

Humility Makes Peace

Roy Assanti—May 23, 2015

Good morning, brethren, in Bracebridge, Canada! And good afternoon, brethren, in New Zealand!

1-John 2:15—we are instructed: “Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

- Just where did the ways of this world—that are about us—originate?
- How did they originate?

We’re going to talk about the hallmarks of where they come from, and the character that is inspires them.

Ezekiel 28:12: “Son of man, lift up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom...”’ No human man could ever “...seal up the measure of perfection...” It rises here from the flesh and blood king of Tyre to the spiritual power behind the man.

This spiritual power/being say, “...You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (v 12).

Satan—Lucifer—‘the bright shining star of the dawn,’ the morning, was perfect when he was created. He was a genius, brilliant in looks and full of vigor, power and leadership.

Verse 13: “You have been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* your covering...” Can we imagine a spiritual creature created with such beauty? If we look at nature and something beautiful, like a wonderful sunset or sunrise, or if we look at the beauty of certain birds, whatever, we know that what God creates is in splendor, in harmony and incredible beauty. So, we can understand the physical things. Let’s imagine the spiritual things.

“...every precious stone *was* your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the turquoise, and the emerald, and gold. The workmanship...” (v 13). We see a fine work of art, a sculpture or a work of architecture; we can appreciate fine workmanship.

“...The workmanship of your settings and of your sockets was prepared in you in the day that you were created” (v 13). This being was past good looks. It was splendor, dazzling brilliance, and whose presence was a giver of joy; a remarkable brilliant life.

This is how God created the ‘bright, shining

star of the dawn,’ v 14: “You *were* the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so...” We know that there’s more than one cherub as they cover the Ark of the Covenant at the throne of God. “You *were* the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so...” How great was the ‘bright, shining star of the dawn’ that God created?

“...you were upon the Holy mountain of God...” (v 14). He was at the seat of control of all things, all order, all living beings. He was there, the very center, the pinnacle of everything. He was that brilliant! That great! God made him so.

“...you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” (v 14). Can we use a little bit of an imagination? This is an actual spiritual dimension. First there was the spiritual and then the physical. This is not the reality, that’s the reality.

Can you imagine the stones of fire, the universe headquarters, the pinnacles of pinnacles where God is? Stones of fire! May God grant that one day we will see what these stones of fire actually are. I’m thinking of giving an idea of where he was, and the environment where God is. So, it’s a spiritual dimension and world.

Verse 15: “You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you.” We know that Christ Himself called Satan the ‘father of lies.’ He found another way to do things.

When I was first being called and led by God’s Spirit I had a very unusual experience. I was lying down in bed half asleep, and I could feel myself almost rise up, and the thought that I had was that this tyrant who is oppressing us, and suppressing our freedom—we want to do what we want to do—why am I suppressed? Then I thought: Where is this coming from?

I think we’ll be amazed at how much we were in the grips of this world, in the grips of Satan’s influence and his thoughts of freedom as he rose to challenge God.

Verse 16: “By the multitude of your merchandise **they have filled your midst with violence**, and you have sinned...” Here it is, merchandise, increased in goods. This elevates and tends to puff up, to make a spirit a person and entity and greater than was they really are! This is what happened to this great ‘bringer of light.’

The end result is, “...they have filled your midst *with* violence...” When you fill your midst with violence you begin to take the rights of others

away to push aside and make yourself go forward, then you are trampling on the rights of others, and ultimately you don't win! Ultimately you have sinned, and it creates violence!

"...Therefore, I will cast you as profane from the mountain of God, and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, **from among the stones of fire**" (v 17)—from among God's universe, from where the pinnacle of pinnacles are from where He dwells "...among the stones of fire."

The story continues in a little bit different vain; it tells us a little bit more. Lucifer was cast away, and the story picks up:

Isaiah 14:12: "How you are fallen from the heavens, O shining star, son of the morning!...." You are glorious, wonderful, the best and now you have fallen!

"...*How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart..." (vs 12-13). No man can say in his heart what is said here:

"...**I** will ascend *into* the heavens, **I** will exalt my throne above the stars of God; **I** will also sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." (v 13).

Like the son of a multi-billionaire, he had it all. But when you've got it all you tend to seek more. What he had was not enough, and he was going to take what he thought he didn't have! He was going to exalt himself. It's amazing! You see Satan's character the way he is, what it says of him.

Let's just imagine the Garden of Eden. What kind of a mind could convince our first parents—Adam and Eve—that even though they had every tree that was beautiful to look at, and good for food! They had it all! He was a multi-billionaire, rich! They had it all! But there was one thing that they couldn't have. What kind of a mind are we talking about here? There was one thing that he couldn't have, and he wanted more.

God's way is to prepare a place for us! Then it follows that God will prepare us for a place! We don't choose what we want to be. Remember the mother that said, 'Grant that these, my two sons, will sit on Your right and on Your left.' *Okay, if they will drink the cup that I will drink, but it is not Mine to grant! It is for those whom it has been prepared!* God prepares a place for us specifically.

Satan's way is *go and get it*; survival of the fittest! Use your wits and your own abilities and get what you want.

Verse 14: "I will ascend above the heights of

the clouds; I will be like the Most High." His nature and character, the brilliant bringing of light changed! He became inward, self-seeking, wanting more!

Verse 15: "Yet, you shall be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit." The principle here is:

Proverbs 16:18: "Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Isaiah 14:15: "Yet, you shall be brought down to the grave..."

The point is we have to choose. We have to make a choice. God tells us to make a choice; you're either here or there; 'you're either with Me or your not. This is the way you've got to be if you're with Me. If you're not, this is the way you are. If you haven't chosen, I'll make you choose.'

Let's look at these snapshots of principles that are inspired by God's mind, a message from our Father and Christ, older brother to us.

Revelation 3:14: "And to the angel of the Church of *the* Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God. I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot... [neither close to Me or far away] ...I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm..." (vs 13-16). How many times does God say it?

"...and *are* neither cold nor hot..." (v 16). What does this condition do to God? How does He compare it to a physical condition?

"...I will spew you out of My mouth" (v 16). 'You make Me sick!' Anybody ever been nauseous. It's not a nice feeling. What a comparison for God to give us. What causes nausea?

