

Blood Covenant - Part 11

by Bob Phillips

The Holy Spirit is the seal of the new covenant and the means of making the covenant real, enabling obedience and living the life of God.

Duration: 50:14

Scripture: Isaiah 11:3

Topics: "Holy Living", "Sanctification"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of following God's commandments and living a holy life. They emphasize that God's will for believers is their sanctification, or their walk of holiness. The speaker also highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding believers away from the desires of the flesh. They warn that the lusts and desires of the flesh can blind our minds and hearts, preventing us from fully surrendering to Jesus. The sermon concludes by discussing the penalty and reward of keeping the covenant with God, emphasizing the blessing of living a life that reflects God's image.

Transcript

This is tape number 11 in a series. We urge you to listen to all the tapes in the series in numerical order so that the whole teaching can be received and understood. Listening to a part of this series or to the tapes out of sequence can lead to a misunderstanding of the nature, the intent, and the importance of this series.

Genesis chapter 2, we're going back to Genesis. We've been, we started in Genesis and now we're back to Genesis. And so I want you to turn with me to Genesis chapter 2. Now we've been talking about various aspects of the covenant with God.

We started out talking about the blood covenant in general. We talked about the heart necessary to make covenant with God. We talked about the relationship of law and grace in the covenant.

We talked about, we've gone over and we've seen the work of the covenant of peace. And now we're going to look tonight at the Holy Spirit in the covenant and the role of the Holy Spirit in the covenant. And we're going to start with Genesis because there's something I want you to see in Genesis chapter 2. We have in the book of Genesis a covenant that God made with Adam.

Now we've talked about covenant all week and we've seen an important aspect of covenant starting with the covenant that God made with Abraham. And here's what we've seen. We have seen in the word of God that God the Father made covenant with God the Son.

We discussed what it meant to make covenant in the Old Testament where an animal was cut in two and the pieces were laid one half here and one half here and they walked through the pieces and I'm not going to go into detail on that. But we've seen that instead of Abraham walking through the pieces, the Lord Jesus Christ walked through those pieces for him, made covenant with God the Father and we become joint heirs of that covenant. And that's why he always refers to it as his covenant.

God always says my covenant. He doesn't say you're in my covenant. He says my covenant.

It's his covenant. Are you with me? All right. Now we didn't go through all the covenants of the Bible.

But in Genesis, we have a covenant that God the Father entered into with a man and the man was Adam. Now the word covenant is not used in those chapters. But all of the elements of a covenant are there.

Now with what we've learned this week, let's see if we can see the elements of the covenant there. In Genesis chapter 2, which is where we'll start. First of all, here's the first element of a covenant.

There are two parties. There are two contracting parties to make the covenant. And I just mentioned who they are.

God and man. God and Adam. Are you with me? So there are the two contracting parties.

Now we mentioned this week that there were conditions to every covenant. Have you remembered we said that? There are conditions to every covenant. So in Genesis chapter 2, verse 16, and part of verse 17, we're going to see the conditions of this covenant that was made.

And here's what it was. Genesis 2, 16. And the Lord God, what's that word? Commanded.

The Lord God commanded the man, saying, From any tree of the garden you may eat freely. Now I want you to notice that he had said in verse 9, And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food. The tree of life also in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now he says clearly that there was every tree that was there was pleasing to the sight. Is that what he said? Every one of them. And two trees were especially pleasing to the sight.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. Now, God said you can eat from any tree of the garden, but of the one tree you may not eat. Now, does that sound to you like a condition of the covenant? Well, that was part of the conditions of the covenant.

Now, he also had a penalty or a curse of broken covenants. And we've been seeing that all week, have we not? Both the Old Testament and the New Testament, we've been seeing that there is a penalty and there is a curse for breaking covenants. Now, let's see what it was.

In Genesis 17 to 17, he said you may freely of any of the trees, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat. Now, here's the curse of breaking the penalty and the penalty for in the day that you eat from it. What did he say was going to happen? You shall surely die.

Now, we could go into a lot of things about that, but that's not our subject tonight. So we're not trying to let me ask you a question. Did they eat of that tree? Was God faithful in fulfilling the conditions and the penalty of the covenant? He absolutely was.

