***Remember and Repent

RV31-02***

We are studying the letter to Sardis, section number six, in Revelation 3:1-6. The believers in the city of Sardis, we have found, have lost much of the spiritual high ground which they evidently once possessed. The Sardis church had a sound doctrinal statement, but the people had failed to live up to that statement and to serve in the power of the Spirit of God that indwelt them. Consequently, their Christian service works were of the human-good type, and they were rejected by the Lord.

The Lord Jesus Christ commands the Sardis church, therefore, to wake up and to see itself as it really is – to wake up and take a look at its true spiritual condition; to stop putting up all of the fronts; to stop kidding themselves; to stop pretending that they are something more than they really are; and, to stop using the clichés that describe what really isn't there. He advises the believers, therefore, to take steps to keep from losing what spiritual factors they still possessed. They're not completely down, and they're not completely gone, but they have lost a lot from what they once possessed. What divine viewpoint is still in operation among them, however, is about to be lost as well. Spiritual progress can always be lost in the midst of self-confident orthodoxies. That's what this church had.

Historically, of course, the Sardis church represented the era of the Protestant Reformation and the days that followed that, when accurate doctrine and control of the Holy Spirit were replaced by a formalized, ritualistic religion. They had the doctrinal statements and the creeds, and they even had the doctrine of the Holy Spirit formalized in the best expression that it had been at that time. But unfortunately, they failed to apply the person of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believers and in the action of the church ministry.

**Remember What you Have**

So, we turn now to Revelation 3:3. The first part of verse 3 deals with a divine admonition. That divine admonition, first of all, is to recall Bible doctrine. So we read, "Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard." The word "remember" is the Greek word "mnemoneuo." "Mnemoneuo" means "to call to mind." This is a call to restore spiritual strength. In order to restore spiritual strength when it is lagging, it is necessary to recollect something previously known, but which has now been neglected. This is in the present tense, and the grammar in present tense in Greek means that they are to constantly be keeping this thing in mind – constantly recalling. It is active which means that the individual believer has to do his own recalling. Somebody else can't do this for him. It is imperative. It is the divine command. The Lord Jesus Christ is not talking in optional language. He is coming through very hard and very clear, and He is telling these people exactly what they must do now to correct the terrible condition that has developed among them. That is absolutely to remember.

Putting this in historical perspective and application, the Reformation creeds formally stated doctrinal truths which had been recovered by the reformers, and then promptly neglected by the followers. So, the first thing that is told to the people in Sardis, as was necessary in the historical church of the Reformation, was to recall the truth that had actually been recovered.

It says, "Remember, therefore. The word "therefore" is the Greek word "oun." This is a conjunction, and it indicates here the action now which is necessary in view of their imperfect Christian service – how to correct the problem. This word is a signpost that is pointing to what God the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ, is going to tell them as to how they may correct the problem.

"Remember, therefore, how." The word "how" is the Greek word "pos." The word "pos" actually should be translated here as "what:" "Remember what you have received." The word "received" is the Greek word "lambano." The word "lambano" is the word for "coming into the possession of something." It refers here to salvation by grace which was received through faith in Jesus Christ as a gift from God. It refers here to the witnessing mission which had been placed upon them as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. It refers here to the unique personal relationship to God the Holy Spirit which they possessed as those who were in Christ. It refers to everything that constituted their unique position as Christians.

So the point here is to remember something that they had received. The Jews of the Old Testament had never received this. It was the unique possession of believers in the church age. They stood in a relationship to Jesus Christ which was described under the personal intimacy of a husband and wife team. Here is something that is going to be true for all eternity.

So, the first thing they have to do in order to correct their spiritual decline was to remember just exactly who they are, so that they get some perspective again about how they should act. And who they are is indicated by what they have received in these personal, unique relationships to Jesus Christ as members of His body. This is in the perfect tense in the Greek. Perfect tense tells you about something that happened in the past, and it continues on to the present. So, they are now looking back at something that they received in the past, and they still have this position. It is active. It is a personal possession. It's indicative in the mood which means it's a statement of fact.

