

Bible Study and Notes

SAINTS, A PECULIAR PEOPLE

(LESSON 21)

Bible Study

1. What word does God use to describe His chosen people? **1 Peter 2:9**
2. What do the saints overcome? **1 John 5:4**
3. What does Jesus think about those that try to live as close as possible with the world and yet want to be in heaven? **Matthew 6:24**
4. What are the three categories of temptation? **1 John 2:15-17**
5. What television programs and movies will a saint avoid? **Psalms 101:2-3**
6. What does God call strange gods? **Genesis 35:1-4**
7. What did the Israelites do that displeased God on the verge of entering into the Promised Land? **Exodus 33:4-6**
8. What should saints adorn themselves with? **1 Timothy 2:9-10, 1 Peter 3:3-4**
9. What distinction does God place upon men and women? **Deuteronomy 22:5**
10. What practice does Jesus say would make us happy? **John 13:3-17**
11. How can people rob God? **Malachi 3:8**

What Group of People Does the Third Angel Reveal?

Revelation 14:12 says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." God has saints and will have saints right up to and including the second coming (Revelation 14:14).

In a previous lesson *Limited Only by Imagination*, we learned that saints are those that have chosen to be espoused to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2) especially through the ceremony of baptism.

As we enter into this lesson being the second study on how saints should conduct themselves, Paul asked a very pointed question and then gave a faithful answer. Romans 8:35-39 asks, "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" Can the same be said of ourselves? Sometimes its easier to be persecuted, hungry, naked, and go through many other physical challenges for the sake of the Word, but when God asks us to be faithful in the small obedient acts, are we just as faithful or do we look for a way to justify our disobedience?

What Does God Call His People?

Revelation 17:14 says, "*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome*

them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful." If we are with Him, we are part of the chosen. But God further defines His chosen people in 1 Peter 2:9 by saying, "*(But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*" The chosen people are a peculiar people who are willing to come out of darkness into the light of the Word and follow a "*Thus Saith the Lord*" on everything they do, think, and say.

Now the word "peculiar" is not usually an appreciative term, but how does God use the term? According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, it means DISTINCTIVE, EXCLUSIVE, PARTICULAR, UNIQUE, and SPECIAL. We are special to Him for He created and redeemed us. We are unique to Him because no two people are the same. God wants us to be particular and not careless for that would lead to injury. In being particular, we will come out of the world and will be exclusive and even distinctive for everybody that does not come out of the world is just following the crowd to destruction.

In being peculiar, saints have a challenge. The world is diametrically opposed to the ways of God.

What Relationship Should We Have Towards the World?

James 4:4 blatantly states, "*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" God compares the act of trying to make friends, not with people, with the world as that of committing adultery. It is the act of going so far in the way of the world that the world accepts us. God even goes one step further and declares that we are His enemy if we try to entertain the things of the world.

The saints are described in 1 John 5:4, which says, "*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, [even] our faith.*" Though we will be at odds with the whole world, we are promised the victory through faith.

What does Jesus think about those that try to live as close as possible with the world and yet want to be in heaven? Matthew 6:24 states, "*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*" On this subject, God removes all neutral ground. We cannot serve the world and God. We must choose to hate the ways of the world and "*love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*" (Matthew 22:37).

What is the motive behind a saint? 1 John 3:22 tells us, "*And*

whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." God's people do not see Him as a restraining God. They do not wonder why they cannot do this or that. They do not try to walk with the world and yet serve God, rather they daily find what pleases God and do it. There are some things found in the Bible that seem so small, yet God is quite pleased when we do them.

How does Satan attract people to the world? 1 John 2:15-17 reveals, "Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." There are three main areas to overcome and that is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. As we discovered in the lesson *The Seed of the Woman*, Jesus as our example overcame these three areas during the temptations in the wilderness.

What Does the Bible Say About the Lust of the Flesh?

Each of us have five senses: taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound. Satan tries to use these God given senses for his purpose. What goes in through the senses, especially the ears, can lead to the lust of the flesh.

What does the Bible say about things we listen to? Proverbs 2:1-5 warns, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, [and] apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, [and] liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as [for] hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." What we listen to should give us knowledge of God.

Psalm 7:17 tells us, "I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high." God loves music however, He is jealous and wants the music to uplift Him only. Looking at most music today, does it uplift God or sin and Satan? Sin and Satan for the most part.

