

Blessed Assurance!

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Before we look into the Word, once again let us look up. Let us fix our eyes, our minds, above all our hearts on Christ Jesus – the Author and the Finisher of our faith. Through one supernatural move which You allowed, by something that is unseen to the naked eye, You have locked up the world in their homes. But for us, You not only locked us out of the world, You have locked us unto Yourself. So, I pray Father, from the little ones who are sitting before their parents' computers with their notebook and pens, at every level, Lord, You'll anoint us. You're the only One Who can speak to everyone so we bring our little ones, our young men and girls, the older generation; everybody we come to You by faith and we pray, Father, teach us. Speak to us. Equip us that we will emerge out of this lockdown stronger, even more zealous to serve You till the end, Lord. Lives would not change in freedom or lockdown, we'll praise, we'll pray unto You, we'll preach unto You. Let our lives be about You, Lord. We live You in every area Father, help us. Now Lord, help me to live You up, so that You can draw all those who are watching and listening to Yourself. Let Christ be lifted up in our midst. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

Like I said, day seven but curfew more than that probably, I don't know, we lost count of days. One thing God has done through the epidemic, He has exposed the incredible fragility of human life that that one little virus practically unseen to the human eye has exposed how hollow are all the achievements, advancements of science, technology, medicine and telemedicine, whatever you want to call it, all our boastings have fallen to the ground. It's also exposing to all the children of God our spiritual preparedness like right now the three nations, China, Italy and USA, USA has been hit. New York has been hit. They're all saying that New York was not prepared for something like this. So, this virus also is exposing to us how prepared are we spiritually. Are we really spiritually prepared for the end? Because this is definitely a harbinger, a sign of the end. The coming of Jesus Christ is so close.

So, we'll go back to God's Book – His Word, where He has spoken His reality which should be our reality. Jesus said this in *Luke 12:4-5*. This is the reality that He spoke.

Luke 12:4-5

⁴“And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body...”

That's the virus in present context.

...And after that have no more that they can do.

That's where the powers of this life end.

⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!

Basically, He's saying whichever form death comes, remember, He is the One who kills whether it is a righteous man who dies peacefully in his sleep or the wicked man who is hanged in the gallows, doesn't matter in what way your death is, there is only person who has power over death, who ordains life and death, it is God. So, He says, “Don't worry about how you die, this death in this body, but I will show you whom you should fear: fear Him.” Fear Him. Two narratives in two verses. Fear not yet fear. Do not fear the virus. Don't fear the pandemic. Don't fear all that's happening on WhatsApp and the forwards you're getting. Don't fear them, but there is somebody that you need to fear. He has the power over the second death. So, from this pulpit, all these years we are trying to address spiritual issues. Do the practical things like we keep hearing and seeing. Wash your hands. Cover your face. Maintain social distance and incline your ears. How to escape the second death? There is a portion in the Bible that describes the second death with incredible clarity and details. Not how to escape it, that's the whole Bible. But that second death, the details are given so graphically, beautifully and clearly. It's found the book of *Revelation 20:11-15*. Now this is Jesus Christ, the Lion of Judah.

Revelation 20:11-15

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¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

How it fled, we do not know. If you read *Peter*, it was rolled up like a scroll and the elements were burned up in incredible heat and fire. But it fled and it is no more.

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.

So, the Lord was telling me and I know there are so many young believers watching, young leaders watching and when the times comes you will be called to be leaders in your own little house groups. And set the foundations of faith. So, starting tonight, I'll go on a series, because the young generation prefers watching and listening. So, it will be there on YouTube on foundations on how you make it very clear. We'll come back to this but I want you to read *2 Peter 1:10-11*. This is Peter's final letter just before his death.

2 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren (He's telling the Church), be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

So, he says, "There is a lot of things you can do as a believer so that you can absolutely hundred percent sure." I don't have to worry and when I go, it's going to be a royal welcome literally a royal welcome.

So, now, we're looking at the second death and we'll go into the process of salvation, how one escapes the second death. It is judgment time *verse 11 of Revelation 20*. Everyone is standing before Him. Heaven and earth have fled. Everybody is standing before Him. It's a great white throne, the throne of righteousness. It was for a season until grace is shut. It is called the throne room of grace. Now grace is over and it is the time of judgement. White throne. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God. It is irrespective of who you were on earth. You could have been great. You could have been small. Death is a leveler. And everybody is standing, all the dead. They have been resurrected and they're all standing before God and books are opened. It's interesting, right? Not book, but books are opened. Another book was opened which was the Book of Life, that book that really matters. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. Everybody was judged according to what was written in the books. So, these books are a record of man's activity on earth – what he thought, what he said, and what he did. Everything is recorded. The minute you are born time starts ticking and everything is recorded. I would say if these people were going to the Lake of Fire what difference does it make what they have done. Degrees of punishment are there. It's not the same. Even fire, symbolically doesn't come at all the same temperatures. When Daniel's friends were put in the furnace it was heated seven times over. That will be the perfect punishment. And the servants of God who misled the people He will say, "Cut them into pieces and throw them into outer darkness." It's not just darkness it's the darkest, because they led God's people into darkness. Remember they are the ones that will be punished the worst. So, you have to look at all these things the Bible talks about. So that's why books are opened. Another book was opened and everything was being judged. *Revelation 20:13*. It talks about three holding areas until that day.

Revelation 20:13

¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it...

These are spiritual realities. We won't understand it until that day. The sea is holding the dead those who died in the sea.

...and Death...

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And death itself is a realm. Death itself is a spirit and a realm. That's why it says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death", it's a realm. It's a spiritual realm. It's a spirit too and there are a lot of people caught there. And there's a lot of people caught in Hades, like the Greek word for underworld or hell. These three are holding areas until the Day of Judgment.

...and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death.

What is cast into the Lake of Fire? Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. Sea is not cast into the Lake of Fire, because sea will be burned up. In that fire, there will be no sea left. No sea. You know what fire does to water. It evaporates. Sea will disappear. How do you know?

Revelation 21:1

¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

So, death is gone and Hades is gone. They're thrown into the Lake of Fire. Sea gives up all the people who died there. Sea itself has disappeared and evaporated, because God Himself can only do those things. Scientists will say, "Nothing disappears." God can make things disappear. Then you come to verse 15, you will realize only one thing really matters ultimately. Pappu pass hogaya ya nahi? Baaki sab chod do. (Did Pappu pass or not? Don't consider anything else.) Rank and marks we will look later. The rankers will go and look at the top of the list. The fellow who is struggling will look is my name there or not in the list. The only thing that finally matters is: is my name in the Book of Life. That's the only thing that matters. And this is no joke. The most important decision a man, a woman or a child will ever make in their life now. That's why God keeps on saying, "When the Spirit speaks do not harden your heart. Today is the day of salvation, because you do not know whether tomorrow is promised." Don't make plans. You have to always say, "If God wills", so if God wills we'll have two meetings on Saturday. If God wills we'll have three meetings on Sunday. Sunday morning in English, afternoon in Hindi and night again in English if God wills. You do not know. Every day you're prepared. So make sure your name is in that book, absolutely. And both Old Covenant saints and New Covenant saints knew how serious this was. In *Daniel 12:1*, the angel Gabriel tells Daniel:

Daniel 12:1

¹At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people...

This is to Israel.

...And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time.

This is tribulation time, the day of Jacob's trouble.

...And at that time your people shall be delivered, (Who?) Everyone who is found written in the book.

This event is yet to happen, but the names are already written, because God is the only one who knows the end from the beginning. To the Jews also it says, "Only a remnant will be saved." And connected with that Paul will say, "All Israel will be saved." Not all Israel, but those whose names are written in the book. So, compare with Scripture with Scripture. Don't get sentimental and say, "Every Jew." Quite a lot of them will be in the Lake of Fire and some of them in the deepest parts, because some of the wickedest and the nicest Jews both have come from that community. Occult from the beginning of time, from the time they came out of Egypt, they have been involved in the occult and Kabala and free masons. Today, a lot of them are there. You read the book of Ezekiel. God will take Ezekiel in the spirit and says, "Son of man, come see what the elders of the Israel are doing." He makes a hole and he looks and he sees all the elders of Israel had started with the Holy Spirit falling upon them, the Holy Spirit which was upon Moses, now they're sitting in the Holy of Holies and it's full of reptiles and other gods and they're worshipping and bowing and doing occult over there. And these are the ones who will after 600 years, these seventy will crucify the Son of God. So please understand there is a good and a bad among them. And God says whose names are written they alone will be saved. Jesus told His disciples and they got very excited. *Luke 10:20*. They got

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excited about ministry. Power ministry, everybody gets excited. When people fall or demons leave. He told them, “Hey man! Chill!”

Luke 10:20

²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but ^[a] rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

You know, there are twelve of them who went out to minister. And they’re coming back and He’s telling them straight in the eye, “Don’t get excited. Don’t look at the power of the ministry, that is because of the anointing that is flowing through you, because it’s My anointing.” Don’t get excited by this and think you are saved, because one of them will go to hell who cast out demons. That was Judas. We rather rejoice because our names are written in heaven. That’s the only reason we should. Lord, I escaped the second death. If you go into the demonic realm, those who fall into demonic worship, those who are deceived by Satan, in *Revelation 13:8*, I’m putting this basis as to why salvation is so important and when you are saved what God does is your name is written in the Book of Life.

Revelation 13:8

⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him (This is the antichrist.), whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb (Now the Book of Life is called the Book of Life of the lamb.) slain from the foundation of the world.

So, if you look at the book; I’m presuming, I’m not God. I don’t know. But if you look in the book, Abel’s name could be there and not Cain’s. Abel believed, but Cain did not. Cain was a murderer. He worshipped the enemy by his actions. So two brothers from the same womb, one’s name is there. The other isn’t there. I’m presuming. It’s like that for those who worship the enemy.

Revelation 17:8

⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Remember those who did not receive the love of Truth, God will allow them to go into delusion and the beast will be able to fool them with all supernatural things. You know why they get fooled? Because their names are also not written there. That’s what Peter is warning us about. Make sure! Make sure! Make sure! And what about the Church?

Hebrews 12:23; Remember talking about worship and we’ve have to come to Zion, the Church of the firstborn.

Hebrews 12:23

²³ to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, (Don’t worry about NRC, this is the RC you should be worried about. This is the one you should be worried about.) to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect

And Paul had this great confidence in his workers, those who labored with him. *Philippians 4:3*. He has a set of faithful workers like Jesus had. He also had faithful workers.

