

How to Overcome the Sin Within II

Fred R. Coulter—November 17, 2012

How to overcome the sin within, that's the biggest problem for every individual. Then when it gets to a family, to a community, to a nation, to the world, it all boils down to the individual.

In every way that you look at what is happening in the world, think about the whole world everywhere, there is misery, upset, war, famine and pestilence! Now we're getting closer and closer and closer to it. I believe the only reason it hasn't hit full blast here yet is because the United States of America is the only place in the world, whether for contention or whether in truth, where the Gospel is preached and the name of Christ is named—only place in the world. You look around the world. Where is the Gospel being preached? *Only in America!* There may be a little isolated place over here, a little isolated place over there.

What we're essentially dealing with this in all of this is that people have gotten rid of God. I covered that in the letter we just mailed out. Everyone's anxious with the election. 'What do you think of the election?' I think Dolores had it exactly right. *We got the one we deserve because of our sins!*

Let's start off here in Proverbs 21:2 so we can understand about *the sin within*. It's *the imagination of man* that is the problem, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated, or like Paul has written: whether Barbarian, Scythian, or whatever, Jew or Gentile.

Proverbs 21:2 applies: "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD ponders the hearts." God is capable of judging everyone's heart simultaneously, at the same time, because He's given the spirit of man to each man. He knows the thoughts of man that they are vain.

Let's come back here to the book of Judges, last verse. This happens over and over again. I know we were discussing, we've asked the question over again: Why do these things keep happening down through history? Like with America, why do we always seem to be at war? Stop and think for a minute. Any country in the world, ask: When was there a time they had no war? *Never!*

Judges 21:25: "In those days *there was* no king in Israel. Every man did *what was* right in his own eyes." That's what human beings do. That's what we were talking about here beforehand.

What was it in the days of Noah? Let's come back to Genesis 6, let's review that and let's see what's going on and also we will add to it all the modern things that we have that affect the mind.

I saw a very interesting little special on, I think it was NatGeo (National Geographic). Sometimes you think about: what would it be like just to be alone somewhere and no one around. There's this island in the Gulf of Alaska called Middleton Island. It's four miles long; at the widest point it's one mile wide. It's virtually a barren island. There are a few little mounds on it and there is some grass, the birds, seals, and all of that stuff.

There's one man and his wife; they live there and they do special reporting. He enjoys going out walking on the island. Of course, when the wind isn't blowing, when the storms aren't going and everything. When you get to the sea it's very relaxing—isn't it? That's because of all of the ions that the body needs, and so forth. That's why it's that way. He's lived there for a good number of years. Here comes the junk from the tsunami. So they get junk washing up there and they found a little soccer ball. That little soccer ball had some writing on it.

They took a picture of the writing, sent it back to Japan to see if they could locate this person, because the man who was running that station, he's married to a Japanese woman. She was able to read the Japanese writing and that's what they took a picture of off the soccer ball and sent back to Japan. They finally located the boy. It was his soccer ball. I was thinking with that:

Here you are, *all alone and you can't get away from the problems of the world today!* You got a mountaintop you want to go to? Don't go in a cave, you might have an earthquake and you're mincemeat. You want an island out in the middle of the sea? *There may be a tsunami take care of you!* You add all of this together and it gets down to what we just read. 'Everyone is doing what is right in his own eyes.'

As Jesus said, 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.' Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually." We've reached the same thing—haven't we?

When you're coming to the knowledge of the Truth, you begin to really be shocked as to what sin is. A lot of people like to nibble around the edges and change a little behavior outside, but what God wants is the change inside. Right there v 5 defines man's heart, always. We won't go through the rest of it, save that God had to destroy all human life and all other life. There was no reason to destroy all

other life unless it was because of transhumanism and cross-genetics as I've brought out in several sermons and many churchathome.org

Let's see one other thing that God has set before us so that we are all accountable. Every single human being on earth is accountable to God,

- whether for good
- whether for bad
- whether they know God
- whether they don't know God

God made some promises here. Here's what everyone wants.

Deuteronomy 30:5: "And the LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. And He will do you good and multiply you above your fathers." Remember, He promised! When God promises, it's a unilateral promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This is what frustrates the nations of the world concerning the modern descendants of Israel as well, that they have been blessed with so much riches and so much territory and such good land and all of this. Look at what sinners they are! And here we are where we are and we're trying to even do better than they do, and yet, we can't get ahead or any of that because of the blessing of God. This is why punishment is coming.