Verse 17: "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'... [sounds familiar] ...and you do not understand..." When you're rich and got it all. When you have it you don't have trials and difficulties. What happens?

You don't understand "...that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (v 17). It's a funny thing this business of being naked. We have got to be clothed; put on garments. If you don't have it, you need something to put on.

What if you were in a shopping mall that was really busy and all of a sudden your clothes evaporated? What would you do? *Head for cover!* Why? *That's an apt comparison that God gives you!* You've got to be covered! That's means that our very nature, the way we are, the sin that dwells within is our nakedness, and we've got to cover it with a sacrifice. We've got to cover and be in that

state of covering with the clothes. That's the priority; that's what we have to have.

I'm going to make a suggestion here. This came to mind that sometimes when you receive a sermon, when something comes to you when you're listening to a sermon, I wonder how many times we realize that that the speaker gets it first. The light goes on and I think, I've never thought of that.

An interesting statement about the angels that didn't keep their first estate, their first dominion; they didn't keep the first *instruction*:

Jude 6 "And the angels who did not keep their own original domain, but deserted their habitation... [where they're were told to be, in that state] ...He is holding in eternal bonds under darkness unto the judgment of *the* Great Day."

It really struck me, and I thought: I wonder if this is like our first estate? Our first habitation that's given to us by God?

1-Corinthians 1:27: "Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the lowborn of the world, and the despised has God chosen—**even the things that are counted as nothing**—..." (vs 27-28). What a description for those that God calls at this time. It seems to be a reverse strategy.

"...in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are" (v 28). Satan *was* Lucifer, the great shinning star of the dawn; *was* in splendor, wealth, glory, beauty, power, presence, leadership, and was brought down to *nothing*.

The point here is that we should never lose this state of mind. It's a key, and the way God has called us. We should never lose this element of humility of being. That's the way God wants us, *humble*, because then we learn.

Isaiah 58:1 teaches a state of abandonment and seeking God: "Cry aloud, do not spare, **lift up your voice like a ram's horn**, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." What does "...**lift up your voice like a ram's horn...**" mean? We can easily read over that.

I remember in a personal account reading when a city was taken over by the Nazis in WWII. These non-military people were inside this building and the sirens were going off and they thought it was hailing outside and they were just going to look. They were dragged and thrown to the floor by these British soldiers. It was the machine gun bullets hitting the ground. Sure death!

In times past the ram's horn meant sharp

swords, spears, arrows that would cut you to pieces. That's the meaning of a ram's horn. *It's a siren to warn of impending peril and danger!* It's an urgent call. It's not just ram's horns. NO! It's urgent! It's an urgent plea: "Cry aloud..." Don't be quiet. Don't spare, say it! "...lift up..." Say it urgently! It's a matter of life and death! This sets the scene of the depth of God—the strength and energy—of what He wants this message brought across.

Verse 2: "Yet, they seek Me daily... [show them their sins] ...and **seem eager**... [they look like they're eager] ...to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and one that did not forget the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice... [hear My cry] ...they **seem eager** to draw near to God. *They say*, 'Why have we fasted, and You do not see? Why have we afflicted our soul and You take no knowledge?'...." (vs 2-3). It's been for nothing!

- What on earth is going on?
- Can you see the attitude toward God Himself? What is our natural state?
- Are we naturally righteous? *There is not one that is righteous naturally! Not one that has not sinned!*

We've got this nature!

- Why have we fasted? *I'll tell you:*

"...Behold, in the day of your fast you pursue your business and exploit all your workers.... [For personal gain?] ...Behold, you fast for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickedness; you cannot fast as *you do* this day, and expect to make your voice to be heard on high" (vs 3-4).

It's interesting, when we think we're right, I ask myself: Am I the one who has to have the last say? Does it have to be my way? **or** Do I listen? That's what I say to myself. What do the Scriptures say? Is that poison? We've got to realize that that's the way we are. Doesn't James tell us about the tongue, that 'little member'? The 'little rudder that steers a massive ship; a little fire that becomes a great forest fire.'

When we begin to think that we're okay and we fast, we say, 'Why haven't You heard our prayer?' It shows that attitude that is with us. I imagine if you fast and you're on edge and someone does a wrong thing—you might be driving—and you think, 'you turkey; you idiot'; is this noticed by God?

The state that we're called in is humility. He calls us low, stay low. Grow, but stay low. That's the message as He continues to say. That causes strife between us, we become a little bit elevated.

Verse 5: "Is this such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul?.... ['I'm really competent here, you'd better watch, look] ...*Is*

it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?..."—like a mindless plant bowing down. The picture is all external.

Imagine a bulrush, it's a plant that generally the head bows down and you've got these leaves that come up. You can imagine the symbolism almost like someone bowing down toward God. That's the picture. A bulrush is just a plant and is inanimate; it doesn't speak. There's no communication coming from it. 'Is that you?' God says. When we are elevated, is that the way we are?

"...Will you call this a fast and a day pleasing to the LORD?" (v 6).

What's interesting to me is that picture where Christ made this comment concerning John, 'What did you go into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? Someone in good clothes, soft apparel? They're in kings houses; what did you go to see? You went to see a prophet—didn't you?' *Yes!* (Matt. 11).

So, it gives you a few examples: 'No, I was wrong' *Was it this?* 'Yes.' And God went on to explain, and it's a way that God uses to get our attention to what He's saying. Here in Isa. 58 He's doing the same thing; the same mind.

Verse 6: "***Is not this, rather, the fast that I have chosen... [same strategy] ...to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed ones go free, and that you break every yoke?***" The yoke over us binds us, constricts us.

It reminds me of Paul and Apollos when they were dragged in and had stocks on their legs. They were beaten and couldn't move around. They were constricted. Do I constrict someone? It's something that I have to ask myself when I read that.

Verse 7: "*Is it not to give of your bread to the hungry, and that you should bring home the wandering poor? When will you see the naked and cover him; and not hide yourself from your own flesh?*"

There's an example about the Samaritan. About the man was overpowered by thieves and he was there on the ground bleeding. In the story of the Samaritan—the low one, the despised one—was the one that did God's will. A priest, a man who represented God's way, to teach God's way, one who is advanced in understanding and knowledge; Who understands God's Word very thoroughly. He sees a man in need and he walks on.