Historically, the Reformation churches received the mission of restoring divine viewpoint enlightenment of mankind. That was a very great calling. It was a fantastic burden which was placed upon that handful of men who finally broke out of the darkness and the superstition of the Roman Catholic Church – that Nimrod religion which had developed over the centuries. The reformers went back to the Word of God. Upon these men was laid the burden of bringing the enlightenment back to mankind of the Word of God and of God's viewpoint. That was a responsibility that then descended upon those who followed them. This was a group of people who said, "Yes, you are right. Yes, this is what the Word of God teaches." They rallied to the reformers.

These people were under a sense of a very great mission. Nowhere else was this information in the world to be found except with the Martin Luthers; the Huldrych Zwinglis; and, the John Calvins. These men who were the researchers; the forerunners; and, the leaders of the restoration to the Word of God. This was not an easy task. It was a dangerous role. Just 100 years before that time, the Bohemian John Huss rose up and was on the same track. He himself came to the same conclusion and said, "This that we are teaching in the Roman Church is wrong. It is pure paganism. The Word of God is the source of information." When you read the Bible, you don't see any connection between the Bible and this system of the Roman Catholic Church. It was John Huss who first stood up and said, "We need to change. These things that we are teaching are false. We are driving people into hell, not into heaven."

Well, you remember what happened to Huss. The pope had him burned at the stake for uttering things of that sort. But 100 years later came another group of men with this enlightenment. They were under the sense of obligation to proclaim the revelation of the truth which God had now made known to them. It was a dangerous business.

This is the sort of thing that God says rested upon the Sardis church: "You people know. You people have been enlightened. You're not a part of that ignorant bunch of folks who have never been informed." Anytime a group of people are instructed in the Word of God, there is a burden of responsibility resting upon your shoulders. You are unique with God because you are informed." All you have to do is talk to the average Joe in our society, and you'll tell just how absolutely he is out of it. He may be able to mouth some clichés such that you feel sorry for the guy in what he reveals about his ignorance. He is absolutely just showing his religion that Satan has fed him. He's completely out of contact with the contents of the Word of God.

So, to the Sardis church, which had a call and a unique mission and a unique relationship to Jesus Christ, but which has now degenerated spiritually, the Lord Jesus says, "The first thing I want you to do is to recall what you have received – this special relationship to God the Son." Then He uses the word "and" which is the Greek word "kai." "Kai" indicates here that there is another thing to remember, and that is something that they heard. The Greek word for "heard" is "akouo." "Akouo" refers to Bible doctrine information which they had received in instructional circumstances in Bible classes. It is in the aorist tense. It is a point in the past when they sat and were instructed. They sat in a group, and the spiritual teaching gift of explaining doctrine was being exercised within their hearing. It's active. They personally sat there and heard the information. They heard the truth. It's indicative – a statement of fact.

**Euphoria**

The Sardian Christians (again, I stress to you) were not in the category of believers who are untaught. The Holy Spirit had in the past brought them to gospel belief, and to illumination of the full counsel of the Word of God – the full categories of doctrine. These Christians, no doubt, were euphoric, as often happens when believers come under the real exposition of the Word of God. Hardly a week goes by but what someone contacts me. Generally, it is some taper. Perhaps it is somebody who has visited the Berean Church. And the first quality that these positive people reflect can only be described as euphoric. They are just overjoyed. They are just beside themselves. They cannot believe what spiritual darkness and ignorance they've been going through. Suddenly it just burst upon them that they've been sitting in churches and listening to challenges; cute stories; and, emotional manipulation. Then, suddenly, they realize what they've been denied. Suddenly they realize what the Word of God means – how alive and powerful it is. Suddenly they realize that now they're on the right track, and God is making their lives a success. God is finally functioning. And they sense the power of the Spirit of God working. All of this comes through an enlightenment of doctrine. And when that hits people, after they've been denied that kind of truth and they've been in darkness, they just get euphoric. I mean, they are overjoyed. They want to just get up, and they just want to shout, "Hallelujah" and "Praise the Lord."

They also grow in spiritual maturity. They grow in stability because they are simply teachable and they are careful to act upon the truth that they learn. And the more teachable you are, and the more positive you are toward using that truth, boy, you're going to get more euphoric, because you're going to find that this really works. This is the answer to everything that you need as a human being – the Word of God, which is alive and powerful.