Verse 6: "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.... [*if* you follow God] ...And the LORD your God will put all these curses upon your enemies, and upon those that hate you, who persecuted you. And you shall return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all His commandments which I command you today. And the LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in every work of your hand..." (vs 7-8).

Think about that. Just stop and think about all the things that you have, all the gadgets, all the things. Today people think they're smart and important because they have a SmartPhone. They've got access to everything right online and their vocabulary has been accepted and reduced down to Twitter and Facebook. They think magically that they're educated. Think of it, all the stuff that you have.

"...in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your land, for good, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers... [that is]: ...**If**..." (vs 9-10). There's the word right there. Here is the whole test for every human being. Even those who don't have the Word of God in the past, but today the world is filled with the Word of God.

If you have a SmartPhone, you can have the whole Bible there and you can push the button, you can have however many translations you want. You want to hear someone preach, you've got the whole spectrum of everything—right? Far different from living on an island four miles long and one mile wide and you're there by yourself and your greatest conversation is with your wife or your husband or the seagulls.

Verse 10: "**If**..." This is what human nature doesn't want to do. This is why there is *the sin within*. We're specifically going to talk about strongholds, *the strongholds in the mind!* The strongholds in the mind have different sources, but it is basically a choice.

Here's the comparison: "...you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the Law..." (v 10). That's why God had everything written down—Old Testament and New Testament—because you could never depend on the lying nature of human beings to keep it straight. God specifically had certain men write it and made sure it was written correctly so that no one could say, 'Lord, why didn't you tell me?'

That's why I think all the modern devices are here. I think nearly everyone in the world is going to have a modern device where they can have it in their hands so they are going to have a personal warning when these events take place. *No one* is going to be without warning.

Now notice the second *if*: "...and **If** you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (v 10). That's the key of overcoming the sin within. Nothing else is going to do it:

- the Law of God
- the Spirit of God
- and *your choice*.

Verse 11: "For this commandment which I command you today is not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, 'Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?'" (vs 11-12). Wouldn't that be something if God said, 'Okay, if you can come up on the moon and on the backside in this crater I've hidden My law.' *No! He's made it available*, especially for today.

I've just finished reading all the Psalms and recorded it and finished Matthew and Mark and I'm into Luke. I don't know how quickly I can get it done or how long it will take me to get the New Testament done. But in reading the Psalms and in

reading every one of them, I'm absolutely amazed how much of the Bible is for the last days.

You look at some of those Psalms that are excoriating against the enemy, that they shall be burned and melted. I thought: What is the only time that's really going to happen? *Lake of Fire!* Even us, when we're reading the Bible and studying the Bible you better think big and expand out, because it's all pertinent to us today.

Verse 13: "Neither is it beyond the sea *that you should* say, 'Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?' But the word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it" (vs 13-14). That's God's way of saying it will be in a language you know, because that's what's in your mind—isn't it? A language you have learned, taught. *Yes!*

Verse 16: "In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God..." That is the key. As I pointed out, the key in overcoming is *loving God and God loving you and you going God's way*. God *is* God! Scrap everything having to do with a religion because a religion is a substitute of man, inspired by Satan the devil, so that you can have an excuse to continue being against God, but modify your way just enough so you're a nicer person in the world. That's what religion is and you conform to the religion.

A lot of people coming out of a religion think that God's way is a religion. It's not a religion. It is a way of life. That's the only true way out of all of this where you can help them. The truth is you can't help anyone overcome a problem unless they do it God's way. That's it, because God *is* God. Are we going to stand and argue with God? *Some people do!*

Now here's for every human being, v 15: "Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil, In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways... [*not yours*] ...and to keep His commandments... [*not yours*] ...and His statutes... [*not yours*] ...and His judgments... [*not yours*] ...so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it" (vs 15-16).

Everything there from vs 10-15 is predicated on **IF**. All 'ifs' are predicated on free will. Free will choice that God has given, God does not take away. He expects you to choose.

Verse 17: "But if your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish..." (vs 17-18). Any day you reject God, that's your fate. You

can repent. God always honors repentance. The only sin that is unforgivable is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which God the Father has sent. That is the only unforgivable sin. Everything else can be forgiven.

"...you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you..." (vs 18-19). Every time you read that—how many times does God say heaven and earth? *Many times!* What did Jesus say? He said, 'Heaven and earth may perish, but *My words shall never perish.*' That's what people need to think about. That's why 'religion' is so damnable.

