

Stand in the Grace of God

(Sabbath During UB)

Fred R. Coulter—April 10, 2004

Greetings, brethren! During this Feast of Unleavened Bread we need to ask: How do **you** stand? *I put it **you** rather than **we**, because it applies to each individual directly!*

- How do we stand before God?
- How does God look at us?
- How does God deal with us?
- What is He doing with us?
- What is the process of conversion
- What is the process of overcoming, and all the things that are pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

First of all, let's look and see how God views the world!

Romans 3:9: “What then? Are we of ourselves better?...” *He is talking about Jews **vs** Gentiles!*

“...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin” (v 9).

- that's a problem and difficulty with the world
- that's a problem and difficulty with human beings

We all have the law of sin and death in us, and we have to fight over sin, we have to overcome sin. **But we cannot do it without the Spirit of God**—that's the key—*with the Spirit of God we can!*

*But here in the world, v 10: “Exactly as it is written: ‘For there is not a righteous one—not even one! There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!’” (vs 10-12). *He is talking about Jews and Gentiles, both!**

We see that in the world today. With this movie **The Passion of The Christ** by Mel Gibson, **it's going to rip apart the cloak of deceit that Judaism has cast upon Jesus!** They're going to have to, as well as every other human being, **understand that** what I am reading here in the way how human beings are **is what killed Christ!**

Verse 12: ““They have all gone out of the way... [of God] ...together they have *all* become depraved....”

That's the ultimate end of living in sin and lawlessness, as we have seen with the homosexual marriages in San Francisco and elsewhere.

“...There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and ***the way of peace they have not known***.... [the insanity of radical Islam; it creates insane, unmerciful, hateful killers] ...**There is no fear of God before their eyes**” (vs 12-18).

Verse 19: “Now then, we know that whatever the Law says...” ***The Law is what's going to judge us!***

Every human being in the world is being judged constantly by the Laws of God. God has given freedom, so you can go choose and do what you want. But know this, ***you are being judged by what you do all the time!*** You suffer the cursing for doing evil, and you can reap the blessings for doing good.

However, ***in setting before all humankind life and death, good and evil, blessing and cursing, He commands us all to choose!*** Cursing is what the world has chosen. The reason God can do that is because He has His Laws, which are always active. Just like the law of gravity. There are spiritual laws and ***here are spiritual and physical penalties for breaking them!***

“...it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (19).

That's the position we find ourselves in when God begins to call us and deal with us. When God begins to open our eyes and understand what we are like and what human nature is, and bring us to repentance so we can understand about Christ.

Verse 23: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...”

Now what do we do? We're all sinners like this, aren't we? ***The only way out is through Christ! No other religion, no other way!*** And it has to be the ***true*** Christ, because there are ***false Christ's***, there are ***false brethren*** and there are ***false ministers!*** And that is ***the majority!***

As Jesus said, ‘Narrow is the gate and straight is the way that leads to life. But broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads to death.’ That’s where the world is going, especially now in the end-time as these events are coming upon us with great fury.

What is the solution? *Man can’t save himself; it’s an impossibility!* Man cannot do what is right. He can do some things that are right, but what ends up happening? Much of the good that human beings try to do turns out to be evil, because they don’t understand the way of God. Because that is so, God has offered repentance ***IF*** people will but repent and seek God. ***IF not that***, then judgment will be executed upon them. So let’s read the solution:

Verse 24: “*But* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus... [that is the only way. Christ died for all our sins] ...Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood...” (vs 24-25).

Now we’re going to see some of the conditions that God has given in order for that to be applied to our lives.

“...in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past” (v 25).

God is willing to forgive. God is willing to put the sins aside, provided there is repentance. And remember what Jesus said when He talked to His generation. He said that if He would have preached what He is preaching and Sodom and Gomorrah, and they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, and they would have remained unto this day.

A lot of people who think that they are good and have substituted their religious ways instead of following the Word of God—which is symbolized by eating the unleavened bread and living by every Word of God—they have a worse sin, because they think they are righteous. The truth is we need to understand that ***we can only come to God on His terms!*** We can only overcome sin with:

- the Word of God
- the sacrifice of Christ
- the Holy Spirit of God

It can’t be overcome any other way!

Verse 26: “Through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the One Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus.”

What is the end result of that, as we covered on the first day of Unleavened Bread?

Verse 31: “Are we, then, abolishing *the* Law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing *the* Law.”

The truth is this: ***IF*** you repent of your sins, which means turning from the way of sin, and going to the way of life, ***THEN*** you have to stop disobeying and you have to begin obeying. God is not going to justify anyone who repents and continues in sin, because that repentance is the repentance of the world. That is the sorrow of the world. That doesn’t lead to true Godliness, because:

- you have to believe God in order to receive that justification
- you have to believe that Jesus Christ was crucified for you
- you have to believe that your sins crucified Christ
 - this is what we have to be before God
 - this is our attitude
 - this is how our lives have to be changed.