However, the occupational hazard is this: In time, the euphoric Christian becomes acclimated to that new plateau of living. He becomes acclimated to spiritual enlightenment, and he forgets how terrible spiritual darkness once was. He loses track of the comparison. It's like somebody who lives on a garbage dump, and suddenly a breath of fresh air comes sweeping across, and they say, "What's that funny smell?" They have become acclimated to what is rotten, so when what is clean-cut and pure comes through, it offends them. And that is what happens to us. We forget how the garbage piles smells. We finally get up there to where we're up on the mountain top, and we're up there where the air is pure, and we have the joys of spiritual enlightenment. And we lose our sense of awe for the Word of God. We lose our sense of awe for Bible doctrine as being the mind of God to us. It's nice to have, but we lose our respect for how crucial it is. The Word of God is the point of all of our spiritual forward progress.

So, in time, the euphoria leaves us. We get acclimated to living in spiritual enlightenment, and we begin to neglect the intake of doctrine into our souls on a daily basis. We begin to neglect the application of doctrinal principles to our lives, and the result is that we try to coast on yesterday's progress. And this is what happened in Sardis. And this is what happened in the Reformation era. That fantastic forward motion that they made out of Roman Catholic darkness into enlightenment was only a partial forward motion. They were so excited and euphoric over what they discovered was in the Word of God that they began coasting on what God had given them.

For example, there were great areas in eschatology – prophetic truth. They never touched it. They never really got into it. They never got into the distinction between Israel and the church. They missed that completely in the Reformation. Yet, what they did have was absolutely fantastic. But they didn't go on in that and continue with the Lord and continue researching. There's no reason in the world why God the Holy Spirit would not have led them right into all that prophetic truth then. He didn't have to wait until about 200 years ago before we ever broke into the area of prophetic truth restoration. He could have just as well led them then, had they been going on with the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, as He led them into the doctrine of salvation. But they were coasting.

Their beneficiaries (those second and third generations that followed after the Reformation people) were even worse. They began gradually watering down biblical truth which had been restored to them. They pretended that for the sake of public relations, some truth was not really important, especially if it caused divisions. Gradually over the centuries, people began moving away from what caused divisions. They were more interested in good relations with one another and in being on good terms and accepted with other people than they were in having the kind of division that Jesus Christ had to face when He declared the truth, and when He told us the truth that He has to give us will even separate members of the family from one another. Protestants began seeking accommodation with Nimrod's Babylonian Roman Catholic mystery system.

I'd like to read you a quotation. The evangelical newsletter ... has this observation. Lutherans and Catholics agree on the Augsburg confession. One of the great creedal statements of the Lutheran church during Reformation days was formulated in the city of Augsburg, Germany. It came to be known as the Augsburg Confession. It was the absolute statement of truth of Lutheranism as it understood the Word of God and the expressions of their beliefs. It was the closest they could come to what Roman Catholics believed. The Augsburg Confession was a definitive statement of biblical truth. Here's what the article says:

"Roman Catholic and Lutheran theologians have found that the Augsburg Confession of 1530, a Reformation document, expresses their common Christian faith. A Lutheran/Catholic statement on the confession was released in Augsburg, West Germany, as part of ceremonies marking the 450 anniversary of the document's publication.

"'Together, we confess the faith in the Triune God and the saving work of God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit which binds all Christians together,' the statement declares. A broad consensus was reached on a proper understanding of justification by faith on salvation accomplished by Christ in His death and resurrection, effectively appropriated by humanity in the proclamation of the gospel and in the sacraments, and on the Eucharist. The consultants agreed there were still areas where full accord had not been reached."

Did you catch that statement? It said that the justification by faith (the faith that was needed to be justified) was secured via the sacraments. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Do you know what that means? That means that you get to heaven on the basis of performing the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants only have the two sacraments: baptism; and, the Lord's Supper. The Catholics have five more. And as you perform these sacraments, you go up one more rung up the ladder to heaven. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This error is embedded in the Roman Catholic system, and it is at the heart of the destruction of a person's salvation.