"...*that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, **choose life...**" (v 19). Look what we have, we've just reached the tipping point and we're on the downside of evil. Once that happens rarely has there ever been a turnaround.

Verse 20: "That you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them."

Let's look at *the sin within*. Let's look at the world the way it is today. First of all let's come to Ephesians 2. We know other Scriptures—don't we?

Proverbs 14:12; 16:25: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the ways of death."

Jeremiah 10:23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself..." It's not!

Speaking of counseling, secular counselors can never solve the problems of human beings. The first thing they tell them is, 'You're good.' So therefore, they do not recognize *the sin within*. Then they point to the Scripture: Everything that God made, behold, it was very good. Ah, ha! But that was before sin. Sin changes the whole equation.

Let's also review. Rom. 8:7: the carnal mind is not subject to the Law of God. It is enmity against God and not subject to the Law of God. That is exemplified most quickly and readily with the fourth commandment.

Just like Ernest asked all of his patients that he takes down for all their medical things. Of course, the reason why they're so sick, in most cases, is because of the sins they've had in their lives. They are 'religious.' There are a lot of people that are 'religious.' They're all Sunday-keepers. But he asked them, 'What does the Bible say which day to worship?' *Oh, that's Saturday. Yeah, but we go to*

church on Sunday! That is the carnal mind hostile, enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So there has to be a change.

What did Paul say about his own human nature because we're talking about the sin within? He said, 'I find a law within my members.' In other words, part of your chromosomes, your nature that we inherit going all the way back to Adam and Eve. Everybody has it. People who have not done horrendous crimes say, 'I'm good,' by comparison, but have you had had hatred? jealousy? lust? greed? envy? Where did those take place? *In your mind!* That's what God wants changed.

You can have good behavior out here. Even con men know how to lie to sound sincere and know they're going to abscond with everything they can from you, but you trust them because of greed. Their greed and your greed and lust all combined together.

You compare yourself with other people and you leave out God to start with so you don't have a good basis for any comparison at all. You better start with God and His way and then compare yourself with that, not other people. The Bible says those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise.

Lo and behold, Churches of God, you better listen to that. Don't come and say how good we are and bring in the ways of men and say that you are duty-bound. You caused the brethren to obey those things. If you don't know what you have done and if you don't know what they are, then you might give me a phone call. I will be very happy to help you.

Ephesians 2:1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins." Think of that statement again. Paul said that in his members he found a law that he defined under the inspiration of God as *the law of sin and death*. At what point in life can a human being die? *At any point from conception!* After they're born, how long can they live? *That depends on how their mother took care of them*, before they were born took care of her body. *That depends on her behavior*, was she with many men, or was she a virgin. God did not choose Rahab the harlot to have Christ. He did not!

This helps answer the question. Remember the statement when Jesus told the man who said, 'I'll follow you, Lord, wherever you go but first let me go bury my father.' What did Christ say? 'Let the dead bury their dead.' Why? Because every human being walking in the flesh alive is only temporary life and the sentence of death is in them genetically and there is nothing you can do through any philosophy, through any behavioral change to change that. So sure is death that even all of those that God has called and up to this point, every faithful Christian has died.

This helps answer the question: Why then does God bring all kinds of floods, war, disaster, killing of children, babies, and everything? Why doesn't God stop that? Why does He allow it? *Because they're all as good as dead!* God is greater than your narrow-minded thoughts of hatred to God; that if God is a God of love and He caused that to happen, what is He going to do about it?

People have no understanding of the second resurrection. When they are resurrected, they're going to know that they died. They're going to be given an opportunity for salvation without Satan the devil around. Is that not much better than the pitiful lives that they would have continued living at the point that they died? Look at the things that have been done to massacres. Everybody says, 'Look at how many Hitler killed.' Let's try Stalin. Let's try Mao Tse Tung. Let's try any country, civilization down through history. Has that not happened? *Yes, indeed!*

"...you were dead in trespasses and sins... [notice what he says the next verse because this is very interesting]: ...In which you walked..." (vs 1-2)—showing that you were alive, but the things you were walking in. Some of them may have been some of the commandments of God. But did God say, 'Blessed are you if you keep some of My commandments'? God does give some blessings for those who do not know, if they keep some of His commandments. But did that do away with *the law of sin and death* within you? Did that change your status spiritually before God? *No!*

Everybody likes to look to the Constitution: 'Congress shall make no law as to the establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof.'—after they've given freedom of speech. Everybody looks at that and says that's wonderful. That is far better than any other constitution in the world. But that has the seeds of its own destruction sown within it because you are going to see it now. Any religion must be tolerated and freedom of worship granted to it.

