

We Know, Part 6

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 October 2021

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] We are looking at the realities that are in keeping with the Christian life and with those things that we are just supposed to know just by virtue of the fact that we are in Christ.

And it might interest you to know that out of this extensive list of know ye nots that are mentioned, they are all from the Apostle Paul and they concern truths that did not even exist.

Prior to the time that God raised up this man, Saul of Tarsus, and made him into Paul the Apostle and gave him a whole series of new revelations that had never been thought of or even imagined before.

And that is principally what we are looking at right now. So if you will turn your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 6, we will use this reference here to follow that with Galatians.

And I think you will see in bold relief exactly what we are up against in our flesh and with our thing called a volition and the responsibility that is given to us.

[1 : 14] And in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, I am going to begin reading with verse 12. And then we will go to the, I am sorry I said Galatians, I meant Ephesians portion, chapter 4.

And in verse 12, Paul says, Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through his power.

Do you not know? And your King James, if that's what you're using, says, Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?

Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be. Now what he is getting to here is something that is germane and extremely important for all believers to understand.

[2 : 43] And that is in connection with what Paul said in verse 11 about what they used to be.

He gives this long list of unacceptable behavior modes. And then he says in verse 11, And such were some of you.

This was your background. This is what you used to be. This was your lifestyle. This is where you lived. This is what you were. But since you came to faith in Christ, it's a whole new game.

Everything has changed. For if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Therefore, in light of that, there is to be a change in your behavior.

Part of that change is going to come about simply because you have been touched by the Spirit of God and you have been made a new creature in Christ.

[3 : 51] So there are some things that are happening in your thinking and in your being and in your person and in your attitudes, etc. that you really had nothing to do with.

In the sense that Christ came into your life and he brought with him a newness of life that causes you to be a changed, different person on the inside.

Now, what we're going to be talking about is another of those things that I wish I understood better, but we'll just go with what we do have.

And that is, in connection with that change that you had nothing to do with, there is a great deal that you do have something to do with. And I'm not sure at all exactly how it is that we go about separating those, except to say this.

When you came to faith in Christ, you entered into, by the grace of God, a different kind of arrangement or connection that never existed before.

[4 : 57] You are now finding yourself in a special kind of partnership with deity, whereby God does things for which he is responsible and you are not accountable and you cannot affect.

And in conjunction with that, there are contributions that you are going to make to that process with your volition, with your will, which is very much intact.

And there is going to be a human, divine kind of coordination there that quite frankly escapes me into so far as its details are concerned, except I know that's the way it works.

I know both are real and both are present. I know God is responsible for his part and we are equally accountable and responsible for our part.

This is a marvelous kind of interaction between humanity and deity and it exists only in the lives of those who are believers. And what we are talking about is this marvelous cooperation that is available and active and dynamic in the life of every believer.

[6 : 17] God has his part for which we can contribute nothing, but we have our part through our volition. So we are responsible and God is responsible.

None of us, I think, are concerned about God holding up his part of the responsibility. There's just no way that he could not do that. But there is plenty of room for us to be concerned about whether we hold up our part of the responsibility.

And I've said this before and let me emphasize it again. It really is a serious, serious thing to be a believer in Jesus Christ. There is a sense in which while on the one hand we are freed and we are delivered from sin and the penalty of sin, on the other hand, we are ushered into a new sphere of responsibility.

that makes demands upon us. But they are not demands for which we will not have sufficient grace to meet.

God makes no demands or requirements from us that he has not enabled us to fulfill. He's not an unreasonable taskmaster. God does not assign to us impossible tasks that then expect us to carry it out.

[7 : 43] While we have responsibility, there is also the power that he provides. And we talked about that in an earlier message. How that to do the right thing is where our will comes in.

But the ability and the power to do the right thing is not ours. And I made a distinction, I trust carefully so, between our being responsible for the will and God being responsible for the power to meet that will.

There again is that intricate, wonderful cooperation, that connection between humanity and deity. And we need to understand that it is in place and we need to make sure that we are holding up our end of it because there's no question about God holding up his end.

This is exactly what Paul is talking about here because in each of these cases it involves your volition. And your volition, of course, is synonymous with your will.

