

THE RIGHTEOUS PURSUES HOLINESS

Chapter 3 Lesson 3

Chapter's Subject: Committed to a Life of Obedience in Pursuit of Holy Living

Main Point: Divine Delight

Today's Study: Divine Delight

1. Blessings for Obedience
2. Delights of God
3. The Good of Obedience

Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Duties after Baptism

In our previous lesson (Chapter 3... Lesson 2), we had for our main point "Dutiful;" under which we should have introduced this current pointer but due to time, we had to forward it to today's lesson. Time is still a factor and as a result this will be a brief presentation.

Unfortunately, for so many congregations much emphasis is placed mainly on baptism and receiving new members, and as a result there are many new Christians who are not aware of the fact that Christianity requires a life-time commitment to serve God faithfully. Note the following quote:

"Baptism is not the end of our service to God, but is the beginning of a lifetime commitment of total dedication to Him."

Keep in mind the following is not exhaustive and you may add to if you so desire:

SOME DUTIES AFTER BAPTISM

1. Meditate on and Study the Bible

The Bible is our compass, our guide, our companion, etc. and without it we are hopeless. Oh may we all join the Psalmist in his delight for the Word of God (see Psa. 119). "Your word have I laid in my heart, that I may not sin against you." (Psa. 119:11 Amplified Bible). Christ used the word to overcome Satan (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). See also Psa. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16; 1 Peter 2:2; etc.

2. Pray Effectually, Fervently and Habitually

Prayer is communion with God and effective communication is a two way transaction. We are not the only one to speak but we also listen to God speaks to us. Someone says, "Payer is the Christian's native air;" Oh beloved, let us regularly go "before the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16) See also Matt. 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-3; 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Peter 5:7).

3. Fast and Pray

Fasting is an act of discipline and self-control; it also helps you practice your ability to manage the desires of the flesh. Fasting helps to build a healthy and strong relationship with God (Luke 2:36, 37; Acts 13:2). Fasting is a biblical way of truly humbling yourself in the sight of God (Psa. 35:13; Ezra 8:21). See also Joel 1:14; 2:12; Matt. 6:16-18; 9:14-15; 17:21; etc.

4. Be Loyal to God and Committed to the Church

This was very much evident among the New Testament Christians; they were loyal to God and faithfully served their local church. The outgrowth of a committed personal life before the Lord is a commitment to the need of the church and in particular your place of local worship. I love the account in Acts 2:32-37 (Some years ago I did a study on this passage entitled "The Delightful Church.") In this situation of loyalty, it is a life given totally to God and His cause here on earth (Acts 9:26-28; 11:26; Eph. 4:7-16, NB v. 16; etc.)

5. Be Good Stewards

Stewardship is a job of supervising or taking care of something, for example an organization, property, etc. All that we are and have belongs to God ... **ALL!!** That includes our bodies, time, talents, wealth, etc. and are to be used to the glory of God (See Matt. 25:1-30) See also Luke 19:11-27; 1 Cor. 4:1-8, NB v. 2; 1 Cor. 6:12-20, NB v. 20; 1 Tim. 6:20; etc.)

6. Regularly Attend Church Activities

Read Heb. 10:19-25, NB Vv. 24-25

Christians need each other. We must diligently encourage one another to show love through good works. We help others to be faithful to Christ by regularly assembling together. Your presence is important for many reasons (a) for the purpose of magnifying and praising God and hearing His Word (Matt. 18:20; John 4:23; Acts 2:42, 46, 47,; 12:24; Heb. 10:24, 25). (b) Church activities is a time of worship, fellowship, Christian service, teaching, evangelism, etc. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:24; 25).

7. Be Kind and Affectionate and Maintain Unity

This must be sincere because otherwise eventually disaster will be experienced. Jesus Christ specifically noted that by our "**Brotherly Love,**" the world will know that we are sincerely His (**John 13:35**; John 15:12; Rom. 12:9; etc.)

This should also be evident:

(a) In our family: Eph. 5:22; 6:4; Col. 3:18-21; Tit. 2:4, 5.

(b) To the needy and hurting: Luke 10:25; Acts 20:35; James 1:27; Matt. 25:34-40

(c) To civil government: Rom. 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13, 14; Matt. 22:17-21.

(d) Etc.

8. Purpose in Your Mind and Heart to be Steadfast

Obviously, Satan has increased his agents of evil in great numbers and so many have manifested themselves as angels of light (2 Cor. 11:4) and there are so many false prophets (false teachers) (Matt. 7:15-2), who are deceiving millions because some (false teachers) **may** be deceived and are not aware of being deceived (2 Tim. 3:13). We must purpose in our hearts to be strong in the Lord. We must put on the whole

armour of God and stand (Eph. 6:10-18). See also 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27; 4:1; 2 Thess. 2:2, 15; 1 Peter 5:9; 2 Peter 3:17.

9. Be an Ambassador for Christ.

The Word of God speaks of “redeeming the time because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:16). Corruption, deception, etc. pollute every sector of society therefore we must be the salt of the earth to purify, preserve, etc. The darkness of sin overshadows the world and millions grope in the midst of immorality; we must be lights that dispel the darkness (Matt. 5:13-16). As Christ’s ambassadors we are to proclaim the “Good News” and to implore sinners to receive it (2 Cor.5:17-21), NB v. 20). It was because the lifestyle of the believers why the name “Christians” came into being (Acts 11:26 ... see also Acts 26:28). Let the world see Jesus Christ by the way that you live!!

10. Be Equipped to Share the Good News

We do need to use the technology available today, to the glory of God in reaching the lost and hurting. Those of us who may not be as experienced with the various means of social media, etc can tell the story of salvation verbally and especially by how we live. If we make ourselves available, God will do the making (Matt. 4:19) and He will equip us for effective service (Acts 1:8). We have a mandate from Jesus Christ and such is our responsibility (Matt. 28:19, 20; etc.). See also **Prov. 11:30**; John 1:40-46; 4:28-30, 39; Rom. 10:14-15; 2 Tim. 2:2, 24-26; etc.

11. Be a Vessel of Honor! Live Morally Upright!

This we have thoroughly discussed throughout this study. Keep this fact in mind: no matter how much we do, what sacrifices we make, etc. it is all in vain if such services come from vessels that are unclean (Matt. 7:15-23, NB Vv. 21-23). See also Mark 7:20-23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; **2 Tim. 2, NB Vv. 19-21**; James 4:8; 1 John 3:3).

12. Live Within the Discipline of Your Church

I will not get into the debate that continues ceaselessly in regards to rules and regulations despite the adverse effects that we are witnessing today. I agree that “methods” must change and not the “message” but in essence the Church (Universal) is constantly changing the “message” in order to attract the crowd and that is damaging!! Guidelines are put in place, based on the Word of God, for the advancement, stability, preservation, etc of Church (Universal). It is necessary for you to live within those guidelines to the glory of God. A lot could be said but I close noting: Ezek. 3:17; 1 Cor. 16:16; 1 Pete 5:5; Heb. 3:17. Biblical guidelines and standards are put in place to preserve our Christian heritage to the highest degree, let us obey and support to the glory of God (Phil. 1:17, 27; Titus 1:13; **Jude 3**).

13. Humility is of Great Value

Note the following quote:

“Submission and humility are reflections of a strong spiritual life (Eph. 5:21). They grow out of the control of the Spirit and a worshipful lifestyle (Eph. 5:18-21). Humility is to be the foundation for godly living between husband and wife (Eph. 5:21-6:4). God will actively bless those who maintain a humble spirit, but He will resist those who refuse to humble themselves before God and others (1 Peter 5:5, 6).”
(Deepening Discipleship by Oliver Mahan)

14. Purpose to Daily Obey God's Perfect Will

This is much easier said than done but it is possible to be lived practically, as we yield to God's leading and walking in the light of His Word. I will summarize by briefly listing the following points:

Submission to the Divine Will (*you may want to read the context in which these references are used*)

- (a) It is the Result of Inward Law (Psa. 40:8)
- (b) Prayer is Essential to Maintain it (Psa. 143:10, read the Psalm).
- (c) It Establishes a Divine Relationship (Matt. 12:50)
- (d) Christ is the Perfect Example (Matt. 26:39, 42).
- (e) It Requires the Whole Heart (Eph. 6:6).
- (f) It should be the Rule of Every-day Life (Jams 4:15).

Beloved, sincerely give your all to Jesus Christ and sincerely and consistently live in obedience, humility, surrender, and renunciation. Let God be glorified in your daily life as you ask Him to "Take My Life and Let it be Consecrated Lord to Thee!!"

DIVINE DELIGHT

Jer. 9:24 Amplified Bible

"But let him who glories glory in this: that he understands and knows Me [personally and practically, directly discerning and recognizing My character], that I am the Lord, Who practices loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, **for in these I delight, say the Lord.** [1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17]."

A brief comment on Jr. 9:24 (*Read the chapter for context*)

Three things people tend to admire are wisdom, power and riches (Jer. 9:23). While this is the emphasis of the world, we must be delighted and rejoice and focus on our personal relationship with God and His grace, which enables us to live righteously. As we saw in a previous lesson King Solomon had it all and above anyone else but eventually realized that **a life lived outside the will of God is nothing but vanity of vanities (Ecc. 1:2; 21:1; 4:16; etc.).** All earthly values are insignificant when compared to a knowledge of God. True worth consist in committing ourselves to God and His standards and in allowing Him to fill us with His Holy Spirit.

God delights in us knowing Him personally and living a life that reflects His justice, righteousness, and love. Blessed is the one who understands the Lord and likewise delights in what He (God) delights.

A. Blessing for Obedience Deut. 28:1-14

1. Summary of Deut. 28

Deuteronomy 28 is an exposition on two words, "blessings" and "cursing;" note carefully Deut. 27 and observe the charge to obey, note also the curses for disobedience. Those who obey will be blessed (Deut. 27:1-12) and those that disobeyed would be cursed (Deut. 27:13-25). Moses avoided speaking in general terms and laid out in details the results of obeying God and the awful consequences

of disobedience (Deut. 28). Moses wanted the people to know that they need to take this matter seriously for these blessings and curses will come into effect because they are real and will have real effects.