Romans 4:21—*talking about Abraham and his faith*: “For he was fully persuaded that what He [Christ] has promised, He is also able to do.”

Not only in causing Isaac to be conceived and born, but in everything in his entire life. You ***believe*** God, that what He has said He is able to do. The situation is this, too: ***IF you believe that God*** is able to forgive your sins through the sacrifice of Christ, ***you have to be fully persuaded, and you have to live that way!***

Verse 22: “As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness.”

And as we saw, God gives—imputes—to you the gift of righteousness, which is fantastic because we stand before God righteous. Not because of our righteousness, but because of the righteousness and the sacrifice of Christ. Yes, we are to keep the commandments of God and walk in His ways. You cannot continue to stand in the grace of God if you live a sinful, lawless life.

Verse 23: “But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead; Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification” (vs 23-25).

The long and short of everything that I have talked about here is this: ***when you are justified you are put in right standing with God through Christ!*** He imputes to you the righteousness of Jesus Christ to inspire you to love Him, to grow, to overcome, to

keep His commandments, and to walk in His ways. He doesn't impute the righteousness of Jesus to you so you can continue living a life of sin. It will never be imputed.

Now let's see what Paul is also writing—this is very important—so that we understand: **How do we stand before God?** I know everyone of us are convicted of sin when we sin, because we still sin. He was raised for our justification. Now we will cover all of the various aspects of this as we go along.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, **having been justified by faith...**”—*because you believe!*

- you believe in the sacrifice of Christ
- you believe that His sacrifice paid for all of your sins
- you believe that God is able to save you
- you believe that God's way is right
- you believe that His commandments are true and ought to be obeyed and kept
- you believe that you ought to live by every word of God

*All of those have to do with belief! That's by faith! **You are justified by faith!** We will see it is also **the faith of Christ** of what He did so that He could provide this for you. Because of that:*

“...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (v 1).

- How do we stand before God? ***In peace!***
- How do we stand before God? ***In righteousness!***
- How do we stand before God? ***Blameless!***

That's the whole meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

Verse 2: “Through Whom **we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand...**”

For doing this video, we have some umbrella reflectors that bring the light and put the light in the right place. Consider that the grace of God is like a great umbrella that you are standing under, from which comes:

- the love of God
- the forgiveness
- the peace
- the belief
- every spiritual aspect
- the fruits of the Spirit

You are **standing in this grace** meaning that—as we saw on the first day of Unleavened Bread—when

and if you sin and ***you repent, your sins are forgiven!*** It is a continuous propitiation, which means *a continual source of forgiveness and atonement*, provided that you are:

- repenting and yielding to God
- desiring to walk in His way
- having His Laws written into your heart and mind

It's an overcoming process! You stand in this grace!

“...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God.... [not of what we do, but of what God does] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations...” (vs 2-3).

As we will cover on the last day of Unleavened Bread, *there are going to be trials! There will be difficulties that will arise!*

“...realizing that **tribulation brings forth endurance...**” (v 3). *All of this is the process of God!*

Remember that it says, ***‘The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.’*** *This produces the endurance!*

“...and **endurance brings forth character...**” (vs 3-4). *That's what God wants us to have, the very character of God called Godliness!*

“...**And character brings forth hope....** [one whole package altogether] ...And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us” (vs 4-5).

We're going to focus in on this, the love of God being poured into our hearts, and how this is to:

- change us
- convert us
- draw us to God continually

Then he rehearses that there was a time we were without strength, and Christ died for the ungodly, and so forth.

Verse 10: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life.**”

Because He is our High Priest at the right hand of God, where we can go boldly before the Throne of God to receive grace in time of help and need, and so forth.

Verse 11: “And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation”

Because of this, God does not want us to go around feeling guilty or accusing Him. In accusing God, what do I mean by accusing God? *Blaming God for your difficulties!* Don’t ever blame God for your difficulties. He’s trying to save you from them. Always take it before God and pray about it; ask for:

- His help
- His Spirit
- His forgiveness
- His strength
- His understanding

so you can grow and overcome!

Let’s see, not only is it the love of God that gives us the empowerment through His Holy Spirit, but we also see that what Christ did was because He loved us. Concerning our former self, concerning the old self, as we covered on the first Holy Day, you are to put out all the sins that you have there. Gal. 2:20 tells us what this is like:

Galatians 2:20: [We] “...have been crucified with Christ...”—*through the operation of baptism.*

You have been conjoined into His death, meaning that *as Christ was crucified and was beaten as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, His sacrifice individually applies to you when you’re baptized!* Crucified with Christ; that’s how that is done.

