

We Know, Part 2

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[0 : 00] Would you open the Bible, please, to Romans chapter 6. We are continuing our theme, Recently Begun. Actually, it's a continuation, in a sense, of what we dealt with earlier, the subject of perspective.

And all the Bible represents is simply this. Information, truth, data, from God's perspective, coupled with man's perspective.

And the reason that so many people have so much difficulty in negotiating through life, and I would even include many Christians, is because they have never come to grips with the idea that God has an entirely different perspective from ours.

And we have almost an inborn trait or desire to want God to see things our way.

And sometimes we get pretty angry with Him when He doesn't. You've heard of people who've said, well, if you're not going to answer my prayers, I'm not going to your old church anymore.

[1 : 13] I'm not going to read your old Bible anymore either. Simply because God refuses to be a celestial bellhop. It just jumps when people ask Him to jump.

And do this for me, and do that for me. In the midst of all of that, we often don't realize that God is actually our best friend.

Friend, He is doing for us what He knows to be best, even though it is often something that we disagree with. And this is a tough thing for people to deal with.

It's a bitter pill to swallow. Because somehow or another, we think, you know, we read these passages in the Bible that righteous prayer of a fervent man avails much, and how people prayed and got miraculous answers to prayer.

And after all, it's in the book. And everything that's in the book is supposed to work that way, and it's supposed to work that way for us. How come when I pray, God seems so far away, and it is as if He turns a deaf ear to what I'm crying out for?

[2 : 19] What's wrong with this picture? Well, the problem can't be me. It's got to be God. And that's precisely the conclusion that a lot of people reach.

I suspect that there are Christians who spend the majority of their life in a spiritual temper tantrum. No peace, no joy, no serenity. Just why me? Why this? Why now? What did I do to deserve this? And on and on it goes. All we are doing is displaying our frail human perspective, which is sorely limited. And mine is limited about as much as yours is.

This is systemic to the whole human race. It isn't just for fringe people. It's for everybody. We are just all so human that sometimes we just let it all hang out, and we wonder why God doesn't get with our program and do what we think He ought to do.

[3 : 28] And as I've said, God is not a celestial bellhop when comes running when we ring a bell. And you know what? We ought to be ever so glad for that.

We ought to be grateful for that. If I could use the analogy, and I don't know a better one to use, than that of a parent and child. And those of you who are parents or who have been parents, you know full well what I'm talking about.

When that two or three-year-old or four-year-old or whatever wants their own way, and you insist on them not having their own way because you know in your adulthood and your experience and the responsibility you have for that child, you know what's best for that child, and you know the child doesn't know.

All the child knows is what they want, when they want it. And if you won't give it to me, and wha, and the temper tantrum goes on. We can do that spiritually.

And I'll tell you one other thing that that does. An ongoing temper tantrum retards your spiritual growth. You end up being stuck where you are.

[4 : 41] There's little or no growth or maturity or development. And forget about peace and joy and thanksgiving.

Those are all foreign. Brethren, it ought not to be that way. And the only corrective for it is what we're dealing with right now, having to deal with the subject of perspective. And Nathan did it again this morning in the Galatian passage, touched on a number of these things. Extraordinary content and material, and it ties in with what we're talking about. But you will not find this material anywhere other than in Paul's epistles. Why is that? Because these concepts didn't actually exist as Paul is revealing them now. So as we look at Romans 6, I want you, and by the way, I am determined this morning, no matter what, we're going to have a Q&A.;

[5 : 45] And I'm convinced that we need it this morning because this content is so important, but so little understood. I'm sure there are bound to be some questions, and I just want you to feel free to ask them because at the same time, I'm not guaranteeing a satisfactory answer, but I'll guarantee a good faith answer to the best of my ability.

And I wish I could give you all the answers that I would like to give you, but I just don't have that ability, nor do I know any preacher who does. So we're talking about the know-you-nots.

That's the way it's rendered in the King James. Know-you-not, or do you not know? And he is actually inserting what we would call a rhetorical question in here.

It is the kind of question that you ask when you are quite convinced that everybody knows the answer to it. But what it does is it sets up a mode or a train of thinking in that it gets people in a certain gear to process what you're saying.