The coup de gras, where you thought, 'This is really a great God-given, Divine-inspired document,' was inspired of God to separate Manasseh from Ephraim, true. It has many good Biblical principles in it, true; but the seeds of its own destruction, just like every other human endeavor are sown in it. That is going to come when the Supreme Court—and it's on its way up the row—has to determine: Is it lawful to allow Sharia Law or not?

God looks at the whole span of things. The way we look at things is that we look at right what's in front of us, maybe we look to the right a little bit, look to the left a little bit. Maybe we look back a little bit, but we don't see the big overall plan of

God, because we don't know God and don't know the Word of God in the main. How can they know?

They go to a church that is called Christian and all they hear is banging of drums and shouting and leaping and singing of hymns and songs. They have 45 minutes of singing, 15 minutes of a Scriptural reference, 20 minutes of 'love-dovey' stories of how great everything is. Then clap your hands, give your heart to the Lord, everything is over. You're now right on the way to eternal life. **Total deception!**

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world... [You've got the effect of the world.] ...according to the prince of the power of the air..." That's Satan the devil. Almost all the sins that come into people's lives today come *through modern technology, through the air!*

You haven't had your fix on porn today? *Pop up your hand phone!* There you go. You haven't had your fix on pedophile today? *Pop up the website!* You haven't had your fix on gambling? *Do it online*, right there on your cell phone. Appeal to your greed. Maybe you'll win \$10,000, but maybe you'll lose \$20,000 before you win the \$10,000.

"...the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2)—those who go against the laws of God. You can't have disobedience without laws demanding obedience. Think of it. Now when those who counsel people, but what they want, they want an excuse as to why they have what they have so they can blame someone else. Maybe they can overcome for a while. Maybe they can permanently stop their drugs, *but they haven't had their minds changed*. They've only adjusted their thinking a little bit. **Conversion, what God wants, is a complete change!**

Notice how this comes about, v 3: "Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh..." Anything to do with the flesh; from bodybuilding to sex activity; from glamorous women to the ugliest. Isn't it true, women are so envious and jealous. It's something! All of the good-looking women all get together and they are so love-dovey with each other. But the ones who are not so good looking are left out. They can never break into the circle of the love-dovey beauties. They get jealous and the love-dovey beauties say, 'I'm so glad I'm not like that woman over there.'

A woman can look at another woman and know in one glance how her hair is, what kind of makeup she uses, her bodily measurements and general description, how her clothes are, how long or short her skirt is, what kind of shoes she has on. In 10 seconds she is all sized up and judged and filed away in that woman's mind. Men do the same thing

in different ways. "...lusts of our flesh..." (v 3). Here comes a woman. What did Jesus say? *The one who looks after her to lust after her*, and this woman comes along with all of the neon-flashing signs, 'I want you to lust after me, look at me I'm beautiful,' all this sort of thing. So, all the men ogle.

What we're dealing with is that it is multiplying—***lawlessness shall be multiplied, so the love of many shall grow cold***. The way you overcome that is with the love of God.

"...doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind... [Let's think how great we are. Let's improve our minds. Are you still sinful? *Never thought of that!*] ...and were by nature *the children of wrath*, even as the rest of the world" (v 3).

(go to the next track)

We've covered a lot of the things how we have a nature of sin and death within us, but also that Satan the devil, who is the prince of the power of the air, brings a lot of things into our lives. He's got a lot of helpers, so let's look at some of those. Then we have to begin to separate out, we will have start with: How does sin begin? Where can we cut it off? That is the key.

Let's see the things that influence us to a high degree: **television and movies!** You can even be watching the news and then all of a sudden what do they do? *They have a commercial* and they are advertising this place down in the Caribbean with all of these women in bikinis. *Flash!* Satan knows—*flash in the mind!* Just flash it once. That's it. That's why there are a lot of things that happen that puts it in the mind.

Music is the next one. Music is perhaps the most powerful thing to get it within you, especially when it's loud. I saw something that was really funny the other day. I've mentioned about the car going along with the loud music. Here was this car going along blasting out the music, the windows down, and the guys sitting in the car. He wants everyone to notice him. How could they miss him? It was making so much noise and booming, the car was vibrating. Everything around was vibrating and his muffler fell off!

Music, for good or bad! For young people the music has evolved to be very satanic, especially the beat is off the diatonic normal scale that God has given and it messes up the mind. It actually causes the brain not to have the synapses connect properly. So, it does affect and alter the mind.