“...*yet, I live*.... [we are brought out of the watery grave and we live, even though the old man died] ...*Indeed, it is no longer I*...” (v 20). *Our life is different!* It’s not *I, me and mine*. It is:

- yes, Lord
- yes, Father
- Your way
- Your Truth
- Your Spirit
- Your love

“...but Christ lives in me...” (v 20).

That’s how you stand before God! That’s how God is able to impute the righteousness of Christ to you. That is how God is able to give to you the righteousness that comes through the sacrifice of Christ, *because Christ lives in you!* That’s what it is with the Spirit of God.

“...For the life that I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (v

20).

- Did Christ have faith when He was on earth? *Of course!*
- Did He have faith before He even came to the earth? *Yes! Faith that the plan of God was going to work the way that God wanted it to work!*

With the power of God’s Spirit in you, *you receive the very faith of Jesus Christ*. That’s what it means to be unleavened and receive the Spirit of God. Not only the faith of God, but the love of God and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit. *The very faith of the Son of God!* It was His faith in going to the cross, enduring the shame and everything that we have seen concerning it:

- to save us
- to save you
- to put us in right standing with God
- How do you stand before God? *You stand as Christ stands!*
- What should this mean for us?
- What should we do?

Let’s see what Jesus said we are to do; *this is the goal!* We don’t start out this way, but this is how we are to act and finish. What we are going to see today is that *the ultimate love of God is the goal* for which we are headed.

John 15:9: “As the Father has loved Me...” [They had perfect love] ...I also have loved you...”

You have to understand, *Christ loves you!* Do you feel loved by God? *You need to, through the power of:*

- God’s Spirit
- His mercy
- His kindness
- His goodness

“...live in My love” (v 9). *That’s how we are to live!*

We are to walk in faith, believe in hope, live in love! So here it is right here, to “...live in My love.”

Verse 10: “If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love...” *The contrary is, if you don’t keep His commandments, you’re not living in His love!*

If you love God the Father and Jesus Christ, you’re going to do what They say; that’s true love. That is believing love! That is faithful love!

“...just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.... [that’s the

whole goal, the way to eternal life through Christ] ...These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you **love one another, as I have loved you**" (vs 10-12).

In turn, this love is not to be just consumed on ourselves, but this is to give us the love and the connection with Christ and God the Father so we can love each other. Of course, that is a task that is always necessary. God has called us from such a diverse background and things. All the brethren that we come in contact with are probably not those whom we would personally select as our friends. *But they are the ones that God has personally selected to be our friends and our brothers and our sisters!* So therefore, we are to love each other as Christ has loved us.

Verse 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends." *That's what Christ did!*

How do you stand before God? *In faith, in love, and as a friend!* Think of that; that's how you stand before God. That's why He doesn't want us to have guilty consciences and things like this.

Let's see how we are to live in this world. Since God has called us out of the world, we are not to be part of the world. We have to live in the world. Remember that Jesus on the Passover night said,

Father, I pray for these who are in the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should protect them from the evil one.

What is our response to the world, spiritually?

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

What God has done to call you, to give you His Spirit, to love you, and to do these things through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we have to be completely belonging to God.

I think one of the biggest problems that we have in the church today is too many people are playing 'straddle-religion.' What do I mean by that? *They have one foot in the world and one foot in the Church,* and they're sort of straddling between the two. They have just enough religion so they feel comfortable, and just enough religion so if things go wrong they can run to God and seek His help.

- don't be a 'straddle-religionist'
- don't have one foot in the world

Because everything in the world is going to be destroyed!

What we have to understand is that anything that is in the world, any physical thing that is there, ***unless you have the Spirit of God and use the things and live by the Word of God,*** all the physical things end up in destruction anyway. Look at the movie, The Passion of the Christ by Mel Gibson. When they asked him why he did it? He said:

Well, I had money, I had fame, I had fortune, I had success, *but I was empty.*

That's exactly what it is talking about: **Love not the world!**

Verse 16: "Because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 16-17). *This is the charter on how we are to live and walk!*

1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light... [to walk the way that Christ did; He never sinned] ...*then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin."

That's how you stand before God! Of course, you confess your sins to God.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins, **He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (vs 7-9).

Our lives are kind of like what you would say is housecleaning. Everyone knows that if you clean your house once, guess what you have to do? *You have to clean it the next day!* And you have to clean it the next day. And every once in a while there is a time when you have to go through and sort of just purge the whole house. That's why we have this. That's why we're able to come to God, to have our sins forgiven. You have your sins forgiven today, *that doesn't cover tomorrow!* There's another cleaning that may need to be done tomorrow.

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar... [because He says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God] ...and His word is not in us."