He describes the blessings that should come upon them if they were obedient; personal, family, and especially national, for in that capacity especially they would be addressed (Vv. 1-14).

He more largely describes the curses which would come upon them if they were disobedient; such would be (1) their extreme vexation (Vv. 15-44) and (2) their utter ruin and destruction (Vv. 45-68).

Deut. 28 carries similar significance as Lev. 26, setting before the people life and death, good and evil; and the promise, in the close of that chapter; we have **their restoration, upon their repentance**; this promise of restoration is repeated in Deut. 30 ... NB Vv. 1-10, 20). Just as they had rules in the repetition of the law, even so they had detailed repetition of the promises and threatening. These conditions laid out to them are noted elsewhere in this chapter (Deut. 28). Not only as sanctions of the law, based on conditions of their obedience or disobedience but they are also predictions of what would be certain. The people of Israel would be happy in their obedience, but eventually they would suffer awful consequences for their disobedience.

NOTE DEUT. 30:1 NKJV

“Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among the nations where the Lord your God drives you.”

2. **An Introduction to Deut. 28:1-14**

(a) *The following is a quote from “The Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible.”*

“The blessings of God are not automatically poured out upon people. God is not a robot, not a mechanical being that acts impulsively, on the spur of the moment without thought or purpose. The blessings of God are not the result of a flex emotion that arouses God to bless this and that person. The blessings of God are not poured out indiscriminately, at random, in a chaotic manner, God’s blessings are conditional. A person has to do something in order to receive God’s blessings. The blessings of God are the subject of the present age.

Remember, the children of Israel were camped in the plains of Moab close by the river Jordan, right across from the great city Jericho. They were poised to cross the river and enter the Promise Land. But before they entered, Moses felt the need to preach a series of messages to the people. He needed to make sure that the people understood exactly how they were to live in the Promise Land. His messages were

later compiled into the book of Deuteronomy. **In essence, Deuteronomy is the preaching of Moses during the days when the Israelites were camped beside Jordan, preparing to enter the Promise Land.** At this point the messages are nearing completion. Moses has almost accomplished his purpose. The people are prepared, as much as Moses is capable of preparing them. Only one more thing remains: the people needed to renew their covenant with God. They need to make a rededication, a recommitment to God, before actually entering the promise land. The present passage deals with the blessings and cursing of the covenant. The people were to be blessed if they obeyed God, but cursed if they disobeyed Him.”

- (b) In his farewell address to the leaders of Israel (Josh. 23), Joshua renewed the covenant between Israel and God (Josh. 24). The following was a challenge and a call to commit their loyalty to God. (Read both chapters for context).

Josh. 24:14-15 NKJV

“Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.”

3. DETAILED OUTLINE Deut. 28:1-14

(a) **Agreement/Terms and Conditions Vv. 1-2**

- (1) The blessings of God are conditional
- (2) Note “if” in verses 1 and 2
 - Note also “God’s Condition to Heal the Land” in 2 Chron. 7:14
 - You will also notice, God has placed conditions on specific areas as noted in Scriptures, for example: Ex. 19:5; 1 Kings 2:3-4; 9:4-5; Psa. 132:12; Matt. 6:14, 15; Luke. 9:23; John 3:16; Rom. 10:9, 10; etc.)
- (3) Notice that **obedience is compulsory!!**

Deut. 28:1

KJV: “If thou hearken diligently unto the Lord thy God, to observe and do all His commandments ...”

Amplified Bible: “If you will listen diligently to the voice of the Lord your God, being watchful to do all His commandments ...”

- (4) For your obedience God will exalt you! v. 1
- (5) You will be blessed as He promised. v. 2

(b) **Anywhere, you are you will be blessed!! V. 3**

- (1) You will be blessed no matter where you are!
- (2) Joseph is an outstanding example (Gen. 39, NB Vv. 2-6, 21-23; also Gen. 40-41; Psa. 128.
- (3) Fred Hammond song “Blessed” ... The Chorus
We’re blessed in the city;

We are blessed in the field
 We're blessed when we come and when we go;
 We cast down every stronghold
 Sickness and poverty must cease
 For the devil is defeated
 We are blessed
 Whoo!

(c) **Abundance Vv. 4-5**

You may call it the blessing of fruitfulness!!

- (1) Productive/Reproductive Population v. 4
- (2) Bumper Crops v.4
- (3) Healthy/Reproductive Livestock v. 4
- (4) Abundant Daily Supply v. 5
- (5) See also Lev. 26:5; Deut. 30:9; Isa. 30:23; Amos 9:13

(d) **All Activities Blessed v. 6**

- (1) Activities do not necessarily mean worthwhile accomplishments.
 - Stop planting crops that you will regret (Prov. 6: 14, 22; 22:8; Hosea 8:7; Gal. 6:7, 8).
 - Human endeavors without God's blessings are vain (Psa. 127; see also the Book of Ecclesiastes; etc.
 - By abiding in Jesus Christ we will become fruitful (John 15:1-8); the ordinary becomes the extra-ordinary, the very best (John 2:1-11); etc.
- (2) Blessings will follow those who reverence God (Psa. 128)
- (3) Divine Favor/Divine Faithfulness
 - New blessings everyday (Lam. 3:22-24)
 - His blessings continue to all generations (Psa. 105:8)
 - With grateful hearts we'll praise Him (Psa. 89:1)

(e) **Adversaries Overcome v. 7**

- (1) God fights our battles (Ex. 14:14)
 - Situations will arise but in Jesus Christ we have consolation and care (John 16:33)
 - The battle is the Lord's (1 Sam. 17:47; 2 Chron. 20:15)
 - He is strong and mighty, mighty in battles (Psa. 24:8-10; Neh. 4:20; Zech. 14:3)
 - Through Him we are more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37)
 - There is no limitation ... ALL your cares, concerns and challenges are addressed by Him (1 Peter 5:7; Matt.6:32; Luke 12:7; Isa. 41:10; etc.)
- (2) Strong in Him/empowered by Him (Eph. 6:10-18)
- (3) Victory over the enemy, prosperous in wars (Deut. 28:7)
 - His guarantee (Isa. 54:7)
 - The enemy will come one way, flee seven ways (Deut. 28:7)
 - He leads and watches over us (Josh. 1:5)

Josh. 1:5 KJV: “There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with the: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.” (Also Deut. 7:24; 11:25; Josh. 21:44; 23:9)

(f) All-inclusive v. 8

(1) This is a comprehensive package

- God has promised to bless all your endeavors . . . all that you put your hands to.
- The result: you will experience purpose, success, fulfillment . . . there will be contentment (not complacency) in God.

(2) The blessings of God rest upon His people (Deut. 23:5; 2 Sam.7:29; Psa. 3:8; 24:5; 125:8; Prov. 10:22).

(3) “**Storehouses**” . . . (Deut. 28:8 refers to material prosperity)

- God’s promise to Abram (Gen. 12:1-3) was fulfilled (Gen. 24:1; etc.)
- We do need to heed Jesus’ admonition (example Matt. 5, NB Vv. 19-34)
- Our desired objectives must have the glory of God in view (James 4:2-3, also Vv. 13-17; our priority is to focus on that which is eternal (2 Cor. 4:18; etc.)

(g) **Advancement, Spiritual Vv. 9-10**

(1) Note again the condition for blessing

- V. 9 “If thou shalt keep ...”
- It is a fact that so many want to be abundantly blessed with good things and go to heaven but remain in sin because they love darkness (John 3:19).
- God’s condition for blessings must be met before you receive . . . “Trust and **obey** for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and **obey.**”

(2) Establish them a holy people

- They were His covenant people and He would keep His covenant.
 - If they were steadfast, He would give them the grace of steadfastness.
 - Those who were sincere in holiness, God will establish in holiness
 - He has the power to do so (Rom. 16:25)
 - See also Col. 2:7; 2 Thess. 2:16, 17.
 - If we keep close to God, He will never forsake us (Psa. 16:8; 145:18; Matt. 28:20b)
- Deut. 28:9-10 teaches divine ownership (1 Cor. 3:16-17)

(3) The establishment of their righteous walk would be the establishment of their reputation (Deut. 28:10)

- Rev. 3:4
- Making us light on the top of the hill . . . a beam of hope (Matt. 5:14-16).
 - You as a result of living in obedience establish a strong testimony.

- To the glory of God, you may have become a channel that exalts the True and Living God . . . we are His ambassadors. (2 Cor. 5:20)
- We are His chosen people!! (1 Peter 2:9-10)

(h) Awesome/Astonishing Prosperity Vv. 11-12

(1) Man's most important need: "A personal encounter with God, which must be maintained and developed."

- The devil and his establishment distract from this fact; they teach the very opposite.
- This subject of worldly enticement and its destruction has been discussed throughout this study. Righteousness exalts, sin destroys anyone and any nation (Prov. 14:34)
- The abundant blessings of God poured out upon His people were what the Queen of Sheba saw in action when she visited King Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-13, NB Vv. 6-9).

(2) The blessing of prosperity with an overflow . . . note:

- "Fruit of the body" (v. 11) ... speaks of prosperity (Psa. 12:3-5; 128; etc.)
- "Fruit of the cattle" (v. 11) ... their livestock (Gen. 24:35; 31:18; Psa. 104:14).
- "Fruit of the ground" (v. 11) ... refers to their crops (Lev. 26:5; Isa. 30:23).

(3) Prosperity promised (v. 12)

- God's good treasury (v. 12)
 - Rain ... benefit to the land for fruitful seasons (Isa. 55:10; Joel 2:23; Joel 2:23-24).
 - Blessing their endeavors (Gen. 39:3; Deut. 29:9).
 - Economically strong and vibrant as a nation (Deut. 28:12b)
- God's blessings guaranteed
 - The righteous will be blessed (1 Chron. 22:13; 2 Chron. 26:5; 31:21; Psa. 1:3).
 - Even in time of scarcity (Deut. 2:7; 1 Kings 17:6; 19:6; 2 Kings 4:6; Matt. 14:20).
 - In superabundance (Mal. 3:10; Matt. 14:20; Luke 6:38)
 - Give bountiful/reap bountiful (Psa. 41:1; Prov. 3:9; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:7)

(4) **Prosperity, a positive approach** (*A few highlighted comments*)

- When you ask of God, do not ask for the purpose of self-gratification, satisfying your lust, etc. but let it be to the glory of God.
- Do not make the mistake of focusing on your gifts and ignore the Giver.
- Do not allow your possessions to control you! If your wealth increase do not make it the center of your life (Psa. 12:10 LASB), always give God first place (Matt. 6:19-34)
- God gives us blessings so that we can bless others, do not hoard it only for yourself (James 4:3; also 2:14-16).

