

Do NOT Call Common!



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“And [Peter] beholds heaven opening, and a certain vessel as a great sheet descending, being let down upon the earth by four corners, in which were all the quadrupeds and creeping things of the earth, and birds of heaven. And a voice came to him: **“Having risen up, Peter, kill and eat!”** But Peter said, “In no way, Lord! **For never have I eaten anything COMMON or UNCLEAN.**” And a voice came again to him for the second time: **“What God has CLEANSED, you DO NOT call COMMON.”** Acts 10:11-15.

The vision Peter experienced while praying on the roof of the house was one of the most significant events of the New Testament. God was in effect making it known to His people that He has granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. [Acts 11:18.] So, the purpose of this study is to establish the truth, that as far as God is concerned the entire world is FORGIVEN of ALL SINS. Which is illustrated in the exchange Peter had with the Lord, the most pressing of which was the fact that the Lord called the Gentiles, that were moments away from the house of Simon the tanner, that they were ALREADY CLEANSED, and are NOT to be called COMMON, even before a single word of the gospel having been preached to them. And the fact this incident took place in a house that belonged to Simon the Tanner, and the vision shown to a man called Simon who was also known as Cephas, which means “Stone,” is significant. In the study titled “the Fig Tree,” we alluded to the fact Simon was called Cephas in respect to the Law, so in this case as well, Simon the TANNER, one who works with animal hide, is in respect to the COVERING of an animal tunic which the Lord God made to cover the sin of Adam and Eve. [Genesis 3:21.] So in essence, God, through the illustration of these two men, is letting us know from what He has cleansed ALL of Mankind from, that is from the Sin that came on the account of Adam and Eve, as well as that of the Law. [Hebrews 9:15.]

Now, this might seem a bit unsettling at first, but it all depends on from whose perspective we view the events. That is, as far as God is CONCERNED, the moment His Son gave His life on the Cross, the sins of the ENTIRE world were cleansed, from the moment Adam disobeyed to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to the final days that are yet to come were ALL put on the body of

the Lord Jesus Christ. [Isaiah 53:4-6.] And the Lord Himself said, “The bread that **I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.**” John 6:51. The fact of the matter is, it was not lost on God, that the source of ALL sin is the devil, who corrupted himself. [Ezekiel 28:17.] That is why the judgment which the Lord spoke about was NOT of mankind, but that of the ruler of this world, saying, “**Now is the judgment of this world; now the prince of this world will be cast out.**” John 12:31. And again, “**Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.**” John 16:11.

The IMPORTANT factor we need to understand is that Sin is the nature of the devil, which is expressed in the works of the flesh the consequence of which was DEATH. And it is precisely for this reason the Lord Jesus Christ did NOT come to judge mankind for their sins, which was ALREADY judged in DEATH, but He came to save us from it. As the Lord said of His Father, “For **God did not send His Son into the world that He might JUDGE the world, but that the world might be SAVED through Him.**” John 3:17. However, in the course of this process, the SOURCE of ALL sins, the father of lies and murder, was himself judged. As Paul says, “**He also likewise took part in [blood and of flesh], so that through His death He might DESTROY the one holding the power of DEATH, that is, the devil, and might set FREE those who all their time to live were subject to slavery through fear of death.**” Hebrews 2:14-15. Please Note, the Lord destroyed the devil by His death not only for believers but also for unbelievers, through which he has set EVERYONE of us to be FREE from death. And to this Paul adds, “For surely He helps not the angels, but **He helps the seed of Abraham.**” Hebrews 2:16. That is to say, HELP is provided in our temptation in the Person of the Holy Spirit, to those who are of the household of faith, who are considered to be the seed of Abraham. [Hebrews 2:18.]

The point being, the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has made a way for mankind to come out from the dominion of the kingdom of darkness, but they have to do it willingly in the belief of the truth. Through which a provision is given in the Person of the Holy Spirit to help bring them into the kingdom of God. As the Lord said to Paul, “**To open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may RECEIVE forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those having been sanctified by faith in Me.**” Acts 26:18. NOTE, it is us who HAVE TO RECEIVE the forgiveness of sins, NOT that God is waiting to grant it, which He has ALREADY done in Christ, in respect to which Paul said, “**As also in Christ God FORGAVE you.**” Ephesians 4:32. For which reason, God is NOT attributing the sinful deeds of mankind, which they commit in the flesh of their ignorance. As Paul says, “**God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, NOT reckoning their trespasses to them, and having put into us the word of reconciliation.**” 2 Corinthians 5:19. John also says, “**He is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world.**” 1 John 2:2. Simply meaning, God has stretched open His hands to us through the cross of Christ, calling us to WILLINGLY be reconciled to Him, and is NOT LOOKING at our failure in the flesh. This is the reason the Lord said to Peter, “Do NOT call Common, what God has Cleansed,” because the entire world has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

However, we commonly present God to unbelievers as a righteous judge who must execute punishment on the sinner in order for Him to be just, and this is not entirely true. When we say this, we are presenting God not as one whose hands are opened waiting to be reconciled to ALL His children, but as one waiting to execute punishment. As such, we make it look as if the judgment for sins is yet to come. However, the fact of the matter is, God is NOT waiting to punish the sinner, since He has ALREADY done that 2000 years ago when His Son was on the Cross, therefore there is NOT

a SINGLE sin of the deeds of the flesh that is awaiting the punishment from God, NOT ONE! God is NOT reckoning sins to ANYONE, and if sin is not imputed, there is no punishment associated with it.

