes this system is a mental attitude, and it is not something that you can just crank up. It is a supreme Christian virtue, and it embodies all godliness. 1 Corinthians 13:13 says that it's a supreme virtue.

Actually, love is really a complex of godly virtues which form the divine power system. And it is the basis of all of our relationships in the church-age. And if you have God's love system developed, as you can under this power system, then you can function in a way that is operationally successful. Living in God's love, of course, requires obedience to numerous commandments. The divine love power system enables us to obey those commandments, and thereby, to coordinate our life with all the legitimate temporal and spiritual activities. Our problem is not knowing what God wants. It is to do it. Our problem is obeying it. And that's what the divine power system, which has been tested out by the humanity of Christ, enables us to do. Consistent functioning under this divine power system produces godly living as it did with Jesus Christ.

**Spiritual Maturity**

Remember that the goal of the Christian life (supreme, and above all) is spiritual maturity, which then reflects the glory of God. . . . The goal of the Christian life is not for you to get out and do something for God. It is, first of all, for you to *be* something. And that's what the divine power system is designed to achieve. And the ultimate goal of that power system is a status of maturity which is described in James 4:6 in this way: "But He gives super grace (more grace). Wherefore, He said, 'God resisted the proud, but gave grace unto the humble.'" The super grace status of Christian maturity – that's what the power system enables you to develop.

In such a mature believer, who is functioning under this divine power system, and stops living like an animal under the sin nature control, and starts indeed living like a member of God's royal family, as befits one who is in Christ – James 2:23 says that when you come to that super grace level of maturity, you are given a unique title which few Christians today possess with God. In James 2:23, the divine power system enables you to secure this honored title: "And the Scripture was fulfilled which said, 'Abraham believed God (Abraham – a super grace believer), and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called a friend of God.'" Few believers have that honored position of being called "a friend of God."

**God's Blessings**

God can bless the super grace believer in a maximum way, and don't forget that that's the purpose of the divine power system – to enable God to bless you, but to bless you in a maximum way so that you won't fall in love with the blessings, instead of the giver of those blessings. That is the breakdown with so many Christians. They often begin in a very humble way, and they often begin looking to the Lord. And God comes in and honors their developing maturity, and He prospers them – materially, and in every way imaginable. And suddenly they fall in love with what He gave them, and forget to love the giver. Now the divine power system will keep you from making that kind of a stupid move.

The people of Israel, when they went into the Promised Land, were warned against that very thing. That's exactly what God said. He said, "When I get you in the land, I intend to prosper you. I'm not bringing you in this land to starve you, or to put you under misery. I'm bringing you for blessing. And when I start blessing you, you are going to be tempted to start becoming very arrogant (the key expression of the sin nature). And you're going to attribute all this to your own efforts and to your own capacities. And you're going to get your eyes on all the good things I've given you, and you're going to get your eyes off of me."

Unfortunately, in the Old Testament, they did not have the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit to enable them to avoid that. They were warned against it, but they went right down with the sin nature's appeal, and they collapsed and were destroyed, in time, and went into slavery.

The Christian, who is the mature product of the divine power system, approaches life from divine viewpoint principles which are then reflected in his daily walk. This is the Christian who is capable of discerning reality. Nothing is so tragic as a Christian who can't discern what is the real thing. It is a Christian who then reflects a love for the truth. It is a Christian who demonstrates a positive volition for the Word of God. It is a Christian who understands the role of government, and how to keep it from enslaving.

It is a Christian who has personal financial integrity. You may be a person who doesn't pay his bills. You may be a person that people have to come and keep knocking at your door to get you to do what you're supposed to do. You may be a person who walks up and says, "Oh, do I owe that? I thought my wife paid that." You know that we've heard that before. Don't give us that hack. A Christian who is living under the power system of the Word of God will have the integrity in financial matters. That's one of the great signs that you have moved to super grace level.

You will have emotional stability. The charismatics will not be able to capture you. You will not be running around wearing Oral Roberts T-shirts, because you know that you are just on the threshold of the pearly gates, and you're entering the great realm of something more with God. You'll not be suckered into that. You'll understand the delusion of Satan's manipulations of the emotions of those poor people.

You will have morality in human relationships. All of these things will be reflected in the mature product of the divine power system. The Christian's life is sustained by this love system for God, and then for everyone else in the human race.

Out of this, of course, will grow the spiritual maturity structure that Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 12:10, and that we have studied in detail: the grace orientation facet; the relaxed mental attitude; the mastery of the details of life; the capacity to love; and, then personal happiness.

**Personal Integrity**

The super grace mature believer, living in the power system, is finally, we may say, characterized by integrity. That's where God is leading all of us. If we love God, we will be people with personal integrity. Integrity is a mental attitude, and a set of values which are compatible with God's standards of righteousness. This integrity is expressed as personal honesty; moral purity; reliability; genuineness; consistency; stability; fairness; truthfulness; loyalty; respect for privacy; guardian of freedom; and, without artificiality and personal shallowness. Some Christians just cannot keep from just being a shallow, little nothing, because they never get into the substance of the deep sense of the Spirit of God.

God's divine power system, provided for the humanity of our Lord, and now available to us, enables us to express these qualities of integrity. Isn't it nice to deal with Christians who are honest? Isn't it nice to deal with people you can trust? Isn't it nice to deal with people who are pure in your presence as well as when you don't see them.

It's nice to deal with people who are reliable? I can relate to that. We have always had workers in our congregation that I know are going to execute. They're going to carry through. I know we have workers that I'm always going to have to have my hand in their back, shoving them, and checking and pushing, and saying, "Let's get on with it." Reliable people are great.

It's nice to deal with people who are genuine – people who are not smiling in your face and stabbing you in your back.

It's nice to deal with people who are consistent every time you meet them. They're stable. When you meet them, they're the same way. You don't meet them one time, and they're all smiling and effusing and bubbling over; and, the next time you meet them, they say, "Ah, drop dead." They are consistent. They are stable.

Integrity (love for God) produces that. All of these precious qualities that we esteem are the results of this power system. All of these expressions of integrity are simply the love of God functioning in the divine power system of the Word of God. And the Bible honors this system because it was provided for our Lord.

We close with Matthew 22:35-40: "Then one of them, who was a lawyer, asked Him (Jesus) a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus said unto him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart; with all your soul; and, with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Now, notice: "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets."

Any standard of absolute righteousness that God has called upon us to execute is all tied in with the capacity to love. The divine power system provided for us in the church age is to enable us, through the intake of the Word of God which is stored in our human spirits, and the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to have the capacity to produce the love for God that can only be produced in that way. Then you will have genuine love for your family. Then you will have genuine love for the person you are married to, or are going to be married to. Then you will have genuine love for your friends. And the results will be dramatic in the human race.

It is a rare quality to have the love of God which fulfills all of the requirements of God. That's the capacity that believers need. And you're not going to get it by somebody pounding the pulpit, and exhorting you to have it. It takes a long time. It literally takes a couple or three years of hard grinding, and learning the Word of God, to be able to begin to start moving in the direction under God's power system of developing this love capacity. You might want to pursue on your own in Romans 3:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; and, Hebrews 6:10, all reiterating that same principle – that executing God's holiness depends on the capacity to love Him.

Now we have come to the functioning in the divine power system – the role of the Holy Spirit. We have two very explicit, negative prohibitions in the Word of God, and one very explicit, positive demand. These are imperatives (commands). You do it. There are no options. And these give us the mechanics under which we function in God's divine power system, and we shall look at those next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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