Philippians 4:3

³ And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

That’s the kind of confidence we should have when we labor in the Kingdom of God. Not saying, “I’m laboring, but I’m not very sure if I’ll make it or not.” He was confident about himself and he was confident about his fellow workers. So please, please, please, take this seriously. There is no greater decision, more important decision you can take and God is giving us this time to set ourselves apart in our homes. Husbands, wives, children, young and old, search your hearts. Spend time with God. Don’t have this Dutch courage, which is a false courage. Our courage should be true. And when we go through these days you’ll understand how you can have the boldness that comes only from faith. So every believer whose name is written

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in the Book of Life should take this very seriously. Do not be casual about your salvation. If that is the greatest decision you can make in your life, you cannot be casual about it.

In *Romans 11*, God uses the illustration from Old Testament and New Testament.

Romans 11:19-23

¹⁹ ***You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.”***

Jesus is the wine. Israel was broken off and we were grafted in. But what happened?

²⁰ ***Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, (They started in faith but went into unbelief.) and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, (Do not be proud.) But fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²² Therefore consider the (the two sides of the coin) goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, (those who fell away.) severity; (The Bible says that there’s going to be a great falling away. You can’t fall unless you were standing.) but toward you, goodness, (condition) if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.***

So, don’t go on this once saved, always saved binge. Let God decide all these things. Continue in your goodness. Continue in His kindness. Continue in faith.) ²³ ***And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, (He says, “If they come back to faith before they die”,) for God is able to graft them in again.***

That’s why a remnant will be saved from Israel. Take it very seriously. Stay under the blood. Stay in His mercy and His goodness. This is not an isolated reference either in the Old Testament or the New Testament. *Exodus 32:31-33*; This is what God tells Moses.

Exodus 32:31-33

³¹ ***Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold!***

They have shifted allegiance from the living God to another god made with their hands. God said, “You cannot serve two gods. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Here they’ve gone and made a golden calf.

³² ***Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”***

So, your name can be blotted off.

³³ ***And the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.***

So, they were written when they left and He blotted them. That’s why 3000 died that day. 3000 is a number. Their names were blotted out. They not only died physically, but their names were also taken out. So, these are things in the Bible.

Psalms 69:27-28; The Bible again warns us.

Psalms 69:27-28

²⁷ ***Add iniquity to their iniquity, And let them not come into Your righteousness. ²⁸ Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous.***

If you come to the New Covenant, Jesus will warn the Church in Sardis, in,

Revelation 3:5

⁵ ***He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.***

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So, overcoming is imperative. If you don't overcome and fall into sin and fall away from faith, He says, "Even if your name was there, I will blot it away." People struggle with these things, because they got a bee in their bonnet which they got from a particular college which will tell them that there is no way that you can lose your salvation once you have believed. It's like telling, once a child is born the child can never die. You have to look at what Scripture says and not what man says. Then people take very casually their salvation and walk with God.

So, remember in *Revelation 20:12*, Scripture says, what will be opened?

Revelation 20:12

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Let me give you a few books.

Psalms 139:60

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

It's something like this. "James," God said, "will be born on this day, this month and this year." I'm not even born and the book is ready. And God has also decided the stuff which I'm supposed to do. The days were already ordered. But I chose another way and went and books are opened. You were supposed to do this. You were supposed to do this. You were supposed to do this. But this is what you did. That's why repentance is so important that when you repent and confess the blood of Jesus cleanses it all out. It's better to have blank pages than to have wrong pages. And no unconfessed sin has ever been forgiven. That's why the Bible says, "If you confess, He's faithful." So, don't worry. Don't get scared. Confess. Use this time as a time of confession.

Psalms 56:8

⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

So, there are saints for thousands of years. Nobody has seen them. They have been in the closet allowing the Holy Spirit to move in them groaning and crying for the salvation of souls. Nobody has seen them. We take pride and say my preaching has brought so many. God says, "No. You have no clue what empowered your teaching. I saw the tears, I saw the cries and it's all written in the book." The cry and the tears of the saints, prayers are recorded.

Malachi 3:16

¹⁶ Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

So, those who did not fear and spoke there must be books. This book is different because this is the book of remembrance, meaning, once in a while when God gets bored He will take these books and look at the conversations like I do. I look at the albums and look at their face and you feel good when they were small. And that way God is also a Father. I mean, He doesn't need a book, but to explain it to us, all those who fear the Lord and their conversation is different. So, wear a mask on your face. Change the way we talk.

Matthew 12:36-37; this is what God says. We're just looking at what would happen if you are not saved.

Matthew 12:36-37

³⁶ But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

So, books are being opened.

³⁷ For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

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So, we have looked into the other side of the realm. The end of life as we see now, 7000 years are over and this is how the new heaven, the new city and the new earth, and this is how it's going to end. But the decisions are made now how it is going to end for us. Because from the day Adam and Eve ate whether one was deceived and the other was not, it doesn't matter once you have disobeyed sin came in. Eve was deceived. Adam was not. And Scripture says that all died.

Romans 5:12; we need to understand the reality of humanity.

Romans 5:12

¹²Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

One man sinned. The first one sinned and all died in him. So, what we see on earth is useless panic, because all the people who are walking on the streets are dead men walking unless they believe in Jesus Christ. Every man, woman and child is a dead man walking, and they're worried about the first death, because they have no idea about the second death. That's why Jesus said, "If you believe in Me, even if you die you live." If you do not believe in the son of Man if you live you are dead. So, we see a lot of dead men walking and a few men who are alive and stay alive. So, this is the situation. So, we'll go to the foundational verse about real salvation, which is found in John 3. In the night, an incredible teacher, part of the Sanhedrin, a ruler of the Jews, a teacher of the law and Torah comes to Jesus. His name is Nicodemus. He comes to Jesus in the night and he's talking to Him. Let's go to verse 3.

John 3:3; Jesus tells him something which is incredible.

John 3:3

³Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

It's like telling Pastor Vijay this; Pastor Vijay comes to me and I say, "What are your qualifications?" "B. Tech. M. Tech and Ph.D." and I say, "No, you need to go back to class one." You need to go back to class one otherwise you cannot serve in the Church. Something like that. This is a man who is a teacher of the law accomplished in the word, Pharisee of Pharisees, one of the Sanhedrin. To him God is saying, "You know what, unless you are born, again you cannot see the Kingdom of God." You are asking me questions from outside and expecting an answer from inside which you will understand. You are surprised by the things that are happening in My ministry. How do I explain to you? You're outside. I'm inside. Even if I were to explain to you, you wouldn't understand because this is kingdom stuff. You want to understand then you need to get in first.

John 4:4-6

⁴Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? (See that's the problem. He's looking from outside. How can it be? How is that possible?) Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Typical natural question.

⁵Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

You cannot see. You cannot enter. You have to be born of water and Spirit.

⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

So, He divides humanity into two—those who are born of the flesh and those who are born of the Spirit. Though all will be walking the same because all are born of the flesh first, but then there is this one set of people who are born in the flesh who are also born of the Spirit. They can see the kingdom. They can understand the kingdom. So even if you are not born in the Spirit if you are hearing, you will hear it differently. I'm sorry you will not understand what we are trying to tell you. But if you are born again, you ask God today, suddenly, the sermons will start to mean something because now, you're seeing it from

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within the Kingdom. This is something that has to happen of God and by God. You cannot be born of yourself. You have to be born of the spirit. It's something supernaturally the Holy Spirit does. We look at how it happens.

So, we saw last night, God divides the world into three categories, three divisions – *1 Corinthians 10:32* – The Jews, the gentiles and the Church of God.

1 Corinthians 10:32

³² Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the Church of God

That's how He divides. The Jew has the law. So, they are a legal entity. The Gentiles have the world, they are a carnal entity. And the Church is born of God, they're a spiritual entity. So how they look at it is different. The Jew looks at everything through the prism of the law. What does the law say? The gentiles have no law other than the law written within them, but there is nothing confirmed about it other than the laws in different religions. But they look at everything through the prism of the world. So, it's a very flesh and world relationship which is a carnal relationship. It's talking about Greeks over there. So, the Greeks will realize, "O! We have to prosper in the society, we have wisdom." So, we have Athena, the goddess of wisdom. (Minerva is the roman counterpart.) So, the one who is a scholar will worship wisdom, because he's seeing with his carnal sight. The one who is a warrior will worship Zeus and Hera, his wife. So, you have a pantheon of gods and each one chooses according to what your flesh desires. That is what happened in Greece. That's what happened in Rome and that's what happened in Europe, Egypt, the Babylonian Empire, and everywhere. So, you will see it's a carnal entity. And you will see all these gods have to be fed. Otherwise this god will not do anything for you. You have to be feeding them always, and then you may get something in return. So, you have a legal entity. You have a carnal entity and you have a spiritual entity which is called the Church of God. Technically, everyone is born a gentile. Here the term used is Greek. Everyone is born a gentile. *Psalms 51:5* says truly how everyone is born. This is how you and I are born.

Psalms 51:5

⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

This is how everybody is born, in sin and under sin. So, we do not sin and become sinners. We are born sinners; therefore, we sin. So, it doesn't matter what good we do our nature hasn't changed. We are still sinners. What salvation does is – our inner nature is changed. God come in and we are declared righteous. Now the righteous are struggling with sin. There's a difference. So technically, everybody is born a gentile. And the gentile who is born in a Jewish family on the eighth day becomes a Jew because he enters under the law by circumcision. And on the fortieth day he's presented in the temple under the law, technically. Circumcision is cutting away of the flesh, meaning, you're not attached to the world anymore. Under the law you've been separated to Yahweh. Now the purpose of the law was only one thing. We'll get into the Jew first before we go into the Greek, because that's the order in which it is mentioned. The law was given through Moses. We know that. And the purpose of the law was this: *Leviticus 19:1-2*. This was the purpose of the law.

Leviticus 19:1-2

¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

How will they know that God is holy? Somebody comes and says, "Worship the Lord your God because He is holy." Huh? What is this holy? What does holy mean? That's why the law is given. When you look at the law, you say this is the law of God and you realize, okay, okay. Meaning, the guy who smokes pot in Netherlands (Holland) and secretly in India, neither of them will ever dare to do that in Singapore, because you'll be punished with death. That's capital punishment there even to bring it in. When entering into Singapore, the first thing it says is drugs are a capital offense here. Are you getting how perspective suddenly changes when you have knowledge? So how are we going to know if God is holy? So, if you're looking at it from a legal perspective, God is not holy in Holland. He's slightly holy in India and very holy in Singapore if you look at pot. So, you need to have law which reflects the character of God. So, the law was given to reflect, to show to God who is God and what is the nature of his kingdom, after death where are you going and do you want to go there? After death, there is only one realm and that is called the realm of God. And where you're separated from God is called hell and later the Lake of Fire. So, the purpose of the law was not that we could every keep it or that by keeping it anybody would get brownie points, because it's a sinner that is keeping the law. The righteous should keep the law. Then you can still say something, but you're born in

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sin and shaped in iniquity. But He will at least know what God is like. In Matthew 5, while He's talking about expanding the law. Jesus came with truth, so He's showing us the spirit of the law which we call truth.