It forces, if they're paying attention, that is, it forces their mind into the alley that we're talking about so that we're all on the same page. And the first one that he utters, actually it is rendered in the King James, and it is in verse 6.

[7 : 15] If we have become, I'm sorry. I've got, I've got my former wife's, my late wife Barbara's Bible this morning and hers is marked different from mine.

So, let us look, if we may, at the New American Standard in verse 3 of chapter 6.

Some of you have the New American, some of you have the New King James, some of you have the regular King James. But in verse 3, one that we've already treated is, do you not know, or know ye not is the way the King James renders it.

Know ye not that all of us who have been baptized or identified into Christ Jesus have been identified into his death. That means literally this, which is a difficult concept for us to grasp, but it means Christ's death becomes your death.

Now, let that ruminate a little bit. Christ's death becomes your death. Not according to you, it doesn't. But according to God, it does.

[8 : 33] That's the difference between your perspective and his perspective. That's what we're talking about. They are poles apart. And what we are seeking to do, to what extent we may be successful, I have no idea, what we are trying to do is to get the average Christian to be willing to trade in their perspective for God's perspective, to see life and issues and events from God's viewpoint rather than our viewpoint.

Now, I'm not suggesting you deny reality. I know that things that are painful and difficult and troublesome come your way. But in the midst of it all, behind it all, there is the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God who really knows what he's doing and whether you believe it or not, he has only your best interest at heart.

He knows what you need. Just like the parent knows what that three-year-old needs and they don't know anything. All they know is what they want. They don't know what they need.

It's your responsibility as a parent to override their wants and make sure you give them what they need.

Sometimes, you give them what they want also. That sweetens the pot a little bit. But overarching all of that, you take the responsibility of providing for that child what you know they need and it is always in their best interest with your love poured out upon them in everything that you do and the things you take away from them, the things you don't let them have, all of that is prompted by your love.

[10 : 34] Our Heavenly Father is no different except the distance between Him and us is so much greater than that between us and our child because after all the only thing that separates us from

our child for years development age but what separates us from God is infinity a whole lot more than years.

So, let us go into this Romans and I'm just kind of going to be hit skipping through here and we're going down to verse 16 for the second know ye not. Do you not know?

Know you not? that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience you are slaves of the one whom you obey either of sin resulting in death or of obedience resulting in righteousness.

And the text says when you present yourselves to someone how do you do that? What would you do it with? you do it with the only thing you can do it with?

Your will your volition this is such a terribly terribly important concept I'm going to hammer this nail until it is flush with the surface volition which is nothing more than another name for your will it's a word from which we also get the word volunteer volunteer or voluntary you have a will the ability to make decisions based on what you think is in your best interest will do and this will or this volition becomes the basis for God's evaluating you whether you are a believer or an unbeliever we are told in again in Paul's epistles because you don't find us anywhere else in this principle we are told that there are going to be two separate accountings one is referred to as the Bema seat or the award throne of Christ it's called the Bema because it is where the awards are handed out the Greek games that we see every four years the Olympic games they always have well actually it's a Bema it's the stand but they don't call it that and they have the one who wins the gold medal in the center and on the top the one who wins a bronze or a silver is off to the side and that is the award throne for the athletes who participated and won their particular events now when Paul talks about this and he draws from it and he uses the term know you not that all run in the race but only one wins and Paul uses the original meaning which this only one wins there's no second prize there's no third prize there's only one and that's the one who wins and that's the Bema seat that's where the reward is handed out in recognition of what has been accomplished and when believers pass on at what point in time

[13 : 52] I don't know exactly when this is we as believers are going to stand at the Bema seat and Christ is going to evaluate us this is let's go to quickly because I'm really determined for Q&A; so let's go to 1 Corinthians chapter 5 I'm sorry 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and I'm just going to jump in here in verse 7 for time's sake Paul says for we walk by faith not by sight we are of good courage I say and prefer rather to be absent from the body than to be at home with the Lord therefore also we have as our ambition whether at home or absent to be pleasing to him why well I'll tell you why the next verse tells you why because for we must all and when he says all here he's not talking about humanity he's talking about those who are believers he's talking about those who are in Christ those who have a connection with him we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ this is the Bema that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done whether good or bad this has nothing to do with punishment it has everything to do with the extending and granting of rewards and recognition or the withholding thereof the reason it isn't punishment for your sins or your wrongs is because

