

Cutting It Short

I wish there was a gift of the Spirit where you can say five things at one time. My heart is full and I think it's part of what Paul was saying when he said, "I don't think you understand the conflict that I have for you." Paul wanted to impart something to them that he had gone through, experienced and referenced significantly after he was on the road to Damascus and said, "Lord, Who art Thou?" seeing something outside of himself but said later, "when it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." Paul wanted to impart something to them that would give them an identification and a participation in what God was seeking to bring forth.

We stand at a place in time that is very deceptive because we can become engaged in trying to perform things, when God is actually looking for us to become something.

Paul says in Romans 9:25 – 28:

As he says also in Hosea, I will call them My people, which were not My people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, you are not My people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. Isaiah also cried concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:

Here is the point:

For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

We are living in a time where we can get under the pressure of time. We can think we don't have much time, so we have to get busy and get this thing done. We can worry about what things look like. We can look around us at the world, not recognizing that the world outside of us is not our enemy, but it's the world that is in our heart that is our enemy. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says that "He set the world in their heart so that they could not see the end from the beginning."

So we are locked down and our frame of reference, as natural people, has time and distance included. As we graduate to the things of the Spirit, we find that what God wants to do in our life is bring us to a rest so that time and distance are drained out of our concern, so that we can enter into that which is eternal. What is seen is temporal; time and distance pertains to that which is temporal. God is seeking to do an eternal work. In order to do that, He has to bring us to a place where what we relate to is not based on time and distance but is based on a reference to the

Almighty, so that what He is doing in us is our point of reference, not what we are accomplishing for Him.

We know that the book of Hebrews is a book of contrasts; we know it's a book of comparison, and the comparison is between the old and the new. The author says that the old had a glory, and the new has a greater glory. In fact, the glory of the new is so much greater than the glory of the old that it makes the old look like it didn't have any glory. We look at the old that way and we forget that it had a glory. It had a glory in my life. It brought me to Christ; it made sin exceedingly sinful. It defined what sin was. Paul said, "Concerning the things of the law, I was without blame. But when the law revived and I began to see it by the Spirit, instead of relating to it as the letter and thinking that I was without guilt concerning the law, what I thought was bringing me to life was actually what killed me. The law revived and I died because the life that I had was based on performance. What God has called me to is based on becoming."

It is much more important that we submit ourselves to the Spirit of God than it is that we do anything. Jesus said, "I didn't come to destroy the law; I came to fulfill it." He did not ever say, "I came to keep it," because if you keep the law, you're doing something. If you give yourself to God and you become something and by life fulfill the requirements of the law, now you don't have to worry about keeping the law because the law is designed to bring guilt. It is the law of condemnation. How do you know if you are under the law? "Well, Brother John, we're not under the law. The Bible says we are not under law; we are under grace." Okay, do you ever feel any condemnation? Guess what? The influence of condemnation is the result of the law being applied, so you are under the law.

We don't fulfill things because they are written in the Bible; things are written in the Bible to show us there is something we can fulfill. What gives definition to the words that are between the covers of the Bible? The Spirit—the Spirit inspired them. It's the Spirit that gives them meaning. It isn't these words that define Spirit. We can't reverse-engineer God by the words that are written here that reveal His will. We can't understand God by the letter.

Jesus was talking to a Samaritan woman of questionable character at the well, and He said, "The day is coming and now is where God is seeking." Wow! If we know what God is seeking and we can get into the place that qualifies for what He is looking for, that would be a good day for us. If you know God is looking for bananas, bring Him some bananas. Who doesn't want to find favor with the King? If we realize that God is seeking those who worship Him in spirit and in truth, it would behoove us to begin worshiping Him in spirit and in truth. The 'truth' that it is referring to there is not an accurate doctrinal apprehension of the Bible. The

'truth' that it is referring to there is primarily the integrity with which we present ourselves to Him. We have to do it by Spirit, but the truth isn't because we know all the types and shadows and all the Bible verses. The truth is the integrity of presenting ourselves to Him, naked before Him with whom we have to do and not diverting ourselves from His judgment. How can we have righteousness without judgment? It says the effect of righteousness is peace, but peace only comes by righteousness and righteousness without judgment doesn't exist. All God's ways are judgment.