Matthew 5:48

⁴⁸ Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

So, Jesus comes and says and Moses is told, God is holy and God is perfect. This is what is required to enter heaven. What is the standard to enter into heaven? Be holy as God is holy and be perfect as God is perfect. Whoosh! Gone! Wretched man, Lord! We're all out. Before the innings started, we're all out, because we are born unholy. We are born sinners. So, the purpose of the law was only one—to show the holiness, the perfection, and the righteousness of God that we would cry out, 'Lord, save me!' Mankind was absolutely doomed unless God stepped in, but the God of love had to save man. Yet He had to save man in such a way He didn't mar either His righteousness or His holiness or His perfection. Only God could do it. Nobody could have done it. So, what was the purpose of the law? The purpose of the law was one, to reflect God's holiness and righteousness and perfection and two, to lead man to Christ. That was the purpose of the law. *Galatians 3:23-24* the purpose of the law--

Galatians 3: 23-24

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law...

The whole world, we look at this world and we're looking. Somebody sent me a forward of before the virus hit, the scenery of Wuhan. China is very big on construction and engineering skills and all that. O, look at our metro, the highest in Jubilee station. We take pride in all that. We don't realize that the whole world is locked up. Everybody is locked up in this world under the law. God's biggest lockup is the world. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law. What was released? Who could open the lock? Only by faith.

...kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

So, Jesus came to this prison and opened the gate and those who put their trust in Him are saved. That's why He says, "I am the door."

²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

The only purpose of the law was to teach us. It was our school master. Purpose? To bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Meaning, we'll see faith in Jesus Christ in His work alone. But after faith has come, once we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and we have been justified by faith, we are no longer under the law. The law has ceased in our life. It has done its objective. That's your passing out in college. You get that graduation hat and you throw it up and say bye to the teachers, because the teachers have finished their work. The whole thing was to hand you over to something else. You may miss your class one teacher, but you don't go back to her. You go to class two. It's over. So don't be sentimental about the law. Law has achieved its purpose.

Galatians 3:25-26

²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Under law, we were prisoners. Christ came and set us free and we all became sons. That's what Bible says, "He took captivity captive and led them as a train to heaven all who were held captive to the law." That's what the law does. Tomorrow we will see or God willing whenever as it flows how Jesus saves and only Jesus saves. Only Jesus saves, I'm sorry if you're hurt, any non-Christian friend who's watching. Why only Jesus saves and how Jesus saves. So, we looked at three categories of people: the gentiles, the Jews and the Church. The problem with the gentiles (the Greeks) is mentioned in *2 Corinthians 4:4*. This is the condition of the Greeks.

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, (What is over their eyes? A blindfold. Absolutely thick and they are blinded.) who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

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When you pray for Greeks, don't pray for salvation, pray that the blindness will go; the blindness over their eyes and that the blindfold will fall off. And we should pray for ourselves also. There are many layers of blindness. We take them off and we can see clearly and clearly. And once you have seen clearly, the Bible says we will be as perfect as He is perfect. That's clarity of vision. That's spiritual clarity! So, the Gentiles or the Greeks are blinded completely by the god of this world, that is satan. Blinded! Otherwise they would see the glory of the Gospel. There is glory in Gospel. Absolutely incredible! It's because it is the glory of Jesus Christ, who is the image of God.

So, the problem with Gentiles or Greeks is that they are blindfolded. The problem with the Jews is in *2 Corinthians 3:13-15*. This is the problem with the Jews. Jews have the law; that is called Moses.

2 Corinthians 3:13-15

¹³unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

So, they have a veil. You can sit and argue with a Jewish rabbi of *Isaiah 53* and everything, he cannot see. The minute a Jewish person becomes Christian, he understands *Isaiah 53* and whole Old Testament better than us. He understands this is Christ because whenever you read the law, a veil covers your eyes. The others are blinded and here, a veil covers so that through the law they are not able to see Christ. What about the Church, those who are born again?

2 Corinthians 3:16

¹⁶Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

You turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away and you are able to see the Kingdom from *Genesis 1* onwards and all the way you see, this is about Christ. This is what Jesus told Nicodemus. Unless you are born of the Spirit, you cannot see. You cannot see, how can you enter? How can you enter something, which you cannot see? You cannot see or enter unless you are born of the Spirit. When you are born of the Spirit, the veil is taken off. So, what is the Gospel? The Gospel is (literally it means) 'the good news'. Paul will explain. He is a man God used to explain the Gospel.

Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Salvation Gospel first went to the Jews and then, it went to the Greeks.

¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Everybody realizes if you really know that to enter into the Kingdom of God, you need to have the righteousness of God. But the problem is there is no revelation of the righteousness of God outside the law. So, the Greeks are absolutely blinded because their gods don't have that righteousness. They have no clue. What righteousness does 'Minerva' have? What righteousness does 'Zeus' have? He left his wife, chased a girl, who was pretty. She turned into a swan, he turned into a swan and then he impregnated her; then she laid an egg, out of which came a child. That child was a Greek mythology hero in the 'Trojan war' and all.

So, these are those gods – they have no concept about righteousness and holiness and all – the Greeks are worshipping. None of them! Every one of them was immoral. You could get out of any situation by bribing them. The Egyptian gods, the Greek gods, the Roman gods or the Scandinavian gods! The Scandinavian god of war was called 'Thor'. The entire Greek mythology, 'Odyssey' and 'Ulysses' are all connected with their gods and you go through their whole thing, you will see absolutely nothing is a problem. Lying is not a problem, fornication is not a problem, adultery is not a problem, covetousness is not a problem, stealing is not a problem; everything is okay.

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So, you have no clue about the righteousness of God. So, to understand, there is only one God and He is the living God and the real God, to understand what His nature is, He picked a man called Abraham, moved him out from their midst, brought him in the promised land, three generations there, moved them into Egypt, made them into a nation, with great ten judgments brought them out, brought them into the wilderness, took Moses up to the mountain and gave him the law and said, "This is what I am kind of look like. It's not exact, but kind of but this is enough. If I show you Myself, you will die. But this is what I look like." So, when the law came in, everybody understood what God is like. What is the terror of the law? You look at the law and you will realize it is impossible for any man to be righteous. So, God comes and offers us this incredible gift of eternal life. That's the Gospel!

Romans 1:17

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

The minimum standard required to enter into heaven! Pass mark! Crown is different. Basic righteousness of God you need. The crown of righteousness is different thing. The basic quality is this- it is revealed by faith. 'Faith to faith' meaning once you enter by faith, you have seen the door, you entered and then as move on by faith to faith to faith, there is a revelation of God throughout eternity- this is who God is! But for that you need to walk by faith to faith to faith. That's why Scripture says- *the just shall live by faith*. That we will look into details later. Now we know *Romans 10:17*. For all the young believers, we have to show them how faith comes.

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Hearing means hearing with ears, primarily and also those who can read, by reading you will hear; God speaks to you deep inside. Even when I am speaking to you, people who are listening online or others, you will hear something, the Spirit of God speaking to you. It is from that voice that faith comes. Otherwise it would be written, faith comes from reading. It's not man's voice; it is God's voice. *Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the word of God*. That man has to either read the word of God or speak the word of God. We don't speak anything else. That's why Paul will say- *we preach Christ crucified*. We don't preach about the world- seven steps to prosperity and all that junk; we don't do that. We preach Christ because *faith comes from hearing and hearing from the word of God*. That's how Jesus proclaims Himself in *John 1, in the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God*. That is why we preach. Even in exigencies like this, we preach even more because we realize we got a captive audience (literally captive audience), audience that has been kept captive in their homes by the law of the land. First the law had put everybody under sin and now the law of the land has put everybody indoors. So, we have a captive audience. So, we preach even more now.

Mark 16:15

¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

For 2000 years, this is why people have given their lives, in their tens of thousands and thousands to reach the Word. They were able to go because they were not afraid of death. They knew Christ has come in, now we cannot die; even if we die, we will live forevermore but others shouldn't die. Nations and religions do not understand what is the fervor of evangelist, why is he willing to risk his life. There are religions that will kill to convert. There is one religion (if you want to call it religion), which will die to convert; even their death is the testimony. So, all the apostles were killed except John, who died of old age. They never killed anybody. If any format of Christianity turns violent, it's not of Christ. It cannot be of Christ because Christianity does not justify it in any form. That leaves it to the government but Christianity does not justify it all because the whole idea is to save men. So, when you go through the middle ages and (see) all the junk- those kings and Catholic, all the Churches, Spanish inquisition and all- those were not Christians; they were never born again. They had taken a religion and gone back into the law and outside the law, they were worse than Gentiles at that age.

That is why the Bible is the most translated and printed book ever, distributed book ever. That's why the Bible is the most attacked book and burnt book ever. Dispensations feared this book. If they can get, they will confiscate every copy and burn it. If they can! Why? It's because they know the power of that Word, because no other religious book has the power to save. Every other religion will leave it to you. "You do and then maybe!" Every religious book will tell you, including the law, "Do, do, do, do, do and then maybe!" and then will also say, "even if you do, you are not saved", while the Gospel says- "you do

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not have to do. You believe what He has done. Believe what He has done. Receive the Spirit that comes in. Listen to the Spirit and obey; He will do it through you.” So, salvation is a completely different ball game. This Word itself that we preach is a spiritual entity though I am speaking in the physical. It’s a spiritual entity. It is a spiritual seed.

1 Peter 1:23

²³having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

So, it’s an incorruptible seed! There is only one thing that can be incorruptible; it has to be eternal. *Heaven and earth will pass away*, so everything is passing away. There is something that cannot pass away, which is the Word of God because it’s incorruptible. That’s why Jesus says; *heaven and earth will pass away but not even a dot from My Word*. When whole earth and heaven is burnt away, the Word never disappears because it’s Spiritual entity. I am not talking about the books, the Bible’s printing but the Word in itself, the spiritual entity never will go. So, the Word of God you hear, you believe is a spiritual entity. It’s a Word- seed that can bring life.