God means what he says. And so, they did die. Now, did they die physically? No, they died spiritually, and they were separated from God.

We saw Monday night when we started this picture of what happens when you break covenant with God. It destroys, sin enters, and it destroys your love relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It destroys your love relationship with God.

That's what sin does. That's why we ought to hate sin. Because sin, of every form and type, greed, selfishness, idolatry, whatever it is, it destroys your love relationship with God.

Are you with me? Now, see, it's not a matter of just getting caught or not getting caught. It's not a matter of what you can get away with and what you can't get away with. If you love God with your whole heart, you understand that that's an enemy because it destroys that love relationship.

All right, now, notice this. Not only was there a penalty, you shall surely die, but there was a reward or a blessing of keeping the covenant. Look with me at chapter 1 of Genesis.

Chapter 1 of Genesis. Here was the reward or blessing of keeping the covenant. Verse 27, chapter 1. And God created man in his own image.

The image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. Now, I said Monday night what that meant.

That God intended that man live the life, the same life that God lives, as much as was possible for a human created being to live it. Are you hearing what I'm saying? And so God really, in saying that, is more than just creating some kind of a theological image. What he's saying is, I want this created being to live my life as much as is possible for a created being to live my life, to be like me.

And so that was one of the blessings of covenant, is that they were in the image and likeness of God. You think God's happy? I say, you think God's happy? Well, I believe he is. And so he intended for man's welfare and not for his calamity.

We've already seen that in Jeremiah 29. Now, he also said as a part of the blessing, verse 28, and God, what did he do with them? He blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth. That's quite a promise.

Did you know that? That man literally was to rule over every living creature on the face of the earth. That was part of the blessings of the covenant that God had given him. He must have had a tremendous mind also, because he was able to name all of those animals, give a name to all those animals.

So his mental capabilities must have been just enormous. And so God had all of this there as a part of the blessings of walking in covenant with him. That would have continued right on through had covenant not been broken.

Are you with me? All right. He also said, verse 29, Then God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed. He says, I've given it to you.

It'll be food for you. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food. And it was so.

And God saw all that he had made. And behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning and the sixth day.

So we're saying that that was the blessings of the covenant. All right. Now there's another element of covenant that's here.

And here's what it is. Every covenant has a divine seal or a pledge of that covenant. Are you with me? Every one of them.

Let's just think about it for a moment. With Noah, what was the pledge of covenant that God made? It was a rainbow. God gave Noah the sign or pledge of a rainbow so that when he saw the rainbow, he knew that God's covenant had been made with him.

And he also knew that there would never again be this flood or destruction of the earth. That was the surety of an outward sign that he gave him. He also gave Abraham a pledge.

What pledge did he give him? Circumcision. He gave him the pledge of circumcision. Now, we won't read it, but you can look at Romans 4, verses 9 to 11, and you'll see very clearly that God says that even though Abraham was not circumcised, God gave him the sign of circumcision to be passed on through the descendants that the covenant was real.

Now, notice this. God never intended for the focus to be on the outward sign, but the inward reality of what he wanted to do. You see, the children of Israel, for example, they focused only on the outward sign, on the pledge, and they never got into the inheritance.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? All they concentrated on was that outward sign, that outward thing, and here's what happened to them. They walked in the rebellion and stubbornness of their own heart, trusting in the outward sign of circumcision, and you know what the end result was? They never entered into the inheritance of the covenant, which was the land of Canaan. Are you hearing what I'm saying? There's a lot of people doing that today, trusting in something outward, and they never entered into the inheritance of the covenant.

In the Garden of Eden, there was also a sign of the covenant. It was the Tree of Life. You see, the Tree of Life was standing there in order to be a sign, so that all they had to do, as Adam looked at the Tree of Life, he knew that that was a sign of covenant for him, and that Tree of Life was a seal or a pledge of his inheritance.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? All right, now, let's come to the new covenant, and let's see, we're seeing that every covenant has a sign or a pledge of the inheritance. Now, turn with me to Ephesians chapter 1, and we're going to see what the sign or the pledge of God's inheritance is for us in the new covenant. Ephesians chapter 1. He very clearly spells it out, doesn't leave any doubt about it.

