



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Various Passages

"The Age of Innocence and the Judgment"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this opportunity to again gather in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and study Thy word. We pray that Thou will direct our time of study together, so that we learn more of Thee as we study that which is contained in the Book of Genesis. May our spiritual eyes be open as we read the word, and may our hearts be tuned to receive the message which Thou hast for us through the Holy Spirit, and we commit our time to Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

[Message] Now tonight, we are having our last lesson on Genesis chapter 3 and the Age of Innocence, and if it may seem to some of you as if we have lingered for a long time over this chapter, it is with a definite purpose in mind, because this is one of the most important chapters that we shall study in our Bible study. And in a genuine sense, the whole of the Bible is related to that which is found in Genesis chapter 3. Now this is the heart of that which we have called the dispensation of innocence or the age of innocence. And remember, we gave as a definition of a dispensation or an age, an administration of God during which man is tested regarding obedience to truth which

God has revealed in that age. And that there are three features in a biblical age or a dispensation. There is first a test and then there is, secondly, a response to that test revealed in the Bible and, thirdly, since as a rule man fails the test, there is a revelation of divine judgment. And in this revelation of judgment, there is tempered a promise regarding redemption from the judgment which God has prophesied.

Now we looked at this first age and we saw that the test was described for us in Genesis chapter 2, verses 16 and 17. For God placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and then he said to them, Genesis 2, verse 16, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now we saw that man was exposed to this particular test and man failed. And as a result of that, God described a judgment, a judgment upon the serpent who was involved in the test, a judgment upon the woman and a judgment upon the man.

Now we have looked in some detail at the test, and we have looked in some detail at the response and the judgment particularly with regard to the grace revealed in the promise of redemption. Last time we spent most of our time on the promise of redemption as contained in Genesis 3:15. Tonight we want to look at the dark side of this and emphasize the judgment side. But just briefly, let's go back again, Genesis 2:16 and 17, this one test, and remember we pointed out one or two things in connection with this test that this test shows us the biblical character of sin. And I've frequently said this and I want to say it over and over, because it is important that we grasp it and some of you have not been here every time. Sin is not immorality; although immorality is sin. Sin is essentially unbelief, which issues in distrust and finds its outworking in acts of immorality, so that what we see in acts of immorality is due to rebellion, which is brought about by a basic distrust of God's word.

Now this was the test that man was posed with in the garden, "Will man obey the word of God?" That is, "Will he believe God and will he live accordingly?" This is at the

heart of sin, and I say this and I emphasize it over and over again because if we do not understand this, we will not understand why it is necessary for each of us to have a Redeemer, and also we will not understand our need of this Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. And, furthermore, it will not come home to us when the Bible says to us, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," for we are inclined to think, and this no doubt is a device of Satan himself, that sin is immorality. And since we have not been guilty of immorality, or at least not in the sense in which others have been whom we can think about or know about or whom we have observed, we think, therefore, that we do not have any need before God. But if we understand what the Bible has to say about sin, then we will understand why Paul says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and why God has found it necessary to send a Redeemer to die for us and deliver us from our sin.

Now it is essential that we understand these facts about an age or a dispensation. Remember I said, Augustine said once, "Distinguish the ages and the Scriptures harmonize," so let's bear that in mind too. And as we read through the Bible, let's remember that certain parts of the Bible have application to a specific age or time, and that the Bible is not to be read throughout as if every verse in the Bible applies directly to us today. The Bible had its specific application when it was written to a particular time and to a particular people. It may have an application in the sense of general relevance to us, and it may also contain truth which has an application in a secondary fashion to us. All of the Bible has that secondary application, but not all of it has the direct primary application.

Now we looked at Genesis 3, and we saw that Adam and Eve were placed in the garden and that the serpent came and that he tested Eve and through Eve, he brought about the fall of Adam. He questioned the word of God by saying, "Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" in verse 1. And then in the 4th verse, he contradicted the word of God, he said, "Ye shall not surely die." God said, "Ye shall die,"

but Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die." And, finally, in the 5th verse, he maligned the author of the word by suggesting that God is not a good God. "For God doth know," he said, "that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil."

Now then, Eve sinned. She gave of the fruit of the tree to Adam, and he willfully sinned. Eve was deceived, but Adam was not deceived Paul tells us Adam sinned willfully. As a result of this, they hid from God. This we said signified that they understood their guilt and yet at the same time, God went out to seek them in the garden of Eden, which of course, was a revelation of his love for them. And I have tried to emphasize this, too, for this is the other side of our sin that while it is true that all of us have sinned, and we come short of the glory of God, and while it is true that all of us are under divine condemnation apart from Christ because of our sin, it is also true that God loves every one of us even in our sin. And just as he must go out after Adam and seek Adam in the garden of Eden, so down through the years, down through the centuries, God has been seeking men. That is why Jesus Christ said when he came, "I have come to seek and to save that which was lost." Redemption is not something that we work up. It is something that God provides for us. We do not want to have fellowship with God, but he wants to have fellowship with us. And no matter how far away from God we may have drifted, God is ready and willing and able, through the cross of Christ, to receive any guilty, condemned human being upon the basis of simple grace. Not only is he ready, willing, and able, but he longs for men to return to fellowship with him through the cross of Christ. Simply believe his word that when Jesus Christ died, our sins were taken care of and the doors are open into the fellowship that exists in the family of God.