Hebrews 12 says that "Every son He loves, He chastens." Which of His sons doesn't He love? You have to be born again. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "No matter how sincere you are about this pursuit of eternal life, if you're not born again, you cannot see or enter into the kingdom of God." So what is this born again thing? It is quickening the life of Christ in me. Now, I am a son because I have been born again. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. He is not Adam; he is Christ.

There are three lives that are available to mankind. One he is born with and it's his first birth. It's called Adam-life – he is the first Adam of the earth, earthy. Has anybody not experienced that? I like to find a point of definition. The second man Adam is the Lord from heaven, and He is quickened in us by the Holy Spirit. So there is Adam-life; there is Christ-life; and there is God-life. Each one is separate, distinct and has a nature that is separate and distinct from the others. Adam-life is not Christ-life. So the gospel is not here to refurbish the old man. It's not a renovation project.

Christ is different than Adam because he never failed to do the will of the Father. Adam had one commandment and he couldn't keep it. In fact, God did not give Adam the commandment to keep. Think about it. Does God have foreknowledge? Is He omniscient? Did He think that there was even a shadow's chance that when He said, "Don't eat of that tree," that Adam wouldn't eat of it? God pointed the tree out to him to shorten the time in him getting there. He hadn't eaten of it, yet. There was another tree that he didn't eat of, and it was there. The commandment of the holy God came to him and said, "You may freely eat of every tree that is in the garden except this one." Why did God give him a commandment that he couldn't keep? So Adam could see his need for Christ. God was not finished with creation because they were created. Adam was designed to be finished in Christ. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, His purpose is to draw all things, both in heaven and in earth, into one—even Christ.

Where is the blessing? Is there blessing apart from Christ? There is no blessing apart from Christ. Where is the sanctification? But of God are you in Christ Jesus and He is made unto you... sanctification. There is no blessing and there is no

sanctification apart from Christ. God's intent was never to leave Adam as Adam, but the redemption that God had in place before He made Adam was the Lamb slain before creation was put in place. The redemptive purpose of God toward creation was in place before the creation was put in place. Is that important? For my confidence in God, it is very important. If God had a remedial program for an experiment that got away from Him... "Oh no! He sinned! What am I going to do now? I know! I'll provide redemption!" No, it wasn't plan B; it's always been plan A.

Hebrews says, "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." That word "from," both in that scripture and the scripture "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," have a spiritual orientation, regardless of what the Greek may say, of "as." "The lamb was slain 'as' the foundation of the world," and "the works were finished 'as' the foundation of the world." It gives the world substance, continuity, purpose and enduring quality, not because it's anything of itself but because it's founded in God's purpose to redeem it – not destroy it. That's really important to me.

In Hebrews, the author starts and says, "The word of God has come to us for a long time and in a lot of various means through the prophets, but now He is speaking to us through His Son." The context of this is not just that we are hearing a different word from a different source, but if we are not in the Son, we are not going to hear that word. This is consistent with what Jesus said to Nicodemus, "If you're not born again, you cannot see the kingdom." In the Gospel of John it says, "He made the world and the world knew him not. He was the light, and the life that was in him was the light that lighteth every man that comes into the world. The darkness saw the light but didn't understand it—comprehended it not. Killed it; snuffed it out."

Jesus came and walked in subjection to his father. He grew. He learned. He was tested and proven faithful. He was demonstrated to Israel as a Lamb without spot and blemish, and then he died and rose again. Do you know what the world has done? They yawn and really don't care. Baal worship was flourishing when Jesus is right there. Amazing.

The first two feasts are served to us on a silver platter—a redemptive platter, but not requiring anything of us. Paul referred to it in Romans 4 and he said that we received righteousness for faith. He used Abraham as an example and he asked, "Did Abraham get this righteousness before he was circumcised or after?" He said, "Obviously, he got it before he was circumcised because he got it for faith; he didn't get it for circumcision." Afterward, Abraham signed the covenant that God made with him by the imputing of righteousness by his being circumcised. God signed the covenant first. He provided the righteousness and what we have received is because of another's sacrifice on our behalf. No other foundation can any man lay,

in his life or in anybody else's life, but that foundation which is laid in Christ Jesus the Lord.