James 1:18

¹⁸Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

So, by the Word that we preach, we heard, we repented, we believed and that Word did something inside and we are born again by the Word and by the Spirit. The Spirit did the work on the Word. Without the Word, the Spirit cannot do the work. So, this is how it began 2000 years ago. Whatever every preacher is doing is what God did in the beginning. He is just replicating; nothing is original. Scripture says, *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was dark and void. The darkness covered, the waters covered and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”* Everything is dark. Spirit of God is ready to do His work but will not do until the Word comes. So, Scripture says, *God spoke, “Let there be light.”* That is the Word. When the Word came and the Spirit came, the creation began. Even today it is the same thing. Nobody will be born again unless somebody speaks or somebody reads; the Word has to go.

So, you may pick up a transcript or whatever one of these on the road and you look at it and you read, you meditate and you believe, the Spirit of God immediately comes or we preach and you hear and believe, the Spirit of God comes. The Word has to go forth. So, the enemy will do through systems and rulers and nations, everything possible to see that the Word of God is not disseminated because he knows it is the power of God unto man’s salvation. So, what God did in the beginning, from that time every man is replicating. When Noah is building and he is preaching “Repent!”, he is doing the same thing. Anybody would have believed, the Spirit would have come and got him inside into the ark of safety. These are types.

So, let’s go to Acts 2, when salvation began; the New Covenant began 2000 years ago on the day of Pentecost. A simple fisherman, not learned or probably semi-learned but he walked with Jesus, so he learned to speak. I don’t know whether he learned to write, maybe he didn’t; he spoke to somebody and that person wrote first and second epistles. I am not sure but here is he. He was speaking on that day and the people were cut to the heart.

Acts 2:36-38

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

What does Scripture say? First to the Jews and then to the Gentiles! So on the day of their feast, all the Jews were gathered in Israel in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. He steps forward and he preaches.

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart,

Holy Spirit started moving. He had to preach; the Holy Spirit will move. Holy Spirit will not move unless you preach what He tells you to preach. So he preached, the Holy Spirit moved.

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37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

They are still thinking in their carnal minds. They are thinking, “Oh my gosh! He was the Savior but we killed Him. If we killed Him, then what will we do?” They are still thinking in terms of the kingdom of Israel. Peter is inside the Kingdom and they are outside the Kingdom. So he tells them.

38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He says- “Something will happen. If you repent, you believe and you get baptized, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Now let’s put the process into picture. “*Repent and be baptized*” and in *Mark 16:16*, He will also put the third thing.

Mark 16:16

16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

So ‘repent’- self is believing. You cannot repent unless you believe the message. Wash your hands, put a mask- that’s a message. If you believed, you wash your hands. Stay indoors, don’t come out. All those who didn’t believe got nicely spanked. Now they all believe. So there is a repentance that is associated with believing. Repentance itself is an act of believing. *If you believe and be baptized!* So repent, believe and baptize! So the first stage of salvation is put into three terms. What is that? Repent, believe and be baptized. In Hindi, we say ‘man firana’ or ‘Praschatap karana’ meaning change your mind completely about God’s Kingdom, what it is like and what life is like. Don’t get fooled. This is all nothing. The next death is what is terrible and there is no escape out of it. You can escape from this, you cannot escape from that. What does a Gentile (Greek) have to repent of? This is a Greek’ bio-data; our bio-data.

Ephesians 2:1-3

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ²in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

So, what was the primary purpose of a Greek outside the law? Pleasure! Pleasure driven generation from that time! What did they have to repent of? These things! They had to repent of all that and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember *Luke 15:32*, when that prodigal son had gone to a faraway country and he lived in carousing with eating, drinking and prostitutes? Do you know what the father said at the end? It is right that we should make merry and be glad for your brother was dead. He didn’t say he just went on a vacation. He said he was dead. He was just dead. Anyone who lives for pleasure is dead. He is alive again because he has repented, came to his senses and has come back to his father’s house. He was dead. So, what did we Gentiles have to repent about? Because we didn’t know the law, so we have to repent about our old lives. “Lord, forgive us!” In *1 Timothy 5:6*, connected with this deadness, Jesus talks about widows.

1 Timothy 5:6

6 But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

So, those are the pleasures of Egypt. That was the act of Moses- by turning his back to the pleasures of Egypt, he who was dead was made alive. That was his act of repentance. So, we all Gentiles before we became believers, we have to repent about how we lived in this world. We lived, primarily everything was pleasure based. Even when we served gods, we served the gods of our appetites. That’s why in all Gentile religions, Greek or anything, you have a god for sex also. It is called ‘eros’, ‘aphrodite’ or fertility gods; all sex gods are there. Alcohol has gods. Anything connected with pleasure, there is a god. Entertainment also has gods. That is why Milton even when he is writing ‘paradise lost’ and all, he goes into Greek format and invocation to the ‘muses’; ‘muses’ are the one who will give inspiration to write poetry.

Even today, all these great actors, why do they all have alter personalities? Because they have gone into the dark spaces and they have received demons in and when they step out, they are fantastic actors. It is not normal or natural. It is demonic

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because they have worshiped other gods who will give you the talents because satan was perfect in beauty and wisdom and he has got all if you want to live that life. He can feed your flesh. So, they went into that side and they will die also miserably one day.

So, this is the Gentile and what the Gentile has to repent from. What about the Jew? *Galatians 2:16* is talking about the good Jew; the bad Jew is just like a Gentile, like prodigal son. The prodigal son had to repent and the elder son also had to repent but you realize that the prodigal son repented, the elder son refused to repent. The sinners in Israel repented and were flocking in, the Pharisees refused to repent. Why? Because they think they are righteous by the law.

Galatians 2:16

¹⁶ knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law

What does he have to repent? From the works of the law! Because he is putting his trust in the works of the law; all the works he has done- "I have kept Sabbath, I paid my mint, I pray three times a day." It's like our Muslim brothers, who are also under the law, they will keep these 5 things of Islam or 7 things of Buddhism and all- they put their trust in this. That is the good works of the law. But you need to repent from that. It's totally irrelevant to God, all those. You are not saved by that. So if you are on the righteous side and not on the pleasure side, what do you need to repent from?

¹⁶ knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ,

It is such a difficult thing. That's why Jesus said, the righteous scarcely enters. They struggle! Those who are rich in righteousness will struggle to enter. In every nation, you will see it is the poor and the sinners who get in first. The righteous struggle because they are banking on their righteousness. So what does righteous have to repent of? They have to repent of their righteousness- the false righteousness- because it simply doesn't make any difference. You never meet the righteous standards of God.

Galatians 3:10

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse...

What is the curse of the law?

...for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Meaning, the minute you come under the law, till the day you die, you have to keep all the works of the law and there is no room for error. It is like Pastor Vijay teaching Abigail math, "100 only! 99 also, papa is not happy." 100 percent! 99.99% is not acceptable under the law. Everything that is written should be kept. Everything! And if you don't keep it, you are under a curse. It's not that you failed and you can retry. You are under a curse. What is the curse? You should be hanged on the tree. This is the problem. You have to repent from this. Nobody is saved by the law.

James 2:10

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

I like the word. It is not even 'fall'; it is 'stumble'. Stumble over one little thing, you are guilty of all. Finished! No use now, gone! So law makes you miserable. It never made man happy. It either made you proud (that's who really did not understand the law, it made you very proud- "I have kept the law"; that's why this knowledge of the law puffs people up- 'proud Pharisees') or a genuine Pharisee, who was really trying to be righteous, it made you miserable. So that's why Paul is a miserable Pharisee. That's why Nicodemus is miserable. He is depressed when Jesus comes into the picture. Because till then he was thinking, "I think I am okay" until he saw Jesus. When he saw Jesus, he realized, "I am not okay." Meaning he is probably thinking- "I am around 60 years old. I have worked on the law all my life. I have gone up the law and I have reached the Sanhedrin, which is a very difficult thing in our community. Only 70 people in a generation get to make it and I have made upto over there. But do you know what? This carpenter guy has come from Nazareth, who doesn't know anything about the

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law supposedly and you look at his life and you realize this is genuine and I am not. So what was the whole point of following the law all these years?" He is miserable. That's why he comes in the dark and goes out in the dark.

Jesus makes people miserable. He says, "This is the standard." What should we do to enter the Kingdom of God? "This is the standard. I am the standard." How do we be that? "You cannot. You need to believe in Me and allow My Spirit to be born in you and then you can. There is no other way. I in you and you in Me. No other way!" So, this is what salvation is – repent, believe and be baptized!

The order in the Bible is so beautiful.

Hebrews 6:1-2

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection...

He is writing to a Church: "Let's not go back to basics again."

...not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

What is the 'dead works'? The Gentile's works of pleasure is 'dead works'; it will take you to death. The Jew's works of righteousness is also 'dead works' because that will also take you to hell. So, repent from both works, which lead to death. They are 'dead works'. They are not good works or bad works; they are dead works because at the end of these works, there is only death. What is 'faith towards God'? Believe in the work, which God has done through His Son.

² of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

So, you are seeing here – repent, believe and be baptized. That is the beginning of salvation. Like I said, it is easier to get a sinner repent than one under the law. Now let us look at the law as to why because this is our struggle. Many of the people who may be listening may be really good people, trying to be good with all their strength.

We will understand what is the issue with the law.

Romans 7:7

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law...

That's why only the Jews had a concept about what sin is and Gentiles did not have. Other than the sages among them, who searched, meditated (the sages of India also, who wrote 'Rigveda' and all), they had a concept about righteousness and after that they came and covered that whole thing and made the religion into something, which never was in the beginning and turned it back into flesh. But if you go into the core, they had a concept about righteousness, the ones who really, really sought the Lord. They had a concept about that God is righteous, the Kingdom of God is righteous.

...On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."

If you grow up in Holland and you never watch anything that is happening in another country, you will always think smoking 'pot' is normal. So you go to Holland and not smoke 'pot', they will think, "What's wrong with you? You are abnormal." Did you get it? Believers are abnormal in this world because neither they are following the voice of the world nor the ways of the law. They are absolutely abnormal people to this world or to the Jews. That is why God divides the world into three categories—the Jews, the Greeks and the Church of God. The Church of God doesn't fit anywhere here. There is denomination called 'Church of God'; I am not talking about them. So I would not have known what is covetousness unless the law had come.

Romans 7:8

⁸ But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.

I will tell you 'real' example. Let's say Pastor Vijay is going out of the house and he tells Abigail, "Abigail, I am going out of the house. Mom and I are going. You both are over there." Let us say Emmanuela is very small, only 3 years old. She has no clue. Let us say Abigail is 11. "Don't eat the chocolates in the freeze. Don't steal the chocolates." So Abigail hears and she knows what it is. Emmanuela has no idea what stealing is. She has never heard the word before. So what will Abigail do? Abigail will tell Emmanuela, "You go, get the chocolates and give it to me." That's what children do at home. Emmanuela has no clue what stealing is because she has never heard the law. She goes and takes it, "How many Abigail?"