Now last time we looked specifically at verse 15, and we saw that this was a promise ultimately of redemption through Christ. God began by pronouncing a judgment upon the serpent in verse 14, "And the LORD God said unto the serpent, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon

thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." This was a judgment upon the serpent. The serpent who was, as he says in the first verse of the chapter, "more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" was originally apparently very beautiful and wise animal or beast of the field. As a result of this temptation in which Satan used as his instrument, the serpent, this judgment is pronounced upon him. And so, today when we see the reptile, the snake, which most of us do not have any liking, we see an animal which has undergone divine judgment because of the fact that he was the tool of Satan in this testing. And every time, by the way, that we see a serpent, it should remind us of the fact of this that happened in the garden of Eden.

Now not only did the Lord pronounce a judgment upon the serpent, the animal, and, by the way, the reason that the serpent must be judged is because when man sins, the whole creation is involved in the sin, and we will deal with that a little more tonight when we turn to Romans chapter 8. And that is why the serpent must be involved even though he was simply the tool of Satan. But in the 15th verse, particularly now we have something that goes beyond the serpent and the Lord says, "And I will put enmity between thee (that is the serpent) and the woman (that is Eve), and between thy seed (that is the serpent's seed) and her seed (that is Eve's seed)." So not only is there enmity promised and prophesied between the serpent and Eve, but between the progeny of the serpent and the progeny of Eve. But, it is not only to be enmity, there is to be victory on the part of the seed of the woman. We read, "It shall bruise thy head."

In other words, the seed of the woman shall crush (that's probably the meaning of this Hebrew word *zuur* here is "to crush," and this is confirmed by the New Testament which refers to this. And Paul, in Romans chapter 16 says, that God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly, and he uses a Greek word with without question means simply to crush. And although there is some debate over the meaning of the Hebrew word here, in the light of the New Testament, and in the light of the fact that it may just as easily mean

crush as any other meaning, it probably has that meaning here, "It shall crush thy head," crush in the sense of a fatal harm or injury. And yet, he says, "Thou shalt crush his heel."

Now we cannot from just this prophecy itself in the Hebrew text, we could not definitely translate these pronouns by his and it. The word for seed in Hebrew is a word that is collective and it may simply mean their, but in the light of the context, we have these seeds finally coming into conflict in an individual way for notice he says, "It shall bruise thy head." Now the head is an individualizing of this prophecy into a part of the seed. Enmity between the woman and thy seed. That is, thee and the woman, thy seed and her seed, but then he mentions the head and the heel of the seed as if to show that this conflict is to be individualized in one who is the head and one who is harmed as to his heel, so that two persons, this ultimately comes down to a personal conflict.

Now just from Genesis chapter 3:16, we would not know all of the details of this for this prophecy is made as general as possible. We said this is the most general of the Messianic promises in all of the Bible. It is simply stated that out of the woman shall come someone who will bring victory for the human race over Satan. Now from the rest of the biblical revelation, we know that ultimately this has to do with Jesus Christ and that the seed of the woman is ultimately centered in one person. Now we saw that the Bible itself doesn't, as I say, tell us everything about that is in Genesis 3, but it is framed in such a way as that only Jesus Christ may really fulfill this. For in the strictest sense, he is the only human being of whom it could be said that he is seed of woman, for he is the only human being who was born of a virgin.

And this is why, by the way, it is very essential for Christians to hold to the virgin birth. We are often told that the virgin birth is not really an essential of the Christian faith. Now this is very false because, you see, if Jesus Christ is not born of a virgin, then he partakes of the sinful nature of the human race, and if he does, then he needs a Redeemer just as much as you and I need a Redeemer. Furthermore, he must be born of a virgin because he must be a divine person because if he is not a divine person the

sacrifice that he accomplished on the cross at Calvary is not a sacrifice that in the sight of God has sufficient value to cover the sins of the whole human race. So it is very essential that Jesus Christ be born of a virgin, and that is why so much is made of this in the Gospel of Matthew and so much of is made of it in the Gospel of Luke, that he had a supernatural origin. Of course, we would know as we read through the New Testament that Jesus Christ must have had a supernatural origin because he is a supernatural person, and the only way in which we may account for the life and ministry of Jesus Christ is that he did have a supernatural origin, so that ultimately only Jesus Christ is the only one who is the seed of the woman.

Also, as I say, there is an individualizing in the sense of the head and the heel. Furthermore, it is interesting that this word seed, now in the Hebrew this is the word, you need not put this down, but it is the zera, and if you wanted to spell it out, you would spell it out something like z-e-r-a like this, zera. This Hebrew word is very much like our English word. It may be collective or it may be individual. You may say, "The seed of the woman" and by this you mean all of the descendants of the woman. Or you may say seed and mean one specifically. Let me show you, for example, from the Old Testament itself. Turn over to Genesis chapter 4 and verse 25, "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: 'For God,' said she, 'hath appointed me another seed (another seed) instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.'"