We have a righteousness that is imputed to us because of that sacrifice. But guess what? Was it enough for Abraham to have imputed faith or did he have to get circumcised? In fact, God is so fastidious about circumcision that Moses, who was circumcised, went out into the wilderness for 40 years because he was essentially unskillful in righteousness, and he thought he was going to deliver Israel by a sword—killing Egyptians one at time. (I don't know what his plan was.) Forty years later, God commissioned Moses and told him to go talk to Pharaoh. It says that he went, got Zipporah and his two sons. On the first night out on the path going to Egypt, he stopped at an inn and God sought to kill him. I don't want to make light of this, but whatever that meant, it doesn't mean that Moses was good in the art of self-defense and he was fending off God's attempts to kill him. How would it be that God would seek to kill somebody, and that person wasn't just dead because God was thinking it? If He upholds all things by the word of His power, all He had to do was just withdraw His presence, and you wouldn't even have to sweep anything up. He would just disappear.

I don't think that God's seeking to kill Moses was trying to terminate him, but I think God had an agenda with Moses, and He wanted to drive the point home with him because he was going to be a mediator of a covenant. It was something that had to happen in Moses. His flesh was already circumcised. Do you know what finally withheld the hand of God? I have a picture of God holding Moses by the throat; Moses is pinned up against the wall, and his feet are about three feet off the ground. Moses isn't able to talk clearly, but he says to Zipporah, "Honey, would you mind circumcising those two boys so God doesn't kill me?" She wasn't happy by the way. That's how important it was to God that everything that Moses did would be circumcised, that the proceeds of what Moses had control over would be circumcised.

You and I have partaken of the benefits of two feasts (or if you want to say four feasts). They have been served up to us because of what another did for us, so we have been the beneficiaries. It has been imputed to us because of our faith. In Romans four, it says that it "was counted to him for righteousness." That word that is translated "imputed" and the word, "counted for" is the same Greek word. I don't know why the translators changed it, but they did. It was counted to him. Why? Because he didn't have any righteousness. If he had righteousness, it wouldn't have had to be imputed to him. He was unrighteous and it was imputed to him for faith. However, he had to get circumcised – after.

We have had righteousness imputed to us. Now, we have to get circumcised. We have to sign the covenant. God has already signed it; He has betrothed Himself to us. “Do you not know, O House of Israel, your Maker is your Husband?” The consequence of that emphasis is actually that before He was your Creator He was your Husband. He betrothed Himself to you before He even made you. That was His purpose. God’s purpose is not to destroy us; it is to bring us to Himself, to give us His name. I have experienced Adam. I am experiencing Christ. His purpose is that I experience God Himself.

Jacob, fleeing Esau, went as far as he could go and was worn out. He was so tired that he used a rock for a pillow; that’s tired. I’ve never understood that; I have to be honest. He had a dream. I’m surprised he got to sleep. He saw a ladder that stretched from the earth to the heavens, and he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on that ladder. He said, “Surely this must be the house of God.” He poured oil on a rock – Bethel, the House of God.

That is what God is doing in me, and that is what God is doing in you. He planted a ladder through the quickening of His Spirit, and He birthed the life of Christ in you. That was the ladder hitting the ground. He has been sending angels. Angels come and they give a message and they go back and then they come – dropping down between heaven and earth. This isn’t alms for the needy; the angels ministered to Jesus, right? God has designated those good angels to be ministers to the heirs of salvation. Where did David get this thing, “Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin”? He was ensconced in a society that was based on the law of sowing and reaping. It had to be an angel. Where did he get these things? Then he follows it up by saying, “Blessed is the man to whom God will impute righteousness.” Not only will God not impute sin, but He will impute righteousness without works. Imputing righteousness without works. This is God saying in Isaiah 1:18, “Come, can we talk?”