Here is the point, DEATH itself, that is the First Death that brought us down to the captivity of Hades, was the consequence for ALL the sins of mankind committed in the flesh on the account of Adam. And whether we believe it or not, it is from this state the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh to save ALL of mankind, in the annulment of the Covenant of Death and Hades through the removal of sin. As Isaiah says, “Behold, **I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation**, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily. Also I will make **justice the measuring line**, and **righteousness the plummet**; The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place. **Your covenant with DEATH will be ANNULLED**, and **your AGREEMENT with SHEOL will not stand.**” Isaiah 28:17-18. So when Christ Died in our place He removed Sin and abolished death for EVERYONE!

And this is where we get it wrong, because we think the resurrection is a privilege that is unique to ONLY believers, and we DO NOT realise Death and the Grave are ANNULLED for ALL of Mankind! And we think that way because we have not fully comprehended the extent to which the forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus applies to the entire world. Paul writes, “For since **death came by a man**, so also **by a man has come the resurrection of the dead**. For as indeed **in Adam ALL die**, so also **in Christ ALL will be made alive.**” 1 Corinthians 15:21-22. Paul is saying, as sure as WE ALL died in Adam, we will ALL be raised from the dead in Christ. And Paul showing the far reaching effect of the Death of the Lord Jesus Christ says, “Having concluded THIS, that **One has died for ALL, therefore ALL have died.**” 2 Corinthians 5:14. The effect of which is that, “therefore **we do not regard ANYONE according to the flesh.**” [verse 16.] This is to say, as ones that are subject to death and hades. Please Note, the ONLY reason the dead are raised from the grave is on the account of the SINS of the world having been FULLY paid in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result, believers as well as unbelievers, are all made ALIVE in Him! God upholds the words of His mouth, if sin was not fully paid for everyone, Death and Hades would have had the LEGAL right to hold the body and soul of mankind, according to the authority granted to the devil by the Law of Sin in the Garden of Eden. However, Christ has obtained the keys of Death and Hades through the sacrifice of Himself in the abolishment of sin, once and for all, for which reason ALL are made ALIVE in Him. [Revelation 1:18.]

This is what we need to understand, the main reason the Lord came in the flesh is to SAVE us from the captivity of the kingdom of darkness that had a stranglehold on Mankind through sin, which He did by satisfying the judgment of the CURSE God spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden. So, the Lord BORE the curse of the world upon Himself, giving Himself to the death of the Cross, through which He removed the keys of Death and Hades! [Galatians 3:13.] God operates in the COVENANTAL strength of His word, and believe it or not, HELL was NOT part of the judgment God gave for the transgression of Adam according to Genesis 3:17-19! And the sins of mankind in the flesh are in effect a consequence of Adam’s action therefore are subject to the SAME judgment as the one the Lord God spoke in the Garden of Eden. And it is from this judgement the Lord Jesus Christ saves us, through the offering of His body for our sins. That is why, the Lord did not mix His words, when He said, “On this rock I will build My church, and **the gates of HADES not will prevail against it.**” Matthew 16:18.

Hades, has everything to do with the First Death, as it relates to Adam, but has ABSOLUTELY nothing to do with the destruction that is yet to come upon the whole earth, that is the Second Death,

to which Hades himself is subject. [Revelation 20:14.] That is why in the Law, there is not a single punishment specified to Israel according to sin that ended in HELL, NOT a SINGLE ONE! As Paul said, “Anyone having set aside **the Law of Moses dies without mercies** on the basis of two or three witnesses.” Hebrews 10:28. It ALWAYS ended in DEATH, because the wages for sin was death. [Romans 6:23.] Which is to be made a captive resident of the kingdom of darkness, and it CANNOT exceed that! That is why the gates of HADES, that is to say, the gates of the FIRST DEATH cannot prevail against the Church, because the covenant of Death and the Grave have been annulled through the DEATH of the Son of God.

And THIS deliverance of God is best illustrated in the story of Israel coming out of the bondage of Egypt. When Israel irrespective of the manner of life they lived, by faith applied the blood of the lamb on the posts and lintels of their door, through which they were delivered from the destroyer of the firstborn. And were delivered from the power of Pharaoh through the Red Sea. Likewise, the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has the same effect, in delivering us from the judgment of the First Death, through which the devil is made powerless in our lives, by bringing us out of the kingdom of darkness. As Paul said, “[God] **who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness** and transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom **we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**” Colossians 1:13-14. And the reason why BAPTISM in water, as to be buried with the Lord BODILY, is an important declaration of faith in the walk of a Christian, which NO ONE can make for us. Which is an expression of coming out of the kingdom of darkness through death to a new life in the Spirit. [Colossians 2:11-12.] That is, our Soul cleansed by the Blood, and our Body buried in water.