It was interesting to observe at the Passion Play, at Oberammergau in Germany that Mrs. Danish and I viewed this summer, that right there in the Passion Play was this statement to the effect that God's grace would be secured forever through this sacrament. It was the Lord's Supper scene. What a falsehood! What a monstrous lie! Do you know what the problem is? The problem is to stand up and point to that and say, "That's a lie; that's false; and, that's wrong." It was interesting that, overall, people who viewed the Oberammergau Passion Play were very impressed. It was well done. It was very impressive. It was probably one of the most interesting presentations of the final weeks of the life of Christ that I think that I've ever seen. People were just enthralled.

I was happy that one of the pastors in our tour group, when we were together, brought this to everyone's attention: "Lest you forget that the testimony is limited. For at the heart of everything that we saw that was so biblical, there was this satanic lie that through human doing, a person can achieve salvation and the approval of God." You had to be careful to stand up and say a statement like that. It was terrible. You were kind of throwing a wet blanket on it. Everybody is euphoric over this presentation, and some guy stands up and says, "There's a very vital and serious flaw in what you heard today, and one that will destroy a person's soul if he believes it.

So, here are the Catholics and the Lutherans saying, "We're all the same. We all believe the same thing." Yet, nothing is farther from the truth.

You probably saw on television, during the national affairs briefing at the Reunion Arena, that the president of the Southern Baptist Convention stood up. In the process of his remarks, he observed that God does not hear the prayers of Jews. Well, this was recorded, and somebody (some Jewish person) brought this to the attention of the press, and a big issue was made of this. I notice that in Bill Moyers' Journal, when he reported on the reunion briefing, he had this particular segment, and there was this pastor (this leader of the Southern Baptist Convention) standing up, and they had him right there saying those things: "God does not hear the prayers of Jews."

Now, the question is: does God hear the prayers of Jews or not? The attack was that that was an anti-Semitic remark. And one of the outstanding leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention in the state of Texas got up, in the same television interview, and expressed regret that the leader of their convention had said such a thing, and that it had the quality of being anti-Semitic.

Now, I don't know what kind of congregation that man has, but that's a pure public relations remark. I think that somebody in his congregation ought to rebuke him for that. Somebody ought to get up and say, "Now, just a minute. What do you think a person who is a Jew needs to know? What do you think that George Burns, who played God, needs to know as a Jew? He needs to know the fact that God has nothing to do with him. That's what he needs to know. He needs to know the fact that God does not listen to him. He needs to have it very clearly made to him that the Bible has a statement on this. Is this an anti-Semitic remark, or is this the truth?" They want to kind of soften that like they were doing in Sardis, so that the Lord Jesus Christ says, "You have lost your way, and you've lost your reward, because what you're doing is evil in My sight. You've lost your orientation."

Well, let's just take a look at just a few verses in Scripture. Is that an anti-Semitic remark? Does God hear the prayers of a Jew? John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes unto the Father but by Me." What on earth does that verse mean? "No man comes unto the Father but by Me?" I'd like to ask this outstanding leader of the Texas Southern Baptists whether indeed that means that if you do not receive Jesus Christ as personal Savior, you cannot approach His Father. You betcha, that's exactly what it means. God does not listen to the prayers of those who do not approach Him on the basis of His Son.

Look at verse 13 and 14: "And whatever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it."

Then notice Acts 4:10: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him this man does stand here before you well. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which has become the head of the corner. Neither is their salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." I'd like you to tell me what those verses mean, if they do not mean that if you do not approach God through Jesus Christ, you cannot be saved, and God will not listen to you. God only listens to His children. He listens to those who are in His family. If He exercises mercy and grace toward unbelievers, it is just that: it is simply a gracious act on the part of God. But for His children, He is obliged to listen to them. He is obliged to respond to their prayers. God does not listen to the prayers of Mohammedans. He does not listen to the prayers of Catholics. He does not listen to the prayers of Jews. He does not listen to the prayers of people who approach God through some other source: Mary; Mohammad; or, through the prophets of old. He does not listen to their prayers.