- King Solomon had it all but came to realize that the final result of life apart from God is “**vanity.**” (Vanity: emptiness, worthlessness).
- Read Luke 12:13-21, NB v. 15; as well as other related references.

(5) We must also remember that true prosperity is spiritual prosperity, manifested in different ways such as love of worship, an increase delight in serving God, an increasing development of Christlike character; etc. Let the temporal things stay in their place and let God be magnified in all that we are and do!!

(i) **August (*Distinguished*) People v. 13a**

(1) The blessing of exaltation

- God will exalt the righteous (Psa. 91:14; Luke 19:17; 1 Peter 5:6).
- “Make the head and not the tail” (Deut. 28:13a)
 - “Head” ... chief, excellent, first foremost, ruler.
 - It is a place of prominence because of God’s favor.
 - Only God can put a special touch on something that changes from common to something special, different and sacred.

(2) This is not a call for arrogance. This is not an emphasis on destructive pride but an assurance for those who are in Jesus Christ.

Time wouldn’t allow for details, but note a few things:

- You may not have two pennies to rub together but you are special!! Very special!!
- You may not have earthly celebrity status but you are special!! Very special!!
- You may not own an elaborate mansion or a modest home but you are special!! Vey special!!
- You may not have neither the best education, nor the skills and knowhow of technology, etc. but you are special!! Very special!!
- You may not . . .!! You may not . . .!!! Based on worldly standards but you are special!! Vey special!!
- We are children of God (Rom. 8:15-16), adopted into His family (John 1:12; Gal. 4:5-6)
- We are the Church (The Ecclesia . . . “called out community”) a called out people (1 Cor. 1:26; Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Tim. 1:9; etc.).
- We are the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7; 22:17).
- We enjoy a union with Christ (1 Cor. 6:15; Eph. 5:30; 1 John 2:24)
- We are heirs of God (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29; Titus 3:7)
- We are the people of God called to a life of holiness (1 Peter 1:15, 16)

(3) Song by Skeeter Davis ... “Child of The King

Once I was clothed in the rags of my sin
Wretched and poor lost and lonely within
But with wondrous compassion the King of all Kings

In pity and love took me under His wing.
 Now I'm a child with a heavenly home
 My Holy Father has made me His own
 And I am cleansed by His blood and clothed in His love
 And someday I'll sing with the angels above

Refrain

Oh yes, oh yes, I'm a child of the King
 His royal blood now flows in my veins
 And I who was wretched and poor now can sing
 Praise God, Praise God I'm a child of the King.

(j) **Attentiveness Vv. 13b-14**

- (1) An unflinching reminder ... God's promises are conditional ... note
 "... if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord ..." (v. 13b)
- Read again verses 1, 2, and 9 (Deut. 28).
 - God will bless you! He will bless you abundantly, but you must obey!!
 - Several lessons in the solemn charge David gave to Solomon, that are beneficial as we pursue obedience to the will of God (See 1 Kings 2:1-4). I will briefly note four things . . . you may want to expand on each.
 - **Promises to the Obedient**
 - "Walk in his way keep his statutes" (1 Kings 2:3)
 - See also Deut. 4:40; 2 Kings 11:28; etc.
 - **Walk Before God this Includes Future Generations**
 - "If thy children take heed to their way ..." (1 Kings 2:4)
 - See also Gen. 17:1, 2; 2 Kings 20:2; etc.
 - **Walk in Truth**
 - "...walk before me in truth ..." (1 Kings 2:4)
 - See also Psa. 26:3; 86:11; etc
 - **Give the Whole Heart to God**
 - "... with all their heart ... all their soul" (1 Kings 2:40)
 - See also Deut. 6:5; Psa. 119:2; etc.
- (2) Steadfastness is compulsory (Deut. 28:14)
- Obey God's commands not for once but forever.
 - Not only making an impressive start but obedience continuously.
 - As related to Israel: as long as they lived righteous lives, including their families and the nation, God wouldn't fail to bless them.
 - Observe God's charge to Joshua, in Joshua 1:1-9
 - Note the need for steadfastness in verse 7 (Josh. 1:1-9). Note again Deut. 28:14
 - See also Josh 23:7; 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27; 2 Peter 3:1
- (3) Blessed!! He will bless you!! God is faithful and will bring it to pass!!
- The hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness"
- Refrain*

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
 Morning by morning new mercies I see:
 All I have needed Thy hand hath provided.
 Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

- **Deut 28:1-2 NKJV**

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God.”

- **Allow me to share another Scripture that shows the importance of obedience; meeting God’s conditions to be blessed.**

See Ex. 23

Observe carefully the contents in the following paragraphs:

- Laws Regarding Ethical Obligations Vv. 1-13
- The Necessity of Observing Three Fast Vv. 14-19
- Obedience to the Ministry and the Assigned Angel Vv. 20-22
- Distinction of Lifestyle in the Conquered Land Vv. 23-33

B. Delights of God

We have discussed the importance of maintaining a balanced approach in regards to the attributes of God. We saw for example that many have placed so much emphasis on the love of God that they have ignored the other attributes of God, for example the justice of God. God’s love is unconditional but He is also a God of justice and will punish sin (Gen. 3:6; Rom. 5:12). We have also seen that God has done everything possible and necessary for anyone to experience deliverance from sin (John 3:16; Rom. 5:7-11). Mercy there was (is) free, as He reaches out to all in love, care and compassion, having no desire that anyone should perish.

Unfortunately, some individuals do not know what it means to have an earthly father who is loving, caring, etc. and that has contributed to the fact as to why many have a distracted view of God our heavenly Father. He is not a God who is primarily concerned in identifying transgressors and pour out His wrath on them. We are His people and He delights in us! Someone suggested that it is not whether God delights in us, He does; however we need to ask ourselves two questions (1) what is it about us that He delights in? (2) Why does He tell us that He delights in us?

There are many synonyms for the word “delight,” for example: lovely, enjoyable, satisfying, gratifying, etc. I will briefly note some things, based on Scripture that give satisfaction and pleasure to God. This is not an exhaustive listing and open to additional pointers.

1. God Delights in Our Prayers

(a) Payer, the thing we talk so much about and do so little of.

- (1) This is an old saying but it is still very much relevant today: "Payer is the Christians native air."
 - It is what we naturally breathe. NOTE: **"He who cease to breathe in prayer is spiritually dead."**
 - It is sad to see so few who really know how to pray or spend personal time with God.
- (2) P. Douglas Small, in his book "Prayer the Heartbeat of the Church," states: "Prayer is the defining mark of a true Christian. He is no Christian who does not pray."
- (3) Prayer is communion with God; it is a two way communication.
 - P. Douglas Small in the book "Transforming Your Church into a House of Prayer," quoted George MacDonald as follows: "Communion with God is the one need of the soul beyond all other needs; prayer is the beginning of that communion.:"
 - God not only expects us to pray (Luke 11:9; John 14:13-14; 15:7; etc.) but our prayers are acceptable and pleasing to Him.
 - Two great hymns (partial quotes):
 - **Sweet Hour of Prayer**
The second verse ... first two lines:
"Sweet hour of prayer, Sweet hour of prayer
The joys I feel, the bliss I share."
 - **I Am Thine O Lord**
The third verse
"O the pure delight of a single hour
That before thy throne I spend
When I kneel in prayer and with thee my God
I commune as friend with friend!"

(b) Characteristics of pleasing prayer.

Quote from Law of Liberty.com

- (1) Prayer must be offered in faith (Matt. 21:22; James 1:5-8)
- (2) Prayer must be offered with a spirit of humility (Psa. 34:18; Luke 18:9-14)
- (3) Prayer must be offered in harmony with God's will (1 John 5:14; Luke 22:42)
- (4) Prayer must be offered by the righteous (James 5:16-18; 1 Peter 3:12)
- (5) Prayer must be offered in a spirit of thanksgiving (Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6)
- (6) Payer must be offered with persistence (Luke 11:5-10; 2 Cor. 12:7-8)
- (7) Prayer must be offered in Jesus name (John 14:13; Eph. 5:20; Heb. 4:14-16)

(c) Hindrances to pleasing payer

- (1) Disobedience (Deut. 1:45; 1 Sam. 14:37; 28:6)
- (2) Secret sin (Psa. 66:18)
- (3) Indifference (Prov. 1:28)
- (4) Neglect of mercy (Prov. 12:13)

- (5) Despising the law (Prov. 28:9)
 - (6) Iniquity (Isa. 59:2; Micah 3:4)
 - (7) Stubbornness (Zech. 7:13)
 - (8) Instability (James 1:6-7)
 - (9) Self-indulgence (James 4:3)
 - (10) Improper treatment of others
 - How you treat the poor (James 2:1-13)
 - How you treat your friends (Matt. 5:23-24)
 - How a husband treats his wife (1 Peter 3:7)
- (d) **Prov. 15:8 Amplified Bible**
 “The sacrifice of the wicked is hateful and exceedingly offensive to the Lord, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.”