Now it is clear here that the word seed is a reference to an individual. It is a reference to Seth who was the seed of the woman. So this expression seed may refer to an individual, and here, as I say, is undoubtedly ultimately a reference to Jesus Christ. So then, when we read here, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," between Satan and the woman, "and between thy seed," Satan's progeny "and the woman's seed." Let me say this, too, with reference to this enmity between Satan's seed and woman's seed, this is not a reference ultimately to just reptiles that move along the ground. This is a reference to men who are under the control of Satan. Remember the Lord Jesus, I think

it might be well for us to turn to this so you can see it for yourselves in the Bible. Let's turn to John chapter 8 and verse 44. This is page eleven twenty-seven in the Scofield Edition of the King James Version. The Gospel of John chapter 8, verse 44. John writes, now the Lord Jesus is speaking in this context and he is speaking with the Jews and he says in verse 44, "Ye are of your father the devil, (Now notice that, "Ye are of your father the devil,) and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: (Notice that, his own. They belong to the serpent) for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Now from this the Lord Jesus spoke to these men and he said, "You belong to your father the devil." Do you notice that he calls them sons of the father? It is often said that we should believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Now it's quite evident that according to Jesus Christ that there are two fatherhoods and it makes a lot of difference to which family we belong, you see. There are two fathers, "Ye are of your father the devil," so we need to be careful which family we belong to. Turn over to 1 John chapter 3. I want you to see that this is not just an isolated text, but represents the teaching of the New Testament. 1 John chapter 3, page thirteen twenty-three in the Scofield Edition of the King James Version.

Now he says in verse 8, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. (That is, men who do not belong to him, belong to Satan. There are just the two seeds, the seed of Satan, the seed of the woman. Now notice the 12th verse,) Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother." Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one." Now Cain was the seed of the woman and yet he was the seed of Satan. You see because of Cain's unbelief, he is the seed of Satan. Now this is important then. This prophecy prophesies conflict or enmity between the serpent and Eve and between the progeny of the two, but it is obvious that when the text speaks of the progeny of the serpent, it goes beyond the animal to the one who inspired the animal,



Satan himself, who is called in Revelation the ancient serpent, the old serpent. So we have then these two seeds, but it is finally prophesied that the seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent's seed. And at the same time, the serpent's seed shall crush the heel of the woman's seed. Now this, as I say, ultimately comes down to the cross where there is victorious conflict for the seed of the woman.

Now I want you to turn with me now to three passages in the New Testament to show you exactly what this means. 1 John 3 verse 8, it's right in this context of the passage that we have just looked at. 1 John 3:8. Here we read, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Why do you think Jesus Christ came? Well, now if you were to say if you know anything much about the Bible you would probably say this, "Jesus Christ came to die for us." Or if you knew something more about the Bible, you might say, "He came to die for us and he also came to be our example." We can also say that Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. Now notice verse 8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might (loose) destroy (undo we might render it, undo) the works of the devil." So that it is stated here that the reason that Jesus Christ came is not only that he might die for us on the cross at Calvary, not only that he might be an example for the redeemed, but also that he might undo the works of Satan, and this is a passage that refers directly to the cross and then directly to Genesis. For on the cross, enmity between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed reaches its climax in the individual conflict between Satan and Christ, and there on the cross, Jesus Christ dies as the sin bearer.

Now because sin is Satan's control over us, because, you see, by sin we voluntarily yield to him and bring ourselves under judgment, when Jesus Christ dies for sin, he undoes the work of the devil in bringing men into subjection to himself. But there are two other passages that explain this a little more fully, and a little more clearly perhaps too. Colossians chapter 2 and verse 15 is the first of them, so turn back to Colossians. This is page twelve sixty-four. Now if we have some new ones tonight, you want to be

sure and look up all these verses for yourself, so you will not go out and say, "I wonder where in the world did he get that?" I want you to read it for yourself, Colossians 2, verse 15.

Now Paul is talking about what Christ did on the cross in this particular passage and in the 15th verse he says, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, (Now principalities and powers is an expression that refers to evil angelic powers, "Having spoiled principalities and powers,") he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." That is, in the cross which he has just mentioned up above in the 14th verse. So he says, Paul, that Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary bore our sins. He says this just above. We have forgiveness of sins and so on. Jesus Christ bore our sins, brought about because we have broken God's law. He nailed the charges that God had against us to his cross, and in dying for sin, he triumphed over evil angelic powers who are under Satan as their head, triumphing over them by means of the cross for he took away from Satan that claim that he had over us, our sins, and made it possible for us to go free.

Perhaps the best explanation of this is found in Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14 and 15, so let's turn there now. Hebrews 2 verses 14 and 15. Now in order to understand these two verses most plainly, let me illustrate for you just a moment. Let's suppose, for example, that Louis Allen, our very gracious host who allows us to come to his home on Monday nights, let's suppose that we discover and we have read in the newspaper that Louis Allen had been guilty of murder. Now we, of course, would not believe it, but nevertheless other people might believe it, and let's suppose that he is imprisoned. And let's suppose that he must be tried, and let's suppose that finally he receives an acquittal from a judge.