He tells us what, in this new covenant, the sign or pledge is going to be. Now, listen, understand what a sign or a pledge is. A sign or a pledge is a sign, a seal, of surety, that everything God said will come to pass and be offered in the covenant.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? All right, now, let's see what it was. Ephesians chapter 1, the new covenant seal or pledge. Verse 13.

In Him, that is Jesus, you also, after listening to the message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise. Now, how many of you see that? You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise. What was the seal of the new covenant? The Holy Spirit.

I want you to notice this. He is called the Holy Spirit of promise. Let me tell you why He's called that.

God never intended, now listen to me carefully, God never intended for man to focus only on an experience with the Holy Spirit. That's not why He was given. Are you hearing what I'm saying? Yes, there's an experience with the Holy Spirit.

Yes, I do believe in a baptism of the Holy Spirit. I believe that you receive the Holy Spirit when you're born again. And I believe there's a further outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I'll show you why I believe that. But now listen to me. Here's where we've missed it.

We've gotten into theological debates and arguments over the Holy Spirit because we have lost sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit was a seal or a pledge of the covenant. He is a person, but He is a seal or pledge of the covenant. He is called the Holy Spirit of promise.

Why would He be called the Holy Spirit of promise? Because He's not something apart from Jesus. He's not something to experience apart from Jesus. He's to be experienced with Jesus.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? And here's what He means. He is the agent whereby all that is in the covenant is supplied to those who are in Christ. He is the agent of making sure that all of the elements, all of the conditions of the covenant are ours.

Are you with me? It's through the Holy Spirit. I say, are you with me? All right. Now, I want you to see something.

Since He is the pledge of the covenant, I want you to go back with me to Ezekiel chapter 36, and we're going to see something. Ezekiel chapter 36. We're talking about our covenant with God.

Ezekiel chapter 36. Again, I want to reiterate what I've been saying to you all week. You absolutely cannot live the Christian life.

God never calls you to live the Christian life. We say that, but God never asks you to live the Christian life. Are you hearing what I'm saying? Because there's no such thing as a Christian life as we have really labeled it.

It's the life of God that He wants you to live. Are you with me? God wants you to live His life. Now, here's what it means.

It means that He is going to live His life through you, and He does that by means of the Holy Spirit. But He cannot live through you when you are living for yourself. Are you hearing what I'm saying? All right.

Now, Ezekiel 36 is a prophecy of the Holy Spirit and the new covenant. Now, notice what he says. Ezekiel chapter 36, verse 22.

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God, It's not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I'm about to act, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when I prove myself holy among you in their sight.

Now, notice this. Here is how God's going to prove Himself holy in this new covenant. Verse 24.

For I will take you from the nations. Could we say He'll take you from the world? I'll take you from the world, the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle.

Now, notice this. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from how much of your filthiness? All your filthiness.

And from how many of your idols? All your idols. So it sounds to me like God doesn't intend for us to keep any idols or any filthiness in this life that He wants to live through us. Is that what it seems to you? All right.

Now, I want you to drop down with me to verse 28, and we're going to come back. Or verse 29. Moreover, I will save you from how much of your uncleanness? From all your uncleanness, and I will call for the grain and multiply, and I will not bring a famine on you, and I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field.

You know, it sort of sounds to me like He's restoring something that He'd promised Adam. Does that sound that way to you? Now, this life is better than the one Adam had. This covenant is better than the one Adam had, and we're going to see why.

But it sort of sounds to me like God's intention was to restore man back to His image and let man enjoy the benefits of covenant that He'd originally planned. Are you following what I'm saying? Now, notice this. Here's what He says.

Verse 30. I'll multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, that you may not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. Now, here's what's going to happen to us when He does this.

Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will what? Loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations. It sounds to me like God is going to do something to us in such a way that not only will all of our idols be removed, all of our filthiness we want to put off from us, but we will literally loathe ourselves when we sin and we'll not want to walk in that direction. Now, are you hearing what I'm saying? Now, how's He going to do that? I want you to see what He says.