2. God Delights in Our Integrity

- (a) Definition of “integrity”
- (1) General meaning: The quality of being honest and having strong moral; principles; moral uprightness.
 - (2) Old Testament meaning: The condition of being without blemish; completeness, perfection, sincerity, soundness, uprightness, wholeness.
 - (3) New Testament meaning: Honesty and adherence to a pattern of good works.
- (b) Two quotes on integrity:
- (1) Chuck Colson
 “We must be the same person in private and in public. Only the Christian worldview gives us the basis for this kind of integrity.”
 - (2) David Jeremiah
 “Integrity is keeping a commitment even after circumstances have changed.”
- (c) **“Integrity”** ... some references with limited comments:
- (1) The need for integrity was an integral part of the covenant God made with Solomon (**1 Kings 9:4-5**).
 - (2) Integrity is the basic element of Christian character. It is the first characteristics of those welcomed into God’s presence (**Psa. 15:2 ... read the Psalm**).
 - (3) David acknowledges that integrity was one of the factors that he continued to obtain the favor of deliverance by God (**Psa. 41:11-13**).
 - (4) **Psa. 101** is a prayer for help to walk a blameless path. To live with integrity, both our efforts and God’s help (**NB Vv. 1-2**).
 - (5) God is a shield to them that walk with integrity (**Prov. 2:6-8, 20-21**)
 - **Prov. 2:7b**
 - **KJV**: “He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”
 - **Amplified Bible**: “He is a shield to those who walk uprightly and in integrity.”
 - **Prov. 2:21**

- **KJV:** “For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.”
 - **Amplified Bible:** “For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the men of integrity, blameless and complete [in God’s sight] shall remain in it.”
- (6) Living a life of integrity, walking before God in righteousness and true holiness is profitable.
- **See Prov. 28:18**
 - Mofatt comments on **Prov. 28:18** as follows: “A man of blameless life is safe: pitfalls bring down the man of crooked courses.”
- (7) Integrity has to do with a sense of **consistency** between a person’s inner values and attitudes and his outward words and actions.
- Joseph stood and maintains his integrity, his honor, etc. (**Gen. 39:9**).
 - Daniel, a man of integrity, under great challenges remain loyal to the True and Living God and shone as a light to the glory of God (**For example see Dan. 5:13-17**).
 - Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior is our perfect example (**Heb. 4:15**)
- (d) God’s endorsement is essential!!!
- (1) **Effective service requires integrity!!!**
- *The following quote has been repeated many times throughout this study:* “Our effort at effective service/ministry are powerless and useless when coming from an unclean vessel (Matt. 7:21).”
 - Despite the many reasons why Christians and church leadership are so drastically scrutinized, degraded, etc., there are still men and women who are standing tall for God (**God is never without a witness!!**) (1 Kings 19, NB v. 18).
 - Integrity has to do with character, which helps produce honor, truth, and reliability, it also develops other people’s confidence.
 - See 1 Tim. 3:7; Titus 2:7-8
 - Living an upright, holy life is presenting an acceptable sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1-2).
- (2) **Job was endorsed by God.**
- **Job 1:8** ... how honorably God speaks of Job.
 - “My servant Job ... there is none like him.”
 - None I value like him, of all the princes and great men of the earth.
 - None like him for uprightness and genuine piety.
 - **Job 2:3** ... Job held fast his integrity
 - Satan had failed in his initial attempt to prove Job’s selfish interest in his fidelity to God.
 - Note God’s delight in Job’s integrity
- Job 2:3 Amplified Bible**
 “There is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who [fervently] fears God and abstain from and shun evil

[because it is wrong]? And still he holds fast his integrity, although you moved me against him to destroy him without a cause.”

(e) **God delights in uprightness (integrity)**

(1) **Prov. 11:20**

- **KJV:** “They that are of a forward heart are abomination to the Lord: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.”
- **NKJV ... v. 20b:** “But the blameless in their ways are His delight.”
- **Amplified Bible ... v. 20b:** “... but such as are blameless and wholehearted in their ways are His delight.”

(2) Due to the moral decline and apostasy in today’s world uprightness (integrity, sincerity, as well as other virtues) are regarded as archaic; but beloved, God will reward uprightness and all righteousness. See Psa. 7:10; 32:11; 37:37; 64:10; 97:11; Prov. 14:11.

3. **God Delights in Our Loyalty**

(a) Let’s take a quick glance at the word “loyalty.”

(1) The word “loyalty” brings to mind a powerful sense of belonging and solidarity. With it comes the idea of whole-hearted fidelity coupled with unswerving devotion and duty.

- In the Bible, the concept of loyalty is pure and personal. This means our whole being is thoroughly committed to someone (Josh. 24:15).
- Such loyalty is expressed in both divine and human realms as given to us in the first two commandments ... see Mark 12:29-31 compare with John 15:13 and 1 John 3:16.

(2) Loyalty is essential to every relationship we have in life that matters – friendship, family, community, faith. **The loyal person acts and stays with and remains committed even when loyalty can be personally disadvantageous or costly for the loyal person to do so.**

(b) Eight Steps on How to be Loyal:

(1) Understand what it means to be loyal.

- Jesus speaks of “denying self”; “seeking first the kingdom of God”; etc; which are applicable to all loyal servants of God.
- You must be willing to allow your own interests to take second place in order to be loyal.
- Loyalty is simple the act of putting someone or something else ahead of one’s self.

(2) Loyalty calls for the willingness to sacrifice.

- Throughout history, millions of patriots have exemplified their loyalty for their country, placing themselves in harm’s way.
- Loyalty means unswerving allegiance in what you do. It is in your mind and heart. Loyalty can be demanding and involve sacrifice.

- We, in the western world, have not experience the level of persecution that our fellow believers have and are experiencing in some areas of the world; some have paid the price for their faith with their lives.
- Note Paul’s response when Agabus prophesied of persecution awaiting Paul in Jerusalem. For context read Acts 21:1-14, note carefully Vv. 12-14.
- Once more, we will not go in details with this subject, but in today’s Church (Universal), popularity, public opinion, etc. are the main areas of emphasis (at least in so many congregations/denominations). We have strayed from allowing God to have the preeminence (See Acts 4, NB Vv. 18-22, highlight Vv. 18-20); instead the emphasis is to please the crowd in order to enhance large numbers. We have seen a great difference where there is a need for sacrificial lives to the glory of God, indeed we are weighed in the balance and are found wanting. However, God be praised for those who are loyal (dependable, faithful, etc.) and they have a made up mind to stand for God no matter what!! (Phil. 1, NB Vv. 20-21).
- God delights in our loyalty (Prov. 17:2; 25:13; 27:18)

Matt. 24:35 NKJV

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?” (Read the chapter, note Vv. 36-51, emphasis on Vv. 44-46).

- (3) There is a need to carefully analyze and determine the requirements (necessities) of whoever will have your loyalty.
- When we review the teachings of Jesus Christ, there should be no doubt as to what are the requirements of His followers. His first discourse for example, in Matt. 5-7, He laid down the conditions for discipleship (see also Matt. 16:24-28; etc.)
 - The following is a quote from “Got Questions.org.”
“For true believers, loyalty is shown in our commitment to Jesus and His gospel; (Mark 8:35; Rom. 1:16). It is the acknowledgement that Jesus is the source of authority and salvation (Matt. 28:18; John 14:6). Such devotion and commitment should echo the attitude of the apostle Peter who said ‘If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ (1 peter 4:11).”
 - **To take the steps of loyalty, you need to recognize that it is a deliberate effort, and to be truly loyal you have to be willing to invest yourself, your time and energy.**
- (4) It’s very important to ask yourself, if the person (s) or cause to which you are committing your loyalty, are they worthy of such devotion.
- Too many have committed themselves to the wrong source (cause) and have experienced catastrophe which not only themselves adversely affected but others.

- Sometimes we focus only on the glitter, glory, and gratification, etc. and not on what is genuinely involved in what is being undertaken, promoted, etc. failing to see what will be the final outcome; we do need to ask ourselves: “Is this really worth my devotion?”
- In the Judeo-Christian religion, the order of loyalty may be summed up as: “God, family, and country,” putting loyalty to God first, then family and finally country.
- **The first verse of “Give of You Best to the Master.”**
 Give of your best to the Master
 Give of the strength of your youth
 Throw your soul’s fresh glowing ardor
 Into the battle for truth
 Jesus has set the example,
 Dauntless was He, young and brave
 Give Him your loyal devotion;
 Give Him the best that you have

The remaining pointers on loyalty are presented with limited comments due to volume of material already presented and time factor that remains.

(5) Consider the benefits of loyalty.

One obvious area where this is easily seen is in the area of employment. We seek jobs with good pay, benefit packages, etc. The Christian experience of serving God has not only the best benefit packages but the blessings are incorruptible, undefiled and are eternal (1 Peter 1:4; Col. 1:12; 3:24; etc.)

(6) Weigh the cost of being loyal

The Christian’s experience is free but not cheap; Jesus Christ gave His life (Isa. 53:6; etc.), we are called on to be living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 2:20; etc.). In Luke 14:25-3 we have another account of the “Cost of Discipleship” (See also Matt. 16:24-28).

(7) Maintain a balanced approach of your loyalty with your everyday life.

There is a need to properly prioritize; we have seen too many who have not given proper attention to this need and have experienced awful results. Keep in mind our loyalty is: first to God, then family and then country (God first Matt. 6:33; do not neglect your family 1 Tim. 3:5; 5:8).

(8) Expect your loyalty to be rewarded and appreciated

One of the most hurtful, discouraging factors in life is to give your very best to those who are unappreciative. In regards to our Christian commitment we are encouraged not to be weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3:13); our service is unto God (Eph. 6:7); God will reward His faithful servants (Matt. 24:45; 25:21, 23; Luke 18:28-30; 19:17; etc.).

Due to time I will continue to present highlighted notes on the remaining pointers for "Delights of God."

4. God Delights in Our Faith and Obedience

(a) Guided by faith

(1) This is not a study on faith but an exhortation and encouragement to all, exhorting you that no matter what comes your (our) way you (we) must continue to serve God.

- I know that it is easier said than one but I also know the reality of maintaining faith in God.
- There are many hymns, songs, etc. that speaks of faith, for example, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."
- Andrae Crouch in one of his songs, "Through it All," noted:
The Chorus
 Through it all
 Through it all
 I've learned to **trust** in Jesus
 I've learned to **trust** in God.

(2) Faith is . . . See Heb. 11:1, 6

- Hebrews 11 demonstrates that faith is trust in God in all circumstances, which enables the believer to persevere and remain steadfastly loyal to God and His Word at all times.
- **Heb. 11:1**
 - The beginning point of faith believes in God's character: He is who He says!
 - The end point believes in God's promises. He will do what He says.
 - When we believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don't see these promises materializing yet must continue to demonstrate true faith(See John 20:24-31).