It is the same volition that you had before you came to faith in Christ. People who are not Christians still have a volition. Everybody does. And that volition is the basis and what we do with it, how we operate with it, is the basis upon which our eventual judgment or evaluation is going to be made.

[9 : 09] So it's a very intricate connection between the divine and the human and it is implied in all of these know-ye-nots because in each of these cases Paul is reminding them with the know-ye-not of a responsibility that they have.

And in verse 15, do you not know or you do know, do you not, that your bodies are members of Christ? It's a big deal. That's really important.

You are one with him. You are in Christ. And because of that, you not only have forgiveness and blessing and eternal life and all the rest of it, but you have obligations and responsibilities that are incumbent upon you as a believer.

And it is something that we really need to take seriously. It is the kind of thing that completely changes when one comes to faith in Christ because prior to that time, we detected virtually no or little responsibilities to God for anything.

But once you become a believer, once you are in Christ, once you have enjoyed his forgiveness and his salvation, you are then imbued with a whole new sense of not only opportunity but responsibility.

[10 : 27] responsibility. And as I've said, it is a serious thing to be a believer in Jesus Christ. And we need to take it seriously because it is an awesome responsibility.

But God makes no demands of us that he has not enabled us to fulfill. Whereas the will is ours, the power to fulfill it is his.

We don't have the power. This is why I tried to make a careful distinction between volition and our use of it and willpower. I am not talking about living the Christian life by sheer willpower, just gutting it out.

Your willpower will fail you miserably. You don't have it. You cannot measure up to what the requirements are with sheer willpower.

But whatever the requirements are, God has already provided the power that is necessary for you to be and do what you are supposed to be and do if you've got the will.

[11 : 36] And therein lies the problem. Now when Paul addresses this regarding the unbeliever, he says what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.

God did in the person of his son provided the sacrifice that the flesh could never generate, the flesh could never fulfill, the flesh could never accomplish.

God did that. And he brought you into a whole new sphere with a whole new opportunity and responsibility. So don't think in terms of, well, now I'm a Christian, I'm off the hook as far as judgment is concerned.

No, you're not. You're on the hook insofar as the award throne of Christ is concerned and in being pleasing to him. This is what makes the Christian life a serious obligation.

And we really need to take it that way. So let's look at this, if we may, as he talks about making your bodies members of Christ, and they are.

[12 : 39] And he says, then shall I take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? And by the members, he's talking about the things with which we do things with, arms and legs and eyes and ears and all the rest of it.

And you, as a believer in Christ, have full responsibility for your physical body, what you do with it, how you use it, where you take it, and what you subject it to.

That's your bailiwick. We need to really understand that and take it seriously. And if these members of our body, it is as if Paul is drawing a picture, an analogy of a physical body, and he's saying, think in terms of a physical body, and we, as an individual, are members of that physical body.

Some of us are like arms and legs and tongue and head and whatnot, and we all come into that body, into that analogy, and all the body works together. Can you imagine taking the elements of our body, our limbs, our legs, et cetera, and providing them to a harlot?

Are you starting? You get the picture? How out of mark, out of the mark is that? How opposite is that from what it is supposed to be?

[14 : 12] He's talking about prostituting our body. And this is a common thing with the Corinthians. When he says, such were some of you, he gave that list in verse 9, all of these things that these people were engaging in, and now he's saying, but you are washed, and now it is all different.

You don't do that anymore. Do you? You do? Well, stop it! That's what he's saying. You have no right to carry on an old lifestyle now that you are a new person in Christ.

Shape up. That's exactly what he's saying to these Corinthians, and it is not, it is not a pleasant thing because he sees the necessity to read out these people.

they are coming from a background of profligacy, of adultery, of fornication, of every kind of evil that you can imagine, so much so that when somebody lived an especially raucous kind of life, it could be said, eh, he lives like a Corinthian.

That was not intended to be a compliment. It was saying that this is a low-life individual that will engage in anything, whatever comes down the pike, whatever will provide him a little bit of pleasure.

[15 : 29] That's what the Corinthians and Paul says as he writes to these new Christians, he's saying, that's what you came out of. You did come out of it, didn't you?