Now I do not know a whole lot about the operations of our penitentiary or our jails. I hope I don't learn too much about them. [Laughter] And this, of course, I would not be necessarily so Pauline because he knew a lot about jails. He said that he was in jails often. But let's suppose that Louis is residing in a prison cell, and in order for the

jailor to release him, it is necessary for a release to be presented to the jailor in some form. He must have some legal document by which he can release Louis Allen. As soon as that document is presented to the man in charge of the jail, then someone may go to the cell, open the door of the cell, and say, "Mr. Allen, you are free to leave the cell." Now believe it or not, I have heard that this has been done and a prisoner has refused to leave, but let's suppose, of course, that he wants to leave. And so, on the basis of the document presented to the jailor, he is able to go free.

Now with that in mind, let's read these two verses and remember this that because we have sinned, we are in the prison house of sin. Satan is the executor of God's judgment. And so, he is in my illustration the equivalent of the jailor, and it is necessary in order for those who are in prison to have a release presented to him in order that they may go free. Now let's read this text for this is the background of this figure of the work of Christ. Verse 14, "Forasmuch then," the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews says, "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, (In other words, because we were human beings,) he (Christ) also himself likewise took part of the same." What does that mean? That means simply that he took flesh and blood to himself. He who was the eternal God, the second person of the blessed Trinity, came down to the human race, took to himself human nature, was born in a manger in Bethlehem.

You see, in order to be our substitute, he must be one of us. In order to die for human beings to take their place upon the cross to bear their judgment for them, he must be also a human being. And so, we read, "He also himself likewise took part of the same, (that is flesh and blood) that through death (That through death. Why must he die? Because sin makes it necessary that a judgment be executed, a judgment of death, as we shall see in a moment revealed in Genesis chapter 3. It is necessary when sin takes place for a death to take place because death is the wages of sin. This is God's divine judgment upon sin. The sinner must die. And so, Jesus Christ, if he is to be our Savior, must die in our place. He must bear our judgment. So through death,) he might destroy." That is,

this word does not mean to destroy in the sense of annihilate, but to destroy in the sense of bring to naught. Satan is still very much alive. He's like a jailer who would love to keep us in prison, but nevertheless the release has been issued and he doesn't have any right to do it anymore.

Let's suppose that Louis Allen down at the jail had offended the man who was in charge over him. The man in charge of him would say to him something like this, "If it depended upon me, you would be in this cell until doomsday." But then when the release is presented, the man must let him go. Well, we have a similar thing, "That through death, he might annul, bring to naught, him that had the power of death (that is, the devil); and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." So, you see, Jesus Christ by dieing upon the cross has made it possible for a release to be issued for all men. The doors of the prison house of sin have been thrown open. The release has been bought by the shedding of the precious blood. He has born our judgment for us.

We have a doctrine which we call double jeopardy. You cannot be tried for something for which you have been acquitted. Well, Jesus Christ has born our judgment and so we do not have to bear judgment. The prison doors of sin are open, the release has been offered, and now it is the privilege of men to go forth and preach the good news that men who believe this message, and who will walk out in the freedom from judgment that God gives, may have everlasting life, you see. This is why we have a Bible class like this. I'm not here to teach you just to give you some more knowledge about some ancient documents. I'm here with a very special purpose in mind and I'll be frank with you, my purpose is that you individually may come to know the forgiveness of sins and eternal life that you may leave the prison house of sin and have everlasting life. This is why I'm here. If it were not for this, I would be back in the insurance business with my father. Much more to my advantage economically that I do that, you see, but I am here because God has called me and because the love of Christ through me desires that

you come to know him, to know this release that God has bought with the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. And so, I proclaim to you the love of God in the cross of Christ and his great desire to have you in fellowship with him.

Now this is a wonderful message, isn't it? "For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same that through death he might annul him that had the power of death (that is the devil) and deliver those who through fear of death for all their lifetime subject to bondage." All you have to do is believe this message, believe it that it pertains to you and accept the free gift of eternal life. Do you really know what this means? This means that you don't have to join the church in order to become a Christian possessed of the forgiveness of sins. This means that you don't have to join the First Baptist Church, you don't have to join the First Presbyterian Church, you don't have to join Our Redeemer Lutheran Church or St. Matthew's Cathedral, or any earthly church. This means you do not have to join even an independent church which proclaims the gospel. This means that you do not have to do good works, that you do not have to pray through, that you do not have to reform, that you do not have to get education, even spiritual education. This means that you do not have to get religion. Religion has sent more people to hell than almost anything else for it leads men to trust in that which is basically unscriptural as a means of approach to God.