In other words he's a bulrush. He's empty! Serving God, what does it mean? *It's with actions!* What happens when the Levite goes by, what does

he do? *He's got to carry out the functions of the temple and so on, he goes by!* Look at the comparison that God gives us. He's off; they were the bulrushes. They had the *appearance* of doing the right thing, but they were the bulrushes.

The Samaritan—despised, lousy, hopeless, low cast—stops! This poor bloke, the poor man and he ran to help and takes money out of his pocket and helps. This is the picture that God is giving us.

Let's talk about the first man, where it comes from:

- my way
- I want to be greater
- I want to be known as greater
- I want
- me, me, me
- they have their duties

But when it really counts, ***it is those that do not abandon their first habitation, their first estate, the first condition that God calls them in: humility! Poverty!*** 'blessed are the poor' I wonder if that was what Christ really referred to?

Christ also asked, 'Who was the neighbor?' The priest and Levite didn't say it was the Samaritan. They said, 'I guess it was the one who rendered assistance.' They couldn't say 'Samaritan.'

Verse 7: "*Is it not to give of your bread to the hungry, and that you should bring home the wandering poor? When will you see the naked and cover him; and not hide yourself from your own flesh?*" From your own family, to support your own family, the basic things. Right at the end, when the whole matter is finished, this is what Christ says; the same thing:

Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; *I was* naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed *You*? Or thirsty, and gave *You* a drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and took *You* in? Or naked, and clothed *You*? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?'" (vs 34-39).

I had a personal reflection on this Scripture. When Manola and I were going together, my father-in-law was quite a jealous man and he didn't like me. It was a hard time. Even for the first nine years of our marriage, he had three grandchildren and he did not want to see us.

Slowly we worked out a way that we could make peace with an intermediary, a peacemaker. Ever since then I was his son; he loved me. We were buddies and we got along absolutely magically. Then a little while after there was a social occasion where he mentioned that he had been tough on me, and Manola's brother should be patient with his father-in-law.

You know, I had to think for a minute, how was he tough on me? I had forgotten all about it. I wonder how we also, some of the things we do—in obeying God, following and obeying His will—that we just forget about it. How did we do that? When did we do that? Perhaps you can identify in your own lives and come across with a similar example. The answer is:

Verse 40: “And answering, the King shall say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, **inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it to Me.**”

We're still talking about our first estate, our first domain is *humility!* God changed His tune, and now it's *the humble, the lowly estate.* That's where His focus is. God must have seen that there's something in His character that could not just be created with magnificence, with brilliance. If we see the birth of His nation Israel, how it's referred to here—in a lowly estate—they were slaves!

Someone I had baptized had these problems and she said, ‘Why am I given these problems? Why was Israel born in slavery? With their children even being killed, thrown in the Nile?’

Ezekiel 16:3—this is the first estate, domain, the estate that we are called in: “And say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, “Your origin and your birth *is* of the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. And *as for* your birth, in the day you were born your navel *cord* was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you...’” (vs 3-4). This is a figure: As far as nations go, ‘you were just hopeless, helpless and totally desperate, low and humble.’

“...And you were not salted, nor swaddled at all. No eye pitied you, to do any of these for you...” (vs 4-5). Can you imagine a child being born absolutely hopeless and helpless, in dire need of help? That's the way we are when we're born.

“...to have compassion on you. But you were thrown out into the open field because your life was despised in the day that you were born. And when I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yea, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’” (vs 5-6). God said it twice: ‘I did it! I'm the One Who took you in! I'm the One Who brought you forth and gave you

life, saved you. I was with you. You're a nation because of Me! I took you in!’ Twice He said, “Live!”

Verse 7: “I have caused you to multiply like the growth of the field, and you increased and grew up, and became exceedingly beautiful; *your* breasts are formed, and your hair is grown, yet, you *were* naked and bare.”

The He goes on to talk about He put His garment over her, which is claiming her as a bride. So, the reason why I say this is, even when God was creating the nation to whom He would go and be sacrificed. Even there they were called in a lowly, lowly state. Like us, the despised! There was no splendor, beauty, and magnificence. It was a poor and low estate.

The principle is when we're weak, God is strong (2-Cor. 12:10). God's will is done in us when we are weak. When we're strong we do *our will*, we do what *we* want to do!

(go to the next track)

We're going to look at an example of humility for us. God uses widows, women in the Bible as an example for us in humility. I might be wrong, but some of the best examples of humility God shows us and teaches us through women.

Luke 7:36: “Now, one of the Pharisees invited Him to eat with him. And after going into the Pharisee's house, He sat down *at the table.* And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that He was sitting in the Pharisee's house, took an alabaster flask of ointment; and she stood weeping behind Him...” (vs 36-38).

He was probably sitting low with His feet to one side, and there was a certain connotation that if she went in front of Him; behind was humility. That's where she was.

“...and *knelt* at His feet...” Submission, humility, repentance; body language is what it's saying. I see my nakedness. My nature is wretched and hopeless. She recognize that. Her eyes were open and she was healed (Rev. 3).

“...and began to wash His feet with *her* tears and to wipe *them* with the hairs of her head; and she was **ardently** kissing His feet...” (v 38). The depth of humility and repentance from this woman. It shows that she knew her way of life was way out of line.

“...and anointing *them* with the ointment. But when he saw *this*, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying...” (vs 38-39).

I stop here and make the point that she was “...ardently kissing His feet...” Did this man put a

different connotation on this woman's humility and on Christ allowing her? Christ understood the very depth to which this woman was caught. The Pharisee missed the point. Was this Pharisee a bulrush?

"...‘This *Man*, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what the woman *is* who is touching Him because she is a sinner’" (v 39)—a local whore, he was thinking.

Verse 40: "Then Jesus answered *and* said to him..." Christ walked in there and this Pharisee did not offer Him of the normal things that you would offer a guest. He didn't give him water to wash His feet. It was customary to wash your feet. It was customary that when we greet each other that it's appropriate to give each other a hug, shake hands.

In Mediterranean circles they kiss each other on the side of their cheeks. When I was in Italy one time we had about a three-four day growth of the beard and it was a hot day. There were pearls of sweat coming down the face. Do you think that these people don't kiss? They kiss fervently on the side with the sweat and all. It's a greeting!