So, what council is there? Philippians 4:8 is very specific: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things." This is good council. We should focus on these things. But people will say, "What's wrong with this song or that song? I can't see anything wrong." You are absolutely correct. Blind people cannot see what the devil is doing. In fact, try an experiment on a friend. Tell that person to repeat the word "Tin" as fast as possible for

ten seconds, and then quickly ask, "What are aluminum cans made out of?" If the answer is "Tin" then you can see how the devil is using the lyrics against God's people. Even with the blatant answer in the question, many will reply with what was pummeled into their heads, whereas, ALUMINUM is the correct answer.

And then there is the art of backward masking. The book *Hell's Bells* exposes this capability. This is where the lyrics sound all right forward, but played backwards, there is a different message going straight for the sub-conscience. It was also practiced by shopping malls, which saw soft drink purchases skyrocket, but then it was deemed an illegal practice so the practice ceased.

Now not all music is bad, but we do have to be very selective because it is the most mind to body controlling mechanism out there. In fact, "Christian Rock" music, for example, is still rock music that has just been Christianized through the lyrics. But what about the sounds from the instruments?

For those who think only rock music is the concern, especially with backwards masking, let us ask what would happen if country music were played backwards? The depressant would get his wife, dog, car, and house back. Amen?

Even in the church it is a concern. The devil appeals to feelings while God appeals to the intellect. If the way music is played or the type of music played appeals more to the feelings and emotions, that is not of God. Why? God works with the mind (Hebrews 10:16).

He wants intellectual decisions for Him.

What Does the Bible Say About the Lust of the Eyes?

2 Corinthians 3:18 states, "*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord.*"

What we behold or look at, we will become.

Ezekiel 20:7 tells us, "*Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I [am] the LORD your God.*" Today we can substitute the word HOLLYWOOD for EGYPT. What we see coming out in the movies and TV, does it uplift God more than sin and Satan? No, it uplifts sin and Satan.

Psalms 101:2-3 gives us very good insight to protecting the invasion through the eyes: "*I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; [it] shall not cleave to me.*" This is very wise council, yet many watch the filth on TV for hours on end. Can we watch prime time TV to the glory of God?

A prime-time TV survey of NBC, ABC, and CBS was taken with the following results:

- Of 104 people that produce TV programming, 93% do not attend church and have no desire to, 95% think that

adultery is a proper lifestyle, and 84% think that homosexuality is an alternate and acceptable lifestyle. What do you think is coming out of Hollywood?

- The number of violent incidences during prime-time from September to December was: NBC at 973, ABC at 917, and CBS at 720 for a total of 2610. That is 9.74 violent incidences per hour. If that is being pummeled into our heads night after night, then we are going to be quite irritable and willing to fight over little issues. And we wonder why people are killing people for no reason.
- The number of sexual incidences was: NBC at 1048, ABC at 884, and CBS at 785. That is a total of 2717 or 10.14 sexual scenes per hour. Then we wonder why adultery is out of hand and homes are breaking up.
- The number of profanity incidences was: NBC at 663, ABC at 509, and CBS at 1028. That is a total of 2200 or 8.19 profanity incidences per hour. Then we wonder why even Christians take the Lord's name in vain.

By feeding our minds these things night after night, we will act, speak, and think on these things. And worse yet, many sit their kids in front of the idiot box allowing Satan to program their youngsters.

Even good programming is misleading. According to *Stat News*, September 15, 2017, at least 6 things occur differently on TV in saving a patient as compared to reality. What is the

significance? Malpractice suits are way up because those that lose a love one under this technique believe that they had an inexperienced doctor and want compensation.

Here is some very good council: Psalms 119:37-38 tells us, "*Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; [and] quicken thou me in thy way. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who [is devoted] to thy fear.*" We should turn away from such filth and devote more to the Word of God. The average home spends 42 hours in front of the TV per week. If they spent half that time in the Word of God, they would understand full well the plan of salvation and the beautiful truths in the Bible.

Isaiah 33:15-17 states, "*He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence [shall be] the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters [shall be] sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.*" I want to be in the group that sees the King return and take us home. How about you?

The following was found in the *Presbyterian Journal* entitled *Side by Side*: "They lay on the table side by side: The Holy Bible and the TV Guide. One is well worn but cherished with pride. (Not the Bible, but the TV Guide). One is used daily to help folks decide (No! Not the Bible: It's the TV Guide). As the pages

are turned, what shall they see? Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV. Then confusion reigns, they can't all agree on what they shall watch on the old TV. So they open the book in which they confide. (No, not the Bible; it's the TV Guide.) The Word of God is seldom read maybe a verse e'er they fall into bed. Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be. Not from reading the Bible: from watching TV. So, then back to the table, side by side, lie the Holy Bible, and the TV Guide. No time for prayer, no time for the Word. The plan of salvation is seldom heard. But forgiveness of sin so full and free is found in the Bible, not on TV!"