You aren't continuing in that, are you? I remember years ago hearing the testimony. I think the man's name was Jim Krause. Yes, Jim Krause, K-R-A-U-S and he was a wizard in electronics and this was back in the days, years and years ago when electronics was relatively new, not like it's developed today, but at any rate, he was a man who was in demand as he worked in the field of electronics and his specialty was going into places of business and places where sensitive things were discussed and whatnot and instilling listening devices, bugging the place so that the conversation that took place there could be picked up and sometimes he was called on by the government to go into a place and bug something so that the feds or whomever could get evidence on somebody and he was, and one time he was in what he discovered later to be the office of some big shots in the mafia and he didn't realize even who they were, it was just a business opportunity as far as he was concerned, he didn't find out about it until later but it so happened that one of the individuals that he was dealing with, his name was, yes it was,

Jim Krause and well it'll come to me anyway and he was witnessing to him because he was a believer and he was also a Jewish man and as Jim Krause witnessed to him, Cohen, Mickey, Mickey Cohen, C-O-H-E-N, Jewish man, he was telling him about Christ having died for his sins and that if you would receive Christ as your Savior, he would forgive you your sins and give you eternal life and Mickey Cohen listened with quite a bit of interest and he says, you mean, you mean to tell me that if I just tell Jesus that I want him to be my Savior and that he died for my sins, that God forgives me all my sins and I'm going to heaven when I die and Krause said, that's right and he said, okay, I'll do that,

I'll do that and Krause says, well that's wonderful, can I help you and the guy says, well he says, maybe, maybe a prayer or something and he told Krause to pray this prayer and receive Christ as his Savior and he did and when it was all concluded, he said, well now, what am I supposed to do? And Jim said, well, you're just, you're a new believer in Christ and you're just going to go on living your life but Christ is in you now and you have forgiveness of sins and hope of heaven and so on and so on and as it turned out, he had a return call to make there at that particular place to check on the equipment, et cetera and a few days later he came back and he asked this new convert, well how's it going, what are you doing and he started telling him about some of his connections and some of the things he was involved in and Krause realized, well, this guy is a heavy hitter, he's in the mob, he's in the mafia, he's one of those and as the conversation went on, the guy was talking about the things that he was involved in, what he was doing, the money he was making and everything and Krause says, well now, he said, wait a minute, didn't you come to faith in Christ just recently?

[19 : 50] Oh yeah, yeah, he says, I did what you told me and Jim says, well you can't keep doing these things that you've been telling me that you're doing, these are not Christian things, you can't continue in it, well why not?

That's all I know, that's what I do, that's my job and Krause said, well, you've got to put all of that aside now, you've got to earn an honest living, you've got to get a real job, you've got to make your break with those, you've got to cut those ties with this nefarious group and he says, well, well, that's all I know, that's what I do, that's what I am and he said, but you've got to understand and he read some scripture, I don't know what passage he read but he might have read something like this and the long and the short of it was, Mickey says, so, even though I'm a Christian, you're telling me that I can't be a Christian gangster?

Now, we think that's quite funny and in a way, it is funny, it is humorous but listen, this just gives you a little inkling of how far afield some people are in their thinking.

Just because I came to faith in Christ and did he really? Well, who knows? I don't know, I cannot, maybe we'll see Mickey Cohen in heaven, I don't know. I do know this, that coming to faith in Jesus Christ is not a matter of saying the right words.

Coming to faith in Christ is not an open sesame or an abracadabra whereby if you just mouth these words then it'll take and you'll be saved and all you need to do is say, I understand that I am a sinner and that Christ died for my sin and I want his eternal life and I want to be saved.

[21 : 58] Amen. There isn't anything mystical or magical about that and if that's all one is doing is mouthing words, all they did was emit some hot air.

God isn't listening. God isn't interested in God. God isn't listening. involved. If the soul of one's being is not involved in a decision like that, there are no magical words that you can utter.

Now those words that I gave you as an example, they're fine if they come from the heart. But if they're just words that are mouthed as like abracadabra, God isn't interested and God isn't listening. There has to be an awareness of your own sin and there has to be a regret regarding that sin and I have struggled with this with grace people for a number of years and I still have never really gotten the thing sufficiently resolved and what I have talked about is the need for repentance and I think the scriptures make it quite clear.