ALL the AUTHORITY the devil had was bound in this one word, “SIN.” In respect to which John says, “And **they have overcome [the devil] by reason of the BLOOD of the Lamb**, and by reason of the word of their testimony.” Revelation 12:11. The Blood in effect is a declaration of DEATH that has taken place, for which reason when we believe and confess the truth of the Gospel we are applying the Blood of Christ for all the sins committed in our flesh, as such the devil has no ground to bring any accusation, nor to condemn any of us. [Romans 8:33-34.] Likewise, when we also take part in the Lord’s Supper, Paul said, “For as often as **you may eat this bread and may drink the cup**, you **PROCLAIM the Lord’s DEATH** until He should come.” 1 Corinthians 11:26. PLEASE NOTE, it is by the DEATH of the Son of God that the kingdom of darkness is paralysed, made powerless, and without authority in our lives! So when we partake of the Lord Supper, it is like applying the Blood of the Lamb on the house of our body by which the destroyer is kept at bay. [Hebrews 2:14.]

What we have to understand is, how ABSOLUTE and far REACHING the forgiveness of sins which is in the cross of Jesus Christ. It is a PIVOTAL moment in all of Creation, when the ENTIRE WORLD was UPENDED, where the nature of FLESH and Sin was brought to an End, and the nature of the SPIRIT and that of Righteousness had begun, and it is APPLICABLE to ALL. We talk about how the Law was done away with, but we by the same measure do not extend the same principle to sins, as if one can be without the other. If the Law is done away with, be assured it is because sin is utterly removed, as Paul says, “But now **we have been RELEASED from the Law**, **HAVING died to that which we were bound.**” Romans 7:6. And in the previous chapter he stated, “For **the one having Died has been FREED from sin.**” Romans 6:7. The point Paul was making was that, we are released from the Law, BECAUSE we have died to sin through the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul said, “**He has been revealed ONCE** in the consummation of the ages **for the PUTTING AWAY of sin by the sacrifice of Himself.**” Hebrews 9:26. The Law was given because of transgression, but if sin is removed, then the Law has become without a purpose.

What we are trying to impress upon you is the extent to which sins are forgiven, even to the one who does not know it to be so. Now, there is a difference in the timing of resurrections, those who belong to Christ as to have His Spirit in them will be raised first at His return, while the rest are raised on the final day of judgment. [Revelation 20:13.] Nonetheless, the foundation that made this possible for BOTH believers and unbelievers, is Christ Crucified in the abolishment of Sin and Death for all. As Paul says, “Now having been made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, **having abolished death** and having brought to light **life and immortality through the gospel.**” 2 Timothy 1:10. The point Paul was making was that DEATH is abolished for all, for which reason Paul says, “We have hope on the living God, **who is the Saviour of ALL men**, especially of believers.” 1 Timothy 4:10. That is, everyone is saved from the grips of death in the forgiveness of sins, but life and immortality is given to those that believe the gospel of truth.

Having said this, when Sin and death were ABOLISHED for everyone in putting aside the nature of Adam, a new measuring line of justice and righteousness was put in its place, in Christ Jesus. On the account of which Isaiah says, “Now therefore, **do not be MOCKERS**, lest your **bonds be made strong**; For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts, **a destruction determined even upon the WHOLE EARTH.**” Isaiah 28:22. Isaiah is making the point that, now the Covenant of Death and Hades have been annulled in the Messiah in the forgiveness of sins, a GREATER judgment is put in place that will engulf all of creation, for which reason he says “DO NOT be MOCKERS.” And Isaiah, seeking to explain THIS, first tries to capture our attention saying, “**Give ear and hear My voice, listen and hear My speech.**” Then he uses an example of a Plowman as an illustration of God, and asks, “**Does the Plowman keep plowing all day to sow?**” Isaiah 28:24. After he leveled the surface, does he not sow seeds with the expectation of a HARVEST? The point is this, God has dug the ground of the earth, in order to set the captives free from DEATH & the GRAVE, and has leveled its surface, bringing the high mountains down, and lifting up the valleys, so everyone is made equal. So God is asking, did I till the ground with the Cross of My Son for NOTHING? Did I not set you free from your captivity, so that I may sow the good seed of My word into your hearts that you may bear My fruit? [Isaiah 28:23-29.] Which is the same sentiment that is portrayed in the parable of the Sower and the four types of grounds in Mark 4:3-20, and also in Hebrews 6:7-8. Paul also says, “Do not be misled: **God is not mocked.** For whatever a man might sow, that also he will reap. For **the one SOWING to his own flesh**, from the flesh **will reap decay.** But **the one sowing to the Spirit**, from the Spirit **will reap eternal life.**” Galatians 6:7-8.