(b) Father of Faith and Friend of God

Almost all actions in Abraham's life show his faith in God and unflinching obedience to God; (He was regarded as a friend of God (Isa. 41:8).

- (1) In obedience to God, he left his native country, family and all else for a land to which God would direct him (Gen. 11:27-32; 12:1-9; Heb. 11:8-16).
- (2) Although both Sarai (Sarah) and Abram (Abraham) were at an age deemed physically impossible to have children, Abram believed the promise of a son (Gen. 17; Rom. 4:18-21).
- (3) He cast out Ishmael when Sarah and God commanded it (Gen. 21:9-15).
- (4) Isaac was the son of promise, but Abraham was willing to offer him as a sacrifice at the command of God (Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:17-19).
- (5) Because of his great faith, he enjoyed the victory of faith (Gen. 22:12-18).
- (6) Friend of God.

- God regarded Abraham as His friend because he was very faithful to God and always submitted to His will (Isa. 41:8).
- Trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey!!

5. God Delights in Truthfulness

(a) Evil is inherited (Rom. 5:12)

(1) Psa. 58:3 also authenticates this fact of man's inherent depravity. **Note:**

"They go astray **as soon as they are born speaking lies.**" Psa. 58:3b NKJV).

- This is a strong statement in regards to the natural tendencies of man to sin because of the sinful nature ... man is born with a depraved soul.
- Sinful inclination comes as a natural expression of man's fallen state (Rom. 5:12).

(2) **One trait of man's inherited depraved disposition is telling lies!!**

• **Jer.9:3 NKJV**

"And like their bow they have bent their tongues for lies. They are not valiant for the truth on the earth. For they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know Me says the Lord."

- Whether it's pretending, covering up denying the facts, etc. a lie is a lie and beloved, do not be fooled, there is nothing known as a "white lie!!"
- We tend to stress the importance of speaking the truth in the training of our children but that is also applicable to all age groups and throughout our lives.
- There are far too many who coins a lie in a second; never to admit the truth.
- The following gem goes back to my childhood days:
"Speak the truth and speak it ever.
Cost it what it will
He who hides the wrong he did
Does the wrong thing still.

(b) Quote from Law of Liberty.com

"The band that ties society together is honesty. Deceit and falsehood are uncharacteristic of God. **The very heart and soul of religion is sincerity.** Lying introduced sin into the world (Gen. 3:4). There is hardly any form of wickedness against which God has spoken so often and so strongly in the Bible as lying (Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:15).

The father of lies is Satan, who abides not in the truth (John 8:44). Lying is completely opposite of the character of God (Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2). He is the God of truth and we must tell the truth to be like Him (Isa. 63:8)."

(c) It is our duty to be truthful (Prov. 12:19; Zech. 8:16; Mal. 2:6; Eph. 4:25; 6:14.

(d) **Prov. 14:22 NKJV**

“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.”

6. God Delights in Reverence and Hope

(a) See Psa. 147:11

(1) The fear of God and mercy of God interrelate. We, who reverence Him, naturally develop a deep of hopefulness in Him.

(2) God takes pleasure in them that fear (reverence) Him.

- Not in pride, pomp and circumstances of war.
- Not in the great and powerful army or the machines of war.
- He delights in the closet (your place of solitude with God).
 - When devoted people pray.
 - When family as a group bends before Him in solemn devotion.
 - He delights in the heart that truly loves, reverences and adores Him.
- Matthew Henry states:

“Our fear must save our hope from swelling into presumption, and fear from sinking into despair.”

(b) Quote from Liberty.com

“We have three objects which encourage our hope:

We have God’s Word

His Word is fixed and unalterable. If the word of God declares that we have hope, we can be assured that the Christian has hope (Rom. 15:4, 13; Lament. 3:18, 26).

We have God’s Church

The church displays the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10). No one can have access to the saving blood of Jesus Christ without going through God’s steps of salvation. After that we are added to the Lord’s body (Acts 2:47) where we serve the rest of our days in hope of eternal life.

We have God’s blessings

The Lord blesses each of us every day (James 1:17-18). We are so fortunate to be richly blessed with both spiritual and material blessings. The blessings keep us focused on the future for greater blessings in eternity.”

(c) **Psa. 147:11 Amplified Bible**

“The Lord takes pleasure in those who reverently and worshipfully fear Him, in those who hope in mercy and loving-kindness.[Psa. 145:29].”

7. God Delights in Our Prosperity

Prosperity has become a debated and highly controversial topic; however, I will not be presenting a comprehensive study on the topic at this time. You are encouraged to dig deeper into the subject but do so with prayer and carefulness, in regards to the materials that you will be exposed to in your research. The following was intended to be a two paragraphs but I am leaving myself open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

(a) **Definition and Synonyms**

(1) General Definitions

- Webster's
"The state of being prosperous, *esp.* economics well being."
- Dictionary.com
"A successful, flourishing, or thriving condition, especially in financial respect, good fortune."

(2) Synonyms

Affluence, wealth, luxury, the good life, milk and honey, ease, comfort, security, etc.

(b) **Scriptural Usage** (briefly noted)

Obviously, there are many usages of the word prosperity or its synonyms in Scripture, and need to be defined in the context that the word was used. As our eyes are opened to Scriptural truth, you will become appalled with the abuse, ignorance, etc. that characterizes the Church (Universal) as it relates to the "Prosperity Gospel." God be praised for those who are faithfully teaching on this subject in accordance with the Word of God.

(1) Prosper

- "Prosper; v ... "*prosper*" from prosperous: "To carry to or towards, to bear. To favor; to render successful." Etc.
- "Prosper; v ... To be successful; to succeed (See Gen. 39, NB Vv. 2-3, 22-23 and Prov. 28:13)."

(2) Prosperity

"PROSPERTY, n ... Advance of gain in any good or desirable, successful progress in any business or enterprise . . . "

- As we discuss prosperity, it should be noted that it is man's disposition to abuse the blessings of providence.
- See Prov. 1, NB v.32
- Keep in mind; unless the human subject is in constant submission to the will of God, unless he is sanctified and guided by the truth, prosperity will certainly arouse the natural within him and which has led to the ruin of so many.

(c) **THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL** (*Briefly noted*)

Prosperity theology (sometimes referred to as the "**Prosperity Gospel**," the "**Health and Wealth Gospel**" or the "**Gospel of Success**) is a religious belief among Christians that financial blessing and physical well-being **is always** the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth. It is based on interpretations of the Bible that are traditional Judaism (with respect to the Hebrew Bible), though less so in Christianity. Prosperity theology views the Bible as a contrast between God and humans: if humans have faith, in God, He will deliver security and prosperity.

Indeed, we are a covenant people having a holy covenant with a holy God who will never leave nor forsake us. The problem is not the teaching and emphasizing the need for faith, we walk by faith not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11; etc.). Is it wrong to expect to receive from God when we give to His work? Absolutely not! His Word states: "Give and it shall be given unto you . . ." (Luke 6:38).

The problem has to do with the **wrong emphasis on getting** and there are a lot of issues connected with the wrong emphasis placed by those who advocate the "Prosperity Gospel." There are too many individuals who are giving **ONLY** to receive. **One brother states: "God is not a slot machine, nor is His blessings just about money."** We do need to move on but the urge is to continue the discussion, but as God leads most likely we will do a more detailed study in the future.

Due to the wrong and deceptive emphasis placed by some in regards to giving and receiving, many do not know the blessings of just freely loving and serving God with a genuine heart of appreciation and total dedication. Instead, so many give **ONLY** to receive ... **they were taught that in order for a breakthrough to be experienced in specific areas of their lives, or if they need a big financial breakthrough, or an abundance of things, or instant healing, etc. they are to give a specific amount of money ... this we have all seen over and over again.** This emphasis has led some to be overcome by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-16). Eventually, this lifestyle leads to deviation from the ways of God and ultimately a focus on the temporal instead of the eternal (2 Cor. 4:18).

It should be noted that while many carnally crave for riches and neglecting God and His righteousness, there are some rich folks and millionaires who are genuinely committed to Jesus Christ and live a righteous life. The concern at this time is not riches but the wrong emphasis being placed on becoming acquiring wealth and other areas of emphasis based on messages of the "Prosperity Gospel."

We need to teach our people to give because of their **love for God** and the need to see His work continue until He returns. We need to help our congregations to see that God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:7). Tell them to give it with love and store it above (Matt. 6, NB Vv. 19-33) and we are to give with willing hearts (Ex. 35:5).

- (d) Quote from: "God Delights in Our Prosperity," published by Wisdom Literature. The quote is based on Psa. 35:27.
 "We sometimes think that perhaps God enjoy afflicting His servants and that He delights in sending disaster, but that is not the character of God. God delights in the prosperity of His servants.

This is a psalm of judgment ... a psalm of terror. David had enemies who planned and wished his ruin. He called upon the Lord to relieve him. He then prays that those who favored him might be exuberantly joyous, and that they might bless God who desires prosperity for His servants.

(1) God's delight in our prosperity demonstrates three points:

- God's interest in all our existence.
- God's goodwill toward our state
- God's willingness to help.

(2) **True prosperity is spiritual prosperity manifested in different ways:**

- A love of worship
- An appreciation of spiritual realities
- An increasing delight in service to God
- An increasing development of Christlike character."

8. God Delights in Our Praise and Worship (*Briefly presented*)

(a) A brief definition

(1) **Praise**

- Dictionary.com
 - Warm approval or admiration, commendation or laudation.
 - The offering of grateful homage in words or song, as an act of worship.
- Greek Usage

From the verb there are five specific words and I am lifting out two ... quoting from Vines Complete Expository Dictionary

 - "*aineo*" ... to speak in praise of, to praise ... in this situation of praise to God (1) by angels Luke 2:13 (2) by men Luke 19:37; 24:53.
 - "*humneo*" ... points to two things:
 - "**transitively**" ... to sing, to laud, sing to the praise of – sing praises (Acts 16:25; Heb. 2:12)
I refer to this as having an object of praise.
 - "**Intransitively**" ... to sing (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26), in both places of the singing of the paschal hymns (Psa. 11-118 and 136) called by the Jews the "Great Hallel." ("*paschal*": *Passover, Easter*)
I refer to this as the act of praise.