If we had a flannel graph here and we had the colors of the rainbow and we were going to put up a representation of sin, what color would you pick? Black? But what color did God pick? “Though your sins be as scarlet...” Whoa! Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. Scarlet. Under the blood.

That’s where He wants to start talking to us. He doesn’t want to talk about our black sin; He wants to talk to us about our red sin. God is saying, “I am proving Myself faithful to you by forgiving your sin because you know sin, and I want to start somewhere where you can realize that I want to be eminently practical in your experience. I want to relate to you with something that you know about, but I want to upgrade it. You thought I was going to say ‘black.’ I’m saying ‘scarlet.’”

There is the reasonability of the thing. That is the benefit of talking to God because He says that your sins are not black. The devil has been telling you that they're black. Your sins are not black; they are red. The testimony of the transition from what you thought was black to red is actually only to build your confidence for an even greater transition. I'm going to tell you something that you wouldn't be able to conceive apart from believing that your sins are under the blood and not black. Your sins are going to be white.

Now let's talk about change. When I was born again, there was a change. I experienced the Lord from heaven, not outside of me somewhere where He knocked me on my back and blinded my eyes like Paul initially, but He began to reveal Christ in me. Do you know how long the Lamb of God was a four-legged woolly beast? Fifteen hundred years? I don't know, but it was a long time. John the Baptist stood in the Jordan River, pointed at the riverbank, and said, "It's got two legs, but it is the Lamb of God, nonetheless." At that moment it didn't become that, but it was revealed that it never really was a four-legged woolly beast; it had always been a two-legged man. Do you know how long that two-legged man stayed around? It wasn't 1500 years. It stayed around for maybe thirty years. I don't know how long it was before Paul said (because he said it before he wrote it) that the life that is Christ is the breath of God on your soul. If we will respond to it as the influence of the Spirit, we get really good life from it—the best wine from the influence of the Spirit of God.

That accountability may not just be "me and Jesus." Watch out for that one, by the way. If you ever find yourself justifying yourself because "Well, I have to do what God tells me," – I'm not saying it can't be true, but the likelihood is that you are cutting yourself some slack especially if it's in the face of about 35 people that are not so sure that you heard from God. The same Spirit of God in each one of you is in me. If I can't take the witness of the Spirit of God in my brethren as a significant counterbalance to what I believe is the impression of the Spirit, I don't see spiritual things very clearly.

The apostle John said, "You can tell me that you love God and I will believe you until I see you don't love your brother. Then, I'm going to tell you that the truth is not in you." That's harsh. That's a big jump from "I'll believe you" to "until ... the truth isn't in you." We are pretty clueless if we don't realize that we are in an environment in which we are completely over-matched.

Romans 8 says that God made man "subject to ____." I know it says "vanity," but it really doesn't matter what the next word is. It could be "God made man subject to purple." It just means that man is not in control; he needs help. He is not going to navigate this life successfully unless success is labeled "feet first." We are called to

go out standing up or having been stood up. That is resurrection by the way. We are not looking to become unclothed; we are looking to be clothed upon. Unclothed would mean we had gone by way of death and then come back. What about those that are alive and remain? What about the remnants of the nations during the millennium? Or those that the sea gives up—its dead? Or the resurrection of the just and the unjust? What is the testimony of the capacity of God for those who are here on the planet so far? What is the abundant testimony that has actually been experienced on this planet? There has been one man, and that man was born of a virgin and never sinned. What hope does that give me?

The world looks at that testimony and yawns. I don't know that they are not justified to yawn. Solomon said, "The best I can figure is stay with the wife of your youth, work hard, enjoy the fruit of the labor of your hands, and die because there is no profit under the sun. There is only vanity and vexation of spirit." If you put yourself to it with hope, that hope is going to get crushed. That is the wisdom of man.