The Pharisee didn't give Jesus a kiss or any of the normal cordialities that you do. Christ didn't rebuke him for that. He accepted the slight, accepted the little offense and never brought it up. But when the Pharisee starts to look at the woman and pick on the woman who is absolutely cut to the very core of her being and losing control and kissing Jesus. She is in tears and anointing Him and 'I repent, I hide myself, I appall what I have been.' That's what she's saying.

Verse 40: "Then Jesus answered *and* said to him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' And he said, 'Teacher, say *on*.' 'There were two debtors of a certain creditor; one owed five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. But when they did not have *anything with which* to pay *him*, he forgave *them* both. Tell *Me* then, which of them will love him most?' And Simon answered *and* said..." (vs 40-43). I love the way he answers; it's like a kindergarten question! Which one?

"...‘**I suppose...** [face-saver] ...*the one* whom he forgave the most.'..." (v 43). It's said that genius is in simplicity. Einstein would say that if you can't explain simply, in a simple way, it probably won't work. It's interesting that when people have a great understanding of concepts...

"...And He said to him, 'You have judged rightly.'... [then comes the teaching]: ...And after turning to the woman, He said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I came into your house, and you did not provide *any water to wash My feet*; but **she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head**. You did not give Me a

kiss... [you didn't shake My hand or embrace Me] ...but she, from the *time* I came in, has not ceased to **ardently** kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil..." (vs 43-46)—comb your hair, freshen up. None of the niceties and proper cordialities of the day were extended to Christ. *Nothing!*

"...but she has anointed My feet with ointment. For this cause, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much.... [notice how Christ doesn't cut the Pharisee down completely] ...But to whom little is forgiven, he loves little" (vs 46-47). You love little! It's a nice way of saying it to him.

Here are wonderful comparisons of someone who is advanced, grown in knowledge and in understanding. It's the humble! The one who keeps the first abode! The first estate! That essence!

Perhaps in His greatness God would have created this creature the very best, and it might have been in levels of angels that He created. But He created the very best. But then He found out that *wealth suddenly gotten* shall dwindle principle. That something is missing. Something happens and the character spoils.

'There's one thing that I can't make—like splendor and greatness, beauty—that element in My character *of humility*.' That element cannot just be made. That's what Christ honored here, that beautiful, wonderful state of humility. As I said before, the best examples are in women who are of low estate, the best examples for us to emulate.

Can you imagine that if we had to go to Passover and ardently kiss someone's feet and put some perfume on? He does ask for that. Just wash the feet, that's enough. She had gone way over and above.

For us, keep these pictures—tattoo it on our mind—of the bulrush as it grows. As we grow in knowledge and understanding, do we become like a bulrush that leans over in a curved, bowing down. Just like the head that bows down in honor and respect of God, He says that's a bulrush. Keep that picture in your mind. Keep the picture of this ardent, passionate, totally desperate person seeking repentance and acceptance by God. That's our estate!

John 12:3: "Mary then took a pound of pure spikenard ointment worth a great price *and* anointed Jesus' feet..." What was it, \$10,000? Imagine a lot of money.] ...wiping His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the aroma of the ointment. As a result, one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who was about to betray Him, said, 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred silver coins... [How much did Judas sell Christ for? 30

pieces of silver!] ...and given to *the poor?* Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and carried what was put in *it*. Then Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has been keeping it toward the day of My burial’” (vs 3-7).

On the day, as they were walking toward Jerusalem, Christ said that He faced toward Jerusalem. He was making Himself go to His sacrifice, to be completely at the mercy of Satan-inspired men inflicting the greatest amount of pain that they could so he (Satan) could thwart the plan of God and get his way. What do you think? His closest buddies, the people He was teaching, what were they doing? What were you discussing along the way? *They all shut up!* They were discussing: who is the greatest? Who is going to be the greatest?

- Look at the comparison!
- Look at this woman!

Verse 7: “Then Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has been keeping it toward the day of My burial’” Great price! Christ was sold for 30 pieces of silver. This could have been sold for 300 silver coins. I don’t know if it’s the same amount, but 30 compared to 300.

- How long was she keeping it for?
- Did she understand the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?
- How did she anoint Him?
- *Humility!*

We see the import that our Lord and Master gave us of this action.

Mark 14:8 “She did what she could *for Me*... [What did she think of Christ?] ...She came to anoint My body beforehand for the burial. Truly I say to you, wherever this Gospel shall be preached in all the world... [God’s Word] ...what this *woman* has done... [because it was so great] ...shall also be spoken of for a memorial of her” (vs 8-9).

Does God honor humility? *You couldn’t beat that! You just couldn’t beat it!* This woman had been putting away and putting away.

- Did she understand the import of Christ’s sacrifice?
- Did she conceive of what was happening?

What about comparing it to His own close friends! *You are My friends*, He says. He walked with, talked with around campfires, revealed so many things to them. This woman had it more than they did it; although, they had a work to do.

Part of humility is forgiveness and seeking peace. There are some more pictures for us. There’s the woman washing the feet with her hair. There’s

the bulrush. God repeats things. He tells you this way, and that way, then He tells you again with a different comparison. *Repeat! Get the point! Repeat!*

Matthew 18:21: “Then Peter came to Him *and* said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven’” (vs 21-22). Then ‘this is what I mean, it’s kind of like this’ and He begins to explain:

Verse 23: “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents. But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. Because of this, the servant fell down *and* worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt. Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins, and after seizing him... [different reactions] ...he choked *him*, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe.’ As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed” (vs 23-30).

Understand the comparison, where it’s going, where it’s moving. It’s kind of like this: He’s explaining a spiritual principle and giving it to us like this, unfolding it like this.

Verse 31: “Now, when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord...” — because of the irregularity in it. Wait minute, you knew what it was like, why didn’t you do the same thing? We don’t understand; we’re distressed.

“...*and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him... [the judgment] ...‘*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?’ And in anger...” (vs 31-34). It’s *a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!* He’s telling us all!

“...his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him.... [here’s the whole point of the matter]: **...Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart**” (vs 34-35).

We're really glad to be forgiven; it's a wonderful thing. But Israel forgot all the things that God did for them. It's easy to forget, and that's why God repeats.