(2) **Worship**

- Webster's Dictionary: worthiness, respect, reverence; reverence toward God, a god or sacred object.
- The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible:
"The English word 'worship' derives from the Old English 'weordhscipe' and mean, 'worthsip' i.e. worthiness, dignity, or merit, the recognition accorded or due to these, the paying of homage or respect. In the religious world the term is used for the reverent devotion, service, or honor paid to God, whether public or individual. The church building is a

place of worship and the forms of divine service followed by various Christian groups or congregations are forms of worship. The verb ‘to worship’ may be transitively, to worship God, and intransitively, to attend or participate in worship.”

(b) Praise and worship

Obviously, there is a difference between “praise” and “worship” although so close together we cannot separate them. We will return to this subject and ask that at this time you note the following quotes:

- (1) “... remember, we praise God in appreciation and anticipation of something but worship Him in total admiration and acknowledgement of who He is. (Source unknown)
- (2) “Praise toward God. This is the means by which we express our joy to the Lord. We are to praise God for who He is and what He does, Psa. 150:2. Praising God for who He is, it is appreciation; praise God for what He does is thanksgiving. Praise of God may be in song or prayer, individually or collectively, spontaneous or prearranged, originating from the emotions or from the will.

Worship when properly expressed is directed towards God. It is a wide term which include praise, but with an emphasis on reverent devotion to God and the practices by which this reverence is expressed. The English word ‘worship’ comes from the Old English word ‘worth-ship,’ a word that denotes the worthiness of the one receiving the special honor or devotion. Worship is characterized by joy and adoration being the response of those that are in the good of God’s gracious redemption in Christ. It is only possible through the leading of the Holy Spirit (John 4:23-24; Phil. 3:3).” (Article by Howard Coles, Coleford, England).

- (3) “Praise is the joyful recounting of all God has done for us. It is closely intertwined with thanksgiving as we offer back to God appreciation for His mighty works on our behalf. Praise is universal and can be applied to other relationship as well. We can praise our family, friends, boss or paperboy. Praise does not require anything of us. It is merely the truthful acknowledgement of the righteous acts of another. Since God has done many wonderful deeds. He is worthy of praise (Psa. 18:3).

Worship, however, comes from a different place within our spirits. Worship should be reserved for God alone (Luke 4:8). Worship is the art of losing self in the adoration of another. Praise can be part of worship, but worship goes beyond praise. Praise is easy, worship is not. Worship goes to the heart of who we are. To truly worship God, we must let go of self-worship. We must be willing to humble ourselves before God. Surrender every part of our lives to His control, and adore for who He is, not just what He has done. Worship

is a lifestyle, not just an occasional activity. Jesus said the Father is seeking those who will worship Him 'in spirit and in truth' (John 4:23)." (Got Questions.org)

(c) Brief Presentation of Psa.22:3, NB v. 3b)

Psa. 22:3: KJV: "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praise of Israel."

NKJV: "But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel."

Psa. 22:3b is frequently quoted in a paraphrased way by noting that, "God inhabits the praise of His people." The praise and worship leader, preacher, etc. uses the quote in order to motivate the congregation in an attitude of praise. Although Psa. 22:3 is so widely used, there are many within our congregations who have no idea where the reference is found neither understands the context in which it is used. **Briefly note:**

(1) **Basic information Psa. 22:3**

- The Trilogy Psalms (Three Psalms)
 - The relationship between Psalm 22, 23 and 24 has long been noted: generally referred to as "The Savior" (Psa. 22), "The Shepherd" (Psa. 23) and "The Sovereign" (Psa. 24).
 - They are also referred to as: "The Cross," "The Crook (for Shepherd)," and "The Crown."
- For Christians, the Christological importance Psa. 22 is inescapable (**NOTE:** *Christology is the doctrine of the person and work of Jesus Christ; the study of His relationship to God, and His relationship to men*).
 - Psa. 22 is quoted in the NT seven times in relation to Jesus (Psa. 22:1 is quoted in Matt. 27:46; Mark 12:34; Psa. 22:18 in the Passion account in all four gospels and Psa. 22:22 in Heb. 2:12).
 - While the Psalms ordinarily emphasize the kingly nature of the Messiah's office Psalm 22 (with Psa. 69) is linked with Isa. 53 in noting the suffering of the Messiah.
- Psa. 22 ... The Divisions (Briefly noted)

As you go through the psalm, you may want to divide it in two or three sections. I am listing two sections, without details, however I will present some highlights on verse 3 (our center of focus)

 - Section 1 ... **Trial** Vv. 1-21
 - Section 2 ... **Triumph** Vv. 22-31

(2) **Psa. 22:3**

ESV: "You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel."

Amplified Bible: "But you are holy, O You who are enthroned in [the holy place where] the praises of Israel [are offered]."

(3) **Praise in the midst of trial and suffering (Psa. 22:3)**

- The testimony that we have in this verse came as a result of trial, suffering, etc. and it is an affirmation that the righteous God who will never leave nor forsake His people (Note Vv. 22-31 ... “Triumph”).
- This affirmation was made . . .
 - . . . at a time when it seemed God had forsaken His servant.
 - . . . in the midst of a most difficult and endangered situation.
 - . . . at a time when prayers were not being answered (so it seemed).
- Never lose sight of who God is!! He is a holy God ... He is not unjust, untrue, nor unkind.
- He is present where and when His people praise Him (Mal. 3:16-17), and their praise like a cloud of incense envelops His throne in the heavens.

(4) The power of praise and worship (a few examples)

- As observed in Psa. 22:3, the psalmist acknowledges that the goodness of God, who is worthy to be praised. Note the following in regards to praise:
 - Surprisingly, praise in the OT arose out of a religion and nation under almost constant stress.
 - Praise is also prominent in the NT in spite of frequent persecution, for example Philippians was written while Paul was in jail.
- Using “prayer” in the acronym form we generally use “p” for praise.
 - It is first and foremost in our prayers as we praise and acknowledge God for who He is . . . The transcendent Creator and Sovereign King. Let praise of and to God continue to permeate our prayers; penetrate our practical lives and produce fruits of righteousness to His honor and His glory!!
 - As the praises go up the blessings will come down.
 - Because of who He is, He will always delight in His people.
 - He is righteous and blameless and what He says He will do.
 - No matter what, we must maintain an unwavering confidence in God (See Job 13:15).

(5) He inhabits the praise of His people!

- He dwells where praise is celebrated . . . He is in the midst!!
- As used in Psa. 22:3, reference here is being made when praise is offered in the tabernacle.
 - God was supposed to dwell there and He was surrounded by those who praise Him.
 - Irrespective of our situation, God is worthy of our praises!!
- He will show up, no matter where we are!! (See Matt. 18:20)
- This bespeaks of God’s wonderful condescension to His faithful worshippers, He is attended with praise of angels, yet He is pleased to inhabit the praise of His people.
- Note the effect of praise in the following examples and you may extend this very short listing if you so desire:

- Jehoshaphat's victory over the Moabites . . . See 2 Chron. 20, Vv. 19-22.
- The Jews in exile faced a hopeless and uncertain situation but victory was in sight; they were told to sing (Isa 54:1).
- Imprisoned, physically wounded, etc. Paul and Silas praised God (Acts 16, NB Vv. 23-27).

9. God Delights in His People

(a) **Zeph. 3:17 KJV**

"The LORD thy God is in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."

(b) **Psa. 147:11 NKJV**

"The Lord takes pleasure in those that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy."

(c) **Psa. 149:4 NKJV**

"For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation."

(d) **See also:** Psa. 89:15-18; 1 Peter 1:6-7; Rom. 2:29; 1 Cor. 4:5.

(e) **Psa. 37:23**

(1) **NKJV:** "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his ways."

(2) **NLT:** "The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives."

(f) **1 Peter 5:7**

(1) **NKJV:** "Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you."

(2) **Amplified Bible:** "Casting all your cares [all your anxieties, all your worries, and all your concerns, once and for all] on Him for He cares about you [with deepest affection, and watches over you very carefully]."

(g) **Eph. 2:4**

(1) **NKJV:** "But God, who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us."

(2) **Amplified Bible:** "But God- so rich is He in His mercy! Because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loved us."

10. God Commands Us to Delight in Him!!

(a) Delight in Him! Praise Him!

(1) **Psa. 37:4 Amplified Bible:** "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He will give you the desires and secret petitions of your heart

(2) **Phil. 4:4 Amplified Bible:** "Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice [Psa. 37:4]."

(3) See also Rom. 5:2; Psa. 43:4; 70:4; 63:3

(b) It is our duty to rejoice in Him!(1) **Deut, 12:7 NKJV**

“And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.”

(2) **Psa. 5:11 NKJV**

“But let all those who put their trust in you; let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love your name be joyful.”

(3) **Psa. 32:11 NKJV:** “Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”(4) **Zeph. 3:14 Amplified Bible:** “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice, be in high spirits and glory with all your heart, O Daughter of Jerusalem [in that day].”(5) **1 Thess. 5:16 Amplified Bible:** “Be happy [in your faith] and rejoice and be glad-hearted continually (always)”

(6) See also Deut. 16:11; Zech. 9:9; Luke 10:20; Rom. 12:15

C. The Good of Obedience 1 John 3:24 (Note Vv. 23, 24)

The presence of the Spirit in the heart assures the **obedient Christian** that Christ abides in him. It is important to remember that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the secret of spirituality and effective service. The Holy Spirit’s witness to our salvation is mandatory and has been stressed by the apostle John in this letter (1 John ... see 3:24; 4:13; 5:6).

The mutual relationship, living in Christ as He lives in us, shows itself in Christians who keep these essential commands (1) believe in Christ, (2) love the brothers (3) live morally upright lives. The Spirit’s presence is not only spiritual and supernatural, but it is also practical; this has also been discussed throughout this study book; beloved, our spiritual experience must be lived out practically, in our daily lifestyle!! The way that we live whether in public or private, will authenticate whether or not the Holy Spirit abides in us.