Jesus Christ already took that punishment he already bore the punishment for your sins in his body on the cross and for believers sins is not an issue here motive will come into play what we did or didn't do what opportunities we had that we took advantage of what we did not what we refused all the rest of it it's either going to result in reward or lack thereof there are so many factors involved in this I cannot begin to enumerate them because I don't know them all but I do know this the all seeing all knowing all discerning I of the only one who really matters knows everything he knows your heart he knows your mind he knows your motivations he knows your capabilities he knows your limitations he takes everything into consideration as only he is able to do and based on that his knowledge you will be rewarded or rewards will be withheld on the other hand there is a completely different judgment and it is described in Revelation 19 and we won't go there but we are told that the small and the great stand before God and the books are opened and these are all unbelievers there are no Christians there

Christians are at the Bema seat or the award throne of Christ all unbelievers are going to be at the great white throne judgment there people will be evaluated on the basis of their deeds and the punishment will be in accordance with their deeds and taken into consideration will be what they knew what they didn't know what they understood what they didn't understand in other words the same all-knowing judge is going to evaluate them as well but their end will be a complete opposite

of those who are going to be with Christ in heaven I do not know I do not know what all hell is going to represent and scholars and theologians have argued for centuries over whether these are literal flames and literal fire and if it's literal why aren't they burned up and destroyed and done away with and that led some to the idea of annihilationism and they'll be just poofed out of existence and won't exist anymore and won't have any more suffering or any more pain they'll just be eliminated from existence and that's called universalism and annihilationism

I don't know what it's going to be but I know this it's going to be negative and hell hell is going to be everything that heaven isn't they are extreme poles extreme opposites and beyond that I'm able to go I'm unable to go except to say that nobody is going to be a happy camper there it's going to be the complete opposite of heaven so let us continue on here in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 10 says we must all and here again he's talking about believers and if you're wondering whether he's talking about believers just look at those whom he is addressing as he begins his epistle and usually it's to the saints at and if he is talking about those who are unbelievers the context makes that clear so that we know exactly what group he's talking about and here he says we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done whether good or bad so let's come back now to Romans chapter 6 and look at this if we may this is the second know you not do you not know or know you not in other words he could put it this way you do know don't you

I mean you do understand this right it's as though he's trying to get his audience to agree that they're with him and he says when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience and this literally means servants like you're hiring on for somebody and that was a very common thing in that day much more so than today you are slaves or servants of the one whom you obey either of sin resulting in death or of obedience resulting in righteousness but here comes a contrast but thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed and what was that form of teaching what did that involve what is it that transfers one from being a slave to sin to being a slave to Christ and by the way every one of us is a slave to somebody all unbelievers are slaves to sin or slaves to self and there are Christians sorry to say there are Christians by the boatload that are slaves to self me myself and I and it's what the scriptures call as we will see time and again it's what the scriptures call the flesh the flesh that is the essence of what we are in our

[21 : 44] Adamic fallen nature and none of us has escaped it it can be overpowered and it can be neutralized but it cannot be eliminated I want you to keep that principle in mind and what this means is this is not a happy thing to say but it's true the flesh the old Adamic sin nature that resides in all of us is not any better than it was before you ever came to Christ understand that this means as a Christian as one who is a believer your destiny is heaven your faith is in Christ you still have an old fleshly nature and it is no better than it was before you came to Christ because that old Adamic nature was not eliminated was not neutralized was not even reduced but along with that there was presented to you and for you a new dynamic a new power that enables you to be victorious over that old nature that would rule the roost if you let it now here's where the plot thickens and the thing gets sticky your volition your will your ability to make choices