The wisdom of God is that if you sow to the Spirit, you will of the Spirit reap that which pertains and grows into eternal life. In the natural, sowing and reaping is that if you sow tomatoes don't look for watermelons. We get that. But the law of sowing and reaping in the Spirit is that if you sow corruption, you can actually—if you continue to sow to the Spirit—reap incorruption. Wow, is that a good deal! It is a process because if you sow corruption, it is not going to come up incorruption, but if you sow corruption to the Spirit, you're going to reap corruptible. Corruption cannot inherit incorruption, but corruptible must put it on. Wow! There is hope. There is great hope for change. We have already encountered change, and if we follow on by the same Spirit, we will continue to encounter change.

This is where most people would stop because it is a "feel-good gospel" so far—what God has done for you by the death of another. I want to get to our circumcision now because Abraham's circumcision was in the flesh, but ours is not. In Hebrews 7:27, it says, "This high priest needs not daily, as those high priests who were under the law, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once when he offered up himself."

You can't start the journey without it being imputed to you because there is no other foundation. It can't be laid in you; you can't lay it in anybody else. It is a foundation that is built in what happened when God provided Himself a Lamb. That is the easiest way to say it. But there is a limited benefit by substitutionary offerings. This was the whole characteristic of the four-legged woolly beast. There was a benefit; sins were forgiven. What God is in, He sanctifies; when He leaves, it is not sanctified anymore. You can't go down to the market and buy a lamb and get

forgiven anymore. At that time, it worked, but it was a substitutionary sacrifice. They brought the lamb; the lamb died; they went back forgiven—to sin again. Limited benefit.

What is established as a foundation in your life only has a limited benefit even though what you offered is him as your lamb. If you remember, we spoke earlier that the purpose of God in creating Adam wasn't to leave him in Adam but to bring him into Christ and grow him up as Christ to full stature so that he could experience the life of God. If we are going to experience Christ-life, it says that he offered himself. We have to offer ourselves, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission. The Nazarite Vow is not substitutionary of someone else; it is you offering yourself.

What God is seeking to bring forward in our experience is a confidence in Him. This process of Christ is not a knowledge-driven system. It does not matter what you know. Of all the authors of this the Holy Scriptures – This book is not the Word of God. These are the Holy Scriptures—of the authors of the Holy Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Ghost for his purpose to say his words, who do you think had the greatest understanding of the purpose and the pathway of God? Paul. What did Paul say about knowledge? It puffs up. Paul said, “Though I have all knowledge and understand all mysteries, I could still be set aside.” I am not making this up when I say this is not a knowledge-based system. You cannot get into the car of salvation and put knowledge in the tank and get home. It will run so far with what has been imputed, and just when you get halfway up the hill, the engine will start to sputter and it dies. It won't get you home.

This is a trust-based system. God said to Israel, “I want to talk to you for a second. Your sins are as scarlet.” That was to begin to instill a confidence in that what they had expected to be black He had already changed. They didn't even have to do anything; He was that good. They didn't even know and He had already done something for them. Trust. Let's back up to the 12th verse of Hebrews 7. I know that this verse is talking about Melchizedek and showing how Jesus was ordained a priest not according to Levi and not out of the tribe of Judah but of Melchizedek, who wasn't even a Jew. We don't have his lineage but the Jews were not a nation until they went into Egypt. So, Jesus was ordained a priest after the order of Melchizedek. It says here that when the priesthood was changed, you then had to change the law because under the law, Levites were the priests. If the priesthood of Levi is set aside and the priesthood of Melchizedek is brought in, it is proof that the law has been done away with by God. There is now a new law. We have a name for that; it is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ.

But what I want to suggest is that the big yawn that the world has concerning Christ is not designed to finish there. Later in the seventh chapter of Hebrews, it says that it is important that we have this priest because he is able to save us to the uttermost.

Hebrews 8:1 says that He dwells in the heavens. If we look back into the 8th chapter of Romans, we find out what his testimony was for. It was to establish us who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, who walk by faith and not by sight, because He is not here. He said, “I have to go. If I stay, you are always going to be pulling on Superman’s cape.” –“Hey, Jesus, could you interpret this vision for us? Could you help us out here; it’s getting scary. Could you wake up and calm the wind and the waves?”