What's the procedure? The point is we should never become offended and write people off. That's what I get! Never write anyone off. It's kind of like this:

Verse 2: "And after calling a little child to Him, Jesus set him in their midst." Look at that. He gets the child and puts him in the middle. 'Look, here's a visual lesson, gentlemen.'

Verse 3: "And said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children...'" An example of someone pompous and great, and Jesus is saying, 'go back to your original estate where I called you, how I called you. Your foundation is humility. That's what I'm getting out of this. I have to have this tattooed in my head.

It's kind of like this: After calling a little child to Him—the picture there—He's saying, "...unless you are converted and become as little children **there is no way**... [there's the picture, that's why you've got to be like] (and He says): **...that you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven**" (v 3). How important is that first domain, that first dominion that we're given; the dominion of the humility of character. Why? *Because from the great 'shinning star of the dawn' 'if you are humble and listen to Me,' like a child! Let's tattoo that on our mind.*

Verse 4: "Therefore, whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." That doesn't mean that you humble yourself into stupidity! We have to compare all the Scriptures and be 'wise as serpents'—like a snake in the grass—'and innocent as doves.' Christ was led, not because He was stupid as a lamb to the slaughter. Sometimes we've just got to 'cop' it. He wasn't led because He was stupid at all. We are not to be stupid. We are to be child-like and never lose that, and furthermore, God does command us to not 'pass your pearls before swine.' Why? They don't understand it, they just go out and trample it in the mud, and they turn an attack you.

Don't be foolish! Be wise and put it all together. These are the ingredients of Godly character. Put it together right as 'apples of gold and settings of silver'—the way that the Proverbs, the wisdom that God gave Solomon—is the way that Solomon puts it.

Interestingly, the way that Cain was when he went to God, he said, 'Lord, accept this sacrifice. I raise the grain of the field; my brother has lambs. He gives you a lamb; I give You of my produce. You

accept it.'

There's a reason why God's plan of redemption, God's plan of creation, of His sons and daughters, is the way it is. It's not because He's got lambs, that he brings his lambs up, it's because of what is commanded. So, we don't offer God that we know better. *NO!* 'I will do it the way I have done it and you have to follow what I say, not that I follow what you say.'

Verse 15: "*So* then, if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault between you and him alone. If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother." This should solve every problem!

- What if it doesn't?
- What if it's like 'apples of gold and settings of silver'?
- What if that doesn't solve it?

Do you say, 'come back, there's a part of my face you haven't walked on, yet? Please come back.' Is that the way we should answer? It's difficult!

It's like the example in Luke that you have 10,000 with you and you're going to face an enemy with 20,000. What are you going to do? You're going to have to cogitate. These situations are not easy. One of the things could be is to seek a peacemaker. Look for a peacemaker; that's what I do.

Matthew 5:9: "Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called *the* sons of God."

Matthew 18:16: "But if he will not listen, take with you one or two others, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

The work of witnesses should be the work of peacemakers, as well. I'll give you an example that happened to me where I was really stuck. About 25 years ago I had employed a church member, because we loved this couple, and we had another guest house at the motel. What happened was that things weren't really working out. I had said that the food was included. What happened? I found out that up to 20 people were invited over, the staff was kept back and food was served, etc. There wasn't one restaurant in town that they hadn't visited, and to assist them we had loaned them \$8,000, which never came back.

It had to stop! We stopped it. Now, it's not totally one-sided. I don't want to paint myself as an 'angel of light' here, I'm 'naked,' too, and have faults. But the fault in my mind was 'what if I'm going to have to give an account to God?' When it has to do with stuff and money, there's no grease: metal grinds metal, emotionally and spiritually, and so on. So, it was a difficult situation and on the

Sabbath the minister said, ‘I don’t expose personal examples to people.’ I tell you what, it cut pretty close to the bone. This was bad. If I was to go and say something, it was, don’t look at me or you’ll get one of these (?) in the face. It was bad! Really bad!

Time past and he moved away and what happened was: What are we going to do? I make myself look as a fool, but I did for you so that in certain situations you have to really think hard about.

I knew he liked wine, so with another I sent some wine at the Feast of Tabernacles and I said, ‘Do not say who it’s from. It’s just from a friend. That’s it.’ So, the next year, I sent some more, and that’s the way it went for a little while. Then one year I sent a whole box of wine. It was accepted.

The bottom line was, in my reasoning, if I have to give account before Christ and the Father, I wanted something in my bargaining bag. I tried! I’m not going to defend myself.

- Can you imagine defending yourself before God?
- Do we learn the lesson of Job?

This is just my thinking that I share with you. I’m not going to say I’m great; *no way!*

Some years later a mutual acquaintance was married and we were all invited and Manola and I will remember that when we walked outside our cabin, he was there with his hand outstretched with an open palm. I took it and shook it firmly. Yes, we had won! We did that! But we were never able to win back his wife.

It’s not easy. And currently I’m working on another situation myself that I’ve been working on for a while. I’ve done this and that, but not enough, I’m still working on one personal one. What I seek to do is share what goes on in my head and what I try to do to fall in line with God’s will.

Here’s an example for us of a *peacemaker*. I don’t know if we’ve thought about this situation as one of a peacemaker, but there are certain characteristics of a peacemaker. A peacemaker needs to:

- exercise humility
- be inoffensive
- have the right facts
- exercise tact and understanding
- needs to get the situation in perspective by bringing God’s will into the picture

(go to the next track)

1-Samuel 25:2: “And a certain man *was* in Maon, and his work *was* in Carmel. And the man *was* very great, and *had* three thousand sheep and a

thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. And the man’s name *was* Nabal and his wife’s name *was* Abigail. Now, *she was* a woman of good understanding and of a beautiful form. But the man *was* cruel and evil in his dealings. And he *was* of Caleb” (vs 2-3).

Why such a discrepancy? If she was intelligent and understanding and beautiful, couldn’t she...? It seems like it was perhaps an arranged marriage.

Verse 4: “And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. And David sent out ten young men....” (vs 4-5). Let’s get the picture. Think of 10 young strong men able to carry a lot of stuff.