God does not remove from you when you become a believer your volition remains very much intact you still have a will same way you had a will before you came to Christ now it is true you have different standards and different interests and all kinds of things that are different because if anyone is in Christ old things have passed away and all things have become new but that doesn't mean that your old nature has been eliminated and if it were then you're not going to suffer physical death you're just going to live forever because you've only got one nature and that's the divine nature but we know that isn't true so we are still sold under sin and physical death all unless Christ comes first and takes us in the rapture best proof positive that we are all sinners is in that it is appointed unto man once to die that's going to be the question isn't are you still a sinner the question is are you a redeemed sinner are you a sinner who is basking in the sunshine of

God's love and the righteousness that Christ poured out on that cross when he died for you that's the question so he has not eliminated your possibility and your potential for acting against him think of that now that is tremendous that that I yesterday when we were talking about this concept in 2nd Corinthians 5 at Gary Gary Wade's funeral I made mention of the fact and I did not take the time to develop it more fully and I wish I could have and I should have but I made the point that when you are in Christ you have a position of perfection let that sink in God views you and sees you as perfect

as much as he sees

Christ now somebody may be saying well he's sure not talking about me because that's far from me I never I'm not perfect about listen if you do not have a perfect standing before God you're sunk you understand that this has nothing to do with your behavior has nothing to do with the productivity of good deeds it has everything to do with your position we have a position that links us to the righteousness of Christ that enables God to look beyond our sin and see us clothed in the righteousness of Christ and it is on that basis that he accepts us we are not sinless beings and I fear some may get the impression that when you say you are perfect in Christ oh well gee I is what walking in the spirit and walking in the flesh is all about and when Paul says if you walk in the spirit you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh and it's axiomatic that if you don't walk in the spirit you will fulfill the desires of the flesh it's a given that's the way it works this is a highly complex thing and [27 : 47] I wish I understood it Christians I'm talking about people who know the Lord and are going to be in heaven when they die Christians are still capable of doing some very sinful ugly stupid things as a Christian now some think that well when you become a Christian you become what you become sinless no you don't you still have a capacity for greed for self centeredness for covetousness you can still do all those things and you know not understanding this causes a lot of Christians to fall into what I consider a real terrible trap where they can they remind you of that little gerbil in the cage that keeps running you know he doesn't get anywhere but he's just running on this thing and that's the way some

Christians are in their Christian life they don't make progress they're just going around around around around around around around around

Tom who Christians He says you said in lay the blame for it at the devil's doorstep that would make him blush.

Think in terms of David. This is a man, the only man in all of the Bible, of whom it is said he was a man after God's own heart.

Are you kidding me? David? David the king, the skunk, the adulterer, the murderer.

[30 : 42] Yep. All one and the same. Did he have a relationship with God? He certainly did.

Certainly did. Man after God's own heart. It was he who set up Uriah the Hittite to make sure that he would be killed in battle because he had taken adulterous advantage of Uriah's wife.

And he lied about it. He was a liar, a murderer, and an adulterer. How could David do those things? I'll tell you how he could do them. He was walking in the flesh. He looked over there on that veranda from his high perch and he saw Bathsheba.

Hmm. Looks good to me. Wonder who that is. And he sent someone to find out and she came to him and the rest was history. You mean to tell me that a man of God could do something like that? Listen. When you understand as a Christian what you are capable of, that helps to keep you on guard. Your old sin nature is not one bit better than it was before you came to Christ.

[32 : 03] And when you came to Christ, your old sin nature and your volition was not changed. God never said, now that you've put your faith and trust in me, now that you've become a Christian, now that you are identified with my son, I'm going to make it possible so you'll never be able to disappoint me again and you'll never be able to do anything wrong or do anything stupid because I'm going to insulate you from that.

I'm going to change you so you cannot do wrong. Nonsense. And this, by the way, not understanding this, is one of the principal reasons why so many people who truly are Christians have no assurance of their faith because they say to themselves things like, hmm, what I did last week, a Christian ought never to do something like that.

God expects better from me than that. How could I do that? Well, maybe it's because I'm not really a Christian at all.

Maybe I've just been kidding myself. Maybe I've just psyched myself out into believing that I'm a Christian because I don't think a true Christian could think things like that or do things like that.