The main point being, just as the First Death came on the account of the first man Adam in respect to sin, the Second Death has also now come to effect on the account of the Last Adam, which is in respect to righteousness. The judgment that is to come, on the account of Christ, which is of righteousness is for the purpose of giving LIFE, but those that failed to obtain it, the consequence is to suffer the Second Death, which is the expression of the Wrath of God. Paul writes, “**How much worse punishment** do you think will he deserve, **the one having trampled upon the Son of God**, and having **esteemed ordinary the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified**, and having **insulted the Spirit of grace?**” Hebrews 10:29. Consider the implication of this statement, which we commonly have attributed to those that rejected Christ. How is it possible that an unbeliever can despise the blood by which he was Sanctified as a common thing, if he had not already been made clean by it? Remember, the main text of our study is, “Do NOT call common what God has cleansed.” So, we by default recognise that the world is ALREADY cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ. Now, having said this, this statement also applies to believers because the manner we live either honours or dishonours God, for which reason Paul calls a believer who walks in the ways of the world according

to the dictates of their flesh to be **“an enemy of the cross of Christ.”** Philippians 3:18. Peter also in respect to Isaiah, shows how such a one can be brought into greater calamity saying, **“For if, having escaped the pollutions of the world** through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, **now again having been entangled in these they are subdued, the last state has become worse to them than the first.”** 2 Peter 2:20. That is to say, **“[their] bonds were made strong.”**

The difference between Hades and Hell is that one is a consequence of sin, the other is the consequence of rejecting the Righteousness of God. And the fact we have blurred these two points is the reason why many Christians have failed to see the expectation to live righteous lives by the Spirit of God. We have made the forgiveness of sins to be the entire purpose of Christianity, and have forsaken the life we are expected to live by the Spirit of God. The death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, saves us from DEATH & HADES, and no power of the depth can EVER annul that. But now, He has delivered us, He expects us to live for Him, by His Spirit. As Paul said, **“He died for all that those living no longer should live to themselves, but to the One having died for them and having been raised again.”** 2 Corinthians 5:15. Peter also says, **“The one having suffered in the flesh is done with sin,** so as to live the remaining time **in the flesh no longer to men’s desires, but to the will of God.”** 1 Peter 4:1-2. And there are many Scripture verses that exhort and warn us of the expectation God has for our lives, that will determine our inheritance. As Paul repeatedly said, **“For this you know, realizing that any fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous man, who is an idolater, has NO INHERITANCE in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”** Ephesians 5:5. That is those who make the practice of the works of the flesh as stated in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 4:17-19, and many more.

And it is on the basis of these that Paul says, **“Therefore much more, having been justified now by His blood,** we will be **SAVED by Him from WRATH!** For if, being enemies, **we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,** much more, having been reconciled, **shall we be SAVED in His LIFE!**” Romans 5:9-10. Here, Paul is making distinction between the twofold nature of SALVATION, so he first speaks of the DEATH of the Son of God, through which we are reconciled to God having been set free from the kingdom of darkness in the forgiveness of sins. Then he speaks of the LIFE of the Son of God, that is His Spirit to SAVE us from the WRATH to come, that we may inherit the Kingdom of God. The LIFE of the Son of God is the expression of His Nature which is of Righteousness being manifested in our body, as to dictate our walk. Remember, in Hebrews He saved the prisoners through His Death, **AFTERWARDS** He **HELPS** the seed of Abraham in their temptations.

The MAIN issue with modern Christianity is that we are focused on our sins having been forgiven, and have not given due regard to what purpose God has given His Spirit to us. If forgiveness of Sins was His entire Goal, God has already accomplished that in the CROSS of Christ, then what purpose does the Spirit of God serve in the lives of Christians? Righteousness is beyond that of the forgiveness of sins, it is the expression of His nature being lived out in our body by His Spirit. As Paul says, **“For if you live according to flesh, you are about to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”** Romans 8:13. God knows those that are His, we cannot pull the wool over His eyes thinking our sins are forgiven so that we may live life that is indistinguishable from that of the world. The fact that sin is forgiven is the reason many deceive themselves and walk in all manner of ill ways, without realising it is His LIFE that saves us from the WRATH to come. The forgiveness of sins through His Death saves us from Hades, but failing to live according to His nature by His Life makes us subject to Wrath, and the Church is NOT EXEMPT.

We have to understand the difference between believers and unbelievers, is the state of our conscience that is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, as to be reconciled with God through which we are made the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. [1 Peter 3:21.] As Peter said, “And the heart-knowing God bore witness to them, **having given them the Holy Spirit**, as also to us. And He made no distinction between both us and them, **having purified their hearts by the faith.**” Acts 15:8-9. And one of the main charges against the Church of God is that we sometimes see the Holy Spirit as some sort of optional extra, and we do not realise He is the ENTIRE purpose for which Christ Died. He is the Promise! As such the very FIRST act the Lord had done when He was raised from the dead, having put aside our sins was to breathe on His disciples and say, “**Receive the Holy Spirit.**” John 20:22. And when Peter also first preached the gospel message to the Jews, he stated, “**Repent and be baptized**, every one of you, **in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins**, and you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**” Acts 2:38. And in Galatians Paul says, “**Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—** ... so that the blessing of Abraham might come **to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus**, so that **through faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.**” Galatians 3:13-14. In ALL of which, the message of the Gospel is to this ONE end, so that we may receive the Promised Holy Spirit on the account of our sins having been FULLY forgiven in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the depth of the implication of NOT having the Holy Spirit is conveyed in the words of Paul, saying, “Now you are not in flesh but in Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you; but **if ANYONE DOES NOT have the Spirit of Christ, he is NOT of Him.**” Romans 8:9.