That's why in the sermons that I have given, *Who and What Controls Your Mind?*, music is paramount. To show you how that is, have you ever gone along and there's a tune in your head? How about some stupid commercial you don't even want

that it just flashed on the television and there it was and you can't get rid of it? We're going to see how you can get rid of those things plus other things.

We're coming into the Christmas season here pretty quickly and guess what you're already hearing in the stores? Satan has made it all nice, beautiful, alluring! Appealing to *the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life!* So, the music is perhaps the most powerful thing.

Right next to that are all of the *visual things* that you have, which can be: signs, pictures, and handheld devices. It can be anything that you can see. All of those make an impression on your mind.

To show you how little infants learn and especially you can see this when they are about 6-18-months-old, babies will look, stare right at something. What they're doing, they're absorbing. This is making an impression on the mind. So, all of those things are imprinting the mind. We have that so much today, more than any other generation, much more.

They had it in past generations. They had all their pornography carved in stone and put along the roadside. They still had it. They had it in their temples. The #1 hook is *sex*, and Satan knows it. That's the hardest thing to overcome. That is why God says to avoid sexual immorality, 'let every man have his own wife and every woman have her own husband.'

Some people, not all, need to marry earlier than other people just because of how their sex drive is. It's not inherent with any race or not inherent in any race, but there are just some people that need to marry early to avoid all the sexual problems.

Then we have *alcohol, drugs, smoking*. Those things can become addictions. Addictions can become *strongholds*. We'll see how to deal with the strongholds. Any one of these things can become a stronghold. You have *lying, stealing, hatred, narcissism*—the love of self. 'I'm so important, you've got to recognize me in everything and anything that I do. If you don't recognize me, I'm going to get mad.'

Then you have other things of human weakness, such as *temper, anger, envy*. All of those are based in lust. All of these things then you work in the overall thing concerning choice.

What can you do about it? God didn't leave us defenseless. We have choices, but we have to make the right choices. I like the one with the Rechabites in the book of Jeremiah. The Rechabites were the children of Rechab. Rechab told all of his offspring, 'You are not to drink any wine.' Didn't mean that they were keeping the commandments of God perfectly, but they probably were keeping most

of them. They were carnal like anybody else because no one except the prophets and some of the kings were converted in the Old Testament.

God told Jeremiah, 'Bring the Rechabites here.' They brought them here. He said, 'Set before them wine, tell them to drink.' They answered, 'No, we won't drink. Our father Rechab told us that we are not ever to drink anything—period! We will not do it. You cannot make us do it.' That one thing, because of choice and they could have said, 'We're here and no one will really know it. We may lose our head if we don't do it. All right, I'll take a sip of wine.' *A choice!*

But they said, 'No, we will not do it.' So, God said to Jeremiah, 'You tell the children of Israel, because they chose to obey their father they'll always have someone to stand before me in all generations.' Now, we don't know where they are and what they do and we don't know whether some of the descendants were drinking hundreds of years later or not. We don't know that. But there will still be a man to stand before God from the Rechabites.

God said, 'You tell the children of Israel, I've given you My laws, My statutes, and My judgments and everything and told you to keep it, but you won't do it. But here the one thing of not drinking wine, the Rechabites obeyed their father. Why don't you do that with Me?' Always keep that in mind.

Let's see how these warnings apply to even those who are converted. Then we'll get a comparison here. We will see what happens and then we will see how our choices work.

2-Timothy 2:21: "Therefore, if anyone has purged himself from these..." All of the sins purged. That means *you must get them out*. You must choose to get rid of the sins. You must choose if you have to cut it absolutely totally off and say to yourself, 'Music has messed up my mind and messed up my life and messed me up. I'm not having any of that kind of music anymore ever—period!' You purge yourself of it. Then you have to ask God to cleanse your mind.

"...he will be a vessel for honor, having been sanctified and *made* serviceable to the Master, *and* having been prepared for every good work. But flee youthful lusts..." (vs 21-22). Because, lo, when puberty kicks in, it begins—boys and girls. This is to a converted minister. This is to someone who is serving the people. Have ministers fallen? *Yes!*

"...and pursue... [What we're going to see is the same thing here. You put out and you put in. You purge away and you cleanse.] ...righteousness, faith, love *and* peace with those who are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and ignorant

speculations reject, knowing that they engender arguments. Now, it is obligatory *that* a servant of the Lord not be argumentative, but gentle toward all, competent to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition..." (vs 22-25).