It was a very heartless thing for the leader of the Texas Southern Baptist Convention to make such a statement. Instead, he should have said, "Our president was absolutely right. That happens to be the truth. That happens to be what the Bible says. It is not anti-Semitic. It is simply pro-God. That's all. And if you don't like being pro-God, you have a problem.

Do you know that they had to revise some of the lines in the Passion Play this year because they considered it so anti-Semitic. They revised some of it so that the Jewish community could approve it more. What are they trying to cover up? Boy, I'd like to see what they would do with this passage in Acts. I never read anything as anti-Semitic as this in my life.

I want to read it to you again, because I don't think you were listening closely. Acts 4:10-12: Could you see what they would do to Peter today? "Be it known to you all." He even talks with that southern expression because he was from the south Galilee there: "Be it known unto all (that's all the people of Israel) that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even this man does stand here before you well (that is, healed). This is the stone which was rejected by you builders. Oh, you who are religious leaders, and you people who are putting it all together – this is the stone. This is the key stone, Jesus Christ. You threw him out. You said, 'I don't want that rock. He's no good. Put him out to dispose of him. We don't want that in our structure,' which has become the head of the corner. You threw him out, and God made him the cornerstone. Neither is their salvation in any other." I don't know what that means, but if you reject Jesus, you're going to hell, "For there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Now that is what I call anti-Semitism in the extreme. However, it's also pro-God, because it expresses the mind of God.

So, these poor people in Sardis had come to the point where they were compromising the truth. They wanted to get along with people. They wanted big congregations. They wanted notoriety. They wanted acceptance.

The pastor of a large church in the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex area called down one of his assistants. This is a Southern Baptist group. This leader was championing the idea of cleaning up the Southern Baptist leadership which has denied the inerrancy of Scripture. He recognizes that this has destroyed all the great denominations in America. He said, "We're going to clean up the Southern Baptist Convention. We're going to get the professors out of our seminaries who do not believe that the Bible is without error. We're going to get them out of our pulpits. We're going to make this a position that the Bible teaches. If you deny this, then you have denied what we believe." The pastor of this mighty church called his assistant down and said, "Cool it. That causes division when you do things like that." This pastor has a big reputation, and when he speaks with his mellifluous voice, everybody slobbers and gets excited. But he doesn't mind telling you to cool it, and to not to cause divisions over the Word of God because you're happening to find what the Word of God really says, and you want to let people know it.

If that man will play public relations like that, that congregation should wonder how much other truth he's willing to compromise and to soften so that he doesn't upset anybody in the congregation, so we can keep building up his numbers and his income and his reputation.

It is sad when Christians can look back to better days in their spiritual status and in their spiritual service. The Bible is filled with these pathetic times when Christians can look back to when they were really up there, and when they really functioning in spiritual capacity, and now they've fallen back." In Galatians 5:7, Paul says, "He did run well. Who hindered you that you should not obey the truth?" This church went for legalism.

Colossians 2:6: "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him." Don't compromise that position.

In Hebrews 10:32, the writer says, "But call to remembrance the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of affliction." Remember how it was in the early days when you first came into the illumination of the Word of God? There was no sacrifice that was too much for you to bear. Now, that you've made progress in spiritual things, you don't like to sacrifice as much anymore.

So, that's what the Lord is saying here to Sardis: "Bring back to your memory, therefore, what you have received in your position in Christ, and the doctrine which you have heard." The word "and" is the Greek word "kai." That means He's adding something – an added factor of admonition: "Hold fast" is the Greek word "tereo." "Tereo" means "to watch over" or "to give heed to." It is a word which is describing their attitude toward their unique position in Christ and the divine viewpoint of Bible doctrine which had been given to them – their attitude to preserve it. This is in the present tense, which means constantly seek to preserve the doctrine that you have received. It is active. You must take steps to stay tied into the truth. And here is another imperative. We'd have a series of them. This is another divine command. There are no options. You see to it that you preserve the truth that you've been taught. It is a serious personal loss with eternal consequences when a believer deviates from the sound doctrine, or he has received something which is false.

