

2 Tim 3:16-17 All Scripture is... ..FULLY Equipped. For EVERY good work.

Rom 15:4 ...everything that was written in the past was written to **teach us**,...

Heb 4:12 **For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.**

Read 1Pet 1:3-16 **Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!**

For in his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded **by** God's power **until** the coming of the salvation **that is ready to be revealed** in the last time.

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while **you may have had to suffer grief** in all kinds of trials.

These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may prove genuine, and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Though you have not seen him, you love him;

and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,

trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ **in them** was pointing...

when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah ...and the glories that would follow.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, **but you**,

when they spoke of the things that have now been told you, by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Therefore, having girded your minds for action, be sober: **set your hope on** the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, **no longer conform to the former lusts which were yours - in your ignorance.**

But **just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do**; for it is written: "**Be holy, because I am Holy**".

Peter reminds us of our calling, As God spoke to Israel: to '**Be Holy, because I am Holy**'

We are called to be a **Royal Priesthood** – a **people belonging to God** - and precious to Him.

And we are called to conform to His likeness, Walking in Holiness, and Purity, and Dedication: in serving Him - **Alone**
Everything we think, and DO, and SAY should be shrouded & enveloped in Holiness and Purity-Of-Thought, and Due Process!
We should be constantly Asking ourselves “Am I Walking in Holiness, and Dedication Of Heart - right NOW”.

The way to address, to challenge, and to overcome temptation-to-sin: is to invite God’s presence into ALL activity,
...that is: to pray - to dwell - in His Holy Presence, via Prayer...
...for His Spirit will convict ...and COMPEL ...us to change.

When God gives us specific instructions to obey, as His people, it’s CRITICAL we do so.

When we delay, or equivocate, or **distort God’s words** - and **His will in our lives** - we bring a Holy Disciplining in-to our lives.

So, Be **QUICK to repent**. **Keep short accounts with God**. Rise early to pray – and to
...**present yourself - and your day before God** – as His servant.

Let’s revisit how RUTHLESS God calls us, as His people, to be: in separating themselves from sin and evil.

Deut 17:6-7 On the testimony of two or three witnesses a person is to be put to death, but no one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. The hands of the witnesses must be the first in putting that person to death, and then the hands of all the people. **You must purge the evil from among you.**

- **Note that those who accuse are to be the first to implement the consequences!**

Deut 19:16-19 If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse someone of a crime, the two people involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the Lord before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time. The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against a fellow Israelite, **then** do to the false witness as that witness intended to do to the other party. **You must purge the evil from among you.**

- **Note that False Testimony – and distortion of the truth - is WICKED in God’s sight.**

Deut 22:21-24 If a man happens to meet in a town a virgin pledged to be married and he sleeps with her, you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death—the young woman because she was in a town and did not scream for help, and the man because he violated another man’s wife. **You must purge the evil from among you.**

Deut 24: If someone is caught kidnapping a fellow Israelite and treating or selling them as a slave, **the kidnapper must die.**
You must purge the evil from among you.

There are NUMBERS of times that God Commands His people: “You Must Purge The Evil From Among You.”

In Deuteronomy, chapters 13-to-24

God's Holy Spirit CANNOT and WILL-NOT: Tolerate Wickedness or Rebellion among His people!

But, As the writer of Hebrews tells us in Chapter 8:13, the Levitical Law is now Obsolete.

The Law's purpose, says Paul in **Galatians 4:1-7**, was to supervise us - until ADOPTION.

PAUL writes: "Here is what I have been saying: As long as your own children are young, they are no different from slaves in your house.

They are no different, even though they will own all the property.

People are in charge of the property. And other people are in charge of the children.

The children remain under their care until they become adults - at which time their fathers give them the property.

It is the same with us. When we were children, we were slaves to the basic spiritual powers of the world.

But when the appointed time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'

So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir."

And in Gal 5:13-18-26 Paul writes: "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free.

But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another **humbly in love**.

For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself."

If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you **will be destroyed** by each other.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.

They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

18 But **if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition,

dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

I warn you, **as I did before**, that **those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Against such things there is no law. Those who **belong to** Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh **with its passions and desires.**

Since we live by the Spirit, **let us keep in step with the Spirit.**

Let us not become **conceited, provoking and envying each other.**

The KEY is in **v18** - **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

Those who've trusted-in-Jesus have God's Spirit **Within** them: to call to Holiness, to convict of sin, and to draw to Himself !

1 John 3:10 says: This is how **we know** who the **children of God** are and who the children of the devil are:

Anyone who **does not do** what is right is not God's child, **nor** is anyone **who does not love** their brother and sister.

This Warning reminds us of the need - and call - for us to **work at** Growing in Holiness and Christ-likeness in our Character!