We've looked at those references before but there are some in the grace movement who come back with that and say listen, when you require that people repent, you are adding to the gospel of grace.

[23 : 21] All you have to do is believe and repentance is not necessary but the references that we've already looked at where Paul made it quite clear when he was addressing the Athenian philosophers on Mars Hill that God has made it quite clear that now he commands all men everywhere to repent which means to change your mind and as I've said before and I think here's

where the confusion exists, so many people confuse the idea of repentance with the Roman Catholic concept of penance which means you have to do certain things in order to be acceptable to God.

In other words, you have to say the rosary, you have to say our fathers, you have to say so many hail Marys, you have to light candles, you have to do this and that that is penance and that's the way that you atone for your sin.

Well, certainly there's nothing scriptural about that. To repent literally means to change your mind. It means you reverse yourself regarding your sin and you see Christ as having paid the penalty for your sin and you make the connection.

What effect does that have on you in your thinking and in your heart? And for somebody to say, well, no big deal to me, I just, you know, well, then that isn't repentance, that isn't a change of mind because when you change your mind, it also means you change your heart, you change your attitude and it's a voluntary thing and it's very important.

And for those who say it isn't necessary that you feel anything, all you have to do is believe. Well, let me ask you a question. As regards your sin, is it okay if you're proud of your sin?

[25 : 23] Well, if you're not proud of your sin, what are you? Likely, regretting your sin, ashamed of your sin, like Paul said here in writing to the Corinthians, they did the things that they're now ashamed of.

What is the attitude of the heart? If the heart isn't changed, isn't reversed, how can there be any genuineness or any sincerity in mouthing a prayer?

And my contention is there isn't. And you know what? I think this might go a long way to explain why it is that there never seems to be any change in behavior, attitude, or actions of some people, some people, who say they have made a profession of faith in Christ.

And yet, there seems to be nothing in their life to indicate it. They have little or no interest in spiritual things, they have little or no interest in the lost, they have little or no interest in the Bible, they have little or no interest in anything that we would think would come kind of automatically for those who are believers.

They're just completely detached. And yet, they claim to have made a profession of faith. And my contention is this. I do not believe that anyone can have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and ever be the same.

[26 : 54] I just don't see how it can be done. And I don't think it's supposed to be done. Those whom Christ saves, Christ changes. And if there is no change and there is no evidence that new life has begun, everyone has every right to suspect that something is wrong here.

One can only wonder if this could be responsible for so many that years ago, perhaps as a young person, made a profession of faith in Christ, and yet they never exhibited any interest or any spiritual growth or any development of any kind, and it leaves everyone kind of scratching their head and saying, yeah, he said he was a Christian when he was saved when he was six years old, but he lives like, well, you know what I mean.

So what's going on here? what's happening? Could it be that actual regeneration never did take place, that someone thought just mouthing the words immediately puts you into connection with God?

No, it doesn't. And when I before illustrated and someone says, well, you don't have to be sorry for your sins. Okay, then you can be proud of your sins and defensive of your sins.

Well, no, actually you can't do that. Why not? All I'm saying is, if the heart and the emotions are not touched also, so that something is felt, did anything happen?

[28 : 43] The reason I question this is this is something that I've struggled with for the entirety of my Christian life. Why is it that there seems to be so little and sometimes no growth at all that is obvious or noticeable in the lives of some who profess to be Christians?

I don't expect anybody who comes to faith and everybody who comes to faith in Christ to be some kind of flaming evangelist, the Apostle Paul type, but there ought to be some kind of fruit, some kind of evidence or don't we have legitimate reason to suspect?

Has anything taken? And I think this is what Paul might have meant when he said that we are to examine ourselves and see whether we be in the faith.

Serious business. Well, that's not my message. My message is here in chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians and Ephesians 4, so let's get back to chapter 6.

Do you not know, verse 16, that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? Now, I get the impression that this was just common activity in Corinth.