“...And David said to the young men, ‘Go up to Carmel and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. And you shall say this, “Long life and peace *be* to you... [look at the humility of this man who was going to be the future king] ...and peace to your house, and peace to all that you have. And now I have heard that you have shearers. And we did not hurt your shepherds who were with us; neither was there anything missing to them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you. And let these young men find favor in your eyes, for we come in a good day.... [a day of feasting and plenty] ...Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David”’” (vs 5-8). The man’s humility! He’s about to be thrust into the guts!

Verse 9: “When David’s young men came; they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and stopped.” They might have been a little bit of solace before that explosion that was about to come. Verse 13 indicates that Nabal berated and yelled at them.

Verse 10: “And Nabal answered David’s servants and said, ‘Who *is* David? And who *is* the son of Jesse? The servants who have broken away, each man from his master, have multiplied.” There were ten men before them; slaves broken away from their masters. Nabal knew that David was on the run from Saul. If Abigail knew, he knew, indicating he was a slave that had broken away.

Verse 11: “Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give *it* to men about whom I know not where they come from?” I don’t know who on earth you are! Get out of my sight! He probably yelled at them; it says that he berated them.

Verse 12: “And David’s young men turned their way and went again, and came and told him all those things. And David said to his men...” (vs 12-13). What happened? He got right in the guts. The

immediate reaction. I mean, a fiery redhead who has killed his 10,000s, who slayed the giant, and you say that to him and his blood rushed to his head and all of a sudden this is what happened:

“...‘Let each man gird on his sword.’ And they each one girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went up with David and two hundred stayed by the provisions. And one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, saying, ‘Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and he screamed at them! But the men *were* very good to us and we were not hurt. Neither did we miss anything as long as we were going to and fro among them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall to us both by night and day all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.... [they really helped us] ...And now know and consider what you will do... [she was a wise woman] ...for evil is determined against our master and against all his household, for he *is* a son of worthlessness, so that none can speak to him’” (vs 13-17). It’s like hearing from his wife, he knows what’s coming!

Imagine that if he said to his master’s wife that his master was a son of worthlessness! Immediately she went into action. Here’s the action of a peacemaker: *Don’t waste any time, you act on it.* You see an emergency, you act on it.

Verse 18: “And Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves, and two skins of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of roasted *grain*, and a hundred clusters of raisins and laid them on donkeys.”

Perhaps she has read the account of when Jacob was going back to meet his brother Esau, and he sent all of these presents ahead of time. That’s a strategy. It could have been a strategy that she thought of straight away from God’s Word. She also was wise because she feared God. There’s a little hint there that we can quickly pass on.

Verse 19: “And she said to her servants, ‘Go on before me. Behold, I am coming after you.’.... [Isn’t that what Jacob said, same thing] ...But she did not tell her husband Nabal. And it came to pass, she was riding on the donkey and came down under cover of the hill. And behold, David and his men came down toward her. And she met them. Now, David had said...” (vs 19-21).

This was in his mind and he’s full of fury and anger! “...‘Surely in vain I have kept all that belongs to this fellow in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *was* his. And he has returned me evil for good.... [that’s it, you’re done] ...So, and more also, may God do to the enemies of David, if I leave any of all that *is* his until morning—even one who pisses against the wall.’

And Abigail saw David and hurried and dismounted... [look at the example that women] ...from the donkey, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. And she fell at his feet and said...” (vs 21-24).

We’ve got an example of feet every Passover, as we bow down. An act of *humility!* All these pictures we’ve got to tattoo in our mind. Whenever we have a difficult situation this is the way to act. Before I send something that can go either way, I read it through, I change it, I pray about it, that it will return a good result, a good fruit.

“...‘Upon me, my lord, *upon* me let this iniquity *be*. And please let your handmaid speak in your ears and hear the words of your handmaid’” (v 24). She pleading bowed before him. She speaking to the ground. She approached him in a way that would not possibly cause any offense. No self-justification, and she’s taking the full blame on her own shoulders. Great example of *humility!* She took the fault on herself.

Verse 25: “Please do not let my lord regard this man of worthlessness, Nabal for as his name *is*, so he *is*. Nabal *is* his name, and foolishness *is* with him. And I, your handmaid, did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent. And now, my lord, *as* the LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, since the LORD has withheld you from coming... [she speaks in advance; God has stopped you] ...to shed blood, and from avenging yourself with your own hand... [this is up to God; it’s not your job] ...now let your enemies, and those that seek to do evil to my lord, be as Nabal” (vs 25-26).

She knew that he was on the run and who were his enemies. ‘I am with you, I am with your 400, I am with your men. I understand that you’re not a slave. Was Abigail seeking to neutralize and inference in Nabal’s scolding of David’s young men, that he was David’s enemy? And that Nabal could betray him to David’s enemy Saul.

Look at the negotiation, the humility, the empathy, the understanding that’s required to make peace.

Verse 27: “And now this blessing, which your handmaid has brought to my lord, let it even be given to the young men who follow my lord.... [I’m with you; I understand you.] ...Please forgive the trespass of your handmaid...” Forgive me! What does that tell you? *It’s his fault, but I’m taking it as my fault!*

“...for the LORD will certainly make a sure house for my lord because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil has not been found in you *all* your days” (vs 28-29). I understand you. I know you and respect you because of God, the great God. You

are a righteous man serving the Lord.

Verse 29: “Yet, a man has risen to pursue you...” Who is pursuing him? Did she know who was pursuing him? *I think so!* She doesn’t say the king, but a man. Look at the choice of her words. We need to choose the right words and to weigh them up in the balance so that they will come back and yield good fruit.

“...and to seek your soul. But the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD your God. And the souls of your enemies, He shall sling them from the hollow of a sling” (v 29). The picture she’s painting: God will bless you. I know you’re doing God’s will. God is with you; I know it.

Verse 30: “And it shall be, when the LORD has done to my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and commanded you to *be* ruler over Israel.” Not a slave, but the rightful anointed King.

Verse 31: “This shall be no stumbling to you...” If you kill all these people, what about the power when He gives you the power? You’re going to think it’s terrible what you did back then.

So, she says that there “...shall be no stumbling to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood for nothing, or *that* my lord has delivered himself. And may the LORD deal well with my lord, and you remember your handmaid” (v 31).