It means simply this, that this is God's message concerning the work of Christ and all that is necessary is for you to simply in your heart believe it. Just say, "I thank Thee, O God, that Thou hast given Jesus Christ to die for me" and that is enough, for you see, you receive the salvation on the basis of simple grace as a free gift, you acknowledge you can do nothing. If you'll be honest with yourself, you'll know that's true. You can do nothing, but Jesus Christ has done it all. And so, you're grateful to him and when you do that, he gives you a new nature and you're born again. As the Lord told Nicodemus, "You must be born again." This is a work that God does, not a work that men do. It comes to those who simply believe the message concerning Jesus Christ. The moment you believe

it, you're born again, have new life, new aspirations, new loves, new purpose in life, new aim, new peace, and a new hope. This is wonderful, you know, this is the gospel. This is the good news concerning Christ.

Well, now, that's the good side. That's the promise. This was the judgment upon Satan that he would ultimately be defeated here and, of course, that is for us good news. But, after all, Adam and Eve did sin in the garden and God is a holy God, and so he must say a word about woman's judgment, I love this, woman's judgment, you know, and then he has to say something about the man's judgment. So let's turn back to Genesis chapter 3 and look at verse 16. By the way, we have some very instructive things for ladies in this text. Then, of course, we have some instructive things for men here and there through the word too. Now notice verse 16, "Unto the woman he said." Now Eve had been the instrumentality of Adam's sin. She has sinned in the process, of course. Eve had acted independently of Adam. Now this is very important because, you see, in her independence, she brings upon herself the judgment of dependence. She should have been subordinate to her husband. Now her subordination must be subjection. This is judgment. Now all women know what this judgment is. You know it's judgment, too, because you must allow your husband to be the head of the house.

Now I know in an audience like this containing a number of women that this may be untrue in some of your homes. [Laughter] So I want you to listen to the text and don't get mad at me. [Laughter] Get mad at God or Paul or some other New Testament writer, but notice it, "Unto the woman he said, 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception.'" In other words, the first thing that the woman must suffer is that instead of the joy of bringing children into the world, and it must have been in God's intentions in the beginning to have been pure joy, no pains of childbirth. Now because of Eve's sin, as she creates or as she is the instrument of new life, as she bears children, as she is fruitful and multiplies, instead of it being a joyous thing all the way through, now in the act of childbirth she must have the pains of childbirth. So, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow

and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." She should have been subordinate to her husband to have engaged with him in being fruitful and multiplication of the human race upon the earth. But, being independent, she brought judgment upon herself and first of all in her sexual life and in her life as the means for the spreading of the human race. But that's not all, "And thy desire shall be to thy husband." In other words, the woman has built up in her makeup a natural need for the man. As he says it, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband."

In other words, she will never find completeness as a woman until she is related to a man. Now this is natural. That's the second, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," and then finally, and this of course, is the greatest judgment of all, "and he shall rule over thee." Rule over thee, now this is a judgment, women. It is a judgment and there is a sense in which I'm sure that you feel it to be a judgment. In some cases more than others particularly if your husband is not living up to his part in God's plan for the family in right relationship to him.

If, for example, Jesus Christ is not the head of the home, and you may be a believer, this becomes a very painful judgment. Or if in a family where the father is a believer and the wife is a believer, the husband is a believer and the wife is a believer, if the husband is a namby-pamby kind of a husband who is not willing to assume authority and leadership in his family, then this also becomes a strain and a trial and a further judgment. It has its best side when the husband is really the head of the house as he should be, when he assumes the responsibilities that he should assume and also when he loves his wife. Paul says in Ephesians 5, "as Christ loved the church." So when the love of the husband toward the wife is like the love of Jesus Christ for the church, self sacrificial to the uttermost, then most of the time the women are happy to be in subjection to that kind of a husband. Now that's the part that the New Testament mentions, but over that's not mentioned, "He shall rule over thee."

Now lest you think that my interpretation of this is a little strained, I want you to turn with me now to several passages now in the New Testament. I want you to see that this is not something that is strained at all, but is the common teaching of a number of passages in the Bible. Let's turn first to Ephesians chapter 5, Ephesians chapter 5, verse 22,

"Wives, (Paul says) submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing (in everything, do you notice that? That's there. There it is. [Laughter] In everything [Laughter]. That's difficult, isn't it? That's very difficult, isn't it? I sympathize with you wives very much. I really do, but let me tell you this, if you think that is hard to fulfill, just read the next,) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Now with all of the hardness of fulfilling that which Paul has for the wife, it is much easier, in my opinion, to do that than to do this. And men, will you close your ears just for a moment, ladies, if you want to have the subjection that Paul desires, love your wife as Christ loved the church. You won't have much trouble. You won't have much trouble.