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet,* if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only,

but also for *the sins of* the whole world... [according to God's plan] ...And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments" (vs 1-3).

That's what it's all about with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, **a renewing of our relationship with God**, having our 'spring housecleaning' *spiritually*. That's why we have to get leaven out of our homes, to show us that just as we have to get the leaven out of our homes **we have to get the sin out of our lives!** Just like you have to use cleaning compounds, use brooms and vacuums, and have to wash, scrub and wax, **all of that is showing that in type that it has to be using the instruments that God has given to overcome and to change! To have your sins forgiven through Christ, and to walk and keep His commandments!**

- let's see what the whole process is all about
- let's see what we are to do
- let's see how we are to do this

This will tie in with what we covered on the first day!

Ephesians 4:17: "So then, I declare and testify this in *the* Lord that you are no longer to walk even as the rest *of the* Gentiles... [we are to walk in the way of God; Christ said, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.'] ...are walking, in *the* vanity of their minds... [they cut themselves off from God] ...having *their* understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts" (vs 17-18).

That's the way the world has been. **God has called us out of the world!** These are the things that Paul is saying you're not to do this any longer.

Verse 19: "They have cast off all feelings, and have given themselves up to licentiousness, **to work every uncleanness with insatiable desire.**"

All you have to do is just look out and see all these things that are going on in the world. You see that's exactly what is happening. I think it's kind of fitting to show the debauchery of it. That always before Ash Wednesday, which begins Lent for the Roman Catholic Church, they have Mardi Gras, which is described right here: "...**licentiousness, to work every uncleanness with insatiable desire.**"

Verse 20: "But you have not so learned Christ... [no, you haven't] ...If indeed you have heard Him..." (vs 20-21). **Not of Him**, but **heard Him** through the words that He has written, through the Spirit that He has given.

"...and have been taught in Him, according

to *the Truth* in Jesus: That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man ... [continually doing it; here's the problem with the old man]: ...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts" (vs 21-22).

Isn't that true? Every time you find yourself caught in a sin, what have you done? *You've deceived yourself! You've lied to yourself!* You have to go and repent to God and put that away. Sometimes some of our sins are kind of like mold, you clean it off. Mold is leaven! You clean it off and everything looks good, and, lo and behold, you go back there again, and here, it's grown back again! You know, like the black mold in a shower, you clean and scrub and get that all out. You use chemicals, brushes, compounds, and you hose it down with high powered hoses. You clean it all up, and guess what? It comes back. ***That's just like human nature!*** So you put it off, *because it's* "**...corrupt according to deceitful lust.**"

When you are putting it off, what do you do then? God has made our mind this way through the Spirit of God, that

Verse 23: "And that you **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**..." *That's what God is doing, renewing!*

Not only are you cleansed from your sin, but you see, being cleansed from your sins is only half the story. It's just like Jesus said of the man who had the demon cast out of him. He didn't do what he was supposed to do, so the demon came back and found the house clean, swept and garnished. But there was no defense! The house may have been clean, *but he didn't put anything in!* So, the demon went out and got seven others and came back and repossessed him. The end was worse than the beginning ***because the man did not renew his mind!*** This means *continually* renewed.

"...be renewed in the spirit of your mind... [you're to put off the old man] ...and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth" (vs 23-24).

Now the thing that's important is this, and always remember: ***Conversion is creation! God is creating Christ in you!*** That's why Paul said in:

- Colossians 1:27: "...the hope of glory."
- Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus."

That's how you renew it! How is it done mechanically?

- through study

You have to feed your mind on the Word of God

- through prayer
- through the exercise of the Holy Spirit of God
- you walk in Truth

That's how you renew your mind!

- How did your mind get so messed up before God called you and converted you? *Because you continually practiced the things that weren't right!*
- Isn't that true?
- How are you going to renew it? *By continually:*
 - ✓ putting *out* the old man
 - ✓ putting *aside* the practices of sin
 - ✓ put *in* the practices of righteousness
 - ✓ walk *in* the way of God.

That's how it's done! That's how you're renewed!
God is literally *recreating your mind to have the mind of Christ!*

- to create the character in you
- to create the love in you
- to create hope in you
- to create faith in you

We'll see all of this in just a little bit. *So it's quite a process! It is a process!* This is not something that's done instantaneously.

This is where so many Christian-professing religions get completely off base. Because they *feel* that if they have their sins forgiven, everything is fine. **NO!** That's good, that's fine, but that's only the start. Let me liken it this way: Suppose you're going to go on a trip. And you get your car all tuned up and repaired, and the oil changed, the filter changed, and everything. You're all ready to go. It comes on the day to go on the trip. You get in the car and you start it. You let the engine run, and you sit there. You let the engine run. You sit there. You haven't done anything. You had the car prepared, but you're not going in the way you need to go.