We ALL have an Individual and Corporate Responsibility: to persevere in growth of Holiness and Christ-likeness.

You, and I, both have a responsibility – before God – to work at progressing in the 8 stages of maturity, stated in **2 Peter 1:5-9**

If you do not recall these 8 stages to maturity, you should revisit my sermon of April 7th.

Those of: Goodness; Knowledge; Self-control; Perseverance; Godliness; Affection; and ...Love .

Peter declares that WITHOUT this step-by-step progression to maturity, **our lives will be Ineffective AND Unproductive**

We all need to **be diligent** in our own lives that we flee evil, cast away that which is tainted by sin and to press-on in holiness.

Let us Consider Achan's sin. Let me read to you **Joshua 7:1-12**.

"But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things;

Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them.

So the Lord's anger burned against Israel.

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth Aven to the east of Bethel, and told them, "Go up and spy out the region."

So the men went up and spied out Ai.

When they returned to Joshua, they said, "Not all the army will have to go up against Ai.

Send two or three thousand men to take it and do not weary the whole army, for only a few people live there."

So about three thousand went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai, who killed about thirty-six of them.

They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes.

At this the hearts of the people melted in fear and became like water.

Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the Lord, remaining there till evening.

The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads. And Joshua said, "Alas, Sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?

If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan!

Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies?

The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?"

The Lord said to Joshua, “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?”

Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep.

They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions.

That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies;

they turn their backs and run **because they have been made liable to destruction**.

I will not be with you anymore, unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.

Note WHY is it that the Israelites – those called to reflect God’s Purity and Holiness - have become “**Liable to Destruction**”:

¹¹ “They have taken some of the devoted things; **they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions.**”

Disobedience to God leaves us “Liable to Destruction”.

Regardless of who we **think we are** before God – He ALWAYS puts His Glory, His Honour and His Reputation FIRST.

And: So should We! ...for **Our God is No Respector of Persons!**

When God tells you “Hand it over”, you should “Hand it over”...

for we are ALL inclined to idolise and to HOLD BACK from surrendering to God – **what is rightfully HIS.**

When we come to Jesus and embrace Him as our Saviour and Lord, We choose to abandon ALL our own Plans – and Values –

...In order to comply with HIS will.

we ALL need to examine ourselves – regularly - as King David prayed in Psalm 139 v 23 :

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. – **those thoughts that DO NOT trust in God, alone.**

Because, as John Calvin wrote: “**the human heart is a perpetual idol factory**”

– all believers are called to STRUGGLE **against** our Human Nature, **as Paul relates of his own experience in ROMANS ch.7**

And God calls us to WORK at this – ALL our lives – that we should become “Overcomers” – By His Spirits work within us.

.....

Yet, We are ALL constantly tempted to NOT trust - SOLELY - in God, Alone.

So Examine Your own heart - as we come to Communion.

In the sermon of July 7th we read from Job 42 that God Rebuked Job’s friends: **who spoke lies about God’s character.**

Job was told to offer a Blood Sacrifice for their sin, and to pray **they not be destroyed** – as they’d become “**Liable to Destruction**”.

Remember Annanias and Saphira - from Acts 5? - they too **had made themselves “Liable to Destruction”.**

This is what happens when we **presume** to be able to lie ...or to **twist** God’s words, ...or to **steal** from God...

...what we **should** have surrendered **to** Him.

God calls us to surrender our rebellious **BEHAVIOUR**. He calls us to surrender our rebellious **THOUGHTS**.

He calls us to surrender our **WILL**. He calls us to surrender our **PRIDE**. He calls us to surrender our **TIME**.

He calls us to surrender **EVERYTHING** not subject to **His Approval**, that is: that tainted by **Our Sinful Nature and it's Carnal desires**.

We are to bring ALL of ourselves – Everything we Have ...and Everything we Are ...into submission to the Lord Jesus.

Who Has heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls? Who Has heard of the Dead Sea Scroll Callender?

The following facts can be confirmed by historical writings.

The 300 years before Jesus was born can be divided into two halves – that time prior to the adoption of the Hasmonaean calendar, ...by the Pharisees ...as opposed to the ORIGINAL Callendar retained by the Zadok High Priests, & kept by: the School of the Prophets. In the Levitical Law, Once a year – on a particular day - The High Priest ALONE was permitted to enter The Holy-of-Holies - and that, **with blood**.

The blood was to atone for themselves - and God's people, **as Instructed by God - to cover-over, but not to deal with, their sins**.

From 300 BC to 150 BC there were 13 High Priests, over that 150 year 'block', each serving 5-to-20 years, then retiring at age 50.