[30 : 08] Is it common activity in Springfield, Ohio? Of course it is. Of course it is. There are prostitutes available, and there are Johns available, and every now and then you see some names published in the newspaper where they're trying to embarrass them into good behavior by publishing the name of some Johns who were frequenting prostitutes, and we've seen that in the Springfield paper and the Columbus paper and all papers all the time.

What's going on here? And Paul was saying this is what some of you were engaging in before you came to faith in Christ. You no longer are able to do that.

Well, you are able, but you are no longer okay in doing that. And what's going to make the difference?

They have arrived at a new set of standards in Christ, Christ, and there is a requirement for some radical changes to be made.

And who is going to make them but the owner, the will, the volition? And you just don't do what you used to do because now you are the property of someone else.

[31 : 30] and this is exactly what he's going to bring out. Do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her?

For he says the two will become one flesh. Well, is there something wrong with the two becoming one flesh? Nope. It's a beautiful thing if each of the ones are the ones that they are supposed to be. Otherwise, it's a very ugly thing. There is an intimacy and a beauty and a God blessedness in connection with a man and a woman who are committed to each other for life, engaging in the conjugal relationships.

It is a beautiful thing that is sanctioned by God that produces babies and produces enjoyment for both the husband and the wife, but it is completely out of order when it is with someone else.

That's what he's saying. We've got a situation today. Well, nothing new about it, except it's proliferating like you cannot imagine. And one of the most prolific places where this is taking place is not in houses of prostitution.

[32 : 53] It's in college and university dormitories. and it is no longer even frowned upon by the authorities. It's just young kids who have raging hormones who are just doing what young kids do.

After all, sex is a natural thing and they're just living out what is natural. And it is unhealthy for them to deny themselves sexual pleasure that could lead to other serious emotional problems.

And that's the kind of rot that people are being given today and our college universities that are now so many of them co-ed where men and women are in the same dorms together and it's just like one big well.

the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality.

Literally means run from it. Means that the opportunity may present itself but you're not to take advantage of it. How do you do that? And the flee immorality is not suggestion.

[34 : 09] It's a command. It's an order. it's a demand to be made. Flee immorality. Run from it. And we've given you the best example that we can find and that is Joseph when he was in the household of Pharaoh had responsibilities in the king Pharaoh's house and Pharaoh's wife threw herself at Joseph and enticed him and invited him to her bed and she even laid hands on him and as he pulled away from her she had his cloak his outer garment in her hands and he no doubt scared witless as any young man like that in that situation ought to have been he fled he took off running how did he do that he exercised a thing called volition and he got out of there he said feet move you know that verse we won't turn there but it's nearby it's in first

Corinthians 13 where Paul says there is no temptation that has come upon you but such as is common to man but God will with the temptation also make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it now that's a passage that is so often misinterpreted and some people think that that means that as a Christian God will not put any difficulty or any hardship upon you that you are not able to bear he will allow you to be in very difficult and trying circumstances maybe with your health or your wealth or whatever relationships but God will make a way of escape for you and that's not what it is saying at all and that's not what the context will permit because sometimes God does not make a way of escape when we are confronted with extenuating circumstances very painful and difficult things sometimes it causes our death now if you want to say well that's a way of escape because he takes you to heaven

I don't think that's what Paul was talking about what he is saying is God always makes a way for you to avoid temptation when it comes your way and it is up to you as to whether or not you will take it you do not have to succumb to the temptation you may but you cannot use as an excuse I couldn't help it I was weak I was no match for it after all the woman threw herself at me what was any normal red blooded boy supposed to do that's not going to fly because God did make a way of escape for Joseph in the form of two feet and Joseph used them and got out of there and all he did was he used his volition now if you stop to rationalize the situation like we sometimes want to do we could say something like this well this poor woman has needs that obviously aren't being met by a legitimate source so maybe

I'm being called upon to meet those needs myself maybe this would be the gallant thing for me to do that's called human rationalizing and it will lead you into difficulty every time because and I want to say this with all of the emphasis that I can muster because we need to be warned about it and it is this we human beings even being in Christ are able to rationalize almost anything we want to and be able to tell ourselves it's okay God will understand you can sell yourself a bill of goods and believe it this is why Jeremiah says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked who can know it this leads to the reality that we are all our own worst enemies flee immorality every other sin that a man commits is outside the body but the immoral man sins against his own body or do you not know you not that your body is a temple of the