Now let's turn to a passage in 1 Peter just to show you that this is not only Paul. Someone has said, "Paul was just a jilted suitor [Laughter] that's why he didn't like women like he did." I have read biblical commentaries by outstanding biblical students who have said as they are expounding Paul's writings and they come to one like this, they'll say, "Of course, Paul is a great writer and a great spiritual thinker, but we cannot follow him in a



chapter like this." Now notice that this is the common belief of the apostolic church, 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 1, page thirteen fourteen. 1 Peter 3,

"Likewise, ye wives (Peter says), be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without a word be won by the manner of life of the wives. (If you want to win your husband for Christ, be quiet, be quiet. Live the kind of life that is set forth for a Christian wife in the New Testament, and you may win him without a word. Never without the word, the V is not in the Greek text. You never win anyone with the gospel, but you may win him without your words,) while they behold your chaste conversation (your manner of life) coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, (That wins more men than your talking, wives) which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: (And I'm not going to recommend ladies that you call your husband, lord. Ms. Meyers, you need not call, Bob, Lord. [Laughter] This word lord was the word that was used in the Old Testament times for sir, sir. So occasionally you may call him, sir, but don't call him, lord. The word has a different connotation now) whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. (Well, that's Eve judgment and it's a judgment. Now let's look at the man's, verse 17, "And (This is Genesis 3 again,) unto Adam he said, 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, (See the first step in sin, men, is to listen to your wives [Laughter] in this case, in this case. Now you understand, of course, I'm being a little facetious when I say that. This was the specific case then. You're not to draw out any such general conclusion as that. "And unto Adam he said, 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,) and hast eaten of the tree, (Now this is very

important) of which I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat of it: (Now notice, the reason for God's judgment is not for immorality. The reason for God's judgment is not for some sensuality. The reason for God's judgment is disobedience. God gave the word. They did not believe the word, but then acted in disobedience to the word. You see, sin was a transgression of God's word. That is basically the character of sin. And this God says here, "Adam, you have transgressed my word and because you have transgressed my word, you have sinned." Now then, he continues,) cursed is the ground for thy sake; ("The first thing, Adam, when you go out to till the ground, instead of doing easily what you want it to do, it will prove hard to you. It will be difficult for you to raise crops. It will be difficult for you to support yourself. And so, from this time on, men have had trouble with the ground, with the elements. This is the basic cause of the farm problem right here. [Laughter] "Thou shalt not eat of it. Cursed is the ground for thy sake;") in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; (Furthermore) Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; (You know, when you go out to the Grand Canyon, for example, and you see that wonderful sight, or when you are in Switzerland and you look at that wonderful picture of the Alps, or any other beautiful spot in nature that you can think of, this is still nature under judgment. We do not know how beautiful the creation was before Adam and Eve sinned. Every time you go out in the backyard and you are digging around in your shrubbery, and you prick your hand because of a thorn or a thistle, remember the curse. Remember the curse, "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;) and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face (Now this I don't think was intended to be only punitive. That is, this was not just judgment. It was to be pedagogical. It was teach man, and as we work, and as you men have to work day after day laboring hard to make a living, to meet the bills, you know, remember the curse. It would never have been this way had it not been that Adam sinned. "In the sweat of thy face) shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

In other words, "Adam, ultimately you shall die." Now there are three forms of death in the Bible. You know, when Adam sinned, he did not die in one sense. What did Genesis 2:16 and 17 say? "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," but did Adam die? No, he did not die physically, physically. In the Bible, there is spiritual death. Bob, would you look up Ephesians 2:1 for us and wait just a minute. I want to have you read it. We have just a few more minutes' time and I want to try to get this over and quickly, Ephesians 2:1. And, Louis Allen, would you look up Romans chapter 5 and verse 12 for me, Romans 5 verse 12. Ricky, let's see if they're teaching you how to read properly and, Thomas Jefferson, would you look up Revelation chapter 20 and verse 14 and 15, Revelation 20:14-15. The Bible speaks of three types of death: spiritual death, physical death, eternal death. It is very important that you understand these three types of death. Let's read the Ephesians 2:1 passage, Bob, first. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." All right. Notice the expression, look it up in your Bibles, "Who were dead in trespasses and sins. You hath he made alive." He's talking to Christians who are still living physically, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

Now that is a spiritual death. Spiritual death is the separation of man's spirit in communion from God. It is the breaking of communion between man and God, that is spiritual death. Now when Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, he did not die physically, but he did die spiritually. Communion was broken between God and Adam. He died spiritually. He became dead in trespasses and sins. That means it's possible for a man to be very much alive physically and yet very dead spiritually. It is possible for a man to be the picture of health, right tackle on the Dallas Texans, picture of health, but dead spiritually. There's an amusing story about a little community in Ayrshire, Scotland. It seems that someone happened to come through and die and he was a stranger. And so, they had to bury him in the common graveyard, but they didn't like that. And so, they

put up a little sign and outside of that cemetery it reads something like this, "This cemetery is reserved for the dead who are living in our county." [Laughter] Dead, but yet alive, spiritual death. This is why we need redemption, spiritually, we are dead.

Now if we persist in our spiritual death, if we persist in spiritual separation from God, if we persist in no communion with God, then we must die physically, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. Adam, you're made out of dust. You shall return to dust." Louis would you read Romans 5:12 for us now, and turn in that passage as he reads it if you can, Romans 5:12, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon men for that all have sinned." Yes. Now notice this, "Death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." He came from dust. He shall return to dust. He shall die physically. As I've said more than once here, the reason that we have the obituary in the newspaper is because of Genesis chapter 3, and it is explained by Romans chapter 5 and verse 12, "Death passed unto men because that all have sinned." You can write Romans 5 over the death of every single human being. The reason that we are born and we grow to maturity and yet there is within us the seed of death is because of original sin in the garden of Eden, physical death.