The end result was this, v 32: “And David said to Abigail, ‘Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who sent you today to meet me. And blessed *is* your advice, and blessed *are* you who have kept me from coming to shed blood today, and from avenging myself *with* my own hand. Now truly, *as* the LORD God of Israel lives, Who has kept me back... [because of your wisdom; used you] ...from doing evil to you, for unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely there would not have been left to Nabal by the morning light even one who pisses against the wall” (vs 32-34). And David received everything.

It’s interesting to see how a peacemaker has to work hard. Sometimes what we can’t do for ourselves, if there’s someone who can just act on our behalf and help us.

Recapping: Abigail was successful to make peace *because she exercised humility*. She was inoffensive and had the right facts and exercised tact and understanding. She got the situation in perspective by bringing God’s will into the picture.

We have trials to keep us humble, to keep us in the right frame of mind. Again, I repeat: to keep

us in the frame of mind that we were called in, the domain, the abode that we should have of our character—*that of humility!*

2-Corinthians 12:9—Paul is saying after Christ did not heal him of this ailment that he had: “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ; for **when I am weak, then I am strong**” (vs 9-10).

Here’s another point, notice that the Apostle Paul had an abundance of revelations made known to him. Whether it was the body or the spirit, I know not. He had these revelations in abundance. When we have so much, given so much, there’s a danger. What is the danger? *That we leave that first dominion, that first estate and we become exalted!* Here Paul is saying that this is what kept him low:

1-Corinthians 6:7: “Now therefore, there is altogether an utter fault among you, that you have lawsuits with one another...” This is the dealings and offenses that we might have with each other. How do we deal with it? Here’s a principle:

“...Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Instead, you are doing wrong and defrauding, and you are doing these things... [not to the people in the world, but] ...to your brethren” (vs 7-8).

He’s saying it to those in whom Christ and the Father have made Their abode. An example is when someone is weak in the faith, and in another place the Apostle Paul gives the example of ‘meat sacrificed to idols.’ Does one turn around and say, ‘Look, it’s not an idol, it’s nothing; the meat is clean, just eat it’? If that person has a problem with that, and their conscious is damaged, our example to a weaker brother or sister can destroy them. So, don’t eat! Not that you can’t eat, but for their sake, don’t eat! Don’t cause offense! Again, it’s the same principle: “...you are doing wrong and defrauding, and you are doing these things...”

Psalms 15:1—another principle: “LORD, who shall dwell in Your tabernacle? Who shall dwell upon Your Holy hill?... [Who attains salvation?] ...He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart... [How?] ...He does not slander with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor” (vs 1-3). No accusation! No evil! How do you not reproach the neighbor?

Verse 4: “In whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the LORD;

he who swears to his own hurt and does not change it.” Even to this day, the example that I gave about the guy who I had to fire and was a problem to us, one of the accusations that he made against me—even recently—I had to accept. It came from the past and I thought he was right. I had to act on his correction, because he was right. It was based on “...he who swears to his own hurt and does not change it.”

Sometimes we’ve got to suffer loss. We just got to give it up. Do we argue our own case regardless? This is the way I understand God’s Word. It doesn’t mean that we ‘cast our pearls before swine.’ You watch yourself, and when there’s a price to pay, when it’s obvious that God expects us to pay a certain price and there’s no way out, we pay it.

Matthew 18:7 “Woe to the world because of offenses! For it is necessary that offenses come, yet, woe to that man by whom the offense comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to offend, cut it off and cast *it* from you...” (vs 7-8). What does that mean?

If it’s a career, a friendship or even a wife... There’s someone who lost his wife because he wanted to obey God and she said, ‘If you follow this way, we are done!’ He did, and they were done. The man was nearly suicidal at times. It really cut into him. He’s without that wife for life, but God blessed him after and gave him another wife of the faith. He knows he’s greatly blessed.

- What is it?
- Is the relationship with my mum, dad, brother, sister, husband, wife?
- What is the cost?

To obey God you choose God first! Cut off the relationships.

- Is it over a car?
- Is it over a job?
- Is it over money?

Dump it!

There’s another parable that talks about the power of money. There’s a time when money, and the things it possesses—mammon—is going to fail. The power of this stuff, of this world, is really going to defile. It’s going to finish, end. This is what Christ is saying.

“...for it is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed than to have two hands or two feet *and* be cast into the eternal fire” (v 8). We know that the earth and those resurrected in the third resurrection are resurrected from the dead. After having forsaken salvation and not going through the process to attain salvation—revealed by God

Himself—he stays flesh and blood and the earth is to be engulf in fire and the surface of the earth is to be completely changed.

The New Jerusalem is about 1500 miles high and wide. Is there any mountain that big? *No way in the world!* The earth would tip on its axis. The earth is going to be completely different, remade: a new heaven and a new earth. Such is the tremendous splendor and the glory of the things that God has in store for us. In this life if you do without this or that, even if it was your hand or foot, give it up. That’s the advice; give it up!

Verse 9: “And if your eye causes you to offend, pluck it out and throw *it* away...” Even if it was as important as your eye, pluck it out. It’s not worth it; throw it away. ‘He who has ears to hear, let them hear’:

“...for it is better for you to enter into life one-eyed than to have two eyes... [in your physical life] ...*and* be cast into the fire of Gehenna.... [It makes sense, folks!] ...Take heed *that* you do not despise one of these little ones...” (vs 9-10).

Matt. 5:22 brings out another interesting examination that we need to undergo, each individually. It does say to ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling’ before God!

Matthew 5:22: “But I say to you, everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be ¹**subject to judgment**.... [then it rises in intensity; God is exercising mercy]: ...Now, *you have heard it said*, ‘Whoever shall say to his brother, “Raca,” shall be ²**subject to the judgment of the council**.’ But *I say to you*, whoever shall say, ‘*You fool*’...” Referring to one who is your bother or sister, whom within dwells the Holy Spirit of the Father and Christ. Moses took off his shoes because it was Holy ground. If I turn around and abuse that someone and call them absolutely hopeless, to cut them off:

“...[you] shall be ³**subject to the fire of Gehenna**” (v 22). That’s what it’s leading to. There are steps, but ultimately, if that’s the way you go, that’s your direction.

Verse 23: “For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go *your* way; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (vs 23-24).