Holy Spirit who is in you whom you have from God and that you are not your own and if you allow yourself to be in a compromising position like that where you succumb to the charms of a prostitute or any other illicit partner you are misappropriating someone else's property because when you came to faith in Jesus Christ he bought you lock stock and barrel you belong to him your body is not yours to do with as you please you are someone else's property and Jesus Christ paid a dear price for you for you have been bought with a price therefore because of that glorify

[40 : 28] God in your body how do you do that you do that with your will with your volition and you don't do it with your won't it's as simple as that what this does is it puts the ball in your court and you know if the ball isn't in your court you can't do anything about it but if it is you can't now let's go to that Ephesians 4 passage and the Ephesians were not greatly different from the Corinthians didn't have quite the reputation that the Corinthians had I remember visiting the ruins of this place just absolutely magnificent you can only imagine what it must have been like in its glory remarkable passage and he's writing to these

Ephesians and you've got to keep in mind that these are former pagans these are the people of whom he speaks in chapter 2 when he says in former times before you came to faith in God before you became a believer in Jesus Christ you were without God without hope in this present world in your state was as bad as it could be but you came to faith in Christ as Gentiles and you are now believers in Christ you are a new creature in Christ you have a new owner and the owner is none other than God himself and he has the prior claim on your body he bought you lock stock and barrel and in verse 17 of Ephesians chapter 4 Paul says this I say therefore and affirm together with the Lord that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk in the futility or the emptiness of their mind saying this is what you used to be but you aren't that anymore and when he uses the term walk he's talking about your manner of life your day to day routine the way you carry on your life activities that's your walk everybody has one even if you're a paraplegic and you can't walk physically you can still walk spiritually and that's what he's getting at here it is your walk your manner of life your attitude your actions etc walk no longer

I know what you used to be but no longer just as the Gentiles also walk in the futility of their mind the Gentiles were the kind of people much like we have today particularly in the morally what shall I say in the morally liberal area these are people who just make their own rules they do not acknowledge the higher power they do not acknowledge an umbrella of morality that determines right and wrong over everything they are their own umbrella they make their own rules they make their own standards it's called moral relativism and they themselves determine what is right or wrong good or bad they have no overarching umbrella of authority and that's where they're coming from and being darkened in their understanding this is mental darkness spiritual darkness it means they cannot see the truth because their whole spiritual vision is clouded over with darkness there is no clarity of thought or purpose or mind everything is vague everything is up in the air nothing is buttoned down you'd be surprised how many people live this way darkened in their understanding excluded from the life of

God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their heart and they having become callous callous that's like scar tissue people have scar tissue on their soul scar tissue is where a wound has occurred and it has been healed over and the scar tissue has no nerve endings in it it's devoid of feeling cannot feel anything that's the nature of scar tissue and people have scar tissue on the soul they have no feeling no compunction no conscience

Paul talks about consciences being seared with a hot iron it's like it's just like a hot iron or a red hot poker is put on someone's arm like one would brand cattle with a brand and it penetrates the flesh and it makes an impression in the flesh and when it grows over it grows with scar tissue and the scar tissue is a protective covering but it doesn't have any nerve endings in it so the ability to feel is no longer there and this is what some people are suffering with some have said that this starts way back when an emotional psychological bonding between mother and child does not occur and the child develops into a person without feelings without a sense of regret with no ability for remorse they are unfeeling these people tend to become predators they prey upon others and they have no compunction and no feeling and no reserve in doing it our generation has produced a bumper crop of these kind of people and it is impacting our whole culture and it begins way back with birth so often under extraordinary what we would call abnormal circumstances many times out of wedlock when you look at the community today where children are growing up without the presence of a father sometimes without the presence of a mother to end up in an orphanage somewhere or foster home and children grow up who have never bonded emotionally and developed that sensation of feeling connection and everything that goes with it turn out to be law enforcement's biggest headaches and the woods are full of these kind of people they verse 19 having become callous there's that word callous it's connected with the scar tissue it means inability to feel to sympathize to care about having become callous have given themselves over to sensuality that simply means their attitude is this if it feels good do it that's a motto they live by given themselves over to sensuality for the practice and here's that word it is a perpetual thing it isn't a one night stand it's a one night stand on top of a one night stand on top of a one night stand on top of a one night stand and it goes on and on and on that's their lifestyle that's what they are that's all they're interested in that's all they care about to them this is life this is living for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness but verse 20 you did not learn