The fact of the matter is, we know we are sons of God by the Spirit of His Son that He gave to us in the Holy Spirit. As Paul says, “For you have not received a spirit of bondage again to fear, but **you have received the Spirit of divine adoption as sons**, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God**, and if children, also heirs: **heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs of Christ.**” Romans 8:15-17. [Galatians 4:6-7.] The inheritance of the Kingdom of God is ALWAYS tied to the Spirit of God, without whom we have NO CLAIM. As Paul says, “In whom also having believed **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**, who is **the GUARANTEE of our inheritance** to the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:13-14. Meaning, the Holy Spirit is the PROOF of RECEIPT by which we are to receive the inheritance of the Kingdom!

Pastor Joseph Prince, teaching on the cleansing of a leper pointed out that the priest applied the blood on the tip of the right ear, on the right thumb, and the right toe of the one who was cleansed from leprosy. And to this he adds, the priest then applied the oil on the tip of the right ear, the right thumb and the right toe, on top of the blood. [Leviticus 14:14-18.] The point he was making was that the Oil goes on top of the BLOOD, the implication being the Spirit of God is given on the account we are completely cleansed from our sins by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the symbolism of these actions were to illustrate, first our ears being opened to understand the things of the Spirit, as Paul says, “ [We received] the Spirit from God, that we may know the things having been granted to us by God, which also we speak, not in words taught of human wisdom, **but in those taught of the Spirit, communicating spiritual things by spiritual means.**” 1 Corinthians 2:12-14. Second, the right thumb represents the works we are to do in the Spirit, “**For we are His workmanship**, having been created in Christ Jesus **for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**” Ephesians 2:10. [Titus 2:14.] Finally, the right toe represents our walk in the ways of righteousness by the Spirit of God, as Paul says, “Now I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you should not gratify the desires of the flesh.**” Galatians 5:16. And this should give us an idea of what God’s expectations are, after having saved us from the captivity of sin.

So, it is a complete and UTTER failure for a Christians to wallow in sin and forgiveness, without realising the call to a life of righteousness by the Spirit of God, which is APART from sin. And it is important for us to realise, NO ONE can grant absolution for sins, which CHRIST has ALREADY, ONCE and for ALL has FREELY made available to ALL, EVEN to unbelievers. The purpose of which is that God gives HIS SPIRIT to the one who believes this to be true, to the one who knows his sins are once for all washed away by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. [Acts 10:43-44.] That is, our conscience having been cleansed from the condition of our sinful flesh, so that we may live in the Spirit according to the nature of God, for which reason God gives us His own Spirit. [Hebrews 10:1-3, 19-23.]

God does NOT have sin in Him, but Righteousness, as such when we live by His Spirit, we live in righteousness and not to the dictates of the lusts of the flesh. [Galatians 5:16.] And this is the reason John says, “And you know that He appeared, **so that He might take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.** Anyone abiding in Him does not sin; anyone sinning has not seen Him, nor has he known Him.” 1 John 3:5-6. When saying, “sinning,” it is to express a persistent state of being. We are not to be dragged back to a previous way of life in the flesh and sin, but we are expected to strive forward for a life in the Spirit and Righteousness. As Paul said, “**Forgetting the things behind and reaching forward to the things ahead,** I press on toward the goal **for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.**” Philippians 3:13-14.

So, God may be patient in leading us, according to what we are able, but He expects us to walk with Him in the Spirit and to Grow. People who turn away from hearing the truth in order to suit their own purpose will endanger themselves. So Paul says, “**Let no one deceive you with empty words,** for because of these things **the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.** Therefore **do not be partakers with them.**” Ephesians 5:6-7. [Colossians 3:5-6.] The doctrines we learn, and put to practice have consequences. So, having a CLEAN CONSCIENCE as to understand the removal of sins to the UTMOST is the basic foundation for serving God. [Hebrews 9:14.] As Paul said, “In order for us **to serve in newness of the Spirit,** and **NOT in oldness of the letter.**” Romans 7:6. The letter of the Law was all about Sin and Condemnation, but the newness of the Spirit is all about Righteousness and Life. As Paul said, “**For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**” 2 Corinthians 3:6. And we cannot serve God in the capacity of the Spirit, if we do not realise our consciences having been cleansed from sin once and for all, as to be dead to sin, and dead to the flesh. The Lord gave the parable of the Speck and the Plank precisely for this reason. [Matthew 7:3-5.] The Lord is making the point, if you do not have a conscience that is cleansed from sin in the knowledge of the truth, how are you going to set another free? The eye is an analogy for the UNDERSTANDING. So, being ASSURED our sins are forgiven in the blood of Christ once and for all, is the grounds by which we are able to bring others to the light. Hence the reason the Lord said, “**First cast out the beam from your eye,** and then you will see clearly to cast out the splinter from the eye of your brother.” [Verse 5.]

The point is when we are assaulted with doctrines that take away from the complete forgiveness of sins which we have in Christ, it is like a person being deceived to look at the dust of the ground, when he is expected to lift his face to the clouds of heaven. [Colossians 3:1-2.] And this will determine the kind of life we live, either in a perpetual state of condemnation of sin which is to wallow in the dust of the flesh, or to the liberty of the Spirit in an ever increasing glory in Christ. [2 Corinthians 3:18.] It is IMPORTANT for us to come to the realisation of our ABSOLUTE forgiveness of sins in Christ, so that we may be open to receive the Spirit of God, and may live according to His nature.