It says in Romans 8 that although we have the firstfruits of the Spirit—so that we are a different group of creation—that we are not locked up by corruption. The first fruit of the Spirit in my life was that I was brought out of corruption and brought into a corruptible state. That means that I am not in the bondage of corruption. I am in the opportunity of corruptibility—which is also called in that verse, “the glorious liberty of the children of God”—to grow up through the influence of the Spirit in me until I come to him in all things, who is the head. Full stature. Why is that important? There is no other place you are going to get the life of God. The life of God is not imparted to baby Christians because we would defile His name. He is not going to give His name to one who isn’t just like Him, so you have to come to full stature.

The glorious liberty of the children of God is that they have a foundation laid in their experience on the sacrifice of another, and it is handed to them on a silver platter. Now, what are you going to do with it? Jesus taught a parable about this. He said there was a wealthy man and he gave talents. Those that returned an increase on what he gave them, got more. That’s nice. However, if you are only going to give back to Him what He gave to you when He returns, if you think that you’re only going to be able to give back to Him an imputed righteousness because of your faith and you haven’t allowed yourself to be circumcised through the influence of the Spirit to grow up into him who is the head of all things, too bad so sad—weeping and gnashing of teeth. What you thought had substance will disappear because you never allowed it to take root in you.

How do you put the talent out to the exchangers? Sow yourself to the Spirit. I have to say, this is a fearful thing. It isn’t just repeating it because it is a Bible verse: “Well, if I sow to the Spirit, I shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” When you sow yourself to the Spirit of God, you sow yourself to something you can’t see, you can’t

define, you can't control, and you can't predict the outcome. You better trust what you are sowing to. If you don't trust it, you won't sow.

Every son that God loves He instructs. What son is there that He doesn't love? He loves all His sons. He loves more than just His sons, but we are just dealing with His sons for now. Of all of those who are born-again, which of those doesn't God love? He has already manifested His love through imparting to them something that they haven't earned. This is great love! In fact, it says, "God because of His great love is rich in mercy."

My encounter with mercy was that I didn't get what I deserved. It was a good day! But it says, "the God of all mercies, the God of all comfort." Mercy is intended to do more than just not getting what I deserve. Mercy is intended to be an influence in my life so that I can experience all that God has for me, which is a far bigger exposure to mercy than just not getting what I deserve. Can you think of a verse that includes the "mercies of God?" "Present your bodies, I beg you, by the mercies of God." Why? So that we can experience all that God wants to bring forward in our experience, which is not leaving us as baby Christians tossed to and fro and unskillful in the word of righteousness but growing us up to full stature so that we can inherit His life.

This is the fulfillment of the promise of God to Abraham. "Abraham."

"Yes?"

"I am your shield and your exceedingly great reward."

"Hey, that's cool, but I don't have a kid."

"I am your provision. I am your protection. I am your enablement. I am going to work in you to produce the results that I want to see from you, if you will yield yourself to Me."

Why do we have to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling? The only source to finish this is God and we have to maintain a posture toward God so that He can finish it. If we are not willing to be circumcised, He can't finish this. There is only so much that He can do for us without our participation. We may be co-heirs, but we are also called to be co-laborers. How do I co-labor? I present my body a living sacrifice.

Jesus taught a parable about this; it's the only one that the disciples ever got right. He wanted them to get one right before he left, so he made this one really easy for them. He said that there were two men in the marketplace. One was standing with his thumbs in his suspenders saying, "I wish these other people were like me."

There was another man who was on his face, had torn his garments, was throwing dust on his head saying, “Oh God, have mercy upon me, a sinner.” Mercy! Jesus chose the word “mercy” and he put it in the story on purpose. He didn’t say, “have grace,” and he didn’t say, “have love.” There are a lot of words that could have been used there, but he said “mercy.” Then he asked, “Who went home justified?” The disciples got that one right.

By the mercies of God, we have the opportunity if we will in trust present ourselves. I don’t care where you are because it is “today.” Offer yourself today. It is the day that defines it not your condition. You can sow corruption to the Spirit, and you can get corruptible back. It really doesn’t matter what the condition is. You can sow a young man in the Spirit to God, and He will grow him up to full stature. The second half of that verse says, “for it is God who works in you.” When? If you let Him, if you meet His conditions. God says, “I have signed the covenant. Will you sign it? Will you allow the influence of My Spirit to convince you of sin? Will you allow the influence of My Spirit to convince you of righteousness? Will you allow the influence of My Spirit to convince you of judgment?”