"Two!"

"Okay. Here, you have one, I have one."

Then you come back, "Did you eat? I put five here. How come only 3 are here? Abigail, did you steal?"

"No! Emmanuela took it." This is what children do. Then Emmanuela gets scolding and then she realizes, "Oh! Stealing is a sin!"

The problem is – if there is no law, there is no sin. People would like that. God says, "Yes, if you want it, I can remove the law. You sin and die and go to eternity in a Lake of Fire but I love you too much for that. *You fathers, being evil know how to give good things to your children*- you wake them up, you get them ready, you send them to school through all that hardship because you know at the end of the day, there is something good for them- what do you think I as a Father should just leave you to your own thing, die and go to hell? I can't do that. That's why I gave you My Spirit so that you don't have to reach there." So, what happens is –

Romans 7:8-12

⁸But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹I was alive once without the law...

I was thinking 'alive' but actually dead.

...but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. ¹¹For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. ¹²Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Is 'Thou shall not steal' a good law or a bad law? The thief thinks it's a very bad law until his own is stolen. The adulterer thinks 'thou shall not commit adultery' is very bad until somebody sleeps with his wife. The liar thinks it's a very bad law until somebody lies to him and takes advantage of him. Is it good or bad?

Romans 7:12

¹²Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

There is no problem with the law because it reflects God. So, the problem is not with the law; the problem is with me. Where does the problem lie? It lies with me.

Romans 7:14

¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Are you getting the picture? The problem is – the more you study the law, the more you are aware of sin. That's why when you are in trouble, you go to a lawyer because he has studied the law. He will tell you 15 different ways how you can get out of this mess because he has studied the whole law. The more you study the law, the more you know the violations of the law. So you become miserable. Studying of the law doesn't make you happy at all. It only makes you miserable. We are all very happy because we don't even know the ten commandments by heart, forget the Levitical law! It makes you miserable.

Romans 7:21-22

²¹I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²²For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

Blessed Assurance!

He realizes, “I am a split personality. Through that soul, because I came under the law, I love the law. The law is good. Thou shall not steal. Yes! That is really good. Thou shall not lie. But I realize outside there is another man who loves to steal and tell lies.” It’s another man! When he is caught in a crisis, the outer man immediately lies and tries to get out of it, though inside he loves the law. The minute you run into trouble! David slept with Bathsheba; she is another man’s wife. She is pregnant. Does he delight in the law inwardly? Does he act according to it? No! Immediately he is looking how to escape. “Get Uriah here straight from the battlefield. Get him. Let him go, sleep with his wife.” He doesn’t go. “Get him drunk the next day. Let him go.” He doesn’t go. It doesn’t work. “Okay. Get him killed. Let me take that widow and marry her. Let me cover.” You see, is the law good? He is the one who wrote *Psalms 119*, how he loves the law, meditates upon the law, which is true. All of us love the law inside but the problem is there is a carnal mind and a carnal body outside. Are you getting it?

Romans 7:22-24

²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

When I was young, in my little hometown where I did my college and all, the biggest pilgrimage centre in Kerala, where people from other states come is called ‘Sabarimala’. Hindu brothers wear black and they go. They take 30 days or 40 days ‘vratam’ (fast). They fast. They are dressed in black. They don’t wear sandals on their feet. They abstain and they don’t look at girls. That was the old way they did it. Do you know why? That’s the controversy case lying in the supreme court because the deity over there is ‘brahmachari’. That’s why women during the menstruation age are not allowed so that you don’t tempt the deity. So all the men also abstain and go. So when they are going to ‘Sabarimala’ (I used to be coming back from college), they are singing, ‘swamy ayyapa’ and all. Coming back, the ‘vratam’ is over; they are whistling at every girl on the road because the college girls are all going. This thing is over, this other law was fighting outside. While going, there was a law, which said, “You have to do this”, but now you are free from the law. Your 40 days fast is over.

That is what ‘Mardi Gras’ happens; just before lent begins, there is ‘mardi gras’. Luisiana is one of the states, hit by the coronavirus. ‘Mardi gras’ is before the lent begins; it is the indulgence of the flesh. You need to understand how it works. This is what the Bible is talking about.

Romans 7:24

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Now, let us look at the crux of it, how Paul puts in *1 Corinthians 15:56*, so that we understand this.

1 Corinthians 15:56

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

So, there are three things over there – law, sin and death. What is the sting of death? It is sin. The power of sin is the law. It’s like a scorpion or a cobra. Cobra has got fangs and in that fangs, there is poison. If the cobra bites you, you will die. What causes you to die? It’s not the bite, it’s the poison. That’s what it is talking about. Why does sin cause death? Because law said so. The wages of sin is death. What empowers sin? The law! What is the wages of sin? Death! That’s what Jesus did. He took death upon himself and took the whole poison upon Himself and released us. Are you getting it? This is the problem of the law. The law empowers sin and sin empowers death. The law does nothing to help us; absolutely nothing to help us. That’s the cry of *Romans 7:24* and verse 25 is the answer.

Romans 7:24

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Does the law say, “I will”? No! Literally it says, “Go to hell.” Where did you get that words from -“Go to hell”? From the law! That’s what the law tells everybody, “Go to hell!”

Romans 7:25

Blessed Assurance!

²⁵ *I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

So, salvation begins with the death of the flesh and you die daily. With mind, you understand law is good but the Spirit comes and gives you the spirit of the law.

So, you hear the Gospel. What is the Gospel?

Matthew 3:2

² *and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”*

That is John the Baptist. Now, this is Jesus—

Matthew 4:17

¹⁷ *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

What is the problem with the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of heaven? It is the Kingdom of perfect righteousness and perfect holiness. So repent before it hits you. There is a day appointed by God when that Kingdom will become manifest on earth. If you don't get saved before that, you are done. It's like Noah's ark- in God's patience and longsuffering, waited and waited and waited, finally it is finished, may be 100 years or 120 years. Animals all came in and got in. The door was left there, everybody is inside, 7 more days and then God shut the door. Before the door shuts on the age of grace in each one's life, God is saying, “Repent!” Why? The Kingdom of God!

That is why we should be excited because every sign is a sign of the Kingdom of God. So if you are righteous and growing in your righteousness, it should bring excitement. If you are righteous but you have fallen, you should say God is giving you time to repent and get back. But the Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of perfect holiness and perfect righteousness. So, three words I used there – repent from dead works and carnal works, believe in Jesus and His work on the cross alone (that we will look tomorrow) and be baptized. So the question is- why should I be baptized? Why do you bring this baptism in? Because Jesus also brought it in *Mark 16:16*, right? Why do you bring this baptism? What is this problem with baptism?

Mark 16:16

¹⁶ *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

So 'and' is there. So, baptism is included with believing; it's not an option.

¹⁶ *He who believes and is baptized will be saved;*

Why? We will look at the Jew first (because Gospel is preached to the Jew first) and then we will go to the Gentile. The Jewish little fellow is born and on 8th day, he is circumcised; he comes under the law. By law, he is married to the law. Marriage is a covenant. What is marriage? A covenant! So he now enters into a covenant of the law; he is married to the law. Now there is a problem with the law, which Jesus explained in *Matthew 5:17-18*.

The problem with the law, to whom you are covenanted—

Matthew 5:17-18

¹⁷ *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*

So, when will the law pass away? When heaven and earth will pass away! What is a lifespan of the law? 7,000 years- from the time of Adam (creation) till 1,000 years reign of Jesus Christ is over, that's when heaven and earth passes away. The law's life span is how much? 7,000 years! You are married to whom? The law! Is this fellow going to die? No! You are stuck with him.

Now, go to *Romans 7* and see how Paul explains this- why we need to get baptized?

Romans 7:1-3

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? ² For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. ³ So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

Did you get the picture? So, I have a choice. If I was a Jewish boy, born under the law, got circumcised, came under the law, like a marriage covenant, I am covenanted to the law. I am under the covenant. The problem is the law never dies. It takes 7,000 years before the law will die. So, I am married to the law. So, if the law does not die, there is only one way I can be free – I need to die. If the man dies, the woman is free. Under the law, she is free. So, baptism is my death. So, if you do not get baptised, you are committing adultery. You are married to the law and you are having an affair with Christ. And Christ is not a man who has an affair. That's the problem. A lot of Christians are having an affair with Christ while married to the law. The only way you can get married to Christ, the other covenant – the New Covenant – enter into the Covenant by dying to the law. The law is not going to die. There is no way the law is going to die. That fellow has got a long life span. He is not going to die. So, you have to die. So, *Romans 6:3*, the Bible answers the question – what do you do?

Romans 6:3-5

³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

So, what is baptism? Baptism is my death and burial of the old man. And the resurrection of a new man who is married to Christ. Now, the law has no hold over me. It has no hold over me. Why? Because I'm married Christ. Tomorrow, we will look. The guys who are trying to take believers back to the law is, now, who is married to Christ and is trying to have an affair with the old fellow. The guys who say, "Once you believe, that's okay. Even if you don't get baptized, it is okay," is trying to make you have an affair with Christ. Those who are married to Christ, they are trying to take you back to the law; they are trying to have an affair with the law. Understand how it works. Why is this third thing so important? Because it's your death. Same is with the Gentile. The Gentile was married to this world because he's all flesh. Flesh and world are made for each other. The flesh and this world created by (not the earth) the devil and the flesh are made for each other. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life – that's the flesh and the world. So, he was covenanted to the world, married to this world. So, I, the Gentile, when I got baptized and came out, I was saying, "I died to this world." Are you getting it? So, the Bible is very tough about this. *James 4:4*. Do you get it, baptized Christians?

James 4:4

⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?...

Why does he use that term? Because when you got baptized, you were covenanted to Christ Jesus. You entered into a marriage covenant with Christ Jesus and you died to the world. Now, you are quietly going back to the world. You died. He didn't die. You died. He didn't. Now, you are quietly going back to your old husband. "Adulterers and adulteresses, do you think you can escape My eye?" So, when we preach against the world, people get mad. Because you've got the spirit of adultery in your heart. You like that. That's why God shut down the world for the sake of Christians who are fooling around, saying, "Get back. Get your act back. Don't you understand what it means? Do you know what happened when you got baptized?" He, who believes and is baptized, will be saved from both the law and the world. Repent, faith towards God, believe and be baptized. And if you do that, what happens? We will go back *James 4:4-5* but now, let's go to *Acts 2:38*. What happens when you believe?