But I do. Therefore, I'm probably not really saved. So, Lord, if I didn't, if it didn't take the first time, if I didn't mean it, if I didn't have enough faith, I want to now and I want to be saved now and I want to trust Christ as my Savior now.

[33 : 48] And they go through this throughout their life because they are disappointed and they think God is disappointed and they think that everything that I have professed and everything that I've learned and everything that I've counted on as being a Christian, it's all down the toilet because a Christian couldn't think some of the things I do and a Christian certainly couldn't do some of the

things I do.

Listen, wake up and smell the coffee. Your old nature as a Christian is no better than your old nature before you ever came to faith in Christ.

But what God has done in addition to what you were before, He has provided for you a new dynamic, a new power, a new ability so that you don't have to succumb to the old flesh.

You still can but you don't have to. Now let's read on here. We're in Romans chapter 6 and verse 17.

Thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed and having been freed from sin you became slaves of righteousness.

[35 : 05] I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. Ha ha. Remember now He's writing to Christians and He's talking about the weakness of your flesh.

For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, how did you do that? You did it with your will.

You did it because you chose to. We all do that. We all did that. Resulting in further lawlessness so now, now, as opposed to before.

Now that you were in Christ as opposed to before you were in Christ now present your members. What are your members? Arms, legs, eyes, ears.

members. These are your members. These are the things that we take in information with and sites with and we process and we reach conclusions and we develop a game plan whereby we will act on this thing or we will not act on it and so on.

[36 : 13] Present your members as slaves to righteousness resulting in sanctification and that literally means separation. it means when you make that presentation with your will it results in your being separated from that evil or that ill thing that is involved.

For when you were slaves of sin you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed?

For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God you derive your benefit resulting in sanctification and the outcome eternal life.

Wow. You see the contrast the distinction the difference here is really powerful and what Paul is doing is making a case prior to Christ and after Christ makes all the difference in the world and when he saved you and you came to faith in Christ whenever that was whether it was just recently or whether it was 60 years ago like some of us your volition your will your capacity to make choices was not done away with it was not weakened it's still there but the spirit of God that comes in at the point of salvation is available to empower you and enable you when you submit yourself to him as opposed to submitting yourself to the flesh and it is the same will the same volition that submits to the spirit as that which submits to the flesh it's kind of like a go-between now as I told you before this is a complex issue but it's a very strong it's a very important one and I wish I had a better handle on it than I do but what we are talking about here is what Paul seems to make quite clear the difference between being a believer and an unbeliever is day and night but the capacity to displease

God and continue to please yourself sometimes at the expense of others remains within you there ought to be no such thing as a selfish Christian that ought to be that ought to be what do you call it I can't think of the word an oxymoron thank you that should be an oxymoron a selfish Christian but we all know that's not true there are plenty of selfish Christians you're looking at one as a Christian I know there have been throughout my life numerous times when I please myself rather than please God or please somebody else you know what you call that you call that the failure and the weakness of the flesh the arm of flesh will fail you you dare not trust your own you can't trust your flesh any further than you can throw this grand piano your flesh wants to rule the roost your flesh wants to run the show your flesh is the same as it was before you came to

[39 : 55] Christ it is focused on self centeredness and the problem we have in the body of Christ are too many Christians who have never shaken off the self centeredness please yourself at all costs can you do that as a Christian oh you better believe it absolutely in fact you needn't look any further than the average marriage to find demonstrations of self centeredness probably the most probably the most obvious kind of petri dish for examining self centeredness would be the marriage relationship because there is no place on earth that I know of where there is such great opportunity for self centeredness to please yourself as opposed to pleasing your mate nor is there such a place

that has such great potential for demonstrating the love of Christ in focusing on your mate as opposed to focusing on yourself and when you do

I'll tell you what you have when you're in a marriage relationship where each is more intent on pleasing the other than they are themselves you got a marriage on the rock that's the best there is that's the absolute ultimate that's what that series is all about that we did several years ago that's back there called marriage on the rock it's 12 volumes and it's all about each partner in the marriage relationship walking in the spirit as opposed to walking in the flesh and sometimes sometimes there's a marriage relationship where one is walking in the flesh and the other is walking in the spirit makes it difficult dicey the idea is for both to be subservient to the other and this is what Paul is talking about in Romans 5 or I'm sorry Ephesians 5 and we're all familiar with the passage we're not going to go there because