So likewise with the forgiveness of sin. The forgiveness of sin, and baptism, and receiving the Holy Spirit is the start. Now you gotta go! So, just like the car, unless you put it in gear and drive it, 'you ain't going anywhere'! You might feel good sitting in the car. It might sound good while it's sitting there idling. It might look good because it's all polished up. But it's going no place, because you're not using it the way it should be done.

This is what God wants you to do. He wants you to ***let Him, with His Spirit, create in you Righteousness and Holiness of the Truth.*** That's how He's able to do it, ***to write His laws and His***

commandments in your heart and your mind in your inward part! One thing to remember, never forget this: ***as a man thinks in his heart, so he is!***

(break)

I'm talking about *creating the Righteousness and Holiness in you!* It is done

- by Truth
- by God's Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth from the God of Truth
- to put truth in your mind, to put the Word of God in your mind

What do you have to get out of it? You have to get out of it all the clutter that you've programmed in it all your life.

In this creation that God is doing in you, you have to participate in it. Because He is not going to give you a brain transplant. He is going to give you a renewing of your spirit, a renewing of your mind, which is a process.

Ephesians 4:25 *talks about this:* "Therefore... [because of what has all gone on before] ...let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his neighbor, because we are members of one another."

This is putting away human nature, carnal behavior. This is your part in the process. In other words, if you are not willing to put these things away, then is God going to be willing to create His Holy, righteous character in you if you don't do your part? *I doubt it!*

Verse 26: "*When you become angry...*" *It doesn't say that you're not to be angry. But here are the guidelines!*

"...**do not sin**..." There is an anger over things that are wrong, there is an anger that can come up, which is righteous indignation, which is separate from the anger of sin. If you get angry, don't sin. There is another limitation:

"...**Do not let the sun go down on your anger**" (v 26). *In other words, by time sun comes to go down, get over it!*

It's important why it says "...the sun go down..." If you go to bed with all the turmoil and anger on your mind:

- you're going to lay there
- it's going to fester
- it's going to get worse
- you're going to toss and turn
- you are going to feel miserable
- you are going to get more angry

and you're right back into doing all the carnal things again!

When you are angry and sin, this gives you justification for whatever you want to do in retaliation you want to take. So, God says by sundown, cool it.

Here's the reason; v 27: "Neither give place to the devil"—because you give an opening for him! As we saw on the first day, he is like a roaring lion going about seeking who he may devour. You're giving place to the devil. He comes along and says:

Oh, you're angry. You need that. You are so right. Ah, yes, that other person is as bad or worse than you think.

Don't give place to the devil!

Verse 28: "Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working at what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who has need. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth, but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not vex [grieve] the Holy Spirit of God..." (vs 28-30).

The Holy Spirit is working with you to create the righteousness and the Holiness of Truth in you. These things are preventing it from being done. These kinds of behaviors are grieving the Holy Spirit. You're fighting and resisting God. That's what he is saying.

God wants you to be renewed. God wants to create these things in you. But you have to be cooperative, and you have to work to get the evil things out. He will give you the power to get them out. Now then, here are other things to get rid of:

Verse 30: "And do not vex the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice; and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you" (vs 30-32).

There's one thing that is true, **you can never develop faith or hope or love unless you forgive!** We have already covered this just in the recent past. There is another key that is important: **If you don't forgive, God won't forgive you either!** Human beings are like this: ***all of us want God to forgive us, but not him, or her!*** Always remember that you have to have forgiveness in order to be forgiven.

Eph. 5 shows the process by which God is doing this. Satan and you have created in your mind,

along with the law of sin and death that you have in you, all of the sin that is in your mind. Remember, **as a man thinks in his heart, so he is!** That's what you were when God called you.

When you repent and have your sins forgiven and are baptized and have the laying on of hands for the receipt of the Holy Spirit, that's a start. All the things that you programmed into your mind are still there. So, these need to be cleaned out. It's a process. It's something you have to work at.

Ephesians 5:3: "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints."

There are things that you're absolutely not to tolerate and not allow. And if you get yourself into any circumstances such as fornication or sexual immorality, Paul has one remedy: flee fornication. That is, get up and run away from it. Because it's going to nab you and take you down for sure.

Verse 4: "Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God" (vs 4-5).

What he is doing he is setting the limits and the bounds of things that we should not do. What are we talking about here with everyone of these things? *We're talking about things that are derived from the Ten Commandments of God!*

What's one of the major problems in the Churches of God today? *Brethren who sit there and listen to nonsense and think, 'Oh, it's so nice, and all my friends are here.'* If that's the case with you, please understand, ***that is your idol!*** You put God in second place. God wants to be in first place.

Verse 6: "Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience."