Picture the bulrush. Am I being a bulrush? Am I just leaning over and praying with hands folded and head down? *or* Am I working something inside? Doesn’t God say to ‘rend your hearts’ (book of Joel)? *Not your garments!* Don’t let it be superficial. God sees us! He knows us! He knows what we are inside! Am I bulrush? *I have to truly*

examine myself! It's better that I examine myself than be examined by my Maker.

Verse 25: "Agree with your adversary..." While we're alive, before mammon fails, before money fails, before our life fails, *agree with your adversary*. It's interesting that it refers to Christ one time, 'In the days of His flesh.' This is the days of our flesh. The days of our flesh will end.

Verse 25: "Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him... [while you are alive this is what you have to do] ...lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. Truly I say to you, there is no way that you shall come out of there until you have paid the *very* last coin" (vs 25-26).

We started with Satan's character. We talked about his character of pride, 'getting *my* way,' as opposed to God's way to 'prepare a place.' I want to end this with God's way of humility.

The second Adam shows what it's like to encapsulate humility, and example of the character that has its foundation in humility. That first estate! That first dominion, our calling, that we're never ever to lose!

We all know about idols, statues, and so on, when I was in Croatia something really struck me in a church that I was brought into. There were these three larger than life figures on a wall and they were strapped to a cross. It was very realistic. You could see the pain. They were not colored, they were gray, like a muddy color. They were bigger than life and you could see them.

As you looked up at the middle cross, you could see the pain on the face, and you could see the arms and legs and to contortion and pain was graphically portrayed. In my mind, looking up at this cross, it was sort of a setup so you could visualize the crucifixion. As I looked up, I imagined what the Scriptures said, that Christ's flesh was literally ripped off His body. He said, 'I could stare down at all My bones.' With the tongue stuck to the jaw, dried, and pain coming from every part of His body. For a minute I imagined not just that gray figure, but a tremendously mutilated body more than the sons of men, as the Scripture says. He was subject to more pain than anyone ever has been.

So, I want to tell you that that was quite humbling. I didn't think of it as an idol or anything like that. It was quite the imagery... It brought tears to the eyes and a lump in the throat, because it was vivid and real.

The foundation of God's character is humility!

John 19:1: "Then Pilate, therefore, took

Jesus and scourged *Him*." That particular part of the scourging in *The Passion of the Christ* movie was so difficult I could barely look, and the picture changed to His mother. What got me was that they were scourging from behind and turned Him over and scourged Him from the front, as well—the legs, the chest, the arms. He was mutilated in a way that only Satan's perverted mind could conceive, to seek to destroy the plan of God and the Son of God. "Then Pilate, therefore, took Jesus and scourged *Him*." Just one simple verse, but there's a lot there.

Verse 2: "And after plating a crown of thorns, the soldiers put *it* on His head; and they threw a purple cloak over Him, and *kept on* saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' And they struck Him with the palms of their hands" (vs 2-3). These guys were not just little pussycats. The Roman army trained every day as if every day, at any time, they would go into battle. They were muscular! Strong! Physical!

Verse 5: "Then Jesus went out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak; and he said to them, 'Behold the Man!'" They presented Him to the Jews.

Matthew 7:27—continuing the account: "Then the governor's soldiers, after taking Jesus with *them* into the Praetorium, gathered the entire band against Him; and they stripped Him *and* put a scarlet cloak around Him. And after plating a crown of thorns... [humility] ... they put *it* on His head, and a rod in His right hand... [symbol of leadership; utter humiliation] ...and bowing *on* their knees before Him, they mocked Him, and *kept on* saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Then, after spitting on Him..." (vs 27-30).

Can you imagine someone coming and not just spitting at a distance, but coming close to you, looking at your eye and just planting one right in your eye? Right in your ear? Right on your mouth? You can be sure that Satan was inspiring these men! Can you imagine that they would do anything less?

"...they took the rod and struck *Him* on the head" (v 30). Why on the head? *To put the thorns even further stuck in, inflicting the maximum amount of pain and humiliation!*

Verse 31: "When they were done mocking Him, they took the cloak off Him; and they put His own garments on Him and led Him away to crucify Him." Those who were passing by railed at Him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You Who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Save Yourself if You are the Son of God, come on, come down from the cross!'

Verse 41: "And in the same way also the chief priests were mocking, with the scribes and elders, saying." Finally they got Him! I don't like

the saying when someone says, ‘I nailed it,’ because they nailed Him!

Verse 42: “He saved others, *but* He does not have the power to save Himself. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him.” And they probably laughed and laughed.

Verse 43: ““He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will *have* Him. For He said, “I am *the* Son of God.”” And the two robbers who were crucified with Him also reproached Him with the same words” (vs 43-44). He suffered the ultimate pain when the Father turned His face on Him, when Christ actually became sin and He was bruised for our transgressions, for mankind.

- How low can you go?
- How low did God go?
- How much humility did God show was in His character?

By the way, we need to emulate! Will we be offended? Are we to be offended?

There are some cases that I know of, and I don’t speak in condemnation, where two brethren with the Spirit of Christ can’t be in the same room. It’s not just in one place; it’s in different places around the world. Can’t be in the same room!

One of the sayings of a wise President—in certain ways he was very wise and in other ways he was not—John Kennedy said, “Some say, Why?” Others say, ‘Why not?’” If we need to be reconciled, the advice from God’s Word is ***to take the steps now! Humility makes peace!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 2:15
- 2) Ezekiel 28:12-17
- 3) Isaiah 14:12-15
- 4) Proverbs 16:8
- 5) Isaiah 14:15
- 6) Revelation 3:14-17
- 7) Jude 6
- 8) 1 Corinthians 1:27-28
- 9) Isaiah 58:1-7
- 10) Matthew 25:34-39
- 11) Ezekiel 16:3-7
- 12) Luke 7:36-47
- 13) John 12:3-7
- 14) Mark 14:8-9
- 15) Matthew 18:21-35, 2-4, 15
- 16) Matthew 5:9
- 17) Matthew 18:16
- 18) 1 Samuel 25:2-34
- 19) 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
- 20) 1 Corinthians 6:7-8

- 21) Psalm 15:1-4
- 22) Matthew 18:7-10
- 23) Matthew 5:22-26
- 24) Matthew 19:1-3, 5
- 25) Matthew 7:24-31, 41-44

Scripture referenced, not quoted:

- 2-Corinthians 2:10
- Matthew 11

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