Now, the common error Christians make is that we do not distinguish between the judgment of sin which leads to death, and that of Righteousness which is for the purpose of life. So we commonly say, Christians do not come into judgment, and that is absolutely right as far as it concerns the First Death. [John 5:24.] But there is a righteous judgment of Christ that is yet to come to which EVERYONE must be subject, as Paul says, “For **we must ALL be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ**, that each may receive back **the things done through the body** according to what he did, **whether good or evil.**” 2 Corinthians 5:10. Now, many in seeking to explain this passage have sought to make a distinction between the judgment seat which Paul speaks about in this verse, which is called (béma seat), and that of the great white throne described in Revelation 20:11, and in Matthew 25:31. The idea being to illustrate the béma seat for the purpose of giving reward to which Christians are subject, while the Great White throne being for the judgement of the Lake of Fire. However, the béma seat is not for the purpose of reward only, since Christ Himself was condemned to death from the béma seat, which Pontius Pilate sat on. [John 20:13.] More so, the Great white throne is not only for the judgment of Second Death, but even to reward others to life. That is, from the SAME Great white Throne Christ judged the SHEEP nations to life, while He judged the GOAT nations to the Second Death. [Matthew 25:31-46. Revelation 20:13-14.]

And the reason we think this way is because we have made distinction between believers and unbelievers, in respect to the judgement to come which we ASSUMED to be on the basis of sin, so we in effect have relegated all other expectations by using the judgment of the unbelievers to be our qualifying point. But when we realise neither they nor us are judged for our sins, and the judgment to come is that of righteousness which is in respect to the life of the Son of God, then we can see NO ONE is EXEMPT! And this is what makes the life lived by the Spirit of God IMPERATIVE for Christians.

We have to view things from the perspective of kingdoms, either of Light or that of Darkness. As Paul says, “For **you are all sons of light and sons of day**; we are **not of night nor of darkness.**” 1 Thessalonians 5:5. People die, because they have not loved the truth in order to come out from the dominion of darkness that they may obtain LIFE and be SAVED. [2 Thessalonians 2:10.] As such, by their own choice they become partakers of the consequence to which the kingdom of darkness is subject. It is VERY IMPORTANT to note, they share in the judgment of the wicked one, because they have submitted to his rule to live according to his dictates and desires which is worked out in their flesh, as a result they will reap its consequences. Remember in Christ, it is the ruler of this world that is judged, and by extension all those that belong to him. That is why the Lord said to the goat nations, “Depart from Me, those being cursed, into the eternal fire, **having been prepared for the devil and his angels.**” Matthew 25:41. Sin is the expression and nature of the evil one, just as Righteousness is the expression and nature of God. So when Paul says, because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience, the sons of disobedience are those that live for the flesh according to the course of this world, which is influenced by the spirit of the power of the air. [Ephesians 2:1-3.]

Now, this brings us to the point, if we know how complete the forgiveness of sins is, which even encompasses the unbelieving world, as to not merit judgment from God, what is the implication to Christians in respect to the manner we are expected to live by the Spirit of God, for the purpose of inheriting the Kingdom of God? One teacher comparing the giving of the Law to that of the giving of the Spirit stated, as the Law was instrumental to direct the lives of the children of Israel in order to bring them into the promised Land, the Spirit of God is also instrumental to direct our lives in righteousness and sanctification in order for us to inherit the kingdom of God. And just as coming out from the captivity of Egypt by the blood of the lamb was the first step for the children of Israel, we

coming out of the kingdom of darkness in the forgiveness of sins through the Cross of Christ is also a first step for us. And this must be followed with the expectation to walk according to the will of God in order to inherit the promised inheritance, which is beyond the Jordan River. For them it was the Law according to the state of being in the flesh, but for us it is the Holy Spirit according to being in the spirit. However, if we honestly gauge the spiritual status of many Christians, a vast amount of them are still at the shores of the Red Sea, unaware of the conditions required to cross the Jordan River. They know of the Blood that was shed for the forgiveness of sins, but have no knowledge of the Oil that was applied for the purpose of sanctification of life. And, it is for the lack of the Spirit, which is expressed as an Oil in the parable of the foolish virgins, which resulted in some of them being left behind, from the inheritance of the Kingdom of God, even though their sins were FORGIVEN.

Here, it is important to bring to rest that some have argued the Jordan River does not represent crossing over into the kingdom of God, because of the war Israel experienced in the land. This can be explained when we consider the twofold nature of the event that is taking place. First, the fact that the Jordan River represents entering into the kingdom of God is illustrated in the Rapture of Elijah, when he was taken in a chariot of fire the moment he crossed the Jordan River. [2 Kings 2:6-11.] This event is meant to represent the Church being made spirits as He is Spirit, when we see Him in the Rapture. The Second, is in respect to the Lord taking ownership of the Earth, when He returns with the army of heaven, that is with those that are made spirits in Him. And this is expressed in the war that was waged, in the battle of Armageddon described in, Revelation 19:19-21. Remember, the Lord had to wage war when He took His place in heaven, which is described in Revelation 12:7-9. And the same pattern is now repeated when He takes over the Earth, through which the devil will be cast down to the pit for 1000 years. So coming into possession of the kingdom of God, involves War be it in Heaven or Earth, respectively!