Let's go back to verse 25. That I will sprinkle clean water on you and you'll be clean. And I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Moreover, here's what He's going to do. I'll give you what? A new heart. And what's He going to do? Put a new spirit within you.

I'll remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. Now, as I said, I'm not sure if it says it there, but I know in Jeremiah, He says, I'm going to take the stony heart in your heart out and give you a heart of flesh. In other words, God says, I'm going to take that hardness toward me out of your heart.

I'm going to deal with the hardness. Is that what He's saying? I want to take that hardness out. I'm going to give you a heart that's pliant and subject to me.

And here's the other thing He's going to do. Now, notice this. Not only will He give us a new heart and a new spirit, verse 27, and I will put my spirit, where's He going to put Him? Within you.

I'll put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances. Now, we're going to see something. We're going to understand that verse and what He's saying.

There are people who assume this. They just assume. They say, well, they take that verse and say, well, God said He's going to give us His spirit and He's going to cause us to walk that way.

And so they just go walking in the stubbornness and rebellion of their own heart and say, well, but God said He'd cause us to walk in His statutes. That's not what it says. It says He's going to remove all the idols, all the abominations, all the filthiness, all the unkindness.

And then He's going to put His spirit within you and His spirit will cause you to walk in His statutes. Now, here's what that means. God did not exclude obedience in the New Covenant.

He didn't substitute something for obedience. What He did in the New Covenant was He did something that He had never done with any other covenant. Now, we've already seen that the covenant God intended for us to have was a covenant of the heart, not of the law.

Now, for those of you who are new, I can't go into all that, but it was a covenant God intended from the very beginning that man had his heart dealt with, not be under law. Have we seen that? All right, but now I want you to notice this. God's going to do something different that He's never done before.

He's going to take His spirit and He's going to put that spirit within you. He's not going to do away with the necessity of obedience. We're going to see that in a moment.

But He is going to give you all the means necessary to live this life He's calling you to live. So what He's doing is He's not excluding obedience as a necessity in covenant. He's not doing that.

But He's giving you the means of being obedient in Christ. Are you with me? Now, turn with me to 2 Corinthians and we're going to see where He puts that spirit. 2 Corinthians.

2 Corinthians chapter 1. He said He's going to put it within us. Let's find out where He put it. Let's find out where He put the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians chapter 1. We're talking about the Holy Spirit in the covenant. 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 21. Now, He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave

us the Spirit.

And where did He give us the Spirit? In our hearts as a what? As a pledge. Now, we see that word again. He was given as a Holy Spirit a promise, as a seal, and a pledge.

Now, what's He talking about? Well, you see, here's what He's saying. He's saying, I am promising you something. We're going to see in a moment what God promises us.

He said, I promise you something. And to show you that I'm serious about my promise, I'm giving you my Holy Spirit to make everything that I said possible. Are you hearing what I'm saying? All right.

He's not only saying it, He is giving us a pledge or a seal or a promise and the means to carry out the promise of everything He said. Now, what was the promise He gave us? The promise was that He would do this. The promise was that He would cleanse us from all our filthiness, all our idols, all our abominations, and He would be our God and we would be His people.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? And so He says, I'm giving you the Holy Spirit as a pledge to do that. Now, where's He going to put it? He's going to put it in our hearts. What have we been seeing all week with all the sin that Israel did, with all the rebellion that we find in the Bible? What have we been seeing was the major problem they had? They have a heart problem.

Is that right? And so now God's not only going to just give them a brand new heart, He's going to do something with that heart. He is going to give them a new heart and He is also going to put His Spirit inside that heart to control man's heart. Are you with me? Now, notice this.

But understand this. It's just a pledge and it's just a promise. We have a part in carrying it out.

We're going to see that. Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 11. Isaiah chapter 11.

And let's see a description of that Spirit that was on Jesus. Isaiah chapter 11. Is it the same Spirit? The Spirit that was on Jesus, is it the same Spirit that He puts within us? Well, obviously it is because Romans chapter 8 verse 11 says, If the same Spirit that raised Christ Jesus from the dead dwell in you, then that Spirit will quicken your mortal body unto life.