You have to have a humble attitude so that you're not hypocritical because you're still working on a problem that you have and you're counseling someone also concerning the problem. Then you are not a hypocrite as long as you are working on overcoming that and you're instructing them how to overcome.

Here's how God deals with it, Galatians 6. Here is the principle involved in talking to others, helping them, while you yourself are still overcoming your problems as well. May not be exactly the same one but the principle to overcome sin is the same with all sin. "...in meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition..."

Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in some offense, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness... [Just like we read back there in 2-Tim. 2.] ...considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ" (vs 1-2). You can help someone overcome.

Here's the key and here has been the Achilles' heel to ministers in the Churches of God, v 3: "For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself." What happens, they come along and say 'if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing,' then they justify it in their minds by saying, 'But *I* am important.' They just deceived themselves. He is deceiving himself.

Verse 4: "But let each one prove his own work... [of changing and overcoming] ...and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another; for each one shall bear his own burden" (vs 4-5). We have to overcome our sins.

Back to 2-Timothy 2:25 concerning meekness: "In meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition... [Opposition to what? *The laws and commandments of God!*] ...if perhaps God may grant them repentance unto acknowledging of the Truth." They have to admit the sin and that's the first step in repentance.

Verse 26: "And *that* they may wake up and *escape* from the devil's snare, who have been taken captive by him to *do* his will." That's what it is so that's why you have to have the laws of God, because that's His will. What is Satan's will? *To break the laws of God; to lie, to cheat, to steal, to corrupt your mind, corrupt your morals anyway he*

can! Be it music, drugs, alcohol, idolatry, demonism—a lot of these things can get into demonism. When it gets to the extreme things then you are dealing with obsessions and fixations. Those are hard to overcome, but they can be.

Concerning the last days and what we just covered, 2-Timothy 3:1: "Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come... [because of everything] ...for men will be lovers of self..." (vs 1-2). That is the great sin.

- You love yourself as God!
- You have your own way!
- You think you are right!
- When you get caught, you blame others!

That is called *narcissism*. ***Repentance to God and seeing your sins comes from God!***

"...lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy... sounds like I'm watching television—right? *Yes!*] ...without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control... [There it is right there. First thing they need to do is self-control, which then is mental control. Who controls your mind?] ...savage, despisers of those who are good" (vs 2-3). 'Oh, I don't want that!' Why don't you come to church? 'Are you kidding?'

Verse 4: "Betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." That's one of the greatest things concerning to reject the Sabbath is that there are so many pleasures on the Sabbath that Satan has put out there. Remember what he said concerning the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? *It's pleasant to the eyes, desired to make one wise!* That basically then means in that parlance: self-centered, egotistical, narcissistic, worshiping yourself, rejecting God.

Verse 5: "Having an outward appearance of Godliness... [for those who are 'religious'] ...but denying the power of *true* Godliness.... [because they are unwilling to change] ...But ***as for you, turn away from all these***" (v 5). That last sentence is the most important. You must stop those activities that lead to sin. Ultimately, it gets down to *the moral conscience within from God's Spirit and God's Word* where Jesus said right in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Let your yes be yes and your no be *no*.' That begins with your yes and no *to yourself*—that's where it begins.

Verse 6: "For from *men such as* these come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed *gullible* women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust. *They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* Truth" (vs 6-7). You have to come to the Truth. You have

to come to the acknowledging of the Truth. The best you can do with people in the world is get them to acknowledge the sins that they have, but you need to let them know the final solution is not just your control. The final solution is repentance to God, then living God's way.

It's like we see today. I know I got up the other night about midnight so I thought I would just sit there with the remote control and surf through television. What a bunch of worthless blither after midnight, just absolute insanity; plain stupid stuff. People look at that and you see this is how people have been dumbed down, being taught stupid things, never taught the Truth.

One of the greatest vehicles of conveying sin into the mind of individuals is humor. Those are called on television 'sit-coms.' You sit there and let all the filth and swill of every deviate thing come through your television and into your mind and sit there and laugh about it. That man who lives on that one-mile wide, four-mile long island doesn't have that problem.

We only have cable so I only went through 74 channels. But for those who have Dish Network and they have 300 channels—then if that isn't enough, go get on your computer and you've got all the blither in the world there with every sin known to man and Satan. It's all right there.