Acts 2:38

³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Blessed Assurance!

That's the proof. It's a proof. There is an inward witness that you are born again. What is that? The Holy Spirit who cries out from within, "Abba! Father!" It's an inward witness. That's the proof. Not the outward rituals. The outward rituals do not have any meaning unless there is an inward witness. The inward witness is the most important part. You are born again of the Spirit and the Spirit comes to dwell within you and the Spirit will tell you, "Daddy, Abba, I fell." That's the inward witness. That's the proof. In *Galatians 3:2*, this is what Paul is so upset with the Galatian Church who had started that way and he is telling them. "Listen to you guys!"

Galatians 3:2

² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law...

"All the days you obeyed the law, did you get the Spirit? No. You had a spirit, yes. It was called 'the spirit of condemnation'. The law only condemned you."

or by the hearing of faith?

When you heard, when you believed, when you repented, when you got baptized, did you get the Spirit? So, that is the inward proof? Are you getting it? So, if I were a Gentile and I got saved, the Holy Spirit came in, I got baptized and I received the Holy Spirit, and *James 4:4-5* says,

James 4:4-5

⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

This is a jealousy of marriage. Others, if you don't feel it, you are not born again. You just went through the rituals and there is no Spirit convicting you. "You are My Son's bride and you are fooling around with that fellow. Aren't you ashamed?" The Spirit within you yearns how? Not angrily; jealously. So, there is an entire portion in the New Covenant about the jealousy of your husband. Our God is a jealous God. And why was God so jealous? Because Israel went after other gods because they were covenanted to Him. So, you understand what the Bible is talking about? These are how you look at the Scriptures and how we apply it to ourselves during the time of lockdown. But how did it all begin? It all began by hearing. You heard, you repented of your gentile dead works or under the law dead works; you believed only in the work of Jesus Christ and what did God do? The minimum requirement – you got pass mark to enter into Heaven. *Romans 5:1*. This is the pass mark you get to enter into Heaven.

Romans 5:1

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith...

Justified means – just as if you have never sinned. You are declared righteous, declared just. You are not declared forgiven. No. For 'forgiven', you are still a criminal, a forgiven criminal. That's not what God is saying here. Just as if you have never sinned.

...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Are we getting the picture? Simple Gospel message. This is the minimum qualification required to enter Heaven. My question is: what did we do to enter Heaven? Nothing. That's the problem with the righteous man. Just believe. "It's not possible. You mean to say, for 60 years, I struggled with all these good works. All my alms, all my fasting, all my prayer, all these things – fed the poor, the beggars and everything; going to the temple, the synagogue regularly, you mean to say all that means nothing?" "Yes. Nothing." "I don't want that God. If He doesn't accept my good works, I don't want Him." That's the problem with the righteous people. What did we do? Nothing. It's entirely the work of God. It's a free gift and people struggle because they know, like even a politician doesn't give you a free gift. He gives you in return for your vote. There are not freebies in life is what we constantly hear. There is something which is called 'salvation'. It is absolutely free to enter into Heaven. After that, your work is for different things – to stay in and to move on and all that. That's a different thing but to enter in – it's free. Admission is free.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Nobody, when they stand before God, can boast. That's why everyone puts a crown at His feet. Because it is the work of God, the work of grace. How did you appropriate it? By faith. the minute you believed, grace started flowing in and you were saved by grace through faith. and how did faith come? By hearing. And hearing from the Word of God. So, when we preach, those who believed, all those who believed that day, the grace of God came in and they got saved. This is what salvation is. The trap. Faith comes by hearing. *Romans 1:17. Galatians 3:11. Hebrews 10:38.*

Romans 1:17

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written...

Once you are saved, if you want to always be saved,

...“The just shall live by faith.”

You have to live by faith.

Galatians 3:11

¹¹ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”

Hebrews 10:38

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back...

How can I draw back? There are two ways I can draw back – I can draw back to the law and God is not pleased; or I can draw back to the world and God is not pleased at all.

...But if anyone draws back...

Either to the works of the law or to the works of the flesh, God is not pleased.

...My soul has no pleasure in him.”

It's an entirely new way of living. The Spirit of God has come in; the Word of God has become alive. And what happens?

2 Corinthians 3:6

⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Now, we are able to see the spirit of the law. While the Old Covenant person is taking the ox and the donkey and says, “You cannot yoke them together because it is under the law,” he is not able to understand what it means because it means you cannot put the believer and the unbeliever together. You understand – that is the Spirit. How can they be yoked together? *Thou shall not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever.* That's what it meant but when you read the Old Testament, his veil is over him and he doesn't understand. *Thou shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox.* So, the poor Jewish farmer still over there, he will still leave it that way but that's not what it means. It means – those who are treading the threshing floor of God, working, they should be allowed to eat part of the harvest. That is what it means. So, when you read here, you start understanding. Because the spirit of the law. Why? Because the Holy Spirit is now showing you, “This is what it means.” As you keep growing, He starts opening up the Word of God.

My favorite passage to Pastors; I put them on this test everywhere I go. You guys have heard it 342 times. So, you are experts. My online brethren.

Genesis 13:7

⁷ And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

This is just history for the man of the law. This is not history for the man of the Spirit. He suddenly realizes, "There is something that God is trying to tell us here." What does verse 7 mean spiritually? It means – there are only two believers in the land. One is Abraham, righteous, by faith. Lot, righteous by faith. When there is struggle between two believers, the unbelievers are watching. That's what it means. This is not history. The Canaanites and the Perizzites were in the land. They are watching. And Paul will say, "Why did you go to court? Why did you go there? Isn't it better to be defrauded? Let him take your money and go." This comes from there. The pictures are all in the Bible. Two righteous people are there. There is a conflict of issue with possessions and all over there and both are righteous but both are not of the same maturity. So, this test will prove who is spiritually mature. And Scripture says, "Abraham, who is the uncle; and Lot, who is the nephew," the one who was blessed all because of his uncle, he takes the first step and says, "We are brethren." That is the story there. This is not a story. This is a spiritual insight about we, in the New Covenant, should become the children of Israel when there is conflict. That is how you read the Bible. But as long as you are under the law, the veil covers. But when you turn to Christ, the veil is removed. That's what the Bible is talking about. So, everything changes to the one who is saved. Everything changes because the Spirit of God has come and it starts seeing the Kingdom of God. What is it? *Hebrews 11:1*. The Kingdom of God is an unseen realm.

Hebrews 11:1

¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Have you seen the Kingdom of God? No. Why are you walking by faith? Because you want to be there. Why are all your decisions on earth made on? On faith. Why? Because for you, the Kingdom of God is real. It is not an unreal thing. Faith is the substance of things. What do you hope for? One – to enter into the Kingdom of God. Two – finish my race and get a crown. That's the evidence of the things unseen. So, there is a temporary unseen and there is an eternal unseen. But the eternal unseen is what is important. So, faith is a complete paradigm shift in our thinking. Everything changes. Absolutely everything changes. That's why *2 Corinthians 4:16-18* says, (we saw that yesterday also)

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart...

When? When Corona Virus sweeps the world, we do not lose heart.

...Even though our outward man is perishing...

That if you are a true believer who walks by faith and is struggling for your breath in an ICU with a mask over your face, outward man is perishing but you also know,

...yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

You may be in the ICU for 7 days and die on the 8th day but those 7 days, you heard very, very clearly – outwardly, you are gasping; inwardly, you are not gasping at all. You are hearing very, very clearly. Very clearly because you were in the Kingdom of God; you were grown in the Kingdom of God. Outwardly, you may be perishing. Inwardly, you are not perishing. That is Jacob – 137 years, old man. Last day. He must have been gasping like the pictures we see. He is dying and he sits up on his bed and says, "Sons, sit here. I'm gasping outside. There is no gasping inside. Come here. Sons of Israel, come here. Stand here, all 12 of you. Let me speak to you one more time." He must have gasped. "Reuben (gasps!)," but inside, what comes out is no gasping. It's absolutely prophetic over and there is heart and emotions that are not involved. It is absolutely spirit. The son he loves is Joseph. The son he loves is Benjamin. He loves all of them but his heart is yoked with him. But when it comes to Judah, he stops and he says, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah." Everything he speaks is being played out now. Outwardly, we may be perishing. That's what I keep telling the Pastors – I'm growing old. We are all growing old. But that's not point. That's irrelevant. Everybody's growing old. Everybody's outward body is perishing. What is happening inside? Are you hearing? I'm not asking if you are studying. I'm asking if you are hearing because as you grow inwardly, your clarity

Blessed Assurance!

of hearing becomes clearer and clearer. That's why Scripture says, "The old man, John, the Apostle, in the Island of Patmos, he was in prison, locked down." He was quarantined for years. No believer. Nothing. But Scripture says, "On the Lord's day." My question is: how did he know it was the Lord's Day? Which calendar did he check? Inside, there is a witness of the Spirit, saying, "This is My Son's day. Get up, son." He got up and he was in the Spirit, "And I heard the voice of the Lord like a trumpet. The trumpet sound from there will go from *Revelation* to all the way till *Revelation 22* and finally, he will see – the Spirit and the Bride says, "Come." Spirit? He heard the Spirit very clearly. The last words to mankind from God written in Scripture. Are you getting it? This is the issue. Outward man is perishing but the inward man is being renewed. And how do you see your outward man? Whatever you are going through are light afflictions.

¹⁷ For our light affliction...

How can you see 60 years of suffering or 70 years of suffering or 80 years of suffering if your life was suffering? How do you see it in light of eternity? Far more exceeding and eternal weight.

...which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

So, how do you see current life? A moment. You see it. For a moment. How do you see eternal life? Like a vapour. A moment.

¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen...

We don't judge by what we see.

...but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

So, what we see in the Corona virus is very temporary. It will go. In a few weeks, it will be over. The lockdown and everything, life will go back to normal. But during that lockdown, if we have seen things that are eternal, it should not go from you. You should walk in what you have learnt of eternity during this time period. Otherwise, we will miss the eternal in the temporal. Even if you miss the temporal, it's okay but don't miss the eternal. Are we getting the picture? That is what the Bible is talking about. That is what *Colossians 3:1-2* says, we have to keep going to it and how? In the midst of all this, why are we bringing people back to the Word and not trying to preach a soft message; don't fear, let us pray. We are not doing anything like that; we are trying to get your attention back to where it belongs. We will not preach Corona but we will preach Christ. What is that?