I've got to hurry I want to make sure I allow some time for Q&A; but in what Paul is saying there about husbands love your wives and wives be submissive to your husband he also says in that same passage in Ephesians 5 that as believers we are to be subject one to another how do you do that how do you do that how do you put others ahead of yourself that's how you do it you do it with your will you do it with your evolution and when you put your mate first that's a decision of your will and sometimes sometimes we may consider it a painful decision but you make it because it's the right thing to do and you know something the way human dynamics work in a marriage relationship when the husband loves his wife sacrificially as Christ loved the church he is primarily concerned about her best interests her welfare and you know what when he treats her that way she picks up on that she appreciates that she revels in that she enjoys that and she responds to that and what does she respond with cooperation the submissive spirit recognition of your headship and glad that you have it and that you're exercising it as you are there is no greater laboratory for the exercise of the flesh and the spirit as that of marriage because there is no place there's no place in humanity for such great potential for greatness happiness or the opposite and it all boils down to this one thing flesh spirit

Paul said if we walk in the spirit we will not fulfill the desires of the flesh and you use your volition for decision making what we are trying to do what every pastor and every church ought to be trying to do is to get people to the place where first of all they are in Christ and then where they mature and develop and grow spiritually in that relationship so that their life evolves more and more around others than it does around themselves and you may say well pastor that's just not natural and I'd be the first to agree and God agrees too it's supernatural it isn't natural it isn't natural someone once said that if the average

Christian ever got to the place where they are supposed to be the world would think they're unnatural the world is filled with natural people and too many of them are found in the body of Christ that's why what Christianity is all about is growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ but before you can grow you've got to be born you've got to have the new birth before you even have the potential for this growth and once you do then the sky's the limit and your growth will be determined by guess what your growth will be determined largely by your diet what are you taking in we all know how dynamic and how dependent a little baby is for growing it's got everything to do with their diet with their intake of the kind of food that will nourish them and spiritually speaking it's the same way someone has said salvation is the end of the gospel but it's the front end and that's when the growth starts once you're in Christ you begin to grow and develop and mature and what is God's objective that we will be conformed to the image of

[47 : 19] Christ I've told you before I know how I have not arrived because nobody yet has ever mistaken me for Jesus so I have not arrived I have plenty of room for growth we all do Peter says as newborn babies of the word desire the sincere milk of the word when you get into that milk and that milk starts nourishing you and building you up and you say you know what this milk is great but I'm I'm ready for solid food and I don't know what spiritual pabulum is or beaches baby food or whatever it is but you develop and you grow a little more and next thing you know you're ready for some real mature food where's the steak and potatoes and that's what growing in the Christian life is all about but so many so many don't understand these principles and they are just kind of retarded in their spiritual growth and they don't grow and they don't develop and it causes people to look at them and say well you know so and so I think did they make a profession of faith some years ago

I don't know did they kind of just drop out or what you know their actions and attitudes they seem almost like they're not a Christian at all and it just kind of makes you wonder you know we can't judge people we can't look into the heart and mind of people and see who really is a Christian or who isn't and all we have to go on is their outward actions and their attitude and their interest and their behavior so some people just kind of make you wonder and then there's that assurance thing again but I'm not finished but I'm quitting because I want some Q&A; from you and I think that this is the kind of thing that could probably generate a lot of questions I'm I'm not sure that I'll have the answers but I'll give you my best shot so Ethan thank you for serving us once again we appreciate it very much if you have a question or a comment it doesn't have to be a question it can be a comment or an observation feel free just raise your hand and he will get to you and I want to warn you by the way if you don't take advantage of these opportunities