So is it the same Spirit? Well, He says it is. It's the same Spirit. The same Spirit that rested on Jesus is the Spirit that rests on us.

The same Spirit that indwelt Jesus is the Spirit that indwells us. Now, let's see what that Spirit was and how it affected Jesus. Isaiah chapter 11, verse 1. Then a shoot will spring forth from the stem of Jesse and a branch from his roots.

And what's going to happen? It will bear fruit and the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him. Now, look at the description of this Spirit. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength.

By the way, what did we find out wisdom and understanding was? We found out that wisdom was the fear of the Lord and understanding was to depart from evil. And so it's this Spirit. Now, did we read when we talked about the fear of the Lord that God says, Come, my children, come to me.

I'll teach you the fear of the Lord. How do you think He's going to teach you the fear of the Lord? By the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Are you with me? Now, you remember what the fear of the Lord

produced? Some of the things it produced.

It produced health for your body, long life, deliverance from evil. It produced all those things and all the benefits. When we walk in the fear of the Lord, it produced the benefits of the covenant.

Amen? Is that what we saw? All right. Now, notice this. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, it's not only going to be that.

That's going to be a Spirit of counsel and strength. Now, does that sound like covenant to you? Have we been discussing the fact that whenever you make covenant with a covenant partner, there's an exchange that takes place, an exchange of life. Did we talk about the fact that God exchanges your strength called weakness for His strength called power.

And He also promises to give us counsel and wisdom because everything He has belongs to you. Everything you have belongs to Him. Amen? All right.

So, there's that exchange of strength again. And a Spirit of knowledge. And what else is He going to give us? And the fear of the Lord.

All right. Now, look at this. And He will delight.

Why am I saying He's going to give us? Because we just said that the same Spirit that was on Jesus and in Jesus is the one that lives in us. Is that right? Now, look what He's going to say. Here's what He does.

What's that going to cause us to do? He will delight. I say He will delight. He will delight in the fear of the Lord.

And He'll not judge by what His eyes see nor make a decision by what His ears hear. But with what? Righteousness, He'll judge the poor and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth. And He'll strike the earth with the rod of His mouth.

With the breath of His lips, He'll slay the wicked. Also, righteousness will be the belt about His loins and faithfulness the belt about His waist. Now, turn with me to Ephesians again.

Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1. As I've been saying to you all week, I'm a teacher. And so, therefore, I use a lot of Scripture, as you know by now. And I want you to go through the Scripture with me so that you see it for yourself.

And you're able to, it's a whole lot better to see it in the Word than just have me quote it to you and tell it to you. Have you found that out this way? It's a whole lot better for you to see it than me just to say it for you. Okay, now notice.

Now, here we are. Ephesians chapter 1. Paul is praying a prayer. Now, look what he prays for them.

He's praying for the Christians at Ephesus. And he says in verse 16, Ephesians 1. I do not cease giving thanks for you while making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. Is that what we read about over there? He's going to give him a spirit of wisdom and a spirit of revelation.

Now, I want you to remember something we found out in Psalm 25. Not only does this spirit of wisdom and revelation come, but it will cause us to delight in the fear of the Lord. Now, is that what we read in Isaiah 11? Now, what's the benefit of that? Here's the benefit of that.

We saw in Psalm 25, good and upright is the Lord. He instructs sinners in the way. And he says he keeps his loving kindness for those who keep his covenant.

But we also saw that the secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and He will make them to know His covenant. Are you hearing what I'm saying? So this spirit of wisdom and understanding will delight in the fear of the Lord. And for those who fear Him, they not only have the angels of God encamping around about them in Psalm 34, but He's going to make His covenant known to us through this spirit.

Are you with me? I say, are you with me? We've been saying some pretty good things about the covenant, haven't we? Now, look what He says. Here's what's going to happen. Here's what He's going to do through the spirit.