And if we do not see beyond the forgiveness of sins, in order to live ready LIVES by the Spirit of God, we are the ones who will miss out when the Lamb returns, the chance to be spirits. The parable of the Ten Virgins described in Matthew 25:1-12, and the parable of the Banquet of the Man, described in Luke 14:16-24, are most applicable to our generation, since we are the ones witnessing the closing of the dispensation of Grace. And there is a growing trend of people declaring to us how CLOSE we are to the end, so that we may live lives that reflect the nature of God, by exhorting us to a life of prayer, reading the word, and the gathering of ourselves, as Paul says, “**SO MUCH MORE as you see the Day drawing Near.**” Hebrews 10:25. [2 Peter 3:11-12.]

And as in the parable of the Ten virgins, the days we are living in are typified by two types of Churches. The Church of Philadelphia, which means “love of the brethren,” is an expression for the wise virgins. This church is described as, “Because **you have LITTLE power, and yet you have kept My word** and have not denied My name.” Revelation 3:8. When the Lord says, “Little Power,” it is in respect to our own righteousness. We have to remember in the Spirit which according to Grace, is ALL about what God supplies, so where we are weak, He is strong. As Paul says, “**Henceforth be empowered in the Lord and in the strength of His might.**” Ephesians 6:10. And this church is encouraged to persevere so that no one may steal our crown, that is the crown of righteousness, which is determined according to the life we live by the Spirit of God. Please Note, how could it be possible for us to lose the crown of reward which the Lord gives, if the way we conduct ourselves in the Spirit does not have any bearing. In the teaching of the Fig Tree, we pointed out how those that were invited by the Man to the Banquet in Luke 14, missed out on the chance to be spirits, and their position was given to those that came after them, all because they did not live prepared lives in the Spirit.

And the five foolish virgins are an example of those that lose their crown, the determining factor being the lack of Oil, that is the Spirit of God! For which the Church of Laodiceans, which means "People rule," is an illustration. This Church in contrast has reasoned themselves and qualified themselves according to their own measurements saying, **"I am rich, and I have grown rich, and I have need of nothing.** And you do not realize that **you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.**" Revelation 3:17. Nevertheless, because they are called according to His name, they are considered a Church, even though they do not have the light of life. For which reason He pleads with them saying, "I counsel you to buy from Me **gold having been refined by fire so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may be clothed** and the shame your of nakedness might not be made manifest, and **eye-salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.**" Revelation 3:18. They are Poor, in respect to faith, because they count on their own works to qualify them, and anyone who counts on sets of laws is poor in faith, because the law is not of faith. [Galatians 3:12, 1 Peter 1:7.] They are naked, because they have not fully accepted the gospel in order to have a cleansed conscience, so they are engaged in all manner of practices. Finally, they are blind, because spiritual truth is revealed to the one who is in the Spirit. As such they are given to natural reasoning which leads to all manner of fables. Consider how many in the world identify as Christians which is according to CULTURE to a distinct set of rituals, traditions and customs according to the heritage of that nation. By which we declare our allegiance simply because we were christened as infants, but have NEVER taken steps to make Christ our own in order to KNOW and WALK in His ways. As such we are christians by default according to the people's rule. And note the difference between the two churches, the first He encourages because they are walking with Him in His Grace, but the latter He invites to break free from their own dependency of laws and rituals, to a relationship with Him.

When people turn from hearing sound doctrines, and turn towards teachings that suit them, listening to fables, and doctrines of demons by men of seared conscience, they are in danger of being ones that lose their crowns. The Cross of Christ for the forgiveness of sins through which we are delivered from the kingdom of darkness is the foundation of the faith, He is the ROCK we BUILD on. So we may be able to pursue a life by the Spirit in the KNOWLEDGE of the Son of God for the purpose of inheriting the kingdom of God, and an escape from the Second Death to come. The Cross of Christ brings us out of darkness, but the Spirit of God brings us into the inheritance of the kingdom of God. And Salvation is the combination of the Two. The Judgment to come is NOT about Sin, but Righteousness, since Christ Himself is the measuring line. [Acts 17:30-31.] So, it is an utter ERROR for Christians to live for sin and forgiveness, when we are expected to LIVE by HIS LIFE in righteousness.

Life in the Spirit is not meant to be difficult, because it is based on the principle of what God has ALREADY given. That is why Paul says, "Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit from God, **that we may know the things having been granted to us by God.**" 1 Corinthians 2:12. It is all about dependency on the supply of the Spirit of God, which is given by grace through faith. As Paul says, "**the One supplying to you the Spirit** and working miracles among you, is it out of works of the Law, **or out of hearing of faith?**" Galatians 3:5. And again, "we should come with boldness **to the throne of GRACE, so that we may receive MERCY and may find GRACE for HELP in time of need.**" Hebrews 4:16. We have to realise God has made all things available to us in Christ that we may walk in His ways. [Ephesians 1:3.] For every requirement God has made provision, even to love others, since it is His love that is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. [Romans 5:5.] Being of little strength means we draw on His power, from wisdom to patience all of which we can appropriate by faith according to His word. And the more we are aligned in our

thinking according to the truth of His word, and the confession of our mouth, the more the life of Christ is manifested in our mortal bodies. Therefore, we are LESS likely to fulfil the lusts of the flesh, not because we are strong and have great will power, but because His strength and His desires are at work in us. The Spirit in us to guide us into all truth, and to enable us to live right is something we have to be made aware of, having our foundation firm on the Cross of Christ, KNOWING, we are absolutely and completely set free from sin once and for all.