Now there is a worse death than physical death, for the Christian when he is born again, he still has to die physically if the Lord does not come before he dies. But physical death for the Christian is not something to be dreaded because physical death for the Christian means simply the laying aside of the body, but the spirit goes immediately into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just recently, a very dear friend of mine died, Dr. W. E. Hawkins with whom I had worked over the radio for a long time, a very godly man and perhaps the most dedicated to Christ, servant of God, I have ever known. He died. This is not a time of sadness. This is a time of rejoicing because Will Hawkins is in the presence of Jesus Christ at this moment. His body was placed in a grave in Fort Worth, but his spirit is in the presence of the Lord. He died physically because of Romans 5:12. He is spiritually in the presence of the Lord Jesus because of the cross of Christ.

Now Ricky, would you read verses 14 and 15, and read them loud enough so that Jim Cole back there in the back can hear. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." All right. Notice this, Revelation chapter 20, verse 14, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." The second or eternal death is the lake of fire. This is the end of all who persist in spiritual death throughout their lives. We are spiritually dead when we are born. If we refuse the message of the gospel of Christ then our present spiritual death is confirmed throughout all eternity. That is eternal death and, specifically, it is called the second death or the lake of fire. The second death is the lake of fire into which unbelievers are cast according to the testimony of this passage.

Now, of course, it should be obvious to us that it is important that we understand that spiritual death is the breaking of communion between God and men. That physical death is the separation of our spirits from our bodies and that eternal death is the prolongation of spiritual death throughout all eternity. It is important that we realize these things. It is, if anything, more important that we know the remedies and there are remedies for two of the three. There is a remedy for spiritual death. The remedy for spiritual death is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:16, for example, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Everlasting life, life is the remedy for this spiritual death and the moment I believe in Jesus Christ, as I said a minute ago, I am born again, I possess new life. I have been brought into fellowship with God. I have the right to call upon him as my Father for I am in his family now and not in the family of Satan.

The remedy for physical death is the resurrection of the body, which will take place when Christ returns for those who have believed in him. At that moment, the dead in Christ shall rise, they which are alive and remain who are living on the earth when Christ comes, they shall be changed and together they shall be caught up to meet the

Lord in the air. That means that the spirits, let's just say the spirit of Will Hawkins, for example, he is with the Lord. But at the coming of Christ, his body shall be raised up from the grave. He shall be given a body like Christ's own glorious body. The spirit shall reunite with his body and throughout eternity he shall have a resurrection body. The remedy for physical death is the resurrection body. For eternal death, there is no remedy at all. No remedy at all. When a person dies the second death that is all eternal judgment. Well, our time is up. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we pray that these words, which are solemn words, may come home to us. Wilt Thou give us, Lord, the desire and the motivation if we have not yet believed in Jesus Christ to believe in him, so that we may be in right relationship with Thee and used by Thee. May gratitude for that which Thou hast done for us fill our hearts. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now those of you that have to go may go. We have a few minutes for questions if you like. Next time, which will be our last time I think, before Christmas, that's right isn't it, Louis? Next time we're going to take a second dispensation and we will do this a lot faster than we have done this because I have been trying to lay the ground work. So I want you to read from Genesis 4 through Genesis 8 verse 19.

Now the questions that you should try to answer are on the back page of this lesson tonight and further details, by the way, in connection with the death and the remedy are in the notes. But, read Genesis 4 and try to answer these questions because we will next time try to cover the whole of the second age or dispensation, the age of conscience. Now are there any questions?

[Question from the audience member]

[Johnson] There are many of these things that I cannot answer and, of course, in a case such as this, I think that the woman should be in subjection to her husband until the husband does things that are contrary to the plain teaching of God's word. Then she must, as the apostles, obey God rather than men. That was the principle they used with respect to government about them. The Roman Government they were in subjection to until the Roman government overstepped itself and said to them or even the Jewish government under the Roman government said, "You shall not preach the gospel." Then they said, "This is a violation of the precepts of the word of God. We must obey God rather than men," remember they said. And I think the same thing is true here. Now the application in specific instances, this is one of the reasons why the Holy Spirit has been given us. And the wife, who is in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, will know a lot more about how to apply this than I can tell you to be honest with you. These principles are revealed in the word. The details the Holy Spirit must lead and guide in, and I know that's a problem because I've run across this in many, many cases. Are there other questions?

[Question from the audience member]

[Johnson] Yes. It is quite certain that Jesus Christ was not born on December the 25th. There is very little question about that. I think even those who are strongest in their celebration of Christmas will admit that, that he was not born on Christmas, and that the celebration of Christmas on the 25th of December actually has its origin in pagan rites. And that the early Christians, at least the earliest Christians, as far as we know, did not celebrate Christmas.