As we have seen in previous lessons, obedience is of paramount importance to all believers who intend to live and maintain a life of righteousness and true holiness. We saw the result of disobedience for example in (a) Adam and Eve (b) King Saul (c) King Solomon (d) as well as others. **The fundamental principle that governs all true obedience is to believe in God and His perfect will. Beloved, a lack of belief results in rejection of the Word, will and ways of God, which results in disobedience and its consequences.**

1. Believing in Depth 1 John 3:23**(a) To Discern Christ**

How do you recognize, identify, determine, and distinguish, etc. the reality of Jesus Christ? Is it important to believe who He is? Etc.

(1) General definition of “believe,” “belief”

- “Believe”
 - To have a firm especially, religious belief.
 - To take as true and honest
 - Etc.
 - “Belief”
 - Mental acceptance of something offered as true.
 - Religious faith, especially “creed.”
- (2) Nelson’s Bible Dictionary defines faith as: “belief in or confident attitude toward God, involving commitment to His for one’s life.”
- (3) The word **belief** in Greek is “*pistis*” which means **confidence or trust**.
- It is to have confidence in the truth, the existence, or reliability of something, without absolute proof that one is right in doing so. Only if one believe in something can one act purposefully.
 - Christ’s words to Thomas (John 20:27-29)
 - Such is necessary to obtain salvation (John 3:15; 5:24; 11:25; 12:46; 20:3; Rom. 10:9).
 - Which comes first, faith or belief?
 - **Belief** comes before **faith**. All abstract (theoretical conceptual, etc.) knowledge is based on belief.
 - **Faith** is related to **belief** because it supplies the conviction that the **belief** is true.
- (4) What we are looking at here is the reality of who Jesus Christ is; and have an intellectual understanding of Him.
- It is to know that He is the Son of God the Anointed One and Savior of the world!
 - **John 6:40 NKJV**
 “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and **believes in Him** may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”
- (b) **To Deepen Our Awareness**
- (1) Definitely, an intellectual understanding of Christ is important but it is necessary to go deeper!!
- To be satisfied with only a mental awareness is like the seeds that fell on “Stolid Surface” (Matt. 13:4, 19).
 - It will never germinate, which means it will not produce.
 - These are hearts that are hard, very hard, with closed minds and hearts like cured concrete. Therefore they give no attention and take no heed to the Word. Many do have an understanding but the word stays on that hardened surface until the devil takes it away!!
 - Millions today know of God but has no real desire to genuinely commit to Him.

- The Jewish leaders rejected Christ although so many of their prophecies clearly pointed to Him.
 - He came unto His own but His own receive Him not (John 1, NB Vv. 10-11).
 - The Roman leaders knew of Christ but didn't know Him.
 - King Herod (Matt. 14:1; Mark 6:14; Luke 23:8)
 - King Agrippa (Acts 26:28)
- (2) **The phrase: "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing."** (*This thought goes back to the 18th century*)
- Note the following contributions to this thought:
 - "The shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again."
 - "Absorbing a little knowledge from the brooks will make you feel less logical and irrational."
 - The meaning of the phrase (*also seen in the quote above*):
"A small amount of knowledge can mislead people into thinking that they are more expert than they really are which can lead to mistakes being made."
- (3) Spiritually, this is a sad reality because we are dealing with eternity!!
- See Hosea 4:6; Micah 4:12; Rom. 10:3; etc.
 - There are far too many precious souls with churches but are lost (a) Luke 15:8-10; (b) The Virgins five rejected (Matt. 25:1-13) (c) etc.
 - There must be more than an intellectual awareness; note carefully Matt. 16:13-20, NB Vv. 13-15.
- (4) **This is a call to deepen our convictions and our consciousness of Jesus and willingly ready to adapt to the cause of salvation.**
- Too many are preaching, teaching and singing, etc. attracting thousands but it is still merely mental awareness and outward performances.
 - **Believing is theology but much more than theology.**
 - It is dogma ("*dogma*": *a deep seated belief, a conviction*) come alive; it is believing enough to stake one's life on the name and character of Jesus Christ.
 - Millions have and are paying the price, even with their lives for the cause of Christ.
 - See also Acts 21:1-16, NB Vv. 11-14
 - Believing is to be seen as being so forceful that one is willing to experience a change. Note John 1:12 (noted several times before): "believing in Christ" results in (a) "Believing" (b) "Receiving" and (c) "Becoming."
- (c) **To Be Dedicated to Christ Our Redeemer**
- (1) That's who we are ... servants of God ... His children.

- We have noted several time before **that sanctification goes deeper than meaning separation ... it includes separation from the world unto God!!**
 - This act of separation is clearly seen in the call of Abram (Abraham) ... separation from an idolatrous family and all else unto God.
- (2) Dedicated defined.
Dedicate means:
- To set apart for some purpose; especially a sacred or serious purpose.
 - Devoted to a task or purpose; having a single-minded loyalty or integrity.
- (3) Some years ago I did a study entitled “Disciples Commitment and Consecration.” As God leads I will review and make it available. The study is built on Matt. 4:18-22 as background reference.
- In the introduction several pointers are noted in regards to Matt. 4:18-22. The following is one example”:
 - **Follow ...** we are called to follow Jesus Christ (v. 19)
 - **Forsake ...** we must forsake all and follow Christ (v. 20)
 - **Fashioned ...** we are fashioned (made) by Christ (v. 19)
 - **Fishers ...** we are called to be fishers of men (v. 19)
 - We are running out of time ...but note: the study, “Disciples Commitment and Consecration,” covers six main points of which two are (a) Imitates Our Master and (b) identifies with Our Master. Dedication to the utmost!
- (4) **First and foremost in our minds is the fact that our bodies, our all are dedicated to God!! See Rom. 12:1-2.**
- As a “new man” (in Christ) it’s your desire to live by the new way.
 - As a “new man” you are strongly convinced, assured of what is right and required.
 - As a “new man” your desire is to communicate with God, and do His perfect will.
 - As a “new man” you are solely God’s and will “glorify Him in your body and in your spirit.” (1 Cor. 6:20).

We are definitely out of time and will have to present highlights for the remaining pointers.

(d) To Depend on Him Wholeheartedly

- (1) To trust Him, rely upon Him for the full and final outflow of His saving grace.
- They that know Him trust Him (Psa. 9:10)
 - We pour it out, all upon Him because He can be depended upon (2 Tim. 2:12).
 - This faith is a necessary requirement for those who intend to be prevailing petitioners with God, because it is by the Son that we come to the Father. In Him, through Him, we are accepted (Eph. 1:6; also Acts 10:35; 2 Cor. 5:9).

- Jesus Christ is our all in all ... much more than we have time to discuss. Take for example the Gospel of John; there we have a series of pictures and in each Christ is the central figure (*Detail not possible; also note there are other related references*).
 - Chapter 1 ... **He is The Son of God** (NB v. 1)
 - Chapter 2 ... **He is The Son of Man** (NB Vv. 1,2 ... like any other person attending a wedding)
 - Chapter 3 ... **He is The Divine Teacher** (NB v. 2)
 - Chapter 4 ... **He is The Soul Winner** (NB Vv. 7-26)
 - Chapter 5 ... **He is The Great Physician** (NB Vv. 8, 9)
 - Chapter 6 ... **He is The Bread of Life** (NB Vv. 25-40)
 - Chapter 7 ... **He is The Water of Life** (NB Vv. 37-38)
 - Chapter 8 ... **He is The Defender of the Weak** (NB Vv.3-11)
 - Chapter 9 ... **He is The Light of the World** (NB v. 5)
 - Chapter 10 ... **He is The Good Shepherd** (NB v. 10)
 - Chapter 11 ... **He is The Resurrection and the Life** (NB v. 25)
 - Chapter 12 ... **He is The King** (NB Vv. 12-15)
 - Chapter 13 ... **He Assumes The Place of a Servant** (NB Vv. 4-5)
 - Chapter 14 ... **He is The Consoler** (NB. v. 1)
 - Chapter 15 ... **He is The True Vine** (NB v. 1)
 - Chapter 16 ... **He is the Giver of the Holy Spirit** (NB Vv. 7-15)
 - Chapter 17 ... **He is The Great Intercessor** (Read the chapter)
 - Chapter 18 ... **He is The Model Sufferer** (NB v. 11)
 - Chapter 19 ... **He is The Uplifted Savior** (NB v. 18)
 - Chapter 20 ... **He is The Victor Over Death** (Read the chapter)
 - Chapter 21 ... **He is The Restorer of the Penitent** (NB Vv. 15-17)
- Read again 1 John 3:23a
- (2) **The second part of this command (1 John 3:23 b) is to “love one another.”** *“Brotherly love” has been discussed extensively throughout this study. Please not the following:*
 - We must forgive others who have offended us (Matt. 6:14; 11:25; Luke 17:4; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; etc.).
 - We must seek to reconcile ourselves to those who we have offended (Matt. 5:23, 24; 6:12; 18:15).
 - We have been freely forgiven and loved by God; similarly we ought to do to our fellow men. Note carefully Rom. 5:1-11 (*highlighted before*). The price for our redemption was paid although:
 - We were ungodly (v. 6)
 - We were sinners (v. 8)
 - We were God’s enemies (v. 10).

... Read carefully the passage (Rom. 5:1-11 and note carefully Vv 10b to 11).

2. Blessedness of Obedience 1 John 3:24

A Brief Summary

In 1 John 2:28, John exhorted his readers to abide in Christ. In addition, he notes in 1 John 3:24 the promise of Christ abiding in the Christian. He also adds the ministry of the Holy Spirit as a new theme. The passage is similar to portions of Christ's last discourse in John 14-17. As noted in those chapters God and Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell in the Christian. This is a genuine Christian experience and also one of the clearest scriptural references to the Trinity.

You may want to expand on the following highlighted pointers.

(a) Compliance with God's Will

"... he that keepeth ..." (1 John 3: 24a KJV)

- (1) We also noted this fact as seen in Deut. 28:1-14, that there are blessings for the obedient.
- (2) See also Ex. 19:5; Deut. 5:29; 1 Kings 3:14; James 1:25; Rev. 22:14).