Verse 18, I pray that the eyes of your heart... Heart, did you know your heart had eyes? That the eyes of your heart... What would that mean, eyes of your heart? It'd be who your heart's drawn to. Are you with me? The eyes of your heart, the inner man, may be what? Enlightened. Now, that's what the Spirit of God's going to do.

He's going to enlighten the inner man. And what's He going to be able to show us when He enlightens us? So that you may know what's the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing, look at this, the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might, which He brought about in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and sitting at His right hand in the heavenly places.

So this Holy Spirit is going to enlighten our eyes that we might see Jesus. And not only will we see Jesus, but we'll see the hope of His calling, which was holiness, and we'll see, we'll understand the riches of the inheritance that He has for us in Christ Jesus. Now, are you understanding what I'm saying? But I want you to know that all of this is dependent upon the Holy Spirit being able to live His life through us.

So now let me tell you what the reverse of that means. The reverse of that means that when we decide to live for ourselves and let our hearts go after the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life, we can't see as we ought because the Holy Spirit can't live His life through us. And therefore He cannot enlighten us and show us the covenant.

Are you understanding what I'm saying? Now, the Word of God tells us that there's an opposite and counteracting work other and against the one we just saw. Turn with me to 2 Corinthians 4. Now, I'm sure you know as you're going through these things that I'm building up to something. As we've done all week, we start out laying a foundation and then when we get that foundation laid, then we begin to build on the foundation we've laid.

So we're laying a foundation to see and understand what God's saying about this Holy Spirit in the covenant. Now, we just saw that the Holy Spirit will enlighten us that our eyes of our heart may be open to see Jesus and to know the hope of His calling and all of the inheritance that He has for us in the covenant. Is that what we saw? All right, now look at a counteracting work.

2 Corinthians 4. Verse 3, And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are what? Perishing, in whose case the God of this world... Who is the God of this world? Satan. And what's he done? He's blinded the minds of the who? Of the unbelieving. Now, just in case, I want you to turn there with me.

We've read it this week. But just in case you think he's only talking about the world, let me read again to you Hebrews 3. Because we need to be alerted to the fact that he's not just talking about the world here. And so, just because... And I don't want you to turn here because I want to read it to you.

I want you to just listen to me when I say this. But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are, but He puts another word in there, if. We're His house if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope for how long? Firm until the end.

And He says, Therefore, as just as the Holy Spirit says, Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart. We've seen how you harden your heart. How do you do that? You become stiff-necked and you refuse to obey His voice.

Every time you do that, a hardness comes to your heart. Are you with me? All right? Now, notice what He says. Take care, brethren.

Now, who are brethren? Is that the world or is that Christians? Christians. Now, listen to what He says. Take care, brethren.

This is Hebrews 3.12. Lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart in falling away from the living God. Now, does the Word say that even a brethren can have in him an evil, unbelieving heart? He says, take care. Now, the heart doesn't start out that way.

He gives you a new heart. But He says, take care that your heart doesn't become stubborn, stiff-necked, and stop listening to the Holy Spirit and get hardened and become an evil, unbelieving heart. Now, is that what the Word says? Just don't make it say something else.

That's what it says. Now, He says, But encourage one another day after day, as long as it's still called a day, lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. What does He mean by the deceitfulness of sin? Sin is very deceitful in that we just think sometimes that it doesn't have any effect or consequence on us because we don't feel anything.

And so we just keep on sinning and sinning and sinning. We don't realize there's a deceitfulness involved in that because what's happening to you is your heart keeps getting harder and harder and harder and harder and harder to where you can't believe and you can't repent. All right.

Now, so when we read in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 4, in whose case the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, we understand that even a brethren can have an evil, unbelieving heart. Is that right? I say, is that right? Okay. Now, so we're not going to apply this to somebody down the street, are we? We're going to examine our own life.

We're not going to apply this to somebody we've got that we work with that's in the world, cussing, committing adultery. We're going to apply it to our own life. We're going to make sure, take care, brethren, that we don't have one of those hearts.

Okay? But notice what he said. The Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit wants to bring enlightenment to the eyes of your heart. Are you with me? The Holy Spirit wants to bring an enlightenment to the eyes of your heart so that He can show you the inheritance that you have in Jesus.