I’ve read that verse for a long time, and I thought it was out of order. I thought that it should be sin, judgment and righteousness. That’s what makes sense to me. God says, “Yeah, that’s not My way.” If I only receive a judgment that is obvious, I only get average results. However, if I will subject myself to the inspection of the Spirit of God, His sword, His word divides deep. Paul said, “It’s a small thing that I be judged by you because I don’t even judge myself. My judge is God.” That is important because when His sword separates, it uncovers what is covered by the lack of separation. Do you know what He is trying to get to in my life? The nature of Adam.

The book of Job is kind of interesting to me because every time Bildad, Eliphaz or Zophar spoke, Job spoke right after them. It was Bildad, Job, Eliphaz, Job, Zophar, Job, but when Elihu introduced God, you didn’t hear from Job again. In Job 41:1, God asked Job, “Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook?” You read that chapter and in spite of what the commentaries tell you, it is not a description of the nature of Satan; it is the description of the nature of Adam.

What God asked Job was, “If I give you a hook, can you pull out the leviathan? It’s not a matter of baiting a hook and dropping it over the boat into the depths of the sea; it’s a matter of dropping it down your own throat. Can you pull the leviathan out of you if I gave you a hook that it would bite on? Are you able to deliver yourself?” This is at the crux of what Paul was concerned about for the Galatians because although they had started in the Spirit they were on a path where they

were going to be their own savior. The scales of this leviathan are so closely woven that air can't pass between them. There is no access for Spirit. The old man in me is destroyed by the brightness of His coming in me, and I survive the transition. Wow! That is a good deal. If I trust. If you trust. And if we prove our trust by sowing.

We know that the law was set aside because the priesthood was changed from Levi to Melchizedek. That was Jesus. The law was set aside, and in Colossians 2 it says that He nailed that law to the cross. He took the handwriting of offenses that was against us and contrary to us and he wiped it out. So why are you yet subject to the beggarly elements of this world? If the law is gone, why are they an issue? Give yourself to the Spirit of God. Begin to feed on the presence of His Spirit, and He will change you from glory unto glory, even into the image of what you behold which is His Spirit.

But Hebrews 7:12 has other implications. Jesus was not the only one who was to be ordained a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Those who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, if they follow on, are to be ordained according to that priesthood. Why is that important? Well, it's pretty important for them, but why is it important to God's purpose? It is the only way a full testimony can be made to the effectiveness of the salvation of God toward man. So far the only glorified body on this planet was a man who was born of a virgin and never sinned. How many of those do you find? Only when there are those who are here, born in sin and shaped in iniquity, and through the operation of the Spirit of God receive a glorified body without going first through death and coming back, does it give those who are in the land of the living hope. A lively hope.

In Romans 8, Paul reveals our condition. "Even though we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we are still groaning within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Some must. Some must. In fact, because the abundant testimony of the book is in favor of it, some will. When that happens, everything else changes: Satan's leash is shortened and he is restrained from human experience; the earth gives up its fruit willingly; the wolf lays down with the lamb, and the lion starts eating grass—to the great relief of the gazelle. What was only a testimony to nature change—Jacob to Israel, Sarai to Sarah, Abram to Abraham—now becomes the order of the day because the kingdom of this world will now become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.

The gospel preached in this world is that there is no change. You are born a leopard and you don't die a hippopotamus. Some have to grow spiritually until their reality becomes what they can't see, and they are willing to accept a judgment that they are not compelled to accept. They are willingly subject to the inspection of the Spirit of God—a living sacrifice to Spirit. That's what it means to sow to the Spirit.

What are you sowing? Yourself. Present yourself. Subject yourself under the mighty hand of God and He will lift you up. It is His plan, and He is seeking those who will be honest enough to present themselves to Him so that His Spirit can finish what He began by creating.

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