Colossians 3:1-2

¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

That's how we should look at things. Everything changes because the Spirit of God has come in and we are being saved and that is the difference.

In *Acts 2:40-42*, the new set of people who heard the message whose hearts were cut. Let us see what happens in *Acts 2:40* onwards.

Acts 2:40-42

⁴⁰ And with many other words (This is Peter on that day) he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Come out of this world, you really want to be united with Jesus Christ then you need to get out of the world.

⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

First thing that happened to them after they got baptized and received the Spirit.

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

What do you think the apostles' doctrine was? Let's look at Acts 1:2-3. This is forty days later.

Acts 1:2-3

² until the day in which He was taken up, (that is who? Jesus Christ) after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

Through the Holy Spirit who was preaching to them all till He left about the Kingdom of God. This is happening after ten days later and do you think that the doctrine has changed? You are talking only about the kingdom and now that you are kingdom people, you have been born again, seen and entered into the kingdom come together, let us learn how to be citizens of this kingdom. We shall teach you about the life of the kingdom, while you are on earth. Kingdom people and that's what they are teaching. And the Bible says, they gathered steadfastly for the apostle's doctrine daily. Now, you have gathered daily here and online also. And people have the opportunity to gather steadfastly as long as this continues and what will we teach? About the Kingdom of God and how do we live in the kingdom even now in the flesh. We are in this body; we live for the kingdom and for the King. Why because Jesus said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." and this is the teaching of the Kingdom of God. Jesus also taught and we are also teaching. We don't teach about how to live in the world rather we teach on how to overcome the world. That is kingdom teaching. So, faith is knowledge based, it is not ignorant. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for* and if you need to hope for something you need to know what you are hoping for. *Evidence of things*, so you need to have some information about what are the things that are unseen. Even if you have not seen, does anybody doubt that there is a country called America? Except for Pastor Vijay, has anybody gone there? But do you doubt? No! Why? Because you have information. You should have the information about the kingdom and faith is knowledge based. God's knowledge and His ways, kingdom, power, grace that saved you and will keep you till the end. Your free will has not been taken away. They gathered daily; they gathered themselves, they came on their own. It's the free will involved. You are free to come and others have the free will to log in and listen. God has not taken your free will away. Now what has happened, the Spirit of God has come in and you have seen and entered the kingdom and a little bit of light has come in and you are making your choices now according to the kingdom. Free will has not taken away, we are still free beings and if we keep on choosing to go to Him, go to who? Jesus Christ, what is He able to do?

Hebrews 7:25

²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

He saves us to the uttermost from the world and the works of the law and also from ourselves. He is one husband whose ears are always open to His bride. I keep on going back to Him in word and in prayer. Constantly going back and He keeps on saving us and He will teach us through His servants who are separated unto Him. So, do your homework, you have to do our homework.

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

So, you are working it out with fear and trembling. But,

¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

So, when you believe what comes in? Grace comes in. He works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure. Whose doing the work? You and whose is the idea? His and whose is the power? His and whose is the action? Mine. The idea is His and that's why we come for the teaching of the Word of God. The power is His, you can't do it on your own.

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Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. Hearing means somebody else has spoken and it's not my idea. To start this Church was never my idea, it was His idea.

Romans 5:2

²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

What is grace? The power of God that made something happened. Saved by grace, we walk by grace and also live by it but for that first you have to hear and if we continue to do like this. If we continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, keeping the grace, hearing and continue step by step and when we fail we repent, that's also a part of grace's work. If you write an answer paper and the teacher gives you marks and gives you the paper back without ever writing anything on it you don't know where you went wrong and where you went right. You got out of 100. So, what is the 50 that I am right and what is the 50 that I am wrong. So, if you fall also it is the Holy Spirit that convicts you, it is He that brings you to repentance and it is He that gives you the grace. So, both sides are there and if you continue like that what will happen?

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

²³Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify...

First, you need to have peace, being justified by faith we have peace with God. So, earlier it was not the God of peace for us it was always the God of wrath. Now that you are saved you know you are child and He is a God of peace. When a father, if he spans you also, it's for his peace and your peace.

²³Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If He is coming at the end of lockdown, we may get absolutely fooled. We may be prepared during this lockdown and He doesn't come. Two days after the lockdown is over and everything is normal He may come. That's what happened in Noah's generation and Lot's generation. He didn't come when there was problem but He came when there was no problem. Because when there is problem everybody is prepared, everybody is praying, repenting, fasting. Corona virus has created a mahol (environment) in the whole world. But after 2-3 weeks if it's over and if everything becomes normal, stock markets are shooting up and industries starts to open up and lots of countries says that we are shifting out factories from China because we don't trust them anymore into India we are bringing many opportunities and carriers. Then we are buying and selling, sowing and planting then He comes. Then we are caught like the deer in the headlight, unprepared and this is the problem. That's exactly what is written. This is the time when everybody is prepared but that's not what He said. That's why we are using this time looking at Scriptures I'm absolutely sure He won't come now. But I know this is the time given to prepare the people or be prepared when it is least expected. So, faith is a life.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

²⁴He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

If you go to Him, He is able to save you to the uttermost. Keep on going to Him and a day is coming when your body, soul and spirit is made blameless. He is Spirit so He sees our spirit that way; I am body so I see my body and soul and keeps us blameless on that day of His coming. So that I have fulfilled the requirement of the law in my life and I am perfect and blameless in His sight and that's all enough and it doesn't matter what others think. The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and that's all it matters so please remember faith is a life not an incident. Wedding is a day and marriage is a life. Everybody especially in India prepares for the wedding, it should be called as the big fat not Greek but Indian wedding because everybody prepares and spends through their nose for their wedding. But very few people prepare for their marriage. Baptism is a day and life with Chris is to live after baptism. There is a marriage, *John 14:15-16* and when we marry people off this is the covenant we make right? Richer or poorer. Pastor Vijay was preaching in the morning. How do you say? In riches or poverty, in sickness and in health, for better or for worst until death do us apart. That is your marriage covenant not a baptism covenant.

John 14:15-16

¹⁵"If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

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There is no escaping Him. This is not a marriage that dissolves in divorce or death. This is forever and ever and this is from where we get, "They lived happily ever after." Eternal truths, temporarily never. We need to understand baptism is a day officially but it is a life not even a lifetime. It is forever. That's why after you have saved, especially after you have saved. In Hosea 4:6, God says about His people and let us internalize though it is Old Covenant but as New Covenant people.

Hosea 4:6

⁶ ***My people*** (who are we? His people) ***are destroyed for lack of knowledge.***

You really don't know Me and you are not searching to know who I am. Faith is not an incident, it is a life. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.* Knowledge of what or rather whom? *2 Peter 3:18*, Peter's last words to the Church.

2 Peter 3:18

¹⁸ ***but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen***

What is grace? Grace is the power of God that comes through faith and what is faith? The knowledge of God that's unseen. So, He says, "When you grow in the knowledge of God, you actually have more access to grace because grace comes in according to your faith and faith is the knowledge of God." *Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things unseen.* And who is the actual unseen? It is God and His realm. You have knowledge about God and His kingdom, so when your faith increases that is the knowledge of God increases you have now more access to grace which is directly proportional. You live a life of faith meaning you'll live a life sustained by grace. This is the salvation story; you don't go back to the law and world. You repent and come back.

Remember in *Luke 17*, I will close with a few verses. Remember Jesus and His disciples.

Luke 17:5-6

⁵ ***And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."***

And what did He say?

⁶ ***So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.***

They said, please increase our faith. You know what He actually says, if you have and that's not enough what you have. He says; let me tell you about something, "If you have faith as a mustard seed."

Do you know the power of faith? Even if you have, let us say one percent of the true knowledge of the true God, do you know what that knowledge can do for you if you apply it? That's what faith is. Faith is the true knowledge of the true God. God is saying; let me tell you sons-His disciples. Even if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, actual exact true knowledge of the true God, only little it is like if you don't know the 99.99% but you know 0.1%. Do you know if you put that into practice what can happen to you? My people perish because of lack of knowledge. I will prove to you from Scripture.

Jonah 3:6-10, these are Gentiles who heard a message and didn't know this God at all. All they know about this God is how He destroyed different nations and their own nation has been destroyed but they hear a message and it comes to the king of Nineveh.

Jonah 3:6-10

⁶ ***Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,***

Who is this? The king of Nineveh and he heard a terrible message from a prophet of Israel.

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Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. ⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

So, we know that he really doesn't know this God and keep your animals fasting. So, he doesn't really have the knowledge of God but he has some knowledge of God.

⁹ Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? ¹⁰ Then God saw their works that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

This is a Gentile king and that is why you have to preach the Word even to the Gentiles and not mollycoddle them.

"If My people who are called by My name." You have to say, "Corona Virus is a judgment from my God and I am not ashamed of it." You have to say that, "Because my God is control of every event that happens." If the hair that falls from the head, He knows. Then, He knows everything that is happening. So, don't tell me that He missed the Corona Virus. "Oh my gosh! I was caught by surprise and what can we do? I hope the Chinese or the Americans could find a vaccine. I don't know what to do." God is not surprised by anything. Nothing escapes and everything is allowed and planned by Him to bring a people to repentance. When Nineveh came to repentance, a Gentile nation came to repentance when a believer preached the Word to them. He didn't have full knowledge of God, he just had a tiny percentage of it and that also he is not sure. He says, who knows because he has no clue because their gods are not like that. Who knows, let us repent. What is Jonah's message? Forty days and no more. He went on a fast, turned from their wicked way and gave an order, everybody sackcloth and fasting. And God relented. You think the prophet was happy? He was mad, he was an angry prophet. His reaction in *Jonah 4:1-2*. You see the Gentiles only assumed but Jonah knew. Their assumption was right; they did not know the God. Like he threw it and it hit the target. But Jonah knew.

Jonah 4:1-2

¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.

It is like me leading worship, suddenly, the keys came in and I sang my voice was good and I worshipped. "Pastor, why did you not lead worship all this time?" I say, "It's a fluke." That is what happened. The king and the people of Nineveh repented. It's a fluke they really did not know but this guy knew. Look at him.

² So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; (Now he is justifying his rebellion) for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.

So, you knew Him right Jonah? Now, I will give you five verses all from *Matthew*. *Matthew 9:27, 15:22, 17:15, 20:30*. Let us read the first one.