Now mind you, I celebrate Christmas. I think it's an opportunity to emphasize the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and I take it in that sense. I do not do it on biblical reasons because it's not referred to in the Bible, Christmas. But it seems that the early Christians

did not celebrate Christmas. But, out of a few years after the time of the earliest Christians in the apostolic days of the apostolic fathers, not the apostles, but the later ones who came just after them, that the celebration of the birth of Christ did arise. But, it was not on the 25th of December, but later in the 2nd or the 3rd Century, and I just have forgotten the details. Perhaps next time I'll try to be a little more explicit on this. The rite of which was in heathenism of celebrating certain pagan deities and their birth on the 25th of December was united with the celebration by Christians of the birth of Christ and out of this arose Christmas Day on the 25th of December.

As you know, of course, when Constantine made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, the Roman priests were all baptized, and they were not Christians at all, but they were just baptized into the Christian faith because their living was cut off, you see. And with that came a lot of practices into the Christian church, which are not supported by the teaching of the word of God at all. Related to that, of course, is the position of the Pope and also Mariology has its origin in this too. It's interesting that even the name for Mary, which is given to Mary by a large religious organization, Queen of Heaven, is a title derived from heathen deities, and it's even reflected in the Old Testament because certain heathen gods are called by that name, the Queen of Heaven and that, of course, is one title that she has, heathen origin.

[Question from audience member]

[Johnson] In the east at least. Yes, in the east at least. In fact, there is evidence of this Persian and Babylonian religion finding its way into the Roman Empire by way of Asia Minor and, specifically, Pergamum, which is referred to, of course, in the Book of Revelation. Any other questions?

[Question from audience member]



[Johnson] Well, I mentioned this for the benefit of those of you who were not there, that guidance in the Christian life is along certain principles. Number one, the word of God that whatever step the Lord wants us to take, it must not be contrary to the Bible. If, for example, we think that God is leading us in a certain way and it is brought to our attention that this type of action is contrary to some principle in the Bible, we would know that this is not God's will for us.

Secondly, since every Christian is given the Holy Spirit of God, we will get to this ultimately, the third person of the Trinity who dwells within us and who makes real our relationship to God, our fellowship with him, it is in the power of the Spirit, and he dwells within us, Paul says, "What? Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost?" This body is a temple and he dwells there. So he is there to lead and guide us. New Testament writers make reference to this. So the Holy Spirit is to lead and guide us too so that a second guiding line for guidance is the conviction that the Holy Spirit brings in our heart with regarding to the path that we should take in a specific case.

In other words, we should not only be sure that the guidance that the step we're taking is in accord with the word of God, but it must also be in accord with the Spirit of God. His conviction in our hearts. For you see, in the word of God we do not have, for example, suppose I'm faced tomorrow with this question. Someone asks me to come, I'll use myself as an illustration if you'll pardon the personal aspects, but let's suppose that someone were to write me tomorrow and say, "I would like very much for you to come and preach in our church for a series of meetings."

Now I can search the Bible through and I do not find anything "yes" or "no" with regard to that decision as far as the word of God is concerned it's in accord with the word of God that I preach the word, so I pass the first test. But the second test, the Spirit of God, the conviction that he brings, that's a different matter. Since the Bible doesn't say "yes" or "no", I'm dependent upon the Spirit's guidance. And so, I pray over it and ask

the Holy Spirit to lead me and guide me, and I seem to be getting a conviction in my heart that I should do this. And so, I sit down at my typewriter and I write out a letter. It says, "I will be happy to come and preach in this series of meetings."

And then after I've written that, I seem to have a feeling of loss of peace, some sense of anxiety in my heart. It doesn't seem as if that's the right thing for me to do. It's in accordance with the word, and I thought that the Holy Spirit was leading me that way, but now I seem to have some question about it. This may arise out of some events. For example, suppose I get another letter, which seems to be a little more urgent and offer opportunities that seem to be more significant that might cause me to really puzzle over it, and I might realize that I may have made a hasty decision.

Well, the Bible provides us with a third test and that third test is mentioned in Colossians chapter 3 and verse 15 where Paul says, "And let the peace of God be the umpire (that's the meaning of the Greek word, be the umpire)." Now every baseball fan knows what an umpire is, he's one who calls balls and strikes and makes decision and his word is law, "Let the peace of God be the umpire in your heart."

Now, if my question, my prayer passes the test of the word of God and passes the test of the conviction of God, the Holy Spirit of God, and yet I have anxiety as I start out in this path, as I'm ready to mail my letter, for example, or even after I've mailed my letter, then I don't have the peace of God. And so, the thing to do is to step back, recall the decision, step back, pray over it again.

Suppose on the other hand, I do have peace with God. An offer comes in that provides a great opportunity and the other seems very insignificant, but God says, "Go this way." And so, against even my better judgment perhaps, I'll reach a lot more people if I do this, but yet the Holy Spirit seems to be leading this way, and I go ahead and mail my letter having peace in my heart that this is what God wants me to do, that is the path that I should travel. This is God's way of showing us when we are in his will. No Christian in God's will, will have anxiety...

“The Age of Innocence and the Judgment” by S. Lewis Johnson  
Copyright © 2008 Believers Chapel, Dallas, Texas. All Rights Reserved.

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**