The TV Psalm: "The TV set is my shepherd. My spiritual growth shall want. It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for His name's sake, because it requireth all my spare time. It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian, because it presenteth so many good shows that I must see. It restoreth my knowledge of things of the world and keepeth me from the study of God's Word. It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend the evening worship services, and doing nothing for the kingdom of God. Yea, though I live to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing my TV as long as it will work, for it is my closest companion, its sound and its picture, they comfort me. It presenteth entertainment before me, and keepeth me from doing important things with my family. It filleth my head with ideas different from those set forth in the Word of God. Surely, no good thing will come of my life, because my TV offereth no good time to do the will of God; thus I

will dwell in the place of the devil and his angels forever!"

How About the Pride of Life?

Genesis 35:1-2 says, "*And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that [were] with him, Put away the strange gods that [are] among you, and be clean, and change your garments.*" Jacob was going to make an atonement for sin, but God would not accept His service until these strange gods were removed. What are these strange gods that are to be put away? Genesis 35:3-4 tells us, "*And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which [were] in their hand, and [all their] earrings which [were] in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which [was] by Shechem.*" God is displeased when we put such ornamentation on for it glorifies people and not Him.

Also note that Jacob was making an atonement for sin. This should remind us of the feast of atonement. In regards to that feast, Leviticus 23:27 says, "*Also on the tenth [day] of this seventh month [there shall be] a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and*

offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD." We are living out the Day of Atonement. During this time, we are to be afflicting our souls, in other words, we are to be seeking God earnestly for the removal of sin in our lives. This is not the time to be decorating ourselves. Is there a time? Leviticus 23:34 says, "*Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [shall be] the feast of tabernacles [for] seven days unto the LORD.*" This represents the second coming. During this feast day, note one particular element in Leviticus 23:40: "*And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.*" It is a time of rejoicing. Why? Because victory is finally here, and one of the crowning acts of victory will be in receiving victory crowns.

Now some people reason that because we are going to receive a crown, which is jewelry, that God is not so displeased with ornamentation. Let us look closer at that reference. Revelation 4:9-11 states, "*And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*" Note that these cannot stand wearing the crown

in the physical presence of God and cast it off. If they cannot stand jewelry that God placed on their heads, do you think we should take pleasure in decorating ourselves now?

Let us examine a few more verses. Exodus 33:4-6 says, *“And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye [are] a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.”* Here, God’s people are about to enter the Promise Land and they were wearing the ornaments. This displeased God greatly, and He referred to them as *“stiffnecked people.”* We are about to enter the heavenly Promise Land and therefore should also remove the jewelry.

What is jewelry associated with? Hosea 2:13 tells us, *“And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.”* Jewelry is associated with idol worship throughout the Bible. Why? Because the purpose of it draws people to the outward appearance of the body instead of the inner, and it appeases the selfish tendencies we all have. When we allow such prideful acts to occur in our lives, we begin to forget God of whom

should receive all the glory.

While we are on the subject of outward appearance, let us read 1 Timothy 2:9-10, which says, *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”* What is meant by MODEST APPAREL? According to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*: Clothing, garments, attire; to clothe, dress. So why do many businesswomen wear short, short skirts, when they are forever pulling down on the skirt because they know too much is being revealed? And, how about men at the pools and beaches in those bikini bottoms? You think God is pleased with this? Or how about a Christian that is unkept? And while we are on this subject, do you think there should be a difference in clothing for specific occasions? Would you wear gardening clothes to a wedding? Would you wear pool clothing to a funeral? Then, should we wear everyday clothes to church? It is true that God looks upon the heart, but does that mean God is pleased when we put no difference between the clean and the unclean, the common and the uncommon regarding His Sabbath. The manner of dress directly shows the respect we have for God and His Sabbath. Now there is a balance here. God does not expect you to spend an unaffordable amount on Sabbath clothes.

Now, while we are on the subject of clothing, we know that God is displeased with people practicing homosexuality. In fact,

it is a sin. One phrase I hear from homosexuals is that they feel confused about their desires. What guidelines did God provide regarding such ideas? Deuteronomy 22:5 makes it plain by saying, *“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so [are] abomination unto the LORD thy God.”* There is to be a distinctive difference between men and women, but today there is a great push for couples to dress as if they were twins, dress in a manner that leaves people wondering if that is a guy or a girl, and much more.