What do you do? First, ***you must control your mind. You must control your thoughts!*** Let's come to Proverbs 4 and let's read this into the record here. We've covered this many times, but this is how it is. I think the greatest thing we need to understand is you are responsible for what comes into your mind.

Proverbs 4:13: "Keep hold of instruction..." That's why in dealing with young people we put out that DVD with the Proverbs on it. You take one chapter of Proverbs everyday for a month. There are 31 chapters. If the month is a little shorter, then double up a day or two. You go over that every month. Beginning the first of the month, you start out with chapter one. This will give God's instruction to them without being so heavy with God on their thoughts when they are not really ready for it. That's the best thing, the book of Proverbs.

Verse 13: "Keep hold of instruction; do not let go..." That's the important thing. If they want to change their behavior; if they want to overcome sin, if they want to overcome all of these things, they have got to hold on to instruction and they have to keep it.

"...for she *is* your life.... [That is, the way to straighten out your life.] ...Enter not into the path of the wicked..." (vs 13-14). They've got to stop their

behavior that goes into wicked ways, regardless of what it may be. To really bring about a change of behavior, it's almost going to be like them a shock of a straight jacket, because they are living so much in sin. How are you going to do that? You've got to lay it out straight to them.

"...and go not into the way of evil *men*" (v 14). First thing they need to do is learn the commandments of God—right? Learn the Proverbs—correct? *Yes!*

Verse 15: "Avoid it... [you have to get away from it] ...do not go in it; turn from it, and pass on!" Someone comes and says, 'I have some real cheap meth here. How would you like it?' *Get out of here; be gone!* Don't be tempted. 'It's really, really good. I can give it to you for a good price. It'll really make you high for a long time.' Whatever it may be.

Now here's true of those purveyors of evil, v 16: "For they do not sleep except when they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away unless they cause *some* to fall.... [make a hit] ...For they eat the bread of wickedness... [Don't they? *Yes!*] ...and drink the wine of violence" (vs 16-17).

Here's what they're going to have to do. It's going to have to be a real turnaround. It's almost, for some people, especially those who are not converted, and especially the youth, it's going to almost be like that you see in the movies the top sergeant talking to the new recruits just coming in. He gets right up in his face. Sometimes you have to shout at them.

I remember one man had to tell someone he knew that was close to him who was hooked on meth and couldn't get off, he just had to shout and yell at him, 'You're cursed!' Finally he was able to stop. Sometimes you have to do that.

Verse 18: "But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day.... [Here's what they need to be convinced of]: ...The way of the wicked *is* as darkness..." (vs 18-19).

- How do you like what you're going through?
- How do you like your hangovers?
- How do you like the sickness that you have?
- How do you like that sexually transmitted disease you picked up?
- Do you know what that's going to do to your future kids?
- How do you like being ignorant?
- How do you like being unemployed?
- How do you like just sitting around being cool, jogging your head and your whole

body to the music and you have no control and no thought to what you're doing?

- How do you like that?
- What did that do for you?

Verse 19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.... [That's true. You don't even know what's wrong with you.] ...My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart" (vs 19-21).

- You *must* change your thoughts!
- You *must* change your way of living!
- You *must* change your friends!
- You *must* change your life!

Verse 22: "For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh."

Here's your task after this lecture today, you tell them. *You are responsible for you*. Don't look at anyone else over here. Don't blame anyone else over there. You, regardless of what has happened to you.

Verse 23: "Above all guard the door of your mind with diligence..." Now you're going to have to have a new exercise that you understand evil and you are not going to let it in. Turn off that television, turn off that music, get away from those people who say that they are your friends who are dragging you down into hell and misery and death.

"...guard the door of your mind with diligence... [for the rest of your life] ..for out of it **are the issues of life**" (v 23). These things are going to affect you your whole life and unless you stop and start building you're going to be unemployed at 50.

Verse 24 is for the youth. Here's what they need to do. They need to acknowledge this: "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious lips put far from you. Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be* established. Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil" (vs 24-27). That is the strong formula that needs to be for young people who need to get their lives straightened around.

James 1 is very important. It talks about *faith and belief*. The first thing you have to convince someone who doesn't know God, is to have them to have faith in the truth of what you say. That will lead to faith in God and Christ. Let them know that that is just a start. They have got to do it.

James 1:6: "But let him ask in faith... [if you want God's help in everything] ...not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the sea* that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*." Just like we covered there in Proverbs, you must go

straight on. You can't let the wind as the wind comes along and blow you off course.