**Repent**

"Repent and recall, therefore, what you have received and heard, and then hold fast ("tereo"). Hang onto it. Don't lose it. And He adds another condition, and that is "repent." The Greek word is "metanoeo." "Metanoeo" means "to change the mind." The Sardis church was to change its mental attitude toward the doctrine that it had received and the application of Holy Spirit truth. It is aorist tense – a point when they make the decision to change. When you deviate from the Word of God, someplace along the line, you have to say, "I'm going back." When you deviate from the will of God, someplace along the line (that's an aorist point in time), you have to say. "Enough is enough. I'm turning around. I'm going back." It's active. You have to make the change. You have to decide. And it's another imperative – a divine command. We have two imperatives: "Keep what you've got, and repent over what you've done with what you've got – how you compromise it."

The Lord's admonition to Sardis was to preserve what they still possessed of divine viewpoint truth, and to change their mental attitudes of their poor use of their spiritual enlightenment. Historically, again, taking this back to the Reformation era, the first major rejection of divine viewpoint truth was the denial of the premillennial return of Jesus Christ to earth to set up His 1,000-year reign.

**The Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ**

That's interesting. In the history of the Christian church, the first major denial of truth that crept out in the first two-and-a-half or three centuries was the denial that Jesus Christ was going to come back to this earth; set up a throne; set up the kingdom; and, that He was going to be the world ruler for 1,000 years. For the first two-and-a-half centuries, there was never any doubt about that in anybody's mind. All the writings that we have of the church fathers all clearly indicate that. Everybody understood that the Bible taught that Jesus Christ was coming back to rule on this earth for 1,000 years in the millennial kingdom.

**They Attacked the Kingdom**

Then they began compromising that truth. They began minimizing the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They lost the distinction between the rapture in the air and the Second Coming to the earth, and the whole area of prophetic truth collapsed. They pursued the church program which was described as "bringing in the kingdom." There are still churches today that you may attend, and they will talk to you about "bringing in the kingdom." That means getting members down the aisle to build up the membership. That's bringing in the kingdom. Well, the kingdom was the first thing that was attacked. It was the first great truth they lost. When they lost that, it clouded the distinctiveness of being a Christian.

**They Attacked Grace**

The second major neglect of doctrine was the truth of grace – God's modus operandi in the church dispensation. They thought that grace for salvation was dispensed by the church organization and through the sacraments. When they started teaching that, they interjected man's human works and doing. The doctrine of justification by faith was totally obscured, and human doing through the sacraments was put in its place.

**They Attacked the Church and Israel**

The distinctions between Israel and the church were also neglected. So, biblical prophecy was spiritualized away.

**They Attacked the Inerrancy of Scripture**

The next thing that fell was the inerrancy of Scripture. In time, this led to the challenge of the authority of the Bible as being the mind of God, and that its statements were indisputable. Today, we live in the full blossom of that denial. Today, it is hard to find people to talk to that you can quote a Scripture verse to, and then they'll shut their mouths. They do not think that when the Bible has spoken that there is no further discussion about the matter. They'll say, "Yeah, but you know, what does that mean? That means this." Then they'll twist it to what they want. This denial of biblical authority, in time, led to attacks on what it had to say about Jesus Christ: His deity; His virgin birth; His vicarious atonement; His resurrection; and, His Second Coming.

Then, as people had departed from biblical Christianity, they had to substitute something beyond this world. There had to be something out there, they felt. And that's where you went into demonism and the occult that we have in such prominence today. They went to that to reach beyond the human realm. 1 Timothy 4:1-3 describes very beautifully where mankind came progressively as they compromised the Word of God as they were doing in Sardis – as they were rejecting the divine viewpoint of Scripture.

**New Morality**

When they did this, this, of course, it led to the demand for a new code of morality. This was a morality that was responsive to the old nature of man. The neglect of Bible doctrine led to economic degeneration. The economic degeneration led into socialism and communism that curse the world today. That's directly the result of the moving away from the authority of Scripture. As we moved into the authority of Scripture, human liberty became established. Men prospered. The private ownership concept and the industriousness of the individual believer prospered people; developed our economy; gave us our liberty; and, gave us our freedoms. The free enterprise system has been undermined, and private ownership has been undermined because people have compromised the Scripture.