And you can see Jesus. Is that what we read? The devil wants to use, the God of this world, wants to use the things of this world. We read what the things of this world is in 1 John 2, verses 15-17, that the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life, the deceitfulness of sin, he wants to use to harden your heart, but also to blind your eyes that you might not see the light of the Gospel, of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.

Are you with me? So Satan comes to tempt you to counteract the work of the Holy Spirit. Now listen to me. Satan comes to tempt you.

The Holy Spirit is at work within you to let you see Jesus in His glory. That you can know the inheritance that you have in covenant through Jesus. The God of this world is at work to create a temptation towards sin.

And when sin comes into your life, it hardens your heart when you disobey God and don't repent. It hardens your heart and it blinds your mind so that you can't see the light of the Gospel in Jesus Christ. Are you with me? May I tell you, that's how traditions of men and doctrines of men get built, because they don't really see Jesus.

And so we just build up things about Jesus. Are you with me? You know, the Word of God says in Proverbs, first chapter, I think it's the eighth verse, Proverbs 1, it says, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It also says, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

In fact, that's what it says in Proverbs 1.8. The beginning of knowledge. Now listen, if there's no fear of God there, and the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, and we approach the Bible without the fear of God in our eyes and our hearts, what's going to happen to our knowledge? You know what's going to happen to our knowledge? We can take a verse like John 3.16 and we can just build a whole denomination around John 3.16, if we want to. And that can be the whole heart of our Gospel.

We can build a whole thing around it. We can take something about the Holy Spirit. We can take Acts 1.8 and we can build a whole doctrine around Acts 1.8. A whole denomination, if we want to, around Acts 1.8. But if there's no fear of God before our eyes, if that's where we begin with wisdom, if we don't begin with the fear of the Lord, we can take a truth and before we've taken ten steps, we have perverted that truth because we didn't even start with knowledge.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? And that's how the Word gets perverted. Now, notice this. Satan is at work to blind the minds of the unbelieving.

Now, the Holy Spirit is the agent that appropriates all that's in the covenant for us. We've seen that, have we not? But now notice what we've said. Not only is the Holy Spirit at work to show us Jesus and enlighten the eyes of our heart, not only is the Holy Spirit at work, but the God of this world is at work to blind our minds.

The Holy Spirit wants to open our heart. The devil wants to harden our heart. Is that what we've seen? All right, notice this.

The Holy Spirit counteracts the work of the devil by not only being... Now, can you listen to me? By not only being a spirit of wisdom and of revelation, but he is a spirit of holiness and sanctification. So the Holy Spirit works in us to produce holiness. Now, why does God work in us to produce holiness? Because as He works in us to produce holiness, He's cleansing all of the filthiness, all of the idols, all of the abominations out of our heart so that our eyes can be opened to see.

That's why I appreciate that song. Now, notice this. If we're not being sanctified and the idols and abominations and uncleanness is not being cleansed out of our heart, then the devil is blinding us from seeing the light of the gospel and the glory of Jesus by depositing sin, uncleanness, and idols in the heart.

Are you with me? And we're going to see what that does. Now, I want you to turn with me to 1 Thessalonians 4. Verse 2. We've looked at part of this verse already this week. We're going to look at the rest of it.

1 Thessalonians 4, verse 2. For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God. And what did He say the will of God is? Your sanctification.

In other words, God's will is your walk of holiness. Is that what He's saying? You can translate sanctification holiness or holiness sanctification. God's very clearly declaring that His will is that we have a walk of holiness and sanctification.

And He says that is that you abstain from sexual immorality and that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in what? Holiness or sanctification and honor. Now, do you think that only applies to sexual immorality or do you think we could also say idolatry, greed, selfishness, critical spirit, selfishness? You think we could say those things too? But God wants you to be able to possess this vessel in holiness. And He's given us the means to possess the vessel of holiness which is the Holy Spirit of promise.

Are you with me? Now look. He says in verse 5 that we're to possess our own vessel in sanctification, not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God. Now suppose we read verse 7. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity.

Let's say the rest of it. God has not called us for the purpose of uncleanness. God has not called us so that we might have idols in our heart.