In 1 Timothy 2:9-10, we read about *“shamefacedness.”* What does this refer to? Makeup. God made all women beautiful. Covering the face with makeup is saying to God, *“Thanks God, but let me fix your flaws.”*

Also notice what type of people makeup is associated with in the Bible. 2 Kings 9:30 tells us, *“And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard [of it]; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.”* This is where we hear the phrase, *“That girl looks like a little Jezebel.”*

Moving on to 1 Timothy 2:9-10, it also refers to jewelry. Let us also read 1 Peter 3:3-4: *“Whose adorning let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”* Adornment should not be on the outside, rather it is to be

on the inside, in other words, Satan's counterfeit has been revealed. You see, the devil has it all mixed up. He has people thinking that outside decorations are what makes the person when in fact it is what is on the inside that counts. God made us in His image. Can any of us improve on that?

Do not take my word for it. All of this was preached in the churches decades ago:

"I exhort you to wear no gold, no pearls, or precious stones. I do not advise women to wear rings, earrings, or necklaces. It is true that these things are little, very little things, therefore they are not worth defending. Therefore, give them up, let 'em drop, throw them away without another word else a little needle may cause much pain in the flesh, a little self indulgence much hurt to your soul. Alas, to what a fearful extent is that friendship of the world that is enmity with God, now cherished among the professed followers of Christ! How widely have the popular churches throughout Christendom departed from the Bible standard of humility, self-denial, simplicity, and godliness. Do not waste any part of so precious a talent, merely in gratifying the desire of the eye, by superfluous or expensive apparel, or by needless ornaments. Waste no part of it in curiously adorning your houses; in superfluous or expensive furniture; in costly pictures, painting, gilding.... Lay out nothing to gratify the pride of life, to gain the admiration of praise of men.... 'So long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee.' So long as thou are 'clothed in purple and fine

linen,' and farest 'sumptuously every day,' no doubt many will applaud thy elegance of taste, thy generosity and hospitality. But do not buy their applause so dear. Rather be content with the honor that cometh from God." - *John Wesley, Works, Sermon 50, The Use of Money.*

Also notice how the two classes of people dress. One group is lost while the other is saved. Revelation 17:3-5 represents the lost class: "*So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*" The corrupt, fallen system is the one that is decked out in precious jewels. Now notice the saved group in Revelation 12:1-2: "*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*" God's people are represented by pure natural beauty. Which group do you want to be associated with?

But how about the Christian cross? Again, what makes a Christian according to the Bible? That which is one inwardly.

Besides, the cross is actually not a Christian symbol:

"The ankh (crux [where we get crucifix from] ansata) was an ancient Egyptian T-shaped cross surmounted with a loop. It symbolized the creative energies of the male and female and the essence of life. The simple T-shaped cross is named for the Greek letter tau." 1996 *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia.*

What did God prophesy would happen in the church? Ezekiel 8:14 tells us, "*Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which [was] toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.*" The "T" in Tammuz is where the cross came from. It was in reverence to Tammuz. If Jesus were sacrificed by a bullet or gun, would you wear that? In fact, if Martin Luther were alive today, I believe that he would nail the 95 Thesis on every denomination's door. The purchasing of such things was what sparked the Protestant Reformation in the first place. Additionally, all we have to do is look at Jesus. What jewelry did He wear? None.

Did you also know that just as Christians decorate their bodies today with "Christian ornamentation," Jesus faced the same situation in His day? The Pharisees would take scripture especially pertaining to the law and put them in little black boxes with straps called PHYLACTERIES. They would then strap one to their right wrist and the other to their forehead and parade around town believing this showed that they kept the law. They were taking the reference in Deuteronomy 6:8 literally

“*And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*”). Of course, we learned that God means this spiritually as in the comparison of the Mark of the Beast on the right hand and in the forehead. The right hand is symbolic of actions (Ecclesiastes 9:10: “*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do [it] with thy might; for [there is] no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*”), and frontlets or forehead is symbolic of the mind, i.e., the intellectual choices (Hebrews 10:15-16: “*[Whereof] the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.*”). Did Jesus partake of this? No He did not. In fact, He addressed the display of it in Matthew 23:5, which says, “*But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.*”

And if I may speak personally for a moment. My wife and I do not wear wedding bands because there is no place in the Bible that supports it. In fact, the source comes right out of Babylon. The temple whore and the temple priest were married to the sun god. They wore wedding bands. Well, the Medes and Persians practiced it who gave it to Greece who passed it to Rome who passed it to Papal Rome, who Christianized it. That is why every priest and nun have a wedding band today. Further, the bands were then added to the wedding ceremony

without an iota of scripture. If the Bible says to remove all ornamentation, we follow a “*Thus Saith the Lord*” in our house, how about you?