**Fabian Socialism**

So, Christians today are going to have to make the same kind of decisions on all these points as the people in Sardis did. They're going to have to decide how to preserve their freedoms. They're going to have to recognize that the Fabian socialism (that we talked about last time) is a satanic concept. They have to recognize when political parties (Democratic or Republican) are using this as a means of bringing people under control. We have to recognize the movements toward one-world government as being a satanic movement in opposition to God. It's a repeat of the Tower of Babel. We have to cry out against the madness of destroying anti-communist governments as we did in Nicaragua, and as we did in Rhodesia, and supporting communist aggressions. The reason for repentance that He calls for here (the reason to "metanoeo") is to remember where you've come from. Go back to the joy; go back to the civility; and, go back to the position of power. That's true of us individually, and it's true of us nationally.

That's why we are in such a critical place in history relative to the election which is coming. This has direct application for us to remember where we have come from; to repent (to change your mind); and, to go back. That's exactly what we want to do. That's exactly what you have to do. You have to go back. Go back to where you lost your way. Go back to where you turned off and got wrong.

Can Americans do this? We're going to pay very dearly for our rejection of the Word of God. The hard money people are giving some very grim reports now on the outcome of the election. They base that upon the fact that certain hard qualities such as silver and gold always tell stories. Gold should not be selling for what it is selling for now. It should not be rising in price. Therefore, they are coming increasingly to a consensus. It's amazing how you see one after another falling in line. I read just yesterday that another big one fell into the same line – this viewpoint that our president will win the election, and that those who are in positions of power and authority understand that this is where the structure is carrying itself. Therefore, the people who are in the know are the people who are getting ready for the worst economic disasters yet imaginable. And they're getting their money into gold, and they're getting their money into silver, and into other things so that they can get it out of dollar bills.

All of that is unnecessary. However, it shows that 58% of Americans now receive some financial benefit from the government. They receive a check from the government in one way or another. In an overall picture, 60% of Americans live off the other 40%. 40% are the producers, basically, and 60% are the non-producing consumers. Fabian Socialism has brought us to the point where we're willing to accept this, in spite of the condemnation that the Word of God places upon it.

It's not only spiritual degeneracy that resulted in taking this attitude that they did in Sardis. It also results in where you live (right here), and the consequence of tying your hands for your Christian service. That, of course, is the reason for the devil's desire to destroy all opportunity for access to the Word of God. He is interested in tying up the hands of believers so that the Word of God does not have free force.

We go back to where we lost our way, and we recognize that the Lord has very kindly given us a solution. When you've gotten off the track of divine viewpoint, verse 3 says, "Remember (recollect, therefore, since you're in this problem) what you have received." Just remember who you are. You're in the family of God. You have the mind of Christ. You have the indwelling Holy Spirit. You're united to Jesus Christ. You've been baptized into Him forever. You have that unique relationship that no other believer in all the centuries has ever had – only in the church age.

"And also remember what you have heard." Remember the doctoral instruction you received. Now, if you never received it, you don't have much to remember. You have a problem there. If you haven't heard instruction in the Word of God, then you're in real trouble. That's where most of our society is. That's why they can't understand what we're trying to say to them.

"And, after having recalled the truth that you have been taught" – you hold fast (you anchor down, and you button that truth). You turn back to it; you act upon it; and, you repent. You change your mind. You admit that you played the fool. Then you turn around and you go back. That's embarrassing. That's not easy to swallow sometimes. But that's what it takes. Admit that you are a fool; turn around; and, go back to where you went off away from the Word of God.

**Joy**

If you do not do these things, you will never return to the place of joy. You'll never return to the place of Christian service that God prospers and that has eternal rewards. You'll never return to the place where you personally will be prospered. Never forget that the promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" means that God is going to take care of you, and He is going to take care of you well – now, as well as in heaven. Being in super grace status and positive to the Word of God means prosperity here as well as out in eternity. That is the great tragedy of Sardis – to have given all that up when they once had it so beautifully in their grasp. We trust that will not be true of ourselves.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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