[49 : 45] Christ in this way that kind of activity and attitude is far removed from what Jesus Christ is all about and you know it and that's exactly what he's saying you did not learn Christ in this way if indeed now there is that question if indeed and the implication is have you really learned Christ it's a big if if indeed you have heard him and have been taught in him just as truth is in Jesus because if you have you can't go on that way that's not what he is about he's about the complete opposite of that you are under a new regime now and you need to wake up and smell the coffee and you know what the beauty of this is it is always always always in your best interest to do so by

God making these demands upon you he is looking out for you this is why God has such a thing about sin and the Bible makes it so clear in so many places sin sin sin and some say these preachers all they talk about is sin sin I get so tired of hearing about sin what's this big deal about sin all the time and the reason is God really is down on sin because he's up on people God loves people he loves people and sin is destructive to people and it hurts people and it kills people and it ruins people and God loves people and he hates sin what kind of a God would he be if he didn't all we need to understand is he's on our side God isn't out to rain on your parade and say I'm going to look down there and see who's having fun and tell him to stop it

God wants you to enjoy life to the max within the safe parameters that he has established for they are for your good for your blessing for your benefit that's the message he's delivering to these Ephesians and to the Corinthians because you are in Christ you are a new creation you under a new umbrella now a new regime and now you have somebody on your side who cares for you more than you could ever imagine and because he does there are certain things that he prohibits for you because he knows they will be your ruination they will hurt you they will pain you they will kill you they will destroy you and God loves you and that's why he steers you away from these things and demands that you not go there and you know what it's the very same thing that you would do for your child only

God is a more consistent parent and a wiser parent than we are and yet the principle is the same in reference to your former life in reference to your verse 22 in reference to your former manner of life you know the way you used to live the values you used to have the places you used to go the things

you used to do your former life you lay aside the old self do you know what jumps off that page at me you lay aside there's your volition how do you do that with your will oh but I can't do that I don't have the ability nonsense you do too it isn't it isn't a lack of ability it's a lack of will you can lay aside your old life you want to because you're marching to a new drummer and this new drummer has a love and a care and a concern for you that is greater than anything that you could imagine and the best possible thing you can do is place yourself right smack dab in the center of the will of that one who loved you enough to die for you he will not lead you astray you lay aside the old life because you can and you should it's the least you can do used to sing a little ditty

I haven't heard it for a long time after all he's done for me after all he's done for me how can I do less than give him my best after all he's done for me when we deliberately with our will lay aside those things that we know are dishonoring to the Lord oh but I like them well sin has its temptations sin sin has its promises of fulfillment of course it never delivers but it's great at promising and we we we enjoy why do you think people do these things they enjoy them they like them why why do people engage in illicit sexual activity feels good it's pleasant it's maybe it's naughty but it's fun and it's kind of cool and it's you know it's just nothing quite like it you know we've been struggling with this issue of abortion since what 1973 and when our illustrious supreme court decided that abortion really is a constitutional right which is probably the worst possible decision that these nine justices have made since since the

[56 : 54] Dred Scott decision and a Negro man was ruled to be less than a white man kind of decision that ought to embarrass every court that came afterwards and when you stop and think about this abortion thing I am convinced and this is just a Wiseman opinion there isn't any way that I can prove it but I've given it a lot of thought and dealt with it from every conceivable angle over the last 50 plus years and I am really persuaded that the really big deal about abortion and why it is so hotly contested for our bodies ourselves this kind of thing is because women and sometimes the men with whom they have had the relationship that resulted in the pregnancy don't want something like an inconvenient baby to upset their life or their routine and they want to be free to pursue unprotected unwise sexual activity without having to pay a price and the complications that come from pregnancy so abortion is a very inviting solution and