The true fault of what's going on with these homosexual marriages, especially in San Francisco and elsewhere, it is because of two major things: Catholic priesthood, which is more than 50-percent homosexual, and the lies that they teach; and the Protestant lawless grace, which is, 'If it feels good, do it, and God will understand.'

Those have laid the seeds that are now sprouting in the fruit that we see in the homosexual assault against Christianity. Well deserved it needs to be assaulted, because it is wrong, vain, empty, foolish and satanic, though it uses the name of Christ

because they have those standing up there speaking vain words and smooth words and nice things.

But if you preach the Truth of God you are harsh and mean and unresilient; you don't have any understanding. Tolerance, inclusions and a occlusive society has gotten us where we are today. You need to understand that. That's why he says don't do that.

Verse 7: "Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them. For you were once darkness... [if you go back in darkness again, you're in deep trouble] ...but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of Light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth)" (vs 7-9).

In other words, the fruits of your life, the recreation and renewing of your mind with the power of the Holy Spirit is going to produce goodness, righteousness and truth. Another thing it will do is:

Verse 10: "Proving what is well pleasing to the Lord."

How do you prove what is well pleasing to the Lord? *You study the Word of God! Then you practice it in your life!* That's how you do it.

Verse 11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather, expose *them*." That's what we have to do.

Now let's see the things that we have to fight against and get rid of. Here are the things that we need to get rid of:

Galatians 5:19: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: **adultery**... [sex is a big problem everywhere in the world, **period**] ...**fornication**... [that's sexual immorality] ...**uncleanness**..."

Notice what I'm reading here are things that transgress the commandments of God. Is it any wonder the Protestants miss the point when they say you don't have to keep the 'old Law'? *Well, these are all based on the 'old Law'!* I'll tell you, *it's so old it's eternal!* It isn't ever going to change for anybody, because it's:

- God's laws
- God's commandments
- God's way

"...uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred..." (vs 19-20).

If you want a good Bible study, do this: write down all these words and then you do a concordance study, and you go through the whole Bible. It would take quite a while to do this. Find out how every one of these things are transgressions of

the laws and commandments of God and are condemned. ***These are the works of the flesh!***

"...hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God" (vs 20-21).

All of these need to be put away! But since we are still living in the flesh, what? Until we get our mind cleaned up and renewed, these things are going to be varying degrees of problems to overcome.

Of course, as long as we're in the flesh we still have these things to work on and overcome because that's part of ***the creating of true character and righteousness!*** We're going to see in just a little bit the steps that we need to take so that when we ***put out the works of the flesh*** and ***put in the fruits of the Spirit***, then there has to be a removal of one and an implanting, or a creating of the other in our mind.

Let's look at the contrast. Every one of these things here: vs 19-21 are against the commandments of God, and there are laws against every single one of them. Now the fruit, the product, the result, because we are to, as Jesus said, *'we are to bring forth fruit, and our fruit is to remain.'* Here is the pinnacle of it. Paul starts out with love first, as we will see in just a little bit. Peter ends up with love. It's a step-by-step process that starts out with love, and it also ends up with love.

Verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no Law" (vs 22-23). *You can't be transgressing the laws of God if you are doing these things!*

Verse 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh together with the passions and lusts."

Crucifying the flesh is the process of putting out, getting rid of. ***Living by the Spirit*** is to put in the way of God.

Verse 25: "If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vainglorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 25-26).

Now let's carry this a little bit further, and let's see what Peter had to say, but first let's go to one verse in:

Galatians 5:6: “Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision...”

In other words, it’s not a physical thing that you do or don’t do. There is no spirituality in circumcision or uncircumcision. That’s just a part of the body. *We’re talking about renewing the mind!* As we have seen before, *circumcise the mind, which is the spiritual conversion through Christ!* Now notice the rest of this:

“...rather, *it is the inner working of faith...* [that which is inside, not that which is outside in the flesh] ...through love” (v 6).

- *faith* cannot operate without love
- *love* cannot operate without faith
- *belief* cannot operate without hope

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the same precious faith as ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.* Grace and peace be multiplied to you...” (vs 1-2).

In other words, as you are building and developing this character, it is going to bring more grace and more peace; it will be multiplied to you.

“...in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (v 2).

It means you will know more of the Word of God, you will know more by proving that it is true. And when you prove and reprove, and prove and reprove, then what’s the old saying? *Repetition is the greatest teacher! God knows that, too!* That’s why we have the Holy Days every year, to be repeated every year so that we come and do exactly what Peter says here, that *it can be multiplied to us in the knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ!* Every year we learn more things, and we grow in grace and knowledge.

Here’s the reason why. Here’s the motivation why. Here’s the whole goal of what we are doing, and the process of the creation of the spiritual mind and Christ in us. It’s in preparation for the resurrection.