At the change of High Priest, those living in the Cities of Refuge could return home, absolved of Accidentally killing another person...

However, In the 150 years before Jesus – there were **more than 120 High Priests in 150 years**.

MANY of those Years: the High Priest had to be dragged-out from the Holy-of-Holies, **DEAD**.

It's Only since 2019: with the understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Calendar system being **deciphered, that we understand that** they had entered The **Most Holy Place** on a day **of their own choosing** - and as a result, **their blood is on their own heads!** – this was the Calendar **that SHOULD have been retained – and ADHERED TO** - by the High Priests

The Pharisees MAY have suspected **Why** these High Priests Died - but now it is **OBVIOUS to us** WHY.

When we go changing and distorting those things God has told us FOR OUR OWN GOOD – we do so **to our own harm**.

God is **completely** intolerant of rebellion and sin among His people.

But **IN PARTICULAR:** when He gives us specific instructions!

But this was **ESPECIALLY** so among those who were to represent Him - before His people – The High Priest!

Let us take warning from how God has dealt with rebellion among His people – so that we do not fall under that same judgement.

They **Presumed** God would not care if they ignored God's Calendar - just so they would "fit-in" with their secular overlords - ...to selectively choose to obey **what** God told them to do - and **when!**

– and so: those Priests who ignored God's Calendar became **"Liable to Destruction"**.

For, When God Cleans House, He does so with The Broom of Destruction.

For those who dismiss this as merely “The God Of The Old Testament”, let me warn you: God is intolerant of our rebellion. God loves us & disciplines us as His children – but even those in the church **He can, and has, put to death - for ongoing rebellion.**

READ: Turn with me to 1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 32

Paul writes to the **Carnal and Worldly congregation** in Corinth, a church of Strong Personalities and Great Giftedness.

He writes to a people **Easily Impressed by Outward Appearances...**

1 Corinthians is actually Paul’s second letter ...so **PERSISTENT** was their **Spiritual Immaturity and their need for correction!**

– at that time, 2 Corinthians was yet to be written...

1 Corinthians 11: 23-32 Paul writes: “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way He took the cup, also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.

Therefore **whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner**, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must **examine himself**, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. **29** For those who eat and drink **without discerning** the body of Christ, eat and drink judgement on themselves. For this reason, many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have **fallen asleep (Died)**. For, if we would judge ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.. But when we are judged, **we are disciplined by the Lord** so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

Paul warns the Corinthians that **they had failed to differentiate the holy from the profane, or Secular,**

...to check their standing before God – whether they were walking in holiness and had kept short accounts with God:

- That is: **being quick to repent** when prompted by the Holy Spirit - and being **quick to forgive**.
- they overlooked the **sanctity of the Ordinance** that acknowledges **their Saviour’s sacrifice for them**, in Communion, ...they had **despised the work – and significance-of the Sacrifice** made for us - by our Holy God, ...and so: they had become **“liable to destruction”**.

God had permitted **some** to fall sick. God **caused** **some to die** - for despising **His Holiness** –

...despising God’s Holy Spirit’s indwelling & presence – ...among those who have been **Saved by Jesus**.

Their Unspiritual and Carnal minds **not perceiving** the solemnity **and SIGNIFICANCE** of this ordinance –

...that recalls our deliverance from sin and judgement: the significance of what God has done – **in Christ Jesus**.

The Record of the Israelites Rescue from Egypt – the avoiding the genocide of their children, from under Pharaoh's rule...

...is a type: an anticipation-of our Salvation – a salvation wrought **by** Jesus.

Just as the Passover Meal is a Solemn Memorial, so is what we celebrate **in and by** Communion.

– it is a meal that recalls and celebrates **OUR God** and **OUR** Salvation!

Some of the Corinthians **were dismissive**, in that ALL God's people are called to celebrate this meal, together, ...in thankful Reverence...

They treated what is a Holy Ordinance as merely a physical meal, without acknowledging it's **profound spiritual** significance.

Here: **there is no place for pride - only gratitude**, humility and acceptance of all who come for forgiveness - to the Foot of The Cross.

Before Him, **we all** were at one time: vile, wretched sinners - destined for His Just Wrath and Destruction.

We **ALL** come before Christ Jesus on a LEVEL playing field – that **of our own Moral Failure**, and of **His Unwarranted Grace!**

So: Let us join together in this celebration... Recalling **who it is** that called us...

...In the bond of love, ...that God Our father has united us in, ...and through:

the precious Blood of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

God tells us to **Know – and to Grow** – through the Scriptures.

EPH 4:30 ; Do Not GRIEVE the Holy Spirit – Be quick to Repent, and Obey!

Summary: What Does God want to do **IN** you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3

How are you going to Work **WITH** God (to make changes)?:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.