Matthew 9:27

²⁷ When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

Matthew 15:22

²² And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

Matthew 17:15

¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

Matthew 20:30

³⁰ And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"

What is one common word in all of it? They had only knowledge about the mercy of God and that was enough. God stopped. "Your knowledge about Me concerning mercy is absolutely right. I am a merciful God. You have appealed to My mercy. I will stop and I will show My hand to you." Are you getting the picture? That's all they knew. That's all they needed. That's why I'm saying – even if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, your faith is based on the truth knowledge of God. How did we all get saved? Because we were told to appeal to the mercy of God. Everyone who is saved is saved only because of the mercy of God. That's why we preach the Gospel. What is something true about our God? Our God does not need appeasement; He doesn't need bribes; He doesn't need offerings; appeal to His mercy. That is what He really is – a merciful God, a gracious God who hates judgment. It doesn't matter what you are. You could be Manasseh who filled the streets of Jerusalem with blood. You were put hooks in a nose and was taken by the Babylonian king and then, when you appeal to God's mercy, He restored you and you don't understand this God. When you were taken to the bottom of the sea in the belly of the fish, when you cried out to God, He took you out. You have been crucified and when all of them are screaming and this guy is also screaming and in the midst of your pain, you looked at him and you cried out in mercy, "Lord, when You go to Your Kingdom, remember me." God said right away, "You shall be with Me in Paradise." You know why? This is the great knowledge of God – He is merciful. And that is His greatest characteristic that is shown to man. That is why He says one thing, "Please don't misunderstand – in My dealings with fallen human beings, I am incredibly merciful. Therefore, be merciful and you shall obtain mercy." He did not say, "Be holy and you shall obtain holiness." He did not say, "Be perfect and you shall obtain perfection." He says, "When it comes to mercy, be very careful. Every breath you take is the result of My mercy." And that's the true knowledge of God. All they did was appeal to His mercy. They did not know the law. They did not know the Torah. They did not know anything but they knew one thing – the God of Israel is merciful. Faith comes from hearing. The Holy Spirit inside does the Word outside – both came together and He stopped and they got healed. Mercy, mercy, mercy. You need to understand that. That is our God.

As I close, balance it always – there is righteousness but there is mercy. If there is no righteousness, you don't need mercy. That's why Abraham is very clear, "Lord, if there are 40 righteous men, will You show mercy?" He said, "Yes." He is not saying. "Lord, they are all unmerciful, terrible people. But anyway, show mercy, Lord." He didn't say that. Righteousness and mercy. And again, in the balance, be careful.

James 2:13

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

But if judgment is not preached, you don't need mercy. That's why, first, we preach – "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near." You know what that is? It is judgment. "The Kingdom of God is near" – that is judgment. "Repent" – that is the appeal for mercy. Fall at God's feet. Kiss the Son and you are free. You don't have to do one thing. Just repent, believe and get in and then, He will tell you what to do. This is the Gospel. True knowledge of God. That is what He is telling His disciples and that is what He is telling through the prophet Hosea, "*My people perish because of lack of knowledge.*" So, first, we need to know about the judgment of God and the mercy of God. And God will say, "You know these both and you will appeal to My mercy; mercy will always triumph over judgment. That's My nature." Mercy will always triumph over judgment. Manasseh has been judged because he messed the testimony of Israel but he appealed to God's mercy. Ahab walked around and repented and God said, "You look at Ahab." He says, "Okay. Forgiven." Later, when he killed the other guy, Naboth, he obtained mercy but he did not extend mercy. "So, I will finish him off now." This is something unbelievable to a man under the law. The man under here in the world, he wants mercy without judgment. "Please don't judge my things. I only want mercy but leave me in my pigpen, please. I like my sin. I love my sin. I enjoy my sin but when I die, I want to go to Heaven." They appeal to a God who is only merciful and not righteous. The legalistic is only righteous and not merciful and God says, "You've got it. I'm right in the middle. I'm righteous and I'm merciful and I'm able to balance both. I'm both the Just and the Justifier. How do you know that I'm righteous? Because I judge sin on My Son. How do you know that I'm merciful? I justify every one of you who believed in My Son. I didn't compromise anywhere." This is the sum total of the Gospel and it never changes. It never, ever changes. To all my brethren who have been listening, this is the Gospel. This is the Gospel of grace. Don't let them take you into this side, you come under the curse. Don't go to that side, you come under another curse. You are dead while living if you are living for pleasure. You are cursed if you go under the law. It is a life. It is not an incident. Incidents are there in the Bible to tell you the reality of faith. 8 incidents in the Gospel according to John but that is not what faith should be in our

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lives. “Oh, I remember when God did these things.” Are you not living by faith? So, for many Christians, faith are only incidents; it is not a life. That’s not what God said, “You are saved in the Holy Spirit.” It’s the Holy Spirit living. That’s why He is called ‘Ru-ah’. Imagine somebody says, “I breathe three times a day.” People will ask, “Are you alive?” You breathe all the time. You are not even aware of it. You are breathing in and breathing out. He says, “That’s the life of the Spirit.” You don’t even have to think. You hear and you obey. And what He hasn’t spoken to you, you go by what you have heard but He has already spoken. A lot of things, He has already spoken. You don’t have to hear it again. Go by it. But if He tells you something else, do it immediately. And suddenly, you realize that you are living by faith and you are not going by the letter of the law. It kills. That’s why the Pharisees always killed. Religious zealots always kill. The Spirit brings life. The life of the Spirit. Simple message but not so simple. You go under the water, you died. When you come up, you are a new person but you realize – you are not so new. The old man is still there. So, in the same *Romans 6*, what does Paul say that you should reckon?

Romans 6:11

¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin...

I died to myself every day and I’m living by faith. I died every day. That’s what happens to Srikanth before he got married. When he got married, he realizes, “I have to go this way.” And then, he realizes, “I can’t go like before. Swapna is there. I need to go to work. I will come back late.” No. “Swapna is there.” Work is the same. Reality is not. Work hasn’t changed. We still do the same works we did in the world but the reality has changed. We realized we have covenanted with somebody. The reality has changed. You still finish work at 6 o’ clock. Now, you don’t come back the way like earlier. You are racing back home because you know – something has changed. Outwardly, nothing seems to have changed. Inward reality has changed. You know you have been covenanted to Christ Jesus. So, you go into the world. Yes, you have to go into the world but you are not looking to the left or to the right. You are going shopping. Yes, you have already made your list. You made your list. You should be like me if you go to the shopping mall. If I go to a supermarket, I go to the same one. I don’t go to two different ones. By the time I’ve gone to 3-4 places, I know where everything is. So, the 4th time I go, it takes me 5 minutes to shop because I know the soap is here, this is here; I know this is here. I pick it and go out. Because if you look around, you will want to buy things which you don’t need. Discount – Take 1, get 2. All these things are into your eyes. I’m talking about the supermarkets. I’m not even talking about shopping malls. I haven’t seen IKEA yet; or what is the big one here? Metro. I haven’t seen Metro. I don’t know Metro. I don’t know IKEA. I’ve heard about it. It doesn’t bother me at all. I have no loss at all. I’m talking about simple examples. If you go further and further, we become worshippers of other gods. When you look at young people, they say they are believers. They say they are baptised in the Holy Spirit and you see them standing like that during worship; yet, you see their Facebook or WhatsApp profile; they have shot themselves with the IPL, bowing to Kohli. They already branded themselves, “Chennai Superstars. I am Dhoni’s.” I thought you were Christ’s. I thought you belong to Christ. I thought you worshipped Christ. You don’t even realize that you have bowed to the gods of this world. You have flipped over to that side, to that other side. Or this way – you hear something; you don’t even know. Immediately, you have expressed judgment without mercy. God says, “If you do judgment without mercy, you will receive judgment without mercy.” He says, “Because – to make judgment, do you have all the facts?” No.” “Two – have you been put in a position of authority? Because you cannot judge without authority.” That’s why there’s a *Book of Judges*. Everybody did not judge. Only the judges judged. To judge, you need authority. I don’t judge the Baptist Church. It’s none of my business. Or the Methodist Church. I have been given no authority over there. I have been given authority over a Church that is placed into my hands and also, there are parameters in which I judge, into the Ecclesiastes, spiritual affairs of the Church. I don’t judge outside that. So, there is no judgment without authority. That’s why God is saying, “If you judge without mercy, you will receive judgment without mercy.” First question: should I judge or not? Am I in the place of judgment? If it is ‘no’, stay away. Two – maybe I am but do I have all the information? These are questions we need to ask. This is how it works. And this is how our lives change when the Holy Spirit comes because when the Holy Spirit comes, He will first convict of my sin; forget the world. The world in me and my sin. And then, He will show righteousness. Then, He will show judgment. Then, He will show eternal life. That’s what He does. Then, you realize – this is the Gospel. Amen?

Let’s pray.

Closing Prayer:

Father, this evening, we just thank You for this time and we thank You for this study, Lord. I pray Your children will get it into their hearts how the Gospel works. This is the Gospel of God where the power of God is manifested in salvation and we will walk by faith and we will hear, keep our ears inclined towards You; our hearts cleaned out every day so that we can hear

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clearly what the Holy Spirit and what we have already heard, You will always bring it into our remembrance. You will store it in our hearts, our minds. So, we don't have to hear that again and again, Lord. But our eyes and our hearts will be inclined towards Heaven, O Lord. So, we read these signs correctly and we respond to the signs correctly. There's only one of the signs. There are many yet to come, Lord. Help us to read and react correctly because we are people of the Kingdom. We are not going back and flirting with the law or flirting with the world; for the Spirit within us envies intensely because the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit that birthed Jesus through Mary. So, He is the Father. And as a Father, He is very zealous about His Son's Bride. Help us to know that, O Lord, and put blinkers in our spiritual eyes. Like He told Joshua, not turning to the left or to the right but keeping in the narrow path. And when we stumble and fall and the Spirit convicts, run back, O Lord; because the one who lives for pleasure is dead when they are living. When he or she goes back to the works of the law, he comes under a curse. "My just shall live by faith." For there is a righteousness of God that is revealed by faith unto faith. That's the only way, Lord. There's no other way. I commit all Your dear ones into Thy hands and I plead the Blood of Jesus over them and I pray they will continue to walk that narrow path, continue to hear from You, continue to forgive, continue to extend mercy and yet, judge themselves, O Lord; because Your Word says, "If we judge ourselves, we would not be judged with the world." Thank You, Father. The rest of the night, we commit into Thy hands. Watch over us. Protect us. Preserve us. Keep us. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

Benediction:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with each one of us.

For all the new believers, this is what we call as 'teaching'. This is not preaching; this is teaching. You heard preaching. You hear teaching. In preaching, a lot of emotions come. In teaching, it's like Derek Prince. Okay? The Bible talks about both preaching and teaching. You had a teaching session.