Verse 3: “According as His Divine power... [the Holy Spirit] ...has given to us all things that *pertain to life and Godliness...*”

- with the Spirit of God
- with the Word of God
- with the keeping of His commandments
- with growing and overcoming

You have all things that pertain to life and Godliness; you are complete in Christ! But that completion must be perfected.

That comes “...through the knowledge of Him Who called us by His own glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and most precious promises...” (vs 3-4).

I want you to understand something and never forget it: the first resurrection *is first for a reason!* In Hebrews Paul calls it *the superior resurrection!* We’re going to see how much superior that is *when* we are resurrected. Then we will fully comprehended it and understand it.

These are “...the greatest and most precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature...” (v 4).

To have the very mind of God, through the Holy Spirit of God, through the power of Christ in us, and doing it God’s way.

Satan came to Adam and Eve and said,

You don’t have to do it God’s way. I’ve got another way. It’s a whole lot easier. All you have to do is eat of this little old tree over here. Now you know that God didn’t tell you about that, because He’s really hiding something from you. But this is really the only way to do it, to become God.

Which is false!

God has given the true way to become partakers of the Divine nature. If you have the Holy Spirit of God in you, you are already a partaker of the Divine nature. But it must be created in righteousness and true Holiness. It must grow and develop. Because once you have the begetting of the Holy Spirit it is just a start. It’s just like a babe who has been conceived in the womb. It is a pinprick of life, but when it is born nine months later, look at all that is there.

Likewise with us! Once we receive the Holy Spirit through baptism and the laying on of hands, we are starting. But we have to grow. We have to be fed. We have to be nourished. There has to be a plan to do it. There has to be a means and a mechanism to accomplish it. That is through:

- the Holy Spirit of God
- the Word of God
- His commandments
- His Holy Days

All these are part of the whole package that God has given!

“...partakers of *the* Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in *the* world through lust... [yes, you can overcome that] ...And for this very reason also...” (vs 4-5).

In other words, because of what he just said here, this is the reason that you do what you do. This is the reason why you have the attitude to do what you do, and the way that you do it.

“...having applied all diligence...” (v 5).
God wants you to be:

- diligent in it
- zealous in it
- passionate for God and His way

“...having applied all diligence besides, **add to your faith, virtue...**” (v 5).

Here are the spiritual building blocks of character in the renewing of your mind. Virtue, which is good, Godly behavior; looking to do the good; planning to do the good; carrying it out and doing the good.

“**...and to virtue, knowledge**” (v 5)—
because you are in an educational process from God!

He is educating you to become a very son or daughter of God. That takes education. That takes His Word. That’s why He has given you the greatest textbook in the world, called the Bible; so that you can have the knowledge. How does knowledge come? *A bit at a time!* He doesn’t want us to be like little kids, and remain in kindergarten all of our lives. The only thing you do—because one of the very first things you learned in kindergarten—is learn the clever little song is to teach the alphabet. Everyone knows that. But that same song with the alphabet ***are the same letters that are used in the Bible to teach you the knowledge of God!*** What are we dealing with? ***It’s an educational process!***

- knowledge of God the Father
- knowledge of Jesus Christ
- knowledge of the Word of God
- knowledge of the history

Do you think that any of us have enough time to get all the knowledge we really, really need in this lifetime? ***NO!*** As much as we can learn, we are to learn. But after the resurrection;

- Don’t you think were going to learn a whole lot more?
- Don’t you think God’s educational process is going to continue for all eternity?

Verse 6: “And to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance...”

That’s one thing a lot of people need today, both of them: *self-control and endurance!* When the going gets tough you still stick with it. Because ***if you faint in the day of adversity, as we saw, you have little strength.*** Endurance! Now what happens with endurance? It’s just like Paul wrote in Rom. 5.

“...and **to endurance, Godliness**” (v 6).

You begin to have the kind of life that reflects the Godliness of Christ as He was in the flesh.

Verse 7: “And **to Godliness, brotherly love...**” *It’s a process!* It’s a step-by-step, growing and overcoming.

“...and **to brotherly love, the love of God**” (v 7).

So here, Paul started out with love, and Peter ends up with love, the very love of God. There’s an awful lot that needs to be said with that, because love is just not a feel-good emotion. That’s only part of it. That’s only one aspect of love. Love includes obedience, and loyalty, and all of the things that are here, that are listed here. Love includes all of those.

Verse 8, “For *if* these things exist and abound in you...”

They can’t exist and abound in you unless you are busy working with God to let Him create these things in you, through doing the things that we have covered here.

“...they *will* cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.... [you’re going to understand] ...But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure;** because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time. For in this way, **you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ**” (vs 8-11).

What did Peter give us here? ***An absolutely sure fire, guaranteed way to know that you are on the road to the Kingdom of God and you will go in!*** That’s how you stand before God.