To substantiate this, note what John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890) wrote in essay on *The Development of Christian Doctrine* published in 1920 by Longmans, Green and Company: “Incense, holy water, holy days and seasons, processions, the ring in marriage are all of pagan origin and sanctified by their adoption into the church.”

And one final word from the Lord on this subject, found in Isaiah 3:16-24, says, “*Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing [as] they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of [their] tinkling ornaments [about their feet], and [their] caul, and [their] round tires like the moon, The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, The rings, and nose jewels, The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, [that] instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of*

a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; [and] burning instead of beauty.”

How About the Contents of the Church Service?

1 Corinthians 11:24 tells us, “*And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*” Jesus gave us Holy Communion to remember Him by. He did not specify how often it should be done, but that when we do it, do it in remembrance of Him. 1 Corinthians 11:25 states, “*After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me.*” Jesus gave us the grape juice to be part of the service as well.

And John 13:3-8 tells us, “*Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.*”

This is the typical reaction to this practice. But Jesus tells us “*If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.*”

John 13:9-14 goes on to say, “*Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also [my] hands and [my] head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash [his] feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for [so] I am. If I then, [your] Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*” He tells us that we should continue this practice.

John 13:15 tells us, “*For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*” Jesus is the Way in which we need to follow.

And John 13:16-17 states, “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*” Jesus tells us the purpose of the practice is for a humbling experience. A doctor is on the same level as a trash collector. A lawyer is on the same level as a homemaker. Two angry people can be humbled.

What About Giving to the Lord?

Matthew 22:16-21 says, “*And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any [man]: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, [ye] hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose [is] this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*” Today, give to the IRS theirs and give to God His.

What is God's? Leviticus 27:30 tells us, “*And all the tithe of the land, [whether] of the seed of the land, [or] of the fruit of the tree, [is] the LORD'S: [it is] holy unto the LORD.*” God asks His people to give a tithe of all they have. Today, we take it out of our paychecks.

How much is a tithe? Leviticus 27:32 explains, “*And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, [even] of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.*” Technically, all of it is God's. He is the one that has given it to us. What a bargain. All God wants back is ten percent.

Now, would you rob God? Malachi 3:8-10 says, “*Will a man*

rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that [there shall] not [be room] enough [to receive it].” By not giving tithes and offerings (amount above ten percent) to God, we are robbing Him. The purpose of such is to finance the operation of taking the Gospel to the whole world.

At what point is the ten percent calculated? 2 Chronicles 31:5 says, “*And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all [things] brought they in abundantly.*” We are to pay God first and then everything else. That means pay God before the car payment, electric bill, mortgage, and even the IRS.

What is the purpose of tithing? To test our dependency. Will we depend 100% on God or do we believe we can take care of ourselves? I would rather place it in God's hands since He has never made a mistake. Amen?

My wife and I experienced this dependency. We went from a six-digit salary to near zero overnight. The savings account dwindled quickly. Overall, we had a choice to make every time money came in. Do we pay the bills of which we did not have

enough money to meet or do we first give to God what is God's? We chose to give to God first, and by the grace of God, we met all of our bills on time and every time. We cannot explain this on paper, the figures do not add up, but we do know how this happened. God tells us to prove Him and we did.

You may have noticed the several references to paying the IRS what they ask for. Some are not comfortable with paying the IRS stating that it really is not substantiated by a legal stance. A Christian tax lawyer supports these feelings but added that it is clear that the judicial system sees otherwise. Further, this is not a spiritual issue though people give spiritual reasons (what they could give to God if it were not going to the government). Then he shared the following verses: Matthew 5:39-41 says, "*But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have [thy] cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.*" Titus 3:1-2 tells us, "*Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, [but] gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.*" 1 Peter 2:13-14 states, "*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*" 1 Peter 2:19-25

explains, "*For this [is] thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory [is it], if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer [for it], ye take it patiently, this [is] acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*" Further, Jesus did not spend one second challenging the authorities. In fact, he totally submitted all the way to the cross.

You Are Being Called

Revelation 18:2-4 says, "*And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not*

partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." I do not want to partake of the plagues. How about you?

What are we called to do? Titus 2:12-14 states, "*Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*" The peculiar people overcome the sinful lusts that this world has to offer.

May you, by the grace of God, have strength to overcome the lusts of this world and keep your eyes on the new world to come. May you be strengthened each and every day through His Word.