I'm not going to give them I'll just take all the time like I usually do okay anyone okay John up here when you mentioned Ephesians back in four it says in reference to your former manner of life you lay aside the old self which is being corrupted that means it constantly is and you have to fight it your whole life that's right that's right you do you do you never come to a place where well spiritually I can just relax I've got it made no you don't no you don't not living in this world because that's not what this world is all about other thoughts or comments anyone okay he'll be right there just to tag on to that

I've heard it said that there is no coasting in the Christian life some people think well I've kind of gotten so far and I'll just coast from here and there is a constant battle and if you decide that you're going to coast what inevitably happens is that you're going to regress really in your Christian life and we always we need to continue to grow each and every day no matter where we're at and how long we've been at this growth in the Christian life is always necessary thank you you never outgrow your need for growth how about that some people feel that way about service you know well I've served such and it's it's I've done enough I'm just going to withdraw and just relax and just do nothing I just I don't know can't imagine that but other comments or questions anyone yeah Lynette could you give some examples for those who might be new here or don't know of how it is that you would grow what is it that we can do as Christians to make us grow I'm sorry repeat that I didn't get the gist of that and I've only got one hearing aid that's working so go ahead yeah can you give some examples of how it is that we can grow as Christians for those who might not know what it is that we can do exactly that would help us grow as Christians okay well as I've already mentioned and probably need to emphasize is diet is very very important and in growth in a growth in a baby and maturing two things that come to mind at least they come to my mind one is diet and exercise a baby taking in nourishment in a normal childhood or normal babyhood those little arms and legs are kicking and moving and you know what they're doing they're exercising they're using their limbs and they that puts strength in them and stability in them and they grow and diet and exercise are terribly terribly important for our physical growth and physical health and stability and you bring that right over into the spiritual and it's diet and exercise how do you exercise your faith are you ready for this serving others serving others make yourself available do something well [53 : 45] I can't I don't have any talents I don't have any abilities nonsense that's cop out stuff that's just trying to rid yourself of guilt for inactivity and I'm not saying go out and join everything and get involved with everything and make your life just one buzz thing where you're running from this to that to something else no no no no I'm not talking about busyness I'm talking about gut level honest involvement in the lives of others and doing something for somebody else making yourself available look around all kinds of needs around you if we'll only respond well others can do it better than I can that's a cop out that's a cop out you're just trying to get yourself off the hook and in doing so you contribute to your spiritual retardation what do you think of that

Scott this might be a whole different sermon but can you comment on I think it's revelation your name blotted out of the Lamb's book of life well you're right probably would be another whole sermon I'll put it this way I'll just give you a wise opinion of it and take it or leave it I wouldn't die on this hill but I would just pose it this I think everyone's name was written in the Lamb's book of life everyone who has ever been born has their name written in the Lamb's book of life life why do I say that I say that because God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself who does that include I know our Calvinist friends say well that just means the Christian world the context will not allow for that kind of hermeneutical gymnastics it was God so loved the world that he gave Jesus died for everybody everybody doesn't appreciate that everybody doesn't believe it but it's true

whether you believe it or not and that means that you were born if I understand this correctly you were born redeemed this in my estimation becomes the only rationale and the only basis for concluding that children who die in infancy or even abortion are in the Lamb's book of life I think that this is what Paul was talking about in Romans 7 when he said I was alive once without the law but when the law came sin revived in me and I died what does that mean that sounds like double talk what does that mean if I understand this correctly and I'm not all that certain that I do but to me scriptures have to fit each other God doesn't leave a lot of truths out there just dangling disconnected everything in the word of God fits everything in the word of God that's one of the things that's so amazing about it but sometimes we just don't see how it fits it doesn't mean it doesn't and when

Paul said I was alive once and the commandment came and sin revived and I died well we know he's not talking about he died physically how did he die he died the only other way that there is that you can die and that is spiritually and spiritual death means separation from God that's what spiritual death is physical death is separation of your spirit from your body that's physical death spiritual death is separation of your spirit from God and Paul says sin revived and I died and that meant that he moved from the state of being redeemed in which he was born to now being lost and what was the corrective the

[59 : 09] Damascus road there he was born again and that's true of all of us because how many people in the world were impacted and affected by the sin of Adam and Eve how many everybody the whole nine yards all of humanity no human being escaped the consequences of Adam's sin because when Adam and Eve sinned they took into their nature their psyche and their being something God did not put there when he created them and that was the sin death principle they were created in a state of innocence and when they disobeyed