I speak to you today as one who was conceived out of wedlock in 1934 and so maybe it's a subject that is closer to my heart and mine than it is to others but the demand for abortion in my estimation comes down to nothing more than a demand for the privilege if you want to call it a privilege of continuing an irresponsible sexual activity without having to engage the inconvenience the responsibility of a baby so for our irresponsibility we will take the life of the child so that we can pursue our continued irresponsibility of safe unwise sexual activity

I wonder if that isn't really what's at the bottom of it but you know I've never heard anybody say that you'll have to decide for yourself whether you think it has any merit or no I'm not saying that that's the whole ball of wax but I suspect that that is perhaps a greater part of it than what we know it's a way to play the game without having to pay a price make somebody else pay it make the innocent pay it and you know something if you are coming from a position of moral relativism or even atheism it's no big deal it's easy to say it's just a blob of tissue no big deal but when you see that life as a result of

God's activity and God's provision and God is involved in it it takes on a whole new perspective and I suspect that so many of those who are stumping for abortion on demand don't give any credence to that at all and that's why we're dealing with what we're dealing with the whole culture is going this way and so many who call themselves Christians are sucked into this there's an article in the literature rack that I hope you will pick up when you walk out because it really got to me and it ties in with what we're talking about this morning it's an article by Billy Graham and the title in the last decision magazine was simply this stop living like the world lives hope you'll get a copy of that and read it those of us who are in

Christ and I trust that's probably everybody here it's always possible that somebody is here that hasn't really come to faith in Christ but that would be a long shot I suspect everybody here is probably a true believer but are we living like the world lives nobody's called upon to be the judge of anyone else but I'll tell you what I am called upon to be the judge of me before the scriptures and you are called upon to be the judge of you before the scriptures and if we claim to name the name of Christ let those who name the name of the Lord depart from iniquity no we're not talking about living pure sinless lives no faults we still mess up we're still able to sin and all the rest of it but there

should be a basic difference about our lives and our attitude simply because we are in [63 : 12] Christ and I hope you'll get a copy of that article on your way out and read it it really got to me and it contributed to this message stop living like the world lives you know I would like to think that everybody who's here this morning is not living like the world lives because if you were you probably wouldn't be here this would be the last place you would be so I'm somewhat encouraged by that but sometimes we can flirt with things that we ought not to and get burned and maybe dishonor the Lord and well these are really serious things in reference to your former manner of life you lay aside the old self which is being corrupted in accordance with the lust of deceit and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new self which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth and that's what you're supposed to be doing therefore laying aside falsehood speak truth each one of you with his neighbor for we are members one of another be angry and yet do not sin do not let the sun go down on your wrath do not give the devil an opportunity means don't let him have first base let him who steals steal no longer well why can't

I be a Christian thief what's wrong with that you gotta make a living some way I I want to be an honorable thief I want to be choosy who I steal from I don't want to steal from just anybody well you know what that is that's the rationalizing that I was talking about you know it can steal from this person because he's got more than he deserves anyway so I can steal from him that's the rationalizing thing let him who steals steal no longer so Mickey Cohen says you're telling me that just because I'm a Christian I can't still be a gangster yeah because in Christ everything's different and you've got a new responsibility and you talk about doing doing doing listen before you come to faith in Christ there is nothing that you can do that God will accept that honors him after you come to

Christ there are a whole lot of things you can do and should do and ought to do and are called upon to do and are empowered to do let's get with those would you pray with me father we recognize that this day in which we live is filled with so much confusion and distortion and sometimes the culture makes it more and more difficult to really see clearly our Christian responsibilities and we believe that these folks here today just because they're here want to be pleasing to you want to take this thing called the Christian life with great seriousness of purpose because it was purchased at such an enormous cost if anybody's thinking otherwise we pray you'll convict them of that as well and we truly do want to thank you that you have already provided the power to do what we ought to do when once we exercise our will to do it thank you that any failure on our part is not due to lack of ability because you provide the ability it's due to a lack of will because we provide the will so embolden us encourage us convict us teach us whatever it is that we need we want to be open and responsive we trust to it in Christ's name amen