Verse 7: "Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord." Or you can put it in this way. If you do not do the things that I have just told you, don't think you're ever going to overcome the problem. Do you really, really down deep inside to the very souls of your feet want to change? That's the question.

Verse 8, if you don't: "*He is* a double-minded man..." You have split thoughts. You want to do good, but you don't want to stop evil. You cannot have that kind of behavior. You cannot expect to live in sin and receive the blessings of God. That's precisely where the nation is today—right? *Yes! Give me, give me, give me!*

One woman said, 'Oh, I got a cell phone from Obama. I'm voting for him.' No thought. Everything is put into a racial connotation too many times. It's not a racial thing. It is right and wrong, good and evil. Everyone is confronted with that problem.

Verse 13: "Do not let anyone who is tempted say, 'I am being tempted by God'..." No, you're being tempted by someone else or your own lust. Is it a trial? *Yes, it is a trial!* Is it something you need to overcome? *Yes, it is!* Remember, you're not going to overcome unless you put forth a maximum effort. Even those who are converted and striving for the Kingdom of God, Jesus said that they don't attain to the Kingdom of God without a great struggle, for all of us. We can take all of these things in our private life. Those of us who are converted we can do it too, because we have choices.

- Do we have anger, temper to work on? *Yes!*
- Do we have lust we need to work on? *Yes!*
- Do we have other things we need to work on? *Yes!*
- How are you doing with yourself in being honest with yourself and also God with your yes be *yes* and your no be *no*?

Try that the next time you exercise. 'I've got to exercise.' You get out there and you're exercising. First thing your body says, 'You really don't need to do quite all those repetitions.' Your body is saying *no!* Your yes has not succeeded in overcoming the no. Or whatever it may be. 'I know I need to diet, but that piece of pie and the whipped cream is just so good. I won't eat tomorrow.'

"...because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one with evil" (v 13). BUT—this is something you're confronted with—Satan will come along with evil. Satan will come along with lies, especially glorious, good-sounding lies.

There's a big billboard just driving up to church here as I cross the bridge and it says, 'Play close to home at Cash Creek Casino.' BAM! A big sign up there. Right across from it there's another sign, 'A pork chop will stop a heart.' That's just going against meat eaters. But you see the stupidity of them both. One on a good thing, another on an evil thing.

Verse 14: "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away... [If you're drawn away, that's the first step: **make sure that you do not allow yourself to be drawn away.**] (Next thing happens when you're drawn away): ...and is enticed by his own lust." Lust gets involved and lust is powerful; lust justifies evil behavior—does it not? *Yes!*

Now notice it is a step-by-step thing, v 15: "And after lust has conceived... [the process continues] ...it gives birth to sin..." This is where you cut it off. You cut it off at the first step. If you don't cut it off at the first step, cut it off at the second step. If you don't cut it off at the second step, cut it off at the third step.

"...and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death. Do not deceive yourselves, my beloved brethren" (vs 15-16). Because all the human reasoning that you have will deceive you.

Next time we are going to go to 2-Cor. 10 and we are going to look at what is called **strongholds—those deep imbedded things in your mind that must be overcome!** Some people it is swearing, cursing, sex, lust, envy, jealousy—deep within there, especially if they have been in a circumstance where they think, 'I've been deprived all my life and why do other people have all these things and I do not have them.'

'Uncle Sam' is right there to say in deception, 'I'll help you get them.' Satan is right there to say, 'Yeah, you're justified.' They got this by lying, cheating and stealing. How are you going to get it? 'I'm going to kill him and take it.' Really! How's that going to work?

That's why it gets down to the individual, gets down to choice, gets down to every one of these things. This is the generation that has the toughest time with it because of everything that assaults the mind.

We're going to be done with church here. We're all going to feel good when we go and we're going to be going down the road and BANG! you're going to see a billboard. Then when you get home you watch the news and BANG! you're going to see this and that and the other thing—right?

That's why daily prayer and daily cleansing of the mind is necessary!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Proverbs 21:2
- 2) Judges 21:25
- 3) Genesis 6:5
- 4) Deuteronomy 30:5-14, 16, 15-20
- 5) Proverbs 14:12
- 6) Proverbs 16:25
- 7) Jeremiah 10:23
- 8) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 9) 2-Timothy 2:21-25
- 10) Galatians 6:1-5
- 11) 2-Timothy 2:25-26
- 12) 2-Timothy 3:1-7
- 13) Proverbs 4:13-27
- 14) James 1:6-8, 13-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Romans 8:7

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

Who and What Controls Your Mind?

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