Eph. 5—here is how we are to do it. Everyone has a pattern, or someone to follow that they use as a guide to live their life by. In doing that they develop their own means of character and

personality so that when they are adults then they can function as adults separate.

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of God...” *That’s why we need the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ!*

We are not to go around and think that we are God, or that we are saviors of the world. *NO!* But we are to imitate God’s behavior, His characteristics, His way of doing things, as listed out in His Word.

“...as beloved children...” (v 1). *That’s what children do! They always mimic the behavior of the adults!*

Verse 2: “And **walk in love...**”

We are to live in love, as it says in one place, and here we are to walk in love. Faith works by love. So it all combines together, where I have said we are to **walk in faith, believe in hope, and live in love!** It all is combined together.

“...even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (v 2).

This is where you start out, with the sacrifice of Christ, and this is where you end up, is with the sacrifice of Christ.

Let’s talk about the love of God and see what has to be done. Just as there is something that is to be built, it has to be honed, and refined, and perfected. I saw a documentary on how they made Rolls-Royce cars, those big expensive cars. The reason they’re so expensive is because just the woodwork that they have in there on the doors, and on the dashboard, the glove compartment, and all that, they have wood—special, expensive wood—that they hand craft. They sand, and they stain, and they polish and polish, and inspect it. It’s worked over, and polished, and redone again and again until it is perfect. Now that’s what God wants in us.

1-John 4:9. “In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us...”

The very fact that God sent Jesus Christ, and He died for our sins, and Christ loves us, and God loves the world that He gave His only begotten Son. That is a manifestation of the love of God, not only for the world but for us.

“...that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.... [now we are to respond to God because of this]: ...Beloved, if God so loved us, **we**

also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us” (vs 9-12).

In other words, *part of having the love of God perfected in you is also loving the brethren!*

Now this gives us little test; v 12: “By this *standard*... [this measurement] ...we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us”—*so that we know that:*

- we have the Spirit of God
- we use the Spirit of God
- we are growing in grace and knowledge
- we are developing the character of God

That’s how we stand before God!

That’s why we are Holy and blameless and without reproach before Him in love! That’s how that works, see, it is perfected in us.

Verse 14: “And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God... [truly; not the counterfeits that we have in the world today] ... God dwells in him, and he in God.... [that can’t be unless you’re keeping commandments of God] ...And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. **God is love...**” (vs 14-16).

That’s the ultimate that we are going to achieve! Having escaped the lust that is in the world and the corruption of the carnal mind, and been given the divine power and Spirit to be partakers of the Divine nature.

“...God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love *of God* is perfected within us... [day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year] ...So that we may have confidence in the Day of Judgment... [we don’t have to be afraid; we can have confidence] ...because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in the love *of God*; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment....” (vs. 16-18).

If you think you stand before God and you’re fearful and in torment, you better start repenting of that. You better start relying on the things that we have covered here today, to know how you stand before God.

“...And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love *of God*” (v 18).

That's why people fear, *because they don't have the love of God!*

Verse 19: "We love Him because He loved us first. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother, whom he has seen, how is he able... [How is he capable? How does he have the power?] ...to love God Whom he has not seen? And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother" (vs 19-21).

We will see what God is doing; Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints...**" (vs 11-12). *To teach them:*

- the way of God
- the will of God
- the love of God
- the knowledge of God
- the faith of God

That is the perfecting! That is building the spiritual character!

"...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying... [the building up] ... of the Body of Christ until we all come into the unity of the faith... [which is where we started] ...and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man...**" (vs 12-13)—*spiritually perfect*. Now notice the goal where we are headed:

"**...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;** so that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ..." (vs 13-15).

That's what God wants!

- that's where we are headed
- that's how you stand before God
- that's why He imputes to you the righteousness of Jesus Christ
- that's why He views you as Jesus Christ
- that is what He is teaching you to mimic and become, the very same

You're the brethren of Jesus Christ!

So brethren, have a continuous good Feast of Unleavened Bread, ***and remember to constantly walk in the way of God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 3:9-19, 23-26, 31
- 2) Romans 4:21-25
- 3) Romans 5:1-5, 10-11
- 4) Galatians 2:20
- 5) John 15:9-13
- 6) 1 John 2:15-17
- 7) 1 John 1:7-10
- 8) 1 John 2:1-3
- 9) Ephesians 4:17-24
- 10) Colossians 1:27
- 11) Philippians 2:5
- 12) Ephesians 4:25-32
- 13) Ephesians 5:3-11
- 14) Galatians 5:19-23, 25-26
- 15) Galatians 5:6
- 16) 2 Peter 1:1-11
- 17) Ephesians 5:1-2
- 18) 1 John 4:9-21
- 19) Ephesians 4:11-15

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