And this requires His word to dwell in our hearts richly, and there is no way doing this except by reading the word and listening to anointed teachings. Paul said to Timothy, “**Every Scripture is God-breathed** and profitable for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and **for training in righteousness**, so that the **man of God may be complete, having been fully equipped toward every good work.**” 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Righteousness is a GIFT nevertheless we have to be trained in it by the Word, that we may live in a manner that is pleasing to Him. [Colossians 1:9-11.] We are RESPONSIBLE, more so, when we are living in a time when the Bible is in the PALM of the majority of the world. Please bear in mind God expects from us according to what we have! The Word of God is an ESSENTIAL aspect of our walk as Christians, as Peter says, “Like newborn babies, **crave pure reasonable milk**, so that **by it you may GROW up in respect to salvation**, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.” 1 Peter 2:2-3. He is saying we need the word to grow, which is in relation to the knowledge of the Son of God, so that we may be transformed from glory to glory by the Spirit of God. [2 Corinthians 3:18.] And do not disqualify yourself thinking you do not understand, it only means you have more reason to rely on the Holy Spirit, who is given to you precisely for this purpose, as the Lord said, “When **He the, Spirit of truth**, shall come, **He will guide you into all the truth.**” John 16:13. So, do it prayerfully, the understanding of the Bible does not depend on the cleverness of man but on the Spirit of God. [1 Corinthians 1:21.]

Which leads us to the importance of being engaged in prayer at all times, giving praise and thanks to God in the name of Jesus, as Paul said, “Rejoice always. **Pray unceasingly**. Give thanks in everything, **for this is the will of God toward you in Christ Jesus.**” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. [Colossians 4:2.] The importance of prayer is illustrated throughout the New Testament, from the way the Lord conducted His ministry, as Luke says, “And **He Himself was withdrawing into the wilderness and praying.**” Luke 5:16. When saying, “withdrawing,” it is to express a consistent state of practice. And the Lord exhorted His disciples to be careful in the practice of prayer as they see the day drawing near, saying, “**Watch also at every season, praying** that you may **have strength to escape all these things** that are about to come to pass and **to stand before the Son of Man.**” Luke 21:36. Prayer is an important aspect of walking in the Spirit by which we overcome the flesh, which the Lord HIMSELF illustrated to Peter saying, “**Watch and PRAY**, so that you may not enter into temptation. **For the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.**” Luke 14:38. And Jude also declaring, the manner we are to conduct ourselves awaiting the return of the Lord says, “But you, beloved, **building up yourselves in your most holy faith, PRAYING in the Holy Spirit**, keep yourselves in the love of God, **awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**” Jude 1:20-23. The importance of prayer cannot be over estimated. Consider, Paul says, “Now likewise also, **the Spirit JOINS to HELP us in weakness**; for we do not know the things **which we should pray** for as it behooves, but **the Spirit Himself makes intercession with inexpressible groanings.**” Romans 8:26. If we do not engage in a regular practice of prayer and reading of the word, how is the Spirit to help in our weakness, as such we by our LACK of practice have made the HELPER to be of no help to us.

Now, some may say this is works, and do not realise there are works of the flesh, and there are works of the Spirit. We are not to engage in the works of the flesh, such as that of circumcision, dietary rules,

watchful of days and months, or clothings and rituals, the works of which are of no benefit and in fact bring us under bondage. [Colossians 2:8.] However, it is not to be mistaken with the works of the Spirit, which Paul calls good works. Reading the word of God, Prayer, and Worship are NOT works of the flesh, but the expression of the desires of the Spirit of God. **DO NOT** be FOOLED! If you struggle in any aspect of the practice of these things, do it prayerfully, taking steps in faith, knowing it is based on the desires He HIMSELF supplies.

The entire purpose of God in delivering us from the kingdom of darkness was so that He may give us Himself in His Spirit that we may LIVE according to His ways. That is why Isaiah said, “**DO NOT be MOCKERS.**” The fact that Sin having been put away gives the Lord free reign to test our hearts and minds in righteousness, in order to give each one of us according to our own works. [Revelation 2:23.] Meaning, God can take into account a million and one different things when looking at each one of us, from the level of truth we were exposed, to the sound teaching which we wilfully have rejected, all of which will have bearings. We are expected to walk to the level we have attained, according to what has been given to us, and in the Spirit this means, to the level He has empowered us. In the New Testament God expects according to what one has, not what he does not have, which the Lord demonstrated in the teaching of stewards of the house in Luke 12:42-48. So in these final days, we need to be exhorted to be engaged in Prayer, Reading the word, and the gathering of ourselves in worship, so that our hearts may be strengthened by the word of His Grace and to be filled with His Holy Spirit, that we may INHERIT the Kingdom of God. [Ephesians 5:18-19, Colossians 3:16.]

We end this study with these words of Paul, “**Trustworthy is the saying, and I want you to affirm strongly** concerning these things, so that **those believing God may take care to be devoted to good works.** These things are excellent and profitable to men.” Titus 3:8.