God's not called us so that we might have greed in our heart. God's not called us so that we might have selfish ambition in our heart. God's not called us so that we might have envy, jealousy, strife, and divisions in our heart.

God has not called us so that we might have lust in our heart. He's not called us for any kind of impurity, abomination, or uncleanness, or idol. But He's called us in holiness or sanctification.

Now, no matter what kind of doctrine we have, I don't care if it's John 3.16 or Acts 1.8. It doesn't matter. But if we reject this, look who we're rejecting. Verse 8. Consequently, He who rejects this is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

In other words, if we live another way without being cleansed of all the idols and abominations and sin in our heart, we're not rejecting man. You're not rejecting man's doctrine. You're not rejecting anything I say.

You are rejecting God and resisting the work of His Holy Spirit. Now, is that what it says? All right. Now, notice.

Turn with me then. By the way, well, turn with me to Acts 5. Acts 5. I wasn't going to turn there, but I want you to see it. I just want you to know it's in your Bible.

Acts 5. Acts 5. Peter and the apostles had been preaching Jesus. And the council and the high priest come against them and they tell them, we don't want you to preach anymore in this name. And verse 28 we read that they said to them, We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name.

And behold, you filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men. May I say that's just a real good idea? We must obey God rather than men.

And he says, The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to his right hand as a prince and a savior. And what did he do? To grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

And we are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him. Now is that clear? God is not going to give his Holy Spirit to somebody who wants to walk in rebellion and the lost sins of their own life and heart living for themselves. Are you with me? He gives his Holy Spirit to the heart that desires to obey him and that Holy Spirit then produces something.

If you desire to obey Jesus then God gives you his Holy Spirit. Are you with me? Is that what it says? Now look what the Holy Spirit does. See, God not only calls you to obey him but I said he also gives you the means to do it.

He only gives it to the heart that wants to obey him. 1 Peter 1. Now look what the Holy Spirit does once he gets there. Once the Holy Spirit gets in the heart is that where he plants him? In the heart? And once he gets there I want you to see what he does.

1 Peter 1. Verse 1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to those who reside as aliens scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia who are chosen verse 2 now notice carefully verse 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by the sanctifying work of the Spirit and why does he do it? That you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood. Are you seeing that? I say are you seeing that? So God gives the Holy Spirit to those who are willing to obey him and have a heart to obey him and then the Holy Spirit turns around and works in that heart that you may have the power to obey him. Are you hearing what I'm saying? That's why I say to you that you can't live the Christian life because it is the life of God.

God has to live that life in you. But, let's see what it's like what does it mean to have a heart willing to obey him and what's the Holy Spirit going to do in your life? Turn with me to Romans chapter 8. See, we've got a whole lot of doctrines today about the Holy Spirit. We've got people who believe in the Holy Spirit.

We've got people who don't believe in the Holy Spirit. We've got a whole lot of jingle jangle of men's words. We've got a multitude of words and books today about the Holy Spirit.

But there's an area of the Holy Spirit that I don't see anybody talking too much about. It's the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God. Now you remember, I'm going to show you the other part too that he opens our

eyes and we might understand what God has for us through the Spirit.

I want you to see it and you're not getting it any other way except through the Spirit. But let's see the other side of the Spirit and what God calls us to. Romans 8 verse 14.

I know you've seen these Scriptures before but let me read them to you and we go through them. We're going to understand Romans chapter 8. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Now how many of you see that? Now what does it mean if you're being led? How can you tell if you're being led by the Spirit of God? If the Spirit of God is leading you.

It's very important because Galatians chapter 5 says if you're led by the Spirit of God you're not under the law. And we already saw that this week. If the Spirit of God is not leading you in your life you're going to be judged by what? By the law.

He also says in Galatians 5 verse 16 that the Spirit if you walk by the Spirit and you will not you will not carry out the lusts or the desires of the flesh. That sounds important, doesn't it? Because it's the lusts and desires of the flesh that blind our minds and our hearts that we can't see Jesus and harden our hearts toward repentance. This concludes tape number 11.

Please proceed to tape number 12 where this message continues.

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