(b) Christ's Indwelling

"... abide in Him, and He in them. [They let Christ be a home to them and are the home for Christ." (1 John 3:24b Amplified Bible)

- (1) Abiding was also discussed several times throughout this study. If necessary please review your notes.
- (2) Christ's indwelling:
 - Revealed in the Coming of the Holy Spirit (John 14:20 ... read Vv. 15-31)
 - Demonstrates to the World Christ's Mission (John 17:23)
 - The Old Life Dies that the New May Live (Gal. 2:20)
 - Obtained by Faith (Eph. 3:17-19)
 - Is a Glorious Mystery (Col. 1:27)
 - Obedience is Essential (1 John 3:24)

(c) Confidence

- (1) There is that deep seated assurance because of this genuine and unique relationship with Jesus Christ (1 John 3:24c)
- (2) **1 John 3:24d Amplified Bible**
"And by this we know and understand and have proof that He [really] lives and abides in us; . . ."
- (3) We have the assurance: Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 2:3; 3:19; 4:1; 5:10.

(d) Comforter's Witness

- (1) The Holy Spirit authenticates our relationship.

1 John 3:24e

 - **KJV:** "... by the Spirit which he hath given."

- **Amplified Bible:** "... by the [Holy] Spirit Whom He has given us."
(2) See also Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 4:13; 5:6

"And we receive from Him whatever we ask, because we [watchfully] obey His orders [observe His suggestions and injunctions, follow His plan for us] and [habitually] practice what is pleasing to Him." **(1 John 3:22 Amplified Bible)**

CLOSING THOUGHTS

In this study, "The Righteous Pursues Holiness;" the subject has been discussed under three main points:

1. Clothed in Christ's Righteousness

- (a) We do not have our own righteousness (Isa. 64:6a), we are righteous **ONLY in Jesus Christ**; and as seen in the study I have placed much emphasis on the **necessity of being in Christ!**
- (b) "There is no better term to describe the essence of holiness of life than Christlikeness."
- (c) This experience is possible and is secured through our union with Christ (Rom. 8:1) and it is essential that we remain abiding **in Him** (John 15:1-8).
- (d) The believer is admonished to put on Jesus Christ
Rom.1:14 Amplified Bible: "But clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ ..."
- (e) To be clothed in Christ's righteousness is to be declared righteous in Christ.

2. Created Anew in Righteousness and True Holiness

- (a) Righteous because of Christ's righteousness ... any man **in Christ** is a new creation ... (2 Cor.5:17) and there is no condemnation (no guilty verdict, no punishment ... (Amplified Bible) to those **in Christ** and are not living by the lust of the flesh (Rom. 8:1).
- (b) This newness of life involves putting off the "old man" and putting on the "new man" (Col. 3).
- (c) **Eph. 4:24 NKJV**
"And that you put on the new man, which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."
- (d) If a person, genuinely heard Christ speaking to his/her heart, then what they heard were not instruction supporting the kind of life, lived when they were sinners (see Eph. 4:21-24).
- (e) **Each person, through the Lord Jesus Christ, is made a new kind of person; a new man in God.**
- (f) A quote to remember: "Salvation recreates the moral image of God in people and opens the door to God's work of sanctification and growth in holiness."
- (g) **Col. 3:10 NKJV**
"And have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him."

3. The third and final main point is: **Committed to a Life of Obedience in the Pursuit of Holy Living.**

(a) **This commitment calls for continuity:**

- (1) We must continue walking in the light (Eph. 5:18)
- (2) We must keep on looking in the mirror ... be a doer (James 1:22-25)
- (3) We must always remember, a double standard life is destructive (James 1:8; 4:8)
- (4) We must continue to be sober, vigilant, always resisting the devil (1 Peter 5:8-9)
- (5) We must continue to stay away from the very appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22-23).
- (6) We must continue to be strong in the Lord, being clothed in God's full armour (Eph. 6:10-18).
- (7) We must, with made up-minds, be determined that what we have in God is too valuable, too precious, etc. to be compromised or give up. Our determination must be: "Nothing will separate us from God's love (Mark 12:29-31; Rom. 8:35-39)." We will keep in mind that the grace of God is sufficient for us (2 Cor. 12:9).
- (8) We must NEVER forget that our call to discipleship, means bearing our cross **daily** to the glory of God (Luke 9:23).

(b) **In pursuit of holy living**

- (1) Early in our study we saw that "pursue" is similar in meaning to the word "press" as used in Phil. 3:14.
 - Read again Phil. 3, note v. 12; "follow after," and v. 14 "press forward."
 - To pursue a life of holiness requires "effort" and "diligence"
 - We just don't sit back at ease in Zion and this wonderful experience of holiness falls into our laps.
 - We must "follow after," Press towards our goal," this is what it means by pursuing holiness!! Beloved, it calls for effort and diligence!!!
- (2) We also noted before and emphasized that this glorious experience is **one that must be maintained and developed**. We daily seek to go deeper and deeper higher and higher in this glorious experience!!!
- (3) **We also saw that holiness of life can be achieved as we walk in obedience and humility and are perfected in the fear (reverence) of God through renunciation and surrender.**
 - **Obedience** to the Word, will and way of God ... the psalmist speaks of having God's Word treasured in his heart (Psa. 119:11), that he might not sin. Peter also admonishes that we desire the Word of God as new born babes crave for milk (1 Peter 2:2).
 - This you must never forget: only as we walk in obedience to the Word, in humility before God, that our lives will benefit us; this is also very important to remember: there must be a doing ... that is "obedience" is compulsory!!

4. **I will close with quotes from the Bishop's Study Manual (Church of God): *(Bold prints mine for emphasis)***

- (a) "Before and after the experience of sanctification there must be **continued obedience to the truth.**

The believer's soul is cleansed because of obedience to the Word. The believer obeys the truth and as he obeys the truth the Spirit of God cleanse his soul from sin."

This is critically important to remember: "A person is cleansed **ONLY** while he is walking in the truth, **ONLY** while he is obeying the truth of God's light."

- (b) "A life of holiness is possible as we **remain consecrated to a life of obedience** to God's Word and His will. Obedience to the will of God brings grace, peace and righteousness (Rom. 5:12-21)."

- (c) "**Our submission** to the standard of God's holiness and **our continued separation** from the world to God **requires our unconditional obedience.**"

- (d) "We have seen that holiness of life is possible if we understand that our competency comes from God and not from ourselves. Holiness of life is the will of God, it is the work of Christ and it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit bringing complete redemption for us through Jesus Christ."

Lev. 11:45 Amplified Bible

"For I am the Lord your God; so consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:15-16 Amplified Bible

"But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your conduct [be set apart from the world by your godly character and moral courage]; because it is written, YOU SHALL BE HOLY (set apart) for I am holy."

2 Tim. 2:15

KJV:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Amplified Bible:

"Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth."

Chapter 3 Lesson 3 Review Questions

1. Choose the correct answer to complete the following:
"Baptism is not the end of our service to God, but is the beginning of a lifetime commitment of total _____.

- (a) denial of wrong
- (b) defying all odds
- (c) decision making occasionally
- (d) dedication to Him.

2. List at least eight duties required of the believer after baptism (as discussed in our lesson).

3. Complete the following:
"Submission and (a) _____ are reflections of a strong (b) _____ (c) _____ (Eph. 5:21). They grow out of the (d) _____ of the Spirit and a (e) _____ lifestyle (Eph. 5:15-21)."

4. As noted in Jer. 9:24 what three things do people tend to admire?

5. (a) Answer True or False (b) explain your answer.
Deut. 28 is an exposition on two words "blessings" and "rejoicing."

6. Complete the following:
 The blessings of God are not (a) _____ out (b) _____,
 at random, in a (c) _____ manner, God's (d) _____
 are (e) _____. A person has to do (e) _____
 in order to receive God's blessings.

7. As discussed in our lesson, which reference in the O T carries similar significance as Deut. 28 and what is set before the people?

8. What proof do we observe in Deut. 28 that the blessings noted (Vv. 1-14), would be conditional?

9. Deut. 28:7, God assures victory over all adversaries and in Ex. 14:14 we have the reminder that God fights our battles.

Match the statements on the left with the correct references listed on the right.

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCE	JUMBLED REFERENCES
Situations will arise but in Jesus Christ we have consolation and care		Psa. 24:8-10
The battle is the Lords		1 Pete 5:7
He is strong and mighty, mighty in battles		Rom. 8:37
Through Him we are more than conquerors		1 Sam. 17:47
We are invited to cast all our cares on Jesus Christ		John 16:33

10. Briefly explain the need for "steadfastness," noted in Deut. 28:14.

14. Which of the following is not a hindrance to pleasing prayer?
(a) Disobedience (b) secret sin (c) indifference (d) sincerity (e) iniquity (f) stubbornness

15. Define integrity: (a) the general meaning (b) OT meaning (c) NT meaning

16. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

Integrity has to do with character, which helps produce honor, truth and reliability, it also develops _____.

- (a) other people's distrust
- (b) other people's confidence
- (c) other people's rejection
- (d) other people's dislike

17. Correct the mistakes in the following:

To take the steps of loyalty, you need to recognize that it is an involuntary effort, and to be truly loyal you have to be unwilling and refuse to invest yourself, your time and energy.

18. In discussing Heb. 11:1, what was noted to be (a) the beginning point of faith and (b) the end point of faith.

19. Discussing “God Delights in Reverence and Hope,” what three objects were noted as sources to encourage our hope; give reference?

20. Complete the following:

Keep in mind; unless the (a) _____ subject is in constant (b) _____ to the (c) _____ of God, unless he is (d) _____ and guided by the (e) _____; prosperity will certainly (f) _____ the (g) _____ within him and which has led to the (h) _____ of so many.

21. Briefly define (a) praise (b) worship.

22. Briefly explain: “O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” (Psa. 22:3 KJV)

23. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

It is important to remember that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the secret of _____.

- (a) Satisfaction and enduing self-righteousness.
- (b) Simplicity and external manifestation
- (c) Self-satisfaction and effective service
- (d) Spirituality and effective service

24. List the four main points used when we discussed 1 John 3:23.

25. (a) Explain the phrase “A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.” (b) How is this spiritually applicable?

We will discuss the answer to as many questions as possible in our next class.