God they took under themselves something that God didn't put in them but was a foreign element and that was called sin sin is anything contrary to the nature and character of God that's sin Billy Graham said sin a sinner is anyone who is less perfect than God this is the whole human race so everyone's name was every human being ever born and and I don't know about this because I just don't understand it that much but genetically life seems very much proved now to be originating at conception not at three months or six months or nine months or whatever but when that sperm fertilizes the egg everything that is needed for humanity is intact right then and there right on the spot and all it needs is time and the development process is amazing and we were all born that way and when

Adam sinned he passed on to his progeny he passed on to their first born son Cain that evil capacity that he didn't have when God created him but he's got now and boy did Cain ever let it show when he murdered his own brother and the human race is off and running and it is downhill the end of all of us is going to be our physical day I told anyone anybody who thinks that they are not a sinner is saying they never expect to die they're going to live forever because it's the wages of sin that is death and we are all consigned to that so as in Adam all die and Romans says so also in Christ shall all be made alive who does that mean no I'm not teaching universalism I don't believe that but I am teaching that the extent and the depth and the breadth of Christ dying on that cross as our redeemer was just as great and just as full and just as complete as was the sin of Adam and Eve that wreaked death upon the whole human race and there was only one exception only one exception and that was Jesus and the only way he escaped it was because he was conceived in the womb of the

Virgin Mary by God himself he was the God man sinless not born in sin like us because had he been born like us in sin he would not have been an eligible redeemer he had to be sinless in order for his sacrifice to be accepted as full payment to God and it was wow we'll take one more if there isn't Joe's got a comment up here or question then we'll have to dismiss this ties in with what you're saying about how we mature and grow as Christians God loved us first he sought us sent his son and we in response say well that's great what I do for God then how do I respond to God what God wants us to do then is to love others that's how we show our love to God by loving others absolutely and Paul then said the law of course you know brought out the sin in us but law says to meet basically to meet it all to meet all the law there's one commandment was given to us treat others as you would want to be treated basically do unto others as you would have them do unto you so anytime you speak or act if you just think to yourself is that the way

I would want somebody to speak or act to me and if the answer is yes then you're probably okay in acting out and speaking that way I appreciate that Joe thank you thank you appreciate that well you know what we've been talking about and this whole nine yards all of this all of this content and a whole lot more in my estimation this is the only thing that explains why the world is the way it is why Christians are the way they are why things are the way they are how we got here where we are and where we're going you will not find answers to these questions anywhere go get your encyclopedia [65 : 38] Britannica and search it from volume to volume and you won't find an explanation for why the world is the way it is only one place you're going to find it and that's in the book and that's why we're here that's what we're doing on Sunday morning that's what this is all about so that we can learn who we are who God is what the relationship is what the connection is what the opportunities are what the responsibilities are what the joys are and all that goes with it it's just absolutely mind-blowing would you stand please we'll be dismissed once again father we have seen only how some of these things work and affect us we see enormous potential in simply being a redeemed believer in Jesus Christ and our prayer for these dear people and for everyone listening is that each of us will mature and grow to the extent of our ability not only because it's well-pleasing to you but it's also in our own best interest that we do so because in serving you we are bettering ourselves in every way possible so much of the world all of the world doesn't understand this and too many Christians don't understand this as well but we know that it's true and we pray that as we continue on with these subjects of what we are to know and what is to be a given in the knowledge and heart and understanding of believers would you be pleased to use it to contribute to our growth right here and now just line upon line precept upon precept how precious is the word that you've provided for any who may be here unaware of who Christ is and what he really did for them we pray that they may be willing to offer what we call a can't lose prayer can't lose prayer is you go to God and you say I don't know how much of this or if any of this is true but I want to know and I want to make myself available to you for your knowledge and your information and help me to understand it when I see it and hear it thank you again father for all that you provided for us we know that it came at an enormous cost and we want to serve you out of gratitude